

MORE FAIRNESS IN MOVING COMPENSATION

A No Demovictions Research Report on Moving Costs for Tenants Facing Demoviction

March 13th, 2024



1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This research originated to assess the validity of moving cost allowances that the City of Toronto secures for tenants facing demoviction as part of their Tenant Relocation and Assistance Plan (TRAP). Currently, moving cost allowances are:

- \$1500 for eligible tenants of bachelor and one-bedroom units, and
- \$2500 for eligible tenants of two-bedroom units when they vacate, as per their TRAP.

City Planners have indicated to tenants and tenant groups that moving cost allowances are based on a survey they did of moving costs for an apartment that is already packed and ready to be transported. This paper estimates the *total* costs of a move for local destinations within Toronto, including not only the cost of the truck and movers, but also packing supplies and packing services, possible additional/variable costs charged by moving companies for non-standard moves, and logistical implications of demovicting large numbers of tenants, potentially from multiple buildings, at once. For this research, we surveyed 11 moving and packing companies located in Toronto. Our research findings indicate that:

- \$1500 represents the low end of costs for tenant(s) of a bachelor or one bedroom unit, if
 no additional costs are included, i.e., for tenants with a modest number of belongings
 who are able to complete all packing on their own.
- \$2500 represents the low-mid range of what the same would cost tenant(s) of a twobedroom unit. The costs of packing supplies and packing services can easily double those amounts.

Logistically, we find that scheduling both packing and supply deliveries as well as moving dates in advance can be complicated by the number of tenants vacating the building, limited parking space, and elevator availability/capacity. Tenants may also need to move after the nominal (e.g., 6 month) eviction period closes, even if they have secured a new residence but are limited by the schedule of the mover. At the same time, tenants may need to pay 2 rents simultaneously, especially to be able to secure a moving company within the window of notice given.

Moving, and preparation for such, is a significant cost of time, energy and money for tenants who have not chosen to incur these costs but are being forced to bear them. The additional time and potential costs associated with moving, above and beyond the physical moving of a pre-packed apartment with a modest number of belongings, should be considered as part of tenant hardship, and thus considered part of the compensation package.



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2 METHODOLOGY

2.1 Moving Companies

Moving companies in downtown Toronto (Zone 1) were identified using the Canadian Association of Movers (CAM) website.¹

The CAM website states "[CAM] is the only official national trade association representing moving and storage companies in Canada.".² Additionally, their website states that "[CAM] can help you to find a reputable mover that you can trust or validate a mover that you are thinking about using. CAM's Certified Canadian Movers will deliver moving services that are fair in practice and cost, professional, safe and timely".³ CBC Marketplace also recommends CAM.⁴

A total of 17 moving companies were selected, 11 of which were available for asking questions. The remaining 6 were not responsive. They are listed below:

Responsive

- 1. https://www.firemenmovers.com/
- 2. https://www.towermoving.com/
- 3. https://elcheapo.ca/

¹ https://www.mover.net/find-a-mover

² https://www.mover.net/about

³ https://www.mover.net/find-a-mover

⁴ https://www.mover.net/news-stories-and-info-items/cbc-marketplace



- 4. https://letsgetmovingcanada.com/
- 5. https://toptownmovers.ca/
- 6. https://rentason.ca/
- 7. https://www.hudsonmovers.com/
- 8. https://twomenandatruck.ca/
- 9. https://tr1927.com/
- 10. https://www.herculesmoving.ca/
- 11. https://phillipsmoving.com/

Unresponsive

- 1. https://www.cargocabbie.ca/
- 2. https://www.suelandmoving.com/
- 3. http://europamovers.com/
- 4. http://www.tendertouchmoving.com/
- https://viktoria.ca/
- 6. http://www.movingtoronto.com/

2.2 Survey Questions

Surveys with moving companies were initiated in June 2023, through phone calls, and were guided by the questions below.

