

DPMO Containerization FAQs for Move.mil and Military OneSource

July 2021

1. What is crating? Why would a customer request it?

Damaged and missing items (which lead to claims) are the number one reason for customer dissatisfaction in the Defense Personal Property Program. Transporting your household goods inside crates can help reduce damage associated with handling and prevent loss—especially if your shipment goes into storage-in-transit (SIT). Shipments may go into SIT because a customer does not have an address to enable a direct delivery at the time of booking or because a customer requests SIT to accommodate other plans (such as leave or a planned TDY) that prevents a direct delivery at destination.

2. Under what conditions can I request my household goods (HHG) be crated?

In addition to being planned for SIT, shipments are suitable candidates for crating when the shipment:

- is estimated at 10,000 lbs or less in Peak Season (15 May – 30 Sep) or 3,000 lbs or less in Non-Peak Season (1 Oct – 14 May);
- is moving farther than 800 miles;
- and does not contain extra-large items which will not fit in a standard lift-van

Crating is an option that can be discussed and requested during a counseling session. Please note that if you request to crate your domestic shipment, you may be responsible for excess costs if the cost to move your personal property is greater than a loose load, uncrated shipment. Please note that if you request to have your domestic shipment crated and the cost to do so exceeds the cost of moving your shipment as an uncrated, loose load, you may be responsible for paying the difference. Your local transportation office can advise you on potential costs.

3. If I request crating, am I guaranteed to receive it? Under what circumstances would the transportation office deny my request?

No. Current lumber shortages are limiting the use of crates for domestic shipments (which is an optional service), and moving companies are preserving these assets for international shipments (which require the use of crates).

4. What are "tamper-evident seals?"

These are seals the moving company will place on all international, unaccompanied baggage, and crated (Code 2) HHG containers. The seals can provide reasonable evidence that a container has been opened or tampered with during transportation.

5. Should I sign the seals on the crates?

You will not sign each seal but will sign the inventory. The seal number for each seal will be annotated by the moving company on the inventory and cross-referencing the container number. It is your responsibility to verify the seal information is correct prior to signing the inventory.

6. Is it required that the moving company loads and seals my crates at my residence?

Yes, if your shipment was booked as a containerized shipment, the moving company is required to load and apply seals to your containerized shipment prior to leaving your residence unless you or your servicing transportation office authorizes crating at the warehouse.

In such cases, items removed from the residence without containerization must be annotated on the inventory as Containerized at Warehouse (CW). However, if your shipment was not booked as a containerized shipment, the moving company may elect to containerize at their warehouse for their convenience.

7. If the moving company indicates my HHG will be crated at the warehouse, what are my rights as a customer and am I allowed to go to the warehouse to watch my HHG be crated?

If your HHGs was booked as a containerized shipment, the moving company is required to load and apply seals to your containerized shipment prior to leaving your residence unless you or your servicing transportation office authorizes crating at the warehouse. In such cases, items removed from the residence without containerization must be annotated on the inventory as Containerized at Warehouse (CW). You are not permitted to go to the warehouse.

8. What happens to "overflow" items that do not fill a crate? Do these items remain "loose?"

For a crated shipment, overflow items will be treated in the same manner as the rest of the shipment, crated. The moving company will use a smaller crate for the overflow. Moving companies are not restricted to using a standard liftvan.

9. Once my crates are sealed, can they be opened during transit?

Yes, seals may be broken by customs or other government officials in performance of their official duties. In rare occasions, seals may be damaged as a result of normal transportation movement. Should this occur the containers will be resealed and the moving company must add a notation in DPS with the new seal numbers.

10. Is the moving company required to deliver my crates to my residence sealed or can they open them in the warehouse before delivery?

The moving company should not break the seals until the containers are at your residence for delivery.

11. If my crates are delivered without the seals, what should I do?

You should annotate on the delivery documents that the seals were missing or broken when it was delivered. You should also use the inventory to account for all items. If any items are found missing or damaged, list these items on the Notification of Loss or Damage AT Delivery form, which should be provided by your moving company.

12. If an individual item requires a custom crate, will it be crated at the residence even if the bulk of the HHG is brought to the warehouse for crating?

The moving company is required to crate all items at the residence, unless the Shipping Office or the customer gives the moving company the permission to crate at the warehouse. Your moving company should crate the item prior to departing the residence.

13. Are there limits on the size of a crate for unaccompanied baggage (UB)?

While there are no documented size limitations, crated items should be things that are needed immediately or soon after arrival at destination. Examples: Items that can be shipped in unaccompanied baggage include clothing and personal items, small kitchen essentials, and collapsible items such as cribs, playpens and strollers.

14. Are customers advised to keep crates for specialty items?

Customers must be provided the option to retain the new crate/container for their next move. If the customer elects not to retain the crate, they can do so without fear of being penalized by the transportation office denying a TSP's request to construct another crate for same item in future moves, and TSP shall remove the crate from the residence.