

GUIDE TO DEALING WITH

# FREIGHT DISPUTES

No one wants to pay for incorrect charges on their final freight shipping bill. But how do you know if an unexpected charge is actually valid? That's where we come in!

Read our helpful e-guide to understand the most common freight shipping fees, how you can avoid them and what to do when it's time to dispute an inaccurate charge.



# REWEIGH & RECLASS CHARGES

If your shipment was improperly weighted or classed, you may be charged with a reweigh or reclassification fee. It's up to you as the shipper to provide correct information on the bill of lading (BOL), so taking a few extra moments to correctly determine the weight and class of your shipment can make a world of difference to your quote's accuracy — and your bottom line.

## ✓ AVOIDING THE CHARGES

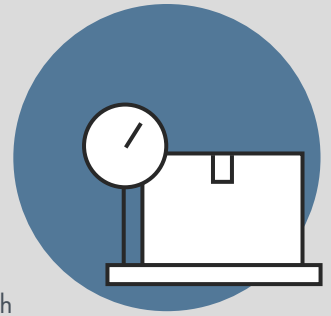
By accurately stating the weight and commodity classification (or "class") of your shipment, you ensure you get the most accurate freight quote while avoiding unnecessary reweigh or reclassification charges. When determining the weight of your shipment, make sure to be precise and include any packaging in your calculations — even the pallet!

Accurately classifying your shipment, while sometimes confusing, is also important. You can learn the ins and outs of freight classification by downloading [Unishippers' simple three-step guide to classifying your freight shipments](#).

## ! FILING A DISPUTE

If you are faced with an invalid reweigh or reclass charge, be sure to file your dispute right away. As with all negotiations with the carrier, the more documentation you have to prove your case, the better — and the more efficient the carrier will be in resolving your dispute. To support your case, make sure to provide adequate documentation, including:

- The original packing slip, purchase order and invoice
- Spec sheets showing the product's ship weight, material composition and dimensions
- Documentation indicating the purpose or practical use of the product
- Photos of the shipment prior to shipping, if possible, including the packaging and commodity
- A certificate showing that your scale was calibrated in the last six months



# REDELIVERY CHARGES

If the carrier attempts to make a delivery but is turned away by the receiver (requiring an additional trip), you may incur a redelivery charge. This charge can also be applied if no one is available to accept the delivery, if the delivery address was changed to a new location or if the carrier has an issue accessing the location, such as:

- Deliveries to businesses in downtown areas with ordinances restricting large trucks
- Deliveries to businesses with parking lots too small for a tractor/trailer
- Businesses in strip malls with inadequate space for the tractor/trailer to enter or exit

## ✓ AVOIDING THE CHARGE

Generally, redelivery fees are applicable when the carrier is not at fault, such as when a delivery attempt is made during normal business hours (8 a.m. to 5 p.m.). You can avoid this charge by confirming the delivery details on the BOL with the shipment receiver and confirming their hours of operation.

## ! FILING A DISPUTE

You can dispute a redelivery charge if the failed delivery attempt was the carrier's fault — for example, if the carrier went to the wrong address or attempted to deliver your freight outside of normal business hours. To dispute the charge, you'll need to provide the BOL, delivery receipt, a statement from the receiver and proof of normal business hours.



# LIFTGATE FEES

If the freight receiver doesn't have a dock, a liftgate may be necessary to load or unload your shipment. If the carrier discovers that a liftgate is required at any point during transport, they may use a liftgate at their discretion — without notifying the shipper — and can apply a liftgate fee to your final invoice.

Since not all trucks are fitted with the proper equipment, it's important to note that your shipment could also be delayed and incur a redelivery fee if you forget to indicate that a liftgate is required.

## ✓ AVOIDING THE CHARGE

The best way to avoid this charge is to understand any special requirements of the delivery location prior to shipping. Remember that a liftgate is often required at residential, non-commercial or limited access locations and when deliveries are made to a curbside — essentially, any place without a loading dock.

## ! FILING A DISPUTE

Remember that if a liftgate is required for delivery, the charge is valid. Liftgate fees can be disputed if the liftgate was not required or if the charge was applied in error, but you'll need to provide proof (such as a delivery receipt or pictures of the loading dock).

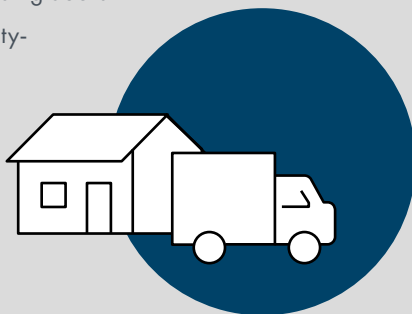


# RESIDENTIAL & LIMITED ACCESS FEES

If you are shipping to a residential area, a residential surcharge may be applied to the shipment. This can apply to any residential address where individuals reside, even if a commercial business is operating out of the home.

Shipments may also incur a fee if scheduled for pickup or delivery to a location with limited or secured access. While each carrier has slightly different guidelines, limited access fees generally apply to delivery locations that:

- Are not open to the public during normal business hours
- Do not offer regular loading docks
- Require extensive security-related inspections
- Require a smaller or specialized truck for pickup or delivery



## ✓ AVOIDING THE CHARGES

To get an accurate quote, make sure to indicate if the address is in a residential or limited access area when preparing your shipment. Rules for deliveries to limited access or residential locations vary, so it's a good idea to check with your carrier before you ship.

