

LTL Invoice Dispute Guide

Validate unexpected charges. Build carrier-ready disputes. Prevent repeat billing issues.

THE THREE-PART METHOD

VALIDATE

Confirm the service and rule.

DOCUMENT

Build the case with evidence.

RESOLVE

Submit clearly and track.

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1

Guide Contents & Quick Reference

Jump straight to a topic, or use this page as a checklist while you work a dispute.

GUIDE SECTIONS

Start With the Right Question	p.3	Build a Carrier-Ready Dispute	p.11
Common LTL Invoice Charges (16 types)	p.4	Prevent the Next Dispute	p.12
Build the Evidence File	p.10	Quick Glossary	p.12

ALL 16 CHARGE TYPES, A-Z BY GUIDE ORDER

1. Reclass / Reweigh	p.4	9. Overlength / Extreme Length	p.6
2. Residential Pickup or Delivery	p.4	10. Guaranteed or Expedited Service	p.7
3. Liftgate Service	p.4	11. Detention	p.7
4. Limited Access / Non-Commercial	p.5	12. Sort, Segregate, Re-stack, or Lumper	p.7
5. Reconsignment / Return	p.5	13. Cubic Capacity / Linear Foot	p.8
6. Corrected BOL	p.5	14. Inside Pickup or Delivery	p.8
7. Redelivery	p.6	15. Storage	p.8
8. Notification / Appointment	p.6	16. Dry Run / Attempted Pickup	p.9

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

Each charge type follows the same four-part format: what it is, validate first, useful evidence, and prevent it.
Build the evidence file before using the carrier-ready submission template, then track the response through final credit.

2

Start With the Right Question

A charge is not automatically invalid because it was unexpected or omitted from the original quote.

CORE PRINCIPLE

Match the carrier reason to the shipment facts

The strongest dispute compares the carrier's stated reason for the charge with documented shipment facts and the contract, pricing agreement, classification rule, or carrier rules tariff that applied on the shipment date.

ASK THESE THREE QUESTIONS FIRST

Did the service occur? Was it requested or required? Is the amount priced correctly? A strong dispute must identify which answer does not match the invoice.

01

Did the service occur?

Review the BOL, tracking history, delivery receipt, driver notes, photographs, and customer communications.

02

Was it requested or required?

A service may be requested in writing, verbally, or required by the location even when it was not selected during quoting.

03

Is the amount correct?

Confirm the amount against the pricing agreement, carrier rules tariff, and effective date.

RECOMMENDED WORKFLOW

01

IDENTIFY

02

VERIFY

03

COLLECT

04

SUBMIT

05

TRACK

Separate the charge. Verify the shipment record and rule. Gather objective evidence. State the facts and requested action clearly. Record responses, credits, deadlines, and next follow-up dates.

IMPORTANT

Carrier definitions, thresholds, free time, rates, and filing deadlines vary. Always confirm the rule and effective date for the specific shipment.

3

Common LTL Invoice Charges

CHARGES 1-3 OF 16 / Validate the facts before disputing the fee.

Reclass / Reweigh

WHAT IT IS	A carrier inspection reports a different weight, density, freight class, commodity description, or NMFC item than what appeared on the original BOL.
VALIDATE FIRST	Request the carrier's weight-and-inspection record. Compare the inspected weight, dimensions, packaging, commodity, class, pallet count, and classification basis with the freight actually tendered.
USEFUL EVIDENCE	Original and carrier-stickered BOL; manufacturer specification sheet; packing list; certified scale ticket; date-stamped photographs; density and class calculations.
PREVENT IT	Weigh the fully packaged freight, measure the greatest outside dimensions, and use a precise commodity description and current classification basis.