- What is your hourly rate and the difference between the number of movers?
- Typically, assuming everything is already packaged, how many movers and how many hours are needed for moving a 1 bedroom apartment? What about a 2 bedroom apartment?
- If a tenant needs packaging services, how much more time does it typically take to pack a 1 bedroom unit? What about a 2 bedroom unit?
- Are there any additional fees (e.g., administrative fee, fuel charge, overtime, heavy lifting, using a staircase) or is everything figured into the hourly rate?
- Do you offer discounts for seniors or people with special needs?
- Are you open to the possibility of negotiating a discount for a bulk move? For example, XXX units in our building would need to move within a X-X month period.
- Do your prices change depending on the time of year? For example, if you are less busy in the winter than in the summer months.
- Do prices change over time? (e.g., over the course of a year, or 3-5 years?)

Not all moving companies provided answers to each question. Answers and research findings were gathered through June-July 2023, and are compiled in this paper into the following "Findings" sections:

- Moving Cost
- 2. Price Variability Within a Year
- 3. Typical Move Duration (assuming local destination)
- 4. Packing Materials
- 5. Packing Services



- 6. Additional Fees and Considerations
- 7. Discounts

We then calculate the total moving costs under the following scenarios:

- Total including moving and packing costs
- Total including moving and packing costs with discount for seniors/special-needs
- Total without packing costs.

This is followed by a discussion of the implications of our findings for Tenants and Developers, and specific recommendations to Developers and policy makers.

Please note this paper is intended to identify and itemize relevant costs, and its findings are based on the information provided. The findings are informational only, are approximate, and are not conclusive. Also, it should **not** be understood from this paper that any tenant association or group should be responsible for managing or helping to manage other tenants vacate their building or move out.

3 SURVEY FINDINGS

3.1 Moving Cost

- Hourly rates vary depending if during on-peak or off-peak time periods (see Section 2)
- \$209/hour covers most (7 out of 11) moving companies' rates, including peak rates, for 2 movers (and one truck)
- \$259/hour covers most (8 out of 11) moving companies' rates, including peak rates, for 3 movers (and one truck)
- It would cost approximately an additional \$40-\$70/hour per additional mover.

Table 1: Toronto-Based Moving Company Cost Comparison

Company	2 Movers	3 Movers	4 Movers
<u>firemenmovers</u>	\$2160 (8 hours) (~ \$270/hour)	\$2695 (8 hours) (~ \$337/hour)	\$3100+(8 hours) (~ \$388+/hour)
towermoving	(No data available)	\$1200 (3-6 hours) (~ \$200/hour @ 6 hours)	(No data available)
elcheapo	\$179-\$219/hour	\$249-\$289/hour	(No data available)
<u>letsgetmovingcanada</u>	\$149-209/hour	\$209-\$269/hour	(No data available)
toptownmovers	\$115-\$140/hour	\$165-\$190/hour	\$205-\$240/hour
<u>rentason</u>	\$360 first hour, +	\$490 first hour, +	(No data available)



	\$144/additional hour (~ \$180-\$171/hour @ 6-8 hours)	\$195/additional hour (~ \$244-232\$/hour @ 6-8 hours)	
hudsonmovers	(No data available)	\$215/hour	\$265/hour
twomenandatruck	\$179-209/hour	\$229-\$259/hour	(No data available)
<u>tr1927</u>	\$180-195/hour	\$225-245/hour	(No data available)
herculesmoving	\$508 first 3 hours, + \$130/additional hour (~ \$149-\$145/hour @ 6-8 hours)	\$725 first 3 hours, + \$190/additional hour (~ \$216-\$209/hour @ 6-8 hours)	(No data available)
phillipsmoving	\$140-180/hour	\$180-250/hour	(No data available)

3.2 Price Variability Related to Timing

- Most moving companies describe the summer months as busier and more expensive than the rest of the year (6 out of 11).
- Some moving companies describe the middle of the month as less busy and hence less expensive than at the end of the month (4 out of 11).
- Some moving companies (2 out of 11) describe the weekdays as less busy and hence less expensive than the weekends.