## ! FILING A DISPUTE

It's possible that a carrier may consider a destination residential if the consignee is an individual and not a company. If this happens, you can dispute the charge by providing documentation to prove that the location in question was not actually residential, such as:

- Information about the building
- Screenshots or photos of the facility, including roads and loading docks
- Statements regarding how the freight was delivered



# INSIDE DELIVERY AREA CHARGES

If your freight needs to be picked up or delivered inside a commercial location (rather than to a receiving area directly adjacent to the truck), an inside delivery area charge may be applied. You can also incur this charge if the driver is required to push the freight up a driveway, around a corner or into a garage. The charge will also likely increase if the freight needs to be delivered more than a few feet into a building — such as up a flight of stairs or into an elevator.

## ✓ AVOIDING THE CHARGE

To get the most accurate quote, make sure to indicate whether your freight needs an inside pickup or delivery on the BOL. You can avoid this fee by specifying where or on what side of the building your shipment should be received.

## ! FILING A DISPUTE

The carrier is not required to provide notification or get permission for inside delivery. If this service is required or requested and the carrier performs the service, the charge is valid and cannot be disputed.

# APPOINTMENT OR NOTIFICATION CHARGES

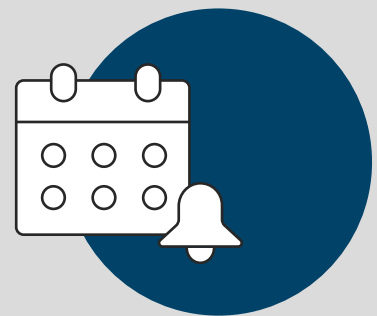
When a consignee requires the carrier to notify the recipient or set up an appointment prior to delivery, you will be charged an additional fee. Since these services are provided at the request of the shipper, the charges are valid.

## ✓ AVOIDING THE CHARGE

A specific consignee may have notification or appointment instructions on file with the carrier for any shipment to their location — and, as with other fees, the carrier is not required to get permission before providing this service and billing the shipper. As the shipper, it's your responsibility to understand any special requirements from the consignee in advance, so your quote is as accurate as possible.

## ! FILING A DISPUTE

To dispute an appointment or notification charge, you must prove that the service was never requested. This may include reviewing the BOL and delivery receipt, or speaking with the consignee to determine if the charge was valid.



# OVER-LENGTH FEES

Unlike a large volume shipment, over-length shipments typically take up a long amount of space on the truck. Due to the extra length, if your shipment is long and narrow, you may be charged with an over-length fee.

It's important to note that if the carrier decides to re-measure the dimensions of your shipment and determines that it's larger than originally quoted, you may also be charged with a freight inspection fee.



## ✓ AVOIDING THE CHARGE

The easiest way to avoid an over-length fee is to provide precise package dimensions (not an estimate) on the initial quote. In most cases, over-length fees are assessed per piece — depending on the carrier and number of items, a bundled package may actually cost you less.

## ! FILING A DISPUTE

If you believe you were incorrectly charged with an over-length fee, you will need to provide documentation proving that your shipment didn't meet the requirements of an over-length charge. This could include:

- A copy of the original BOL
- A manufacturer spec sheet with shipping dimensions
- Sales invoices
- Pictures of the shipment shown against a measuring tape

# GUARANTEED DELIVERY FEES

If you indicate a required delivery date on the BOL, most carriers will do their best to deliver by that date. If the delivery date requires faster service than standard transit will allow, the carrier will often expedite the delivery and charge you with an additional fee.

## ✓ AVOIDING THE CHARGE

To avoid this charge, make sure to double check your required delivery date and ensure you aren't inadvertently requesting expedited services. If you do inadvertently request these services, the charge is valid and cannot be disputed.



## ! FILING A DISPUTE

Standard guarantee service typically guarantees delivery by a specific time and delivery date. If guaranteed service is requested but not met, it should be fairly easy to have the charges removed. When filing a dispute, you'll need to provide documentation proving that:

- Guaranteed delivery was requested
- You followed all the carrier's requirements for guaranteed shipments
- There were no delays beyond the carrier's control
- The carrier did not perform the guaranteed service

Be sure to file a dispute for guaranteed service failures within 15 calendar days of the delivery date! After that time, the carrier may refuse to waive or reduce the charges.

# TRADE SHOW FEES

Any shipment traveling to or from a trade show, convention or exhibition requires special consideration and handling that will incur additional fees. However, there are simple steps you can take to minimize certain avoidable fees.

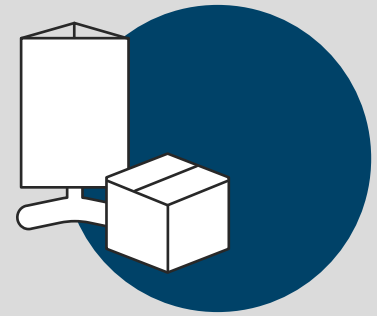
## ✓ AVOIDING THE CHARGES

The BOL for a trade show requires extra details, such as the booth number and event coordinator's contact information. Make sure to include this information to avoid incurring additional fees.

It's also important to pay close attention to required pickup and delivery times, which the event manager will often arrange ahead of time. To avoid additional fees, make sure the carrier understands the required delivery and pickup times. Keep in mind that you'll incur additional fees if the carrier is required to wait during pickup or delivery, or if it occurs after hours or on a weekend or holiday.

## ! FILING A DISPUTE

If you don't follow the carrier's trade show processes, the shipment wasn't scheduled with enough time to make the delivery or you don't provide the carrier with all the necessary information, it will be hard to dispute trade show fees — even if the service wasn't fully completed (or completed on time). However, if your dispute is valid, be sure to document every aspect of the dispute in detail for the best chance at a resolution.



## STILL HAVE QUESTIONS? WE CAN HELP

Disputes happen from time to time — and when they do, Unishippers is here to help. Our dedicated team of shipping consultants will advocate for you and work with the carrier on your behalf, ensuring you get the most efficient, pain-free resolution process.

Contact us today to get started.

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