Residential Pickup or Delivery

WHAT IT IS	An additional charge when the origin or destination meets the carrier's definition of a residence or residential-type location.
VALIDATE FIRST	Do not rely only on the street address. Review the carrier definition and determine how the property is actually used. Home-based businesses and farms may still qualify.
USEFUL EVIDENCE	Business website and posted hours; exterior photographs and signage; dock or forklift photographs; map or satellite view; written location description.
PREVENT IT	Confirm the location type before quoting and disclose residential service when applicable.

Liftgate Service

WHAT IT IS	A charge for using a hydraulic or mechanical device to move freight between the trailer and ground level.
VALIDATE FIRST	Check the BOL, delivery receipt, driver notes, and site capabilities. Determine whether a usable dock or suitable forklift was available and whether liftgate service was requested or required.
USEFUL EVIDENCE	Dock or forklift photographs; POD/DR; signed statement from the shipper or consignee; security footage or receiving records when available.
PREVENT IT	Document loading and unloading equipment during quoting and on the BOL. Never assume a commercial site has a usable dock.

4

Common LTL Invoice Charges

CHARGES 4-6 OF 16 / Validate the facts before disputing the fee.

Limited Access / Non-Commercial

WHAT IT IS	A carrier-defined charge for locations with restricted access, special security, limited staffing, no standard dock access, or other operating constraints.
VALIDATE FIRST	Review the exact carrier tariff definition. Common examples include construction sites, schools, government sites, storage facilities, places of worship, military installations, and secure campuses.
USEFUL EVIDENCE	Site photographs; published business hours; access instructions; proof of public access; dock or platform details; map link; written receiving statement.
PREVENT IT	Ask about security, appointment requirements, staffing, dock access, and site type before rating the shipment.

Reconsignment / Return

WHAT IT IS	A charge resulting from a change in consignee, delivery address, destination, or shipment disposition after the carrier has accepted the freight.
VALIDATE FIRST	Identify who requested the change, when it was requested, and how far the freight had moved. Confirm whether the carrier actually changed routing or returned the shipment.
USEFUL EVIDENCE	Original and revised BOL; email or call history; tracking timeline; written instructions; delivery receipt.
PREVENT IT	Confirm consignee name, address, contact information, and purchase-order instructions before pickup.

Corrected BOL

WHAT IT IS	An administrative fee for changing shipment information after pickup or after the carrier has created its shipment record.
VALIDATE FIRST	Confirm that a correction was requested and determine whether it resulted from shipper-provided information or a carrier data-entry error. Review the carrier's definition of a BOL correction.
USEFUL EVIDENCE	Original carrier-stickered BOL; revised BOL; timestamps; email trail; carrier imaging or shipment record.
PREVENT IT	Review the BOL before tendering freight and avoid sending multiple versions after pickup.

5

Common LTL Invoice Charges

CHARGES 7-9 OF 16 / Validate the facts before disputing the fee.

Redelivery

WHAT IT IS	A charge when the carrier attempts delivery but cannot complete it and must return with the freight.
VALIDATE FIRST	Confirm the attempt date and time, published receiving hours, appointment status, address accuracy, and reason for failure. Determine whether the attempt occurred during an acceptable window.
USEFUL EVIDENCE	Tracking events; POD or exception record; appointment confirmation; receiving hours; call logs; consignee statement.
PREVENT IT	Validate address, hours, appointment requirements, contact information, and site restrictions before delivery.

Notification / Appointment

WHAT IT IS	A charge for calling ahead, providing arrival notice, or arranging a delivery appointment when requested or required.
VALIDATE FIRST	Review the BOL, purchase order, quote selections, and communications. Determine whether the consignee required an appointment even when the shipper did not request one.
USEFUL EVIDENCE	Original BOL; order instructions; appointment confirmation; call logs; delivery receipt; consignee statement.
PREVENT IT	Ask whether the receiver requires notification or an appointment and include it in the quote and BOL.

