



A Realtor's Guide to Senior Relocation



# YOUR CLIENT'S BIGGEST MOVE

By: Catherine Sheeran, Director of Senior Services



# Introduction

Most realtors have worked with senior clients. Fewer have worked alongside a dedicated senior moving team. And that gap, the space between knowing a client needs help and knowing exactly what that help looks like, is where deals slow down, timelines slip, and families get overwhelmed.



I'm Catherine Sheeran, Director of Senior Services at Interstate Moving | Relocation | Logistics. For eight years, I've partnered with realtors across Northern Virginia to help senior clients and their families through one of life's most complex transitions.

This guide is a resource you can keep on hand or share with colleagues. It covers what senior moving services actually include, how the process works from first call to closing, what it costs, and how bringing in the right moving partner can help you get listings to market faster and close cleaner.



# Why Senior Moves Are Different

A standard move is straightforward: pack it up, drive it over, unload. A senior move is almost never that simple. The client is usually right-sizing, going from a larger home into a smaller one and unable to bring everything. That alone creates a layer of decisions that a standard move doesn't have. What stays? What goes to the kids? What gets donated, sold, or cleared out?

On top of logistics, there are health considerations. Mobility may be limited. Cognitive changes may be a factor. The emotional weight of leaving a longtime home is real, and it affects the pace of the entire process. A standard moving crew, no matter how professional, isn't set up to navigate those layers. They're set up to move furniture.

For realtors, this matters because the move is often what determines whether the listing timeline holds. If the client can't get out of the house on time, or if the home isn't cleared and cleaned before showings, the entire transaction stalls. A dedicated senior moving team exists to prevent that.



# What Interstate's Senior Services Actually Include

When I tell realtors that Interstate offers senior moving services, some assume I just mean we're gentle with the boxes. It's much more than that. Here's what falls under my team's scope:

## MOVE MANAGEMENT & COORDINATION

I serve as the single point of contact for the entire process. Instead of the family juggling five vendors, they get updates from one person who knows the full plan.

## SPACE PLANNING

Before anything gets packed, we walk through the home and identify what will actually fit in the new space. This prevents the most common and expensive mistake: moving too much.

## DECLUTTERING SUPPORT

We use color-coded stickers (green for keep, yellow for donate, red for let go) to help clients visualize decisions. We also photograph sentimental items being donated so the memory is preserved even when the object isn't.

## PACKING, TRANSPORT, & DELIVERY

The move itself is always firm fixed price with no hidden fees.

## DEEP UNPACKING AND HOME SETUP

We can unpack everything, hang clothes, make the bed, organize the kitchen, and set up the living room so the new home feels lived in by the end of moving day.

## HOME CLEAR-OUT

After the move, we coordinate the removal of everything left behind: donation pickups, disposal, and preparation for the cleaning crew.

## CONCIERGE SERVICES

Optional hourly add-ons that cover the details families don't expect: selling a car, returning cable equipment, coordinating utility transfers, decommissioning plates with the DMV, rehoming plants.

One of my clients had developed severe neuropathy and couldn't drive anymore. We listed her car, managed the test drives, finalized the sale, and handled the DMV paperwork online. Her son lived out of state and couldn't fly in. That's what concierge service is for.

Everything is presented a la carte. Families choose what they need and skip what they don't. Nobody is pressured into extras.

# How the Timeline Works

The ideal timeline for a senior move is about 90 days. That gives everyone room to plan, declutter, coordinate with family, and make thoughtful decisions. When families reach out a month before moving day, everything shifts into what I call “crisis mode.” It’s still possible, but the pressure makes every decision harder.

Here’s how the process typically unfolds:



For realtors, the key takeaway is this: the sooner I’m brought in, the more control everyone has over the listing timeline. I tell every realtor I work with the same thing: bring me in as soon as you can.

# What it Costs?

One of the first questions families ask is about cost, and realtors should feel comfortable discussing ballpark numbers with their clients. Here's what to expect for a one bedroom apartment:

SERVICE LEVEL	ESTIMATED COST	INCLUDES:
Good	\$1,500 – \$1,800	Basic local move
Better	\$2,000 – \$2,300	Adds partial packing or unpacking help
Best	\$2,500 – \$2,800	Full-service move with concierge support
Concierge Add-Ons	~\$95 – \$97/hr	Car sale, donation coordination, utility transfers, DMV, etc. Most clients spend under \$1,000 total.

Longer-distance moves are priced based on weight and mileage. The important thing for realtors to know is that the pricing is firm, transparent, and presented in a way that gives families control over what they spend.

# How Working Together Gets Listings to Market Faster

The realtor's strategy for the property directly affects how I plan the move, and vice versa. When I know whether the goal is to sell quickly as-is or to invest time in repairs and staging, I can build a timeline that supports that strategy instead of working against it.

The coordination is daily when a move is active. Texts, emails, quick check-ins about staging dates, painter schedules, settlement timelines. When a buyer's financing falls through or a title issue surfaces, I need to know as soon as possible so we can adjust. The realtors I work best with are the ones who communicate early and often.

Having a joint voice matters. When the realtor and I are recommending the same timeline and the same approach, the client feels confident. The sequence I find works best for most senior listings is: move the client first, then clear out, then stage, then list. That way the homeowner isn't navigating showings in a home they're still living in, and the property presents at its best from day one.

I recently worked with a realtor on a senior move where we executed this exact playbook. We got everything moved, everything cleared out, everything donated.

The realtor did a quick paint job, listed the house the first of March, and it sold in a week with multiple offers over asking.

That outcome happened because the realtor brought me in early enough that we could work the timeline in their favor.



# What to Tell Your Client Before Making the Referral

When you refer a senior client to me, a few things help the first conversation go well:

- **Let them know it's more than a moving company.** Tell them that Catherine and the Interstate team bring a full suite of services, not just a truck. Move management, decluttering, unpacking, clear-outs, and concierge coordination are all available.
- **Share some background with me.** The more I know going in, the better the first call goes. Are they retired military? Moving to be closer to grandchildren? Active in their church or a charitable organization? Those details shape how I build trust with someone I haven't met yet, and they make the experience feel personal from the start.
- **Share your strategy for the property.** Is the goal a fast sale or a longer timeline with repairs and staging? That directly affects how I plan the move and clear-out.
- **Bring me in early.** As soon as the listing conversation starts, that's the right time to loop me in. Even if the move is months away, early planning gives everyone more options and a better outcome.



# About Catherine Sheeran and Interstate Senior Services

Catherine Sheeran is the Director of Senior Services at Interstate Moving | Relocation | Logistics, a three-generation, family-owned company founded in 1943 and headquartered in Springfield, Virginia.

Interstate holds ISO 9001:2015 certification and operates 6.5 million square feet of logistics infrastructure across Springfield, Dulles, and Landover.

Catherine has spent eight years building Interstate's senior services program, working directly with realtors, senior living communities, estate sale companies, and families across Northern Virginia and the D.C. metro area.

To schedule a consultation or learn more about partnering with Interstate on senior moves:



## Catherine Sheeran

Web: [moveinterstate.com/residential-moves/senior-moves](https://www.moveinterstate.com/residential-moves/senior-moves)

Phone: 800.745.6683 (ask for Senior Services)

Email: [contactus@inva.com](mailto:contactus@inva.com)