

Household Goods Claims

Here are some basic facts you should know about filing your household goods claim:

Documents Necessary to Complete a Claim:

Plan to submit DD Forms 1842, 1844, 1840/1840R, the Government Bill of Lading, your detailed household goods inventory, and a copy of your PCS orders. Other forms that may be required include a power of attorney, repair estimates, proof of your claim or settlement with your private insurer, and evidence of purchase price or replacement costs.

Time Limits:

70 Days: You must give notice of damaged or missing items within 70 days from the date of delivery. You do this by turning in your “pink” DD Form 1840/1840R. For example, if your household goods were delivered on 1 January 2009, you have until 10 March 2009 to file your notice of damage with our Claims Office.

Two Years: You must file your claim within two years of the date your household goods were delivered. You do this by turning in forms and documents, according to the instructions you received when turning in your “pink” form. If your goods were delivered on 1 January 2009, you must submit your claim by 31 December 2010. If you miss the two year deadline, your claim will be denied automatically. There is only one exception for war/armed conflict, which rarely applies.

DD Form 1840/1840R:

The carrier gives you this “pink” form at the time of delivery. Damages noted at delivery should appear on the front (1840) side. Read the instructions carefully: **Turn over carbons**. List subsequently discovered damages on the reverse (1840R) side. Use inventory numbers to identify the missing or damaged property. Be specific when describing the nature and location of the damage.

If you discover additional damage after you have submitted the original form **and you are still within the 70 day window**, you may add the additional items to the notification.

If you fail to turn in DD Form 1840/1840R within 70 days of delivery, the amount you might otherwise have been awarded will be reduced and may be completely denied.

Failure to note damages during the 70 day timeframe creates a presumption that the damage was not incident to shipment. Please do not hesitate to call the Claims Office at the Netherlands Law Center if you have any questions.

Remember: Your claim for damage to your goods is against the carrier, **NOT AGAINST THE GOVERNMENT**. The Government provides this service as a convenience for claimants, but it is not intended to be or replace insurance. The Government reimburses the claimant and then “steps into his or her shoes” to assert the claim against the carrier. This process is known as *subrogation* and can only occur in cases where the claimant does not have private insurance adequate to cover the damage. Any loss of the Government’s recovery from the carrier due to a failure to file a claim within the designated timeframes may result in deductions from the amount you are awarded.

DD Forms 1842 and 1844:

The Claims Office will provide you with these forms and instructions when you turn in your “pink” form.

DD Form 1842 establishes the formal base of your claim. You will be required to provide personal and contact information. **DO NOT ENTER THE AMOUNT CLAIMED OR SIGN OR DATE THE FORM BEFORE YOUR APPOINTMENT AT THE CLAIMS OFFICE.**

DD Form 1844 is a worksheet that itemizes property loss or damage and the claim repair or replacements costs. You will receive instructions to help you understand the level of detail required to describe your property and the loss or damage. You must also provide original prices of property, as well as the month and year it was purchased or acquired.

You must substantiate ownership of all items valued at or over \$100. Substantiation begins with your inventory and may require purchase receipts or other proof.

Repair Estimates:

Repair takes precedence over replacement, unless the item was completely lost or destroyed.

Estimates must come from a person qualified to perform the necessary repairs. For example, a wood repairer will not be qualified to assess or repair electronic items.

Repair estimates are required for:

- ~ Items valued over \$50.
- ~ Claims for internal damages to electrical or mechanical items.
- ~ When it appears the item may not be economically repairable.

In some instances, you may be asked to provide additional statements to support the claim.

Disposal or Repair of Damaged Items:

DO NOT dispose of or repair your property before you coordinate with your claims office. Immediate disposal of property is only allowed for health or safety concerns. Failure to preserve a damaged item may result in denial or reduction of compensation for the item. This is especially important if you are seeking the full replacement value for the damaged property.

In certain instances, you may be required to relinquish your property for its salvage value. If so, bring it to the claims office for inspection/examination and/or arrange inspection of the property where it is located.

Fraud:

Any claim tainted by fraud may be completely denied. Additionally, individuals responsible for filing a fraudulent claim may be subject to investigation and prosecution.

Submitting Your Claim:

For more information on submitting a claim, please call or visit the Claims Office at the Netherlands Law Center. Claims are received Monday through Friday, 0900-1600 hours. Phone: DSN 360-7683, Commercial +31 (0) 46-443-7683. Location: USAG Schinnen, Building 37, Room 108.