



Our new cantilever patio umbrella (pictured above) was damaged during our household move in September, 2016. The moving company, A Few Good Men Moving & Storage, LLC of Youngsville, NC, initially agreed to repair the umbrella, then decided to replace the umbrella, and then finally, said they would neither repair nor replace the umbrella once we filed a formal claim with the company. The umbrella was purchased in May 2016 at a cost of over \$1,200.00 for the umbrella and the umbrella base.

The moving company picked up my household goods, including the cantilever umbrella, on Wednesday September 7, 2016 and delivered them to my new residence (which is less than 10 miles away from my old residence) on Thursday, September 8, 2016. On the morning of the move, Matt Sharpstein, the company manager, came on-site and oversaw the mover personnel for about 2 hours. Afterward, Matt's mother arrived and took over supervision of the moving crew.

When the moving company picked up our goods, I had personally closed the umbrella for moving because when Matt Sharpstein had provided the moving estimate for the move asked that we close the umbrella for the move. The mover personnel that disassembled the umbrella for moving (disassembly should have only been to disconnect the umbrella base from the umbrella assembly) did not have the correct tools to remove the base from the assembly, so I provided them the wrenches that had come with the umbrella when I purchased it to allow them to remove the base. The mover personnel appeared to have difficulty removing the base, but I did not note any issues or watch them the entire time they were disassembling the umbrella.

On day of delivery of the household goods to our new home, my wife (Peggy) was at the new residence to direct placement of household items into the new residence since I had to wrap up the remaining items from our old residence. The movers arrived at our new residence about 7:30am and began the offload. My wife said that the mover personnel seemed to be in a great hurry to offload our goods and were overwhelming her with questions regarding the placement of items. The movers completed the offload around 1pm and had left our new home before I arrived at around 2pm.

Immediately after I arrived at the new residence, I noted that everything around the house was in disarray. I began to survey the goods and I noticed that the cord that raises/lowers the cantilever umbrella was hanging loosely outside of the umbrella housing and I had never noticed the cord before. I decided to crank the umbrella open to tighten the cord and as I began to crank it, the cord fell loosely to the ground outside of the umbrella. I then asked my wife about the umbrella and she said that she had not touched the umbrella and had not seen it opened or closed by the mover personnel who were reassembling the umbrella. She stated that she noticed that the mover personnel seemed to be “struggling” with setting the umbrella back up, but did not see anything additional other than she saw them “sliding” the umbrella base along the concrete patio to the location that my wife had specified it be placed.

During the offload, several of the mover personnel came to my wife and told her about items that they felt had been damaged, but the personnel working on the umbrella did not say anything to her about the umbrella or the difficulty they had reassembling the unit. Subsequently, we also noticed damage to the base of the umbrella where it had been scuffed from sliding it along the concrete patio on its side.



That afternoon, I called Matt Sharpstein and told him about the umbrella and other damage to our furnishings and requested that he personally come to our new residence so we could show him the damages. Matt became very defensive during our conversation about the damages, but agreed to come out and came to our home the next day, Friday, September 9th.

Matt, accompanied by his mother, arrived at our new home on Friday as scheduled. I first showed Matt the damage to the umbrella base and the broken cord. He acknowledged that the umbrella had probably been damaged in the move and said that he would personally come back and repair the umbrella. He checked his calendar and we set an appointment for Friday of the following week (September 16th) for him to return and work on the umbrella. During his inspection of the umbrella, Matt noticed that the umbrella assembly was fitting very loosely into the umbrella base and said he believed that needed to be corrected as well. I offered to provide