Overlength / Extreme Length

WHAT IT IS	An additional charge when the shipment's longest piece exceeds a carrier-defined threshold.
VALIDATE FIRST	Confirm the applicable threshold, the longest outside dimension, packaging, and the carrier's recorded measurement. Thresholds and pricing vary by carrier and contract.
USEFUL EVIDENCE	Specification sheet; tape-measure photographs; dimensioned packing diagram; BOL; carrier inspection record.
PREVENT IT	Measure the longest packaged piece - including pallets, crates, and protrusions - and enter the length accurately when quoting.

6

Common LTL Invoice Charges

CHARGES 10-12 OF 16 / Validate the facts before disputing the fee.

Guaranteed or Expedited Service

WHAT IT IS	A premium charge for a time-definite or guaranteed service option. Remedies for failure are governed by the carrier service terms.
VALIDATE FIRST	Confirm the selected service, eligible origin and destination, pickup date, promised delivery, actual delivery, exceptions, and filing deadline.
USEFUL EVIDENCE	Quote and service confirmation; BOL; tracking history; POD with delivery time; carrier service terms; invoice.
PREVENT IT	Select guaranteed service intentionally, preserve the confirmation, and review performance immediately because filing windows may be short.

Detention

WHAT IT IS	A charge when carrier equipment or the driver is delayed beyond the free time allowed for loading or unloading.
VALIDATE FIRST	Confirm arrival, check-in, loading or unloading start, release, and departure times. Review free time and whether the delay was caused by the facility, shipper, consignee, or carrier.
USEFUL EVIDENCE	POD with in/out times; gate log; appointment record; time-stamped messages; warehouse or security logs.
PREVENT IT	Stage the freight, schedule the facility, communicate delays early, and document arrival and departure times.

Sort, Segregate, Re-stack, or Lumper

WHAT IT IS	Labor charges for sorting, separating, reconfiguring, palletizing, or handling freight beyond normal dock delivery. A third-party provider may issue a lumper receipt.
VALIDATE FIRST	Confirm what work was performed, who requested or required it, and whether the carrier or third party documented the service and amount.
USEFUL EVIDENCE	POD/DR; lumper receipt; photographs; receiver requirements; purchase order; driver notes; written consignee statement.
PREVENT IT	Identify special receiving and pallet requirements before shipping and include expected labor charges in the transportation plan.

7

Common LTL Invoice Charges

CHARGES 13-15 OF 16 / Validate the facts before disputing the fee.

Cubic Capacity / Linear Foot

WHAT IT IS	A space-based pricing rule that may apply when freight occupies excessive trailer capacity, has low density, cannot be stacked, or exceeds linear-foot thresholds.
VALIDATE FIRST	Review the carrier rule, thresholds, density, occupied floor space, stackability, and actual dimensions. Confirm whether the charge is a minimum, adjustment, or accessorial.
USEFUL EVIDENCE	Dimensioned photographs; packaging and stackability details; density/PCF calculation; BOL; inspection record; applicable tariff excerpt.
PREVENT IT	Measure accurately, identify non-stackable freight, reduce unused pallet space, and compare carriers with different space-based rules.

Inside Pickup or Delivery

WHAT IT IS	A charge for moving freight beyond the point immediately accessible to the vehicle, such as inside a building, through doors, down corridors, or to a designated interior area.
VALIDATE FIRST	Determine the actual service point and whether inside service was requested, required by the site, or performed. Review the carrier definition; a covered loading area is not always inside.
USEFUL EVIDENCE	POD/DR; delivery instructions; photographs; consignee statement; driver notes; BOL.
PREVENT IT	Define the service point in advance and confirm whether the consignee can receive freight at the curb, dock, or trailer.

Storage

WHAT IT IS	A charge for holding freight after free time expires because delivery, customs clearance, inspection, payment, or disposition is delayed.
VALIDATE FIRST	Confirm when storage began and ended, the free-time rule, carrier notifications, delivery attempts, and the party responsible for the delay.
USEFUL EVIDENCE	Tracking history; arrival and notice records; appointment communications; delivery attempt record; POD; carrier tariff.
PREVENT IT	Respond quickly to terminal notices, resolve appointment issues early, and keep consignee contact information current.