Table 2: Price Variability based on Peak Season

Company	Notes	
firemenmovers	November to March is less busy and hence less expensive, while April to October is busier and more expensive. Heaviest demand is during the summer, at the end of the month, and at the end-of-year holidays.	
towermoving	(No data available)	
<u>elcheapo</u>	Hourly rates do not change but moving during the winter can take longer and therefore be more expensive.	
letsgetmovingcanada	Winter is less busy and hence less expensive, while summer is busier and more expensive. Moving during the summer may also be more difficult than the winter because heat can make it harder for the movers.	
toptownmovers	Hourly rates are the same for the winter and summer, but may be lowered through sales promotions.	
rentason	Hourly rates for the winter and summer and throughout each day of the month are the same, but total cost may be greater during peak times as	



	more time is likely needed to complete the move. Weekdays and mid- month moves tend to be less expensive.		
hudsonmovers	Hourly rates can sometimes be lower in the winter, but it is not typical.		
twomenandatruck	January to May is less busy and hence less expensive, while summer, end of the month, and weekends are busier and more expensive. Middle of the month and weekdays are also less busy and hence less expensive.		
<u>tr1927</u>	Winter is less busy and hence less expensive, while summer is busier and more expensive.		
herculesmoving	(No data available)		
phillipsmoving	September to May is less busy and expensive, while June to August is busier and more expensive. Middle of the month is also less busy and expensive.		

3.3 Typical Move Duration (assuming local destination)

- Most moving companies (7 out of 11) describe move duration within a 5-8 hour range for 1 bedroom units.
- Most moving companies (6 out of 11) describe move duration within a 5-8 hour range for 2 bedroom units.
- Most moving companies (6 out of 11) require a 3 or 4 hour minimum charge.
- Bachelor and 1 bedroom units typically need less movers than 2 bedroom units, but this
 may vary depending on the amount of things being moved. Unless otherwise stated, the
 table above assumes 2 movers for bachelor and 1 bedroom units and 3 movers for 2
 bedroom units.

Table 3: Time Estimates for Moving Duration

Company	1 Bedroom	2 Bedroom	Minimum Charge
<u>firemenmovers</u>	8 hours	8 hours	4 hours
towermoving	(No data available)	3 - 6 hours	4 hours
<u>elcheapo</u>	2.5 - 4 hours	4 - 5 hours	1 hour
letsgetmovingcanada	(No data available)	(No data available)	3 hours
toptownmovers	5 - 6 hours	(No data available)	4 hours



rentason 6 - 7 hours		6 - 8 hours	(No data available)
hudsonmovers	(No data available)	(No data available)	(No data available)
twomenandatruck	5 - 6 hours	5 - 6 hours (7 - 8 hours with 2 movers)	(No data available)
<u>tr1927</u>	8 hours	8 hours	4 hours
herculesmoving	6 hours	6 hours	3 hours (off-peak days) 6 hours (peak days 27th - 3rd of any month)
phillipsmoving	6.5 hours	7.5 - 8 hours	(No data available)

3.4 Packing Materials

Summary of Key Findings

- Appropriate packing materials are an additional cost to moving or packing services.
- Modestly, they may represent an additional cost of approximately \$200 \$400 for bachelor or 1 bedroom units, and \$400 - \$600 for 2 bedroom units.
- There may be additional costs for special items, additional packing, or upgraded packing styles (e.g., wardrobe boxes, art and mirror boxes, large tv/monitor boxes, etc.)

Supporting Data

Moving companies offer packing materials that they can deliver prior to move out day. According to Let's Get Moving Canada's packing calculator,⁵ the following estimates were generated:

Studio, 1 Person

- Minimalist Lifestyle / Basic Packing Style = \$252.67
- Modest Lifestyle / Basic Packing Style = \$317.55
- Modest Lifestyle / Average Packing Style = \$533.49
- Pack Rat Lifestyle / Professional Packing Style = \$788.22

1 BR, 1 Person

- Minimalist Lifestyle / Basic Packing Style = \$291.58
- Modest Lifestyle / Basic Packing Style = \$376.44
- Modest Lifestyle /Average Packing Style = \$626.39
- Pack Rat Lifestyle / Professional Packing Style = \$903.08

