

NEWS

For Immediate Release

Governor Murphy signed Public Law 2019, c.216

Toms River, NJ; August 9, 2019: This law amends the Public Movers Act for advertising or operating without a license issued by the NJ Division of Consumer Affairs. The law becomes effective in 90 days. Here is a summary of the changes.

- A police officer can issue a disorderly persons summons to any unlicensed person advertising or offering moving or storage services.
- A police officer can issue a disorderly persons summons to any unlicensed person operating as a public mover or warehouseman, punishable by a fine up to \$1,000 or by imprisonment for up to six months, or by both.
- A police officer can issue a disorderly persons summons to any person that owns or operates a motor vehicle, or directs another person to use it for unlicensed moving or storage services. Any vehicle used can be impounded. The vehicle owner / operator must notify the consumer to return any property on the vehicle at the owner, operator or lessee's expense, and pay any fines, towing and costs.
- Municipal court fines for disorderly persons are \$500 for a 1st, and \$1,000 for 2nd or more violation. After a 1st offence, a judge can order a website shut down, and stop all unlicensed advertising. Penalties for failing to shut down a website is \$1,000 for each day the website remains visible.
- Civil fines for 1st offense was raised to \$5,000, and not more than \$20,000 for 2nd or subsequent offense. Civil cases are remanded to Superior Court.
- If a consumer has paid all lawfully agreed charges, the mover must release the consumer's property. Failure to release the property is an unlawful practice violation, but only if all charges were paid in full, and would go to Superior court.

Note: If a consumer adds items or services on moving day that are not written in the contract, a mover can change the total cost to add their tariff charges for the services, and a mover can refuse delivery until all lawful charges are paid in full; that's not new. But now, A higher standard has been placed on all movers to, 1) assure that their contract and tariff charges are correct, 2) verify if all consumer payments or deposits are credited, before they refuse delivery. If that standard has not been met, a mover must release the property to the consumer for their contractually agreed charges.

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The New Jersey Warehousemen and Movers Association was formed in 1969 to offer support and training for movers, and information for consumers. All members must be licensed and agree to a Code of Ethics. Visit our website at www.njmovers.com