

Licensing Services  
360-664-1222

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The UTC regulates the services of privately or investor owned utility and transportation companies. Our mission is to ensure that services are fairly priced, available, reliable and safe.

**Regulated companies:**

- Telephone
- Electricity
- Natural Gas
- Water
- Garbage
- Recycling
- Residential Movers
- Charter Buses
- Airport Shuttles
- Commercial Ferries
- Natural Gas Pipeline

General Information  
360-664-1160  
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PO Box 47250  
1300 S Evergreen Pk Dr SW  
Olympia WA 98504



## Motor Carrier Overview

### **Intrastate**

If you plan to operate a motor vehicle transporting property for compensation over the public highways between points within the state of Washington, you must obtain a permit from the Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission for the following types of operations:

### **General Commodities Carriers**

General commodities operations are defined as transporting all types of goods or property, excluding residential household goods.

### **Household Goods Movers**

Household goods movers operations are defined as transporting household goods between residences, or between a person's residence and a storage facility.

### **Freight Brokers**

Freight brokering operations are defined as arranging for the intrastate transportation of general commodities or household goods by motor carriers.

### **Solid Waste Collection Companies**

Solid waste collection is defined as those carriers collecting solid waste from residential or commercial customers and transporting the solid waste, using a motor vehicle, for collection and/or disposal, over the highways of the state of Washington for compensation. Solid waste also includes residential source-separated recyclable materials.

- "Garbage" or "refuse" means vegetable waste, scrap, waste materials, discarded articles, rubbish, debris, worthless or discarded materials.
- "Biohazardous or biomedical waste" means animal waste, untreated solid waste including human body fluids, cultures and stocks, disease and sharp waste.

# Motor Carrier Overview

## Passenger Carriers

If you plan to transport passengers in a motor vehicle, for compensation in the state of Washington, you must obtain a certificate from the commission for the following types of operations:

### Charter Bus Operations

Charter bus operations are defined as transporting a group of persons for compensation who:

- As a group have a common purpose or are under a single contract
- Have acquired the use of a motor vehicle to travel together to a specific destination or for a particular itinerary

The vehicle used must have a seating capacity for seven or more persons, excluding the driver.

### Excursion Bus Operations

Excursion bus operations are defined as transporting persons for compensation:

- from points of origin within a city, town or area to another location within the state and returning
- Compensation is charged to each individual

The vehicle used must have a seating capacity for seven or more persons, excluding the driver.

### Auto Transportation Companies (Regular Route/Airporter Bus Services)

Regular route bus operations are defined as transporting persons for compensation:

- Between fixed points
- Over a regular route

*Note: The requirements listed above are for "passenger carriers" and do not apply if you are: operating as a taxicab; operating a hotel; operating a school bus; commute ride sharing; or transporting passengers without compensation.*

### Private Non-Profit Transportation Providers

Private non-profit transportation providers are defined as:

- Non-profit corporations that provide transportation services for compensation solely to persons with special transportation needs.

Special transportation needs means persons, including attendants, who because of disability, income or age are unable to transport themselves or purchase appropriate transportation.

## For More Information Licensing Services

(360) 664-1222  
1-888-333-WUTC (9882)



[www.utc.wa.gov](http://www.utc.wa.gov)

# Motor Carrier Overview

## Interstate

### Property and Passenger Carriers

If you plan to operate a motor vehicle transporting property or passengers for compensation over the public highways into, out of, or through the state of Washington, you must register with the commission prior to conducting the following types of operations:

#### **Registered Carriers (FMCSA required)**

Regulated Commodity Carriers are defined as Washington based carriers transporting commodities or providing services under authority issued by the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA). Washington participates in the Unified Carrier Registration (UCR) which is an online registration program for interstate regulated commodity carriers. To register visit [www.ucr.in.gov](http://www.ucr.in.gov).

#### **Freight Brokers**

Freight brokering is defined as a service that arranges for the transportation of commodities by interstate motor carriers.

*Note: The definitions given in this fact sheet are general descriptions only. Please refer to Washington State laws (RCW) or Washington Administrative Code Rules (WAC) for specific definitions or exemptions.*

### **For More Information**

Licensing Services  
(360) 664-1222

Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration  
1-800-832-5660 or  
1-866-637-0635

Unified Carrier Registration  
<http://www.ucr.in.gov/>

# Motor Carrier Overview

## Frequently Asked Questions

### **I just bought a truck, what permits do I need to operate in Washington state?**

If you plan to transport property you own, property that you are buying or selling or property that you are transporting in conjunction with another business that you also operate, then you do not need a permit from the commission to operate in Washington state.

*Private carriers are those persons who transport their own property, property that they are buying, selling or property that they are transporting as an incidental part of another business that they operate.*

If you plan to transport property for-hire, then you may be required to obtain a permit from the commission before you begin operating in Washington state.

*General Commodity Carriers, Household Goods Movers and Solid Waste Collection Companies may not begin operations in Washington State until they have applied for and received appropriate operating authority from the commission.*

### **I want to use my van to start a local passenger service. I won't be using a bus, do I still need a commission permit?**

The determining factor for commission permits or certificates is not always the size of the vehicle or the distance traveled, but the type of service that you are proposing.

Vehicle seating capacity is a determining factor for Charter and Excursion services, but it is not a factor for Auto Transportation Companies (Regular Route/ Airporter Bus Services) and Private Non-Profit Transportation providers.

### **What if I want to operate (passenger or property service) between states?**

If you plan to operate as an interstate for-hire motor carrier of property or passengers, then you must register with the commission. Registered Carriers and Registered Exempt Carriers must renew their registration with the commission annually. Washington and 41 other states participate in the UCR program. Oregon and British Columbia do not participate in UCR so carriers based in those states must register with the state they will run the most vehicles in.

### **For More Information**

Commercial Vehicle Enforcement – Washington State Patrol  
(360) 596-3800

Licensing Services  
(360) 664-1222



[www.utc.wa.gov](http://www.utc.wa.gov)