2 BR, 1 Person

- Minimalist Lifestyle / Basic Packing Style = \$446.42
- Modest Lifestyle / Basic Packing Style = \$562.21
- Modest Lifestyle / Average Packing Style = \$908.13

⁵ https://letsgetmovingcanada.com/packing-calculator



Pack Rat Lifestyle / Professional Packing Style = \$1374.63

2 BR, 2 Persons

- Minimalist Lifestyle / Basic Packing Style = \$476.38
- Modest Lifestyle / Basic Packing Style = \$606.15
- Modest Lifestyle / Average Packing Style = \$978.07
- Pack Rat Lifestyle / Professional Packing Style = \$1479.54

Alternatively, according to Cargo Cabbie,⁶ the following basic supplies and their cost were identified:

- Bachelor Moving kit \$134.95 + Mattress cover \$14.95 + Sofa cover \$14.95 + Chair cover \$13.95 + TV Box & Protective Foam Kit \$36.95 (36") = \$215.75
- 1 BR Moving kit \$169.95 + Mattress cover \$14.95 + Sofa cover \$14.95 + Chair cover \$13.95 + TV Box & Protective Foam Kit \$36.95 (36") = \$250.75
- 2 BR Moving kit \$251.95 + Mattress cover \$14.95 + Sofa cover \$14.95 + Chair cover \$13.95 + TV Box & Protective Foam Kit \$36.95 (36") = \$332.75

3.5 Packing Services

- Moving companies typically provide packing services at the same hourly rates as their moving service, although one moving company identified this was less costly. Packing services typically include filling boxes as well as disassembling and reassembling furniture.
- Packing services may occur on the day packing supplies are delivered if possible, but are typically completed prior to the move out day (e.g., the day before).
- Packing services can potentially take 2-8 hours (our understanding is that the number of persons assigned for a move is typically the same number assigned for packing). This is in addition to the time required for moving.

Table 4: Time Estimates for Packing Services

Company	Notes	
<u>firemenmovers</u>	(No data available)	
towermoving	(No data available)	
elcheapo	No packing service offered.	
letsgetmovingcanada	(No data available)	
toptownmovers	2 - 6 hours to bring in supplies and pack.	
<u>rentason</u>	Hourly rate for packing is less expensive than moving. 2 packers - \$112/hour, and 3 packers - \$163/hour. Full packing services described as typically doubling cost of service.	

⁶ https://www.cargocabbie.ca/box-shop-moving-supplies/



hudsonmovers	(No data available)	
twomenandatruck	(No data available)	
<u>tr1927</u>	5 - 6 hours for packaging services.	
herculesmoving	(No data available)	
phillipsmoving	6-8 hours for full packaging services of a lot of stuff.	

3.6 Additional Fees and Considerations

Summary of Key Findings

- \$100-\$200 deductible in case something breaks.
- Enhanced coverage is an additional cost (e.g., \$75-\$257 fee plus \$350 \$950 deductible if something breaks).
- Moving heavy or special items may require additional cost (e.g., \$150 fee).
- Moving companies may increase their hourly rates over time, possibly greater than inflation.
- Storage is an additional cost (e.g., monthly fee).
- Fuel surcharges can be an additional cost (e.g., \$100).
- Overtime can apply at 1.5 times the hourly rate for work done beyond 8 hours in a day.
- Not mentioned in the above table is that taxes will apply to the total cost of moving, supplies, and packing at 13% HST,GST.