8

Common LTL Invoice Charges

CHARGE 16 OF 16 / Then use the validity check below before submitting a dispute.

Dry Run / Attempted Pickup

WHAT IT IS	A charge when a driver is dispatched for pickup but the freight is unavailable, the facility is closed, or pickup cannot be completed through no fault of the carrier.
VALIDATE FIRST	Confirm dispatch and attempt details, facility hours, cancellation timing, pickup number, and why the shipment was not tendered.
USEFUL EVIDENCE	Pickup confirmation; cancellation email; call logs; tracking or dispatch record; shipper statement; facility hours.
PREVENT IT	Cancel directly with the carrier as early as possible, retain confirmation, and verify the freight is packaged, labeled, and ready before dispatch.

A QUICK DECISION CHECK

Is the charge supported - or is there a mismatch?

A charge is more likely valid when

- ✓ The service is documented on the BOL, POD, tracking record, inspection record, or driver notes.
- ✓ The location or shipment characteristics independently required the service.
- ✓ The carrier evidence includes measurements, weight, photographs, timestamps, or a tariff rule.
- ✓ The amount matches the contracted rate or applicable rules tariff.

Push back when

- ✓ The carrier cannot identify the shipment fact or rule supporting the charge.
- ✓ The BOL, POD, inspection record, photographs, or tracking history conflicts with the invoice.
- ✓ The fee is duplicated, applied to the wrong shipment, or calculated using the wrong rate.
- ✓ The issue resulted from a carrier data-entry or operational error.

WHEN DOCUMENTATION IS MISSING

Ask the carrier for the supporting record and submit a timely initial dispute notice when a deadline is approaching. Do not guess, reconstruct facts without support, or withhold an unrelated undisputed balance.

9

Build the Evidence File

Organize the record so a carrier reviewer can verify the facts without making assumptions.

EVIDENCE THAT STRENGTHENS ALMOST EVERY DISPUTE

Use objective, shipment-specific proof

The best evidence was created during the shipment - before anyone knew there would be a dispute. Preserve original records, label exhibits clearly, and explain what each attachment proves.

EVIDENCE	WHAT IT HELPS PROVE
Original and carrier-stickered BOL	Tendered weight, pieces, class, commodity, dimensions, requested services, and shipment parties.
Quote, rate confirmation, contract, or tariff	The applicable price, service selection, definition, threshold, effective date, and filing requirements.
POD / delivery receipt / driver notes	Services performed, exceptions, signatures, delivery point, time stamps, and notations.
Tracking and dispatch history	Pickup and delivery attempts, terminal events, notices, reconsignment timing, and delays.
Specification sheet / packing list / scale ticket	Product identity, model number, packaged weight, item count, and manufacturer dimensions.
Date-stamped photographs	Packaging, labels, pallet footprint, tape measurements, stackability, loading equipment, and site conditions.
Emails, call notes, appointments, site records	Who requested a service, business hours, receiving requirements, arrival/departure times, and customer statements.

DOCUMENT QUALITY STANDARDS

A CLEAR Use a short file name and identify the shipment, date, and subject.	B COMPLETE Include the entire page or record, not a cropped fragment that removes context.	C CONNECTED Explain what each attachment proves and how it conflicts with the charge.	D CREDIBLE Prefer contemporaneous records, original documents, and third-party evidence.
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BEST PRACTICE

Create one folder for each dispute. Keep the invoice, undisputed payment record, carrier evidence, your exhibits, submission, responses, reference number, and final credit in the same place.

10

Build a Carrier-Ready Dispute

Make the reviewer's decision easy: identify the shipment, explain the mismatch, attach the proof, and state the requested resolution.

BEST PRACTICE

Use one clear argument for each disputed charge. Avoid long narratives, assumptions, blame, or unrelated shipment history.

DISPUTE SUBMISSION TEMPLATE

FIELD	WHAT TO INCLUDE
Subject line	Dispute Request - PRO 123456789 - Liftgate Charge - \$185.00
Shipment details	PRO, BOL, invoice number, ship date, origin, destination, payer, and account number.
Charge disputed	Name the exact charge and amount. State whether the undisputed balance has been or will be paid.
Reason	Explain in two to four sentences why the charge does not match the shipment facts or applicable rule.
Evidence	List each attachment and what it proves. Example: Exhibit A - POD showing dock delivery with no liftgate notation.
Requested action	Request removal or adjustment of the charge and issuance of a corrected invoice or credit memo.
Response requested	Ask for confirmation of receipt, the dispute reference number, and any missing documentation.

SAMPLE DISPUTE LANGUAGE

READY-TO-EDIT EXAMPLE

Please review the \$185.00 liftgate charge assessed on PRO 123456789. The consignee received the shipment at a standard dock and did not request or use liftgate service. The signed delivery receipt does not note liftgate service, and the attached photographs show the receiving dock and forklift available on the delivery date. Based on these shipment facts, please remove the charge and issue a corrected invoice or credit memo. Please confirm receipt and provide the dispute reference number.

DISPUTE TRACKING FIELDS

PRO / INVOICE	CHARGE / AMOUNT	SUBMITTED	CARRIER REF.	NEXT FOLLOW-UP	RESOLUTION
123456789	Liftgate - \$185.00	1/15/26	DSP-44201	1/29/26	Pending

Use one row per disputed charge and retain the carrier reference number through final resolution.

11

Prevent the Next Dispute

The lowest-cost dispute is the one that never reaches the invoice.

OPERATING RULE

Never rely on the quote alone. The final invoice is based on the freight actually tendered, the services actually performed, and the pricing rules that apply.

BEFORE BOOKING

- ✓ Confirm fully packaged weight, pieces, pallets, dimensions, commodity description, and stackability.
- ✓ Verify residential, limited-access, appointment, liftgate, inside-delivery, and special-handling needs.
- ✓ Review carrier-specific overlength, linear-foot, cubic-capacity, prohibited-item, and service-area rules.
- ✓ Save the quote, pricing confirmation, and effective contract or tariff reference.

AT PICKUP

- ✓ Use one accurate BOL and keep the carrier-stickered copy.
- ✓ Photograph the freight after packaging, including labels, pallet footprint, and visible dimensions.
- ✓ Confirm the freight is ready and the pickup location is open before dispatch.
- ✓ Document any change communicated to the driver or carrier.

BEFORE DELIVERY

- ✓ Confirm address, receiving hours, appointment process, contact information, and unloading equipment.
- ✓ Send special instructions in writing and make sure they match the BOL and purchase order.
- ✓ Ask the consignee to record arrival/departure times and disputed services on the delivery receipt.
- ✓ Resolve delivery exceptions quickly to limit redelivery and storage exposure.

QUICK GLOSSARY

TERM	MEANING
Accessorial	A service or condition beyond standard linehaul transportation that may create an additional charge.
BOL	Bill of Lading - the shipping document describing the parties, freight, and requested services.
DR / POD	Delivery Receipt / Proof of Delivery - the signed record of delivery and noted exceptions or services.
NMFC	National Motor Freight Classification - a classification framework used for many LTL commodities and rules.
PCF	Pounds per cubic foot - shipment density calculated from weight and cubic volume.
PRO number	The carrier's primary shipment tracking and billing reference number.
Rules tariff	The carrier publication or incorporated rules that define services, charges, liability, and procedures.

EDUCATIONAL NOTICE

This guide provides general educational information. Carrier contracts, pricing agreements, rules tariffs, governing classifications, and effective dates control each shipment. Requirements and deadlines vary by carrier. Learn LTL is not providing legal advice and does not guarantee the outcome of any billing dispute.