Table 5: Additional Fees

Company	Notes	
<u>firemenmovers</u>	Offers storage for \$140/month.	
towermoving	(No data available)	
elcheapo	Prices will probably change over the course of 3-5 years.	
letsgetmovingcanada	\$200 or more fuel surcharge for moves that take 2 hours or longer. Hourly rates could change by next year. Heavy objects greater than 200 lbs cost an extra \$150.	
toptownmovers	No truck fee or gas fee for moves within the GTA.	
<u>rentason</u>	Offers storage at a separate rate. Hourly rates have increased significantly over the past 3-5 years in response to the market.	
<u>hudsonmovers</u>	\$100-\$200 deductible in case something breaks.	



twomenandatruck	\$0.60/pound standard item valuation provided at no fee (e.g., the typical minimum amount of money you will receive for damaged goods). Prices may change over time (e.g., \$10 more per hour next year).
<u>tr1927</u>	\$75 or more fuel surcharge for longer distance moves. Overtime applies to time spent after 8 hours in a day at 1.5 times the hourly rate. \$200 deductible in case something breaks. Hourly rate applies to travel time to and from the company warehouse.
herculesmoving	Hourly rate starts on arrival to move out location and stops at destination after move in (i.e., not to and from the company warehouse). \$0.60/pound standard item valuation provided at no fee. Enhanced coverage (typical for long distance or special items) is an additional cost, depending on item weight and chosen maximum claim amount (e.g., declaration of \$10000 item valuation costs either \$257 fee with \$350 deductible if something breaks, or \$197 fee with \$950 deductible if something breaks).
phillipsmoving	\$100 or more fuel surcharge for all moves. Hourly rate applies to travel time to and from the company warehouse. Item valuation at moving companies already offered basic \$0.60/pound standard item valuation provided at no fee. Enhanced coverage is an additional cost (e.g., \$10000 - \$15000 item valuation typical for 1 BR costs \$75 fee, and \$15000 - \$30000 typical for 2BR or larger costs \$150 fee, either having \$100 deductible if something breaks)

3.7 Discounts

- Most moving companies (8 out of 11) were open to the possibility of negotiating a bulk discount.
- Some moving companies (5 out of 11) offer 5% off the hourly rate or \$10/hour off discounts for seniors or people with special needs.
- One moving company offers a 5% discount for payments in cash.

Table 6: Potential Discounts Offered

Company	Discount			
	Seniors	Special Needs	Cash	Possible Bulk
<u>firemenmovers</u>	5%	(No data available)	(No data available)	Yes
towermoving	No	No	(No data available)	Yes



<u>elcheapo</u>	5%	5% (ODSP)	5%	No
letsgetmovingcanad a	\$50 total, or \$10/hour off	\$50 total, or \$10/hour	(No data available)	Yes
toptownmovers	(No data available)	(No data available)	(No data available)	(No data available)
rentason	No	No	(No data available)	Yes
hudsonmovers	No	No	(No data available)	Yes
twomenandatruck	No	No	(No data available)	Yes
<u>tr1927</u>	No	No	(No data available)	No
herculesmoving	%5	%5	(No data available)	Yes
phillipsmoving	\$10/hour off	(No data available)	(No data available)	Yes



4 INTERPRETATION OF FINDINGS

4.1 Estimating Total Costs for Moving, Packing Supplies, and Packing Services

Bachelor and 1 Bedroom

\$209/hour @ 5-8 hours for moving: \$1045 - \$1672

- + \$209/hour @ 2-8 hours for packing: \$418 \$1672
- + \$200 \$400 for packing materials
- = \$1663 \$3744 Subtotal
- + 13% HST/GST
- = \$1879 \$4230 Total

\$1797 - \$4050 Total with 5%/hr or \$10/hr discount for seniors or special needs

\$1407 - \$2341 Total without packing service

2 Bedroom

\$259/hour @ 5-8 hours for moving: \$1295 - \$2072

- + \$259/hour @ 2-8 hours for moving: \$518 \$2072
- + \$400 \$600 for packing materials
- = \$2213 \$4744 Subtotal
- + <u>13% HST/GST</u>
- = \$2507 \$5361 Total

\$2398 - \$5180

Total with 5%/hr or \$10/hr discount for seniors or special needs

\$1915 - \$3019 Total without packing service

4.2 Implications for Tenants and Developers

- Packing must be done prior to move. Companies can deliver packing supplies, as well as
 packing services prior to moving. Scheduling both packing and supply deliveries as well as
 moving dates in advance is complicated by the number of tenants vacating the building, limited
 parking space, and elevator availability.
 - This may have capacity implications for scheduling delivery and packing in addition to scheduling moving for all tenants throughout the eviction period.
- 2) Moving companies should typically be contacted 4-6 weeks prior to moving out.^{7,8}

⁷ https://www.firemenmovers.com/services/residential-and-commercial-moving/

⁸ http://www.movingtoronto.com/count down moving calendar.php



- This would suggest that a new rental unit would already need to be secured prior to scheduling a move, and that tenants may need to pay for two rents simultaneously. This represents an additional cost to tenants, which would need to be paid prior to compensation being provided upon leaving. It is also conceivable that a tenant who has secured a new residence may be scheduled to move after the 6-8 month eviction period closes.
- 3) Seniors and tenants with special needs, as well as tenants with children, are less able to pack on their own and should be compensated for the cost of packing services.
 - Senior/special-need tenants should not be expected to rely on the RTA's additional four-month-rent compensation, which our research suggests could be largely eaten up by these additional moving costs.
 - We appreciate that some Developers have already begun to recognize this.
- 4) Prior to moving, tenants may need to notify subscriptions, deliveries, credit card companies, banks, insurance companies, pharmacies, and utilities of their change in address, and to schedule any disconnection of services to ensure continuous access to services. Health cards and driver licenses would also need to be updated.⁹
 - Associated time and costs, as well as potential risks of interrupted services should be considered as part of tenant hardship.
- 5) Pets or houseplants may require to be moved separately if movers cannot take them in the truck.
 - Additional costs to tenants may be associated with these.
- 6) Moving and packing during the week may require booking time off from work resulting in unpaid leave. This may be avoided for moving during the weekends, but this may also be more busy for the mover resulting in more expensive moving costs.
 - Time and potential costs associated with this should be considered as part of tenant hardship.
- 7) Families with children or pets may need to provide child- or pet-care during the day of the move.
 - Additional costs to tenants may be associated with these.

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⁹ http://www.movingtoronto.com/count_down_moving_calendar.php



5 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The moving compensation of \$1500 for eligible tenants of bachelor and one bedroom units and \$2500 for eligible tenants of two bedroom units likely cover **less than half** of the full range of expenses for a local move, including moving services, supplies, and packing services. \$1500 represents a value below the low end (\$1879-\$4320) of what it will cost a tenant of a bachelor or one bedroom unit that does their own packing, and if no additional fees are included. \$2500 represents the low end of the range (\$2507-\$5361) of what the same would cost a tenant of a two bedroom unit. (Tenants may not have the ability to control when they can find and move into a new building so this paper includes peak rates to estimate moving costs.)

While some packing materials are included in this estimate, packing services can potentially double the cost of a move. Moves may also cost less than estimated with some companies (see Section 3.1), during off-peak time periods (see Section 3.2), if packing services are lower than moving services (see Section 3.5), and if bulk discounts can be provided (see Section 3.7). At the same time, other companies may cost more and tenants may also be required to pay for additional fees and costs associated with the move (see Sections 3.4 and 3.6). This can include implications that represent additional time and potential costs associated with moving that should be considered as part of tenant hardship.

Based on the above, we have the following recommendations:

- The developer/landlord should seek to contract with one or more moving companies using a bulk rate/bid approach over the 6-month N13 period, which would a) remove the need for a moving allowance, and b) enable tenants/the landlord a more coordinated approach to move-out logistics and timing. Additional considerations may be required for tenant "optin" or "opt-out".
- The City should require a more accurate menu of moving-associated compensation for tenants to request, that reflects the real costs of moving, including:
 - o Increase in moving compensation to cover the actual costs of moving
 - Separate allocation for packing compensation for vulnerable tenants
 - Separate allocations for tenants' hardship e.g., missed paid work, child- or petcare for move

Presumably the City and Developers have calculated their own estimates. Tenants have now done the same, but we welcome our approach being replicated by City staff, Councillors' offices, and Developers to verify that our findings reflect the reality of just this *one part* of the costs borne by Tenants because of their involuntary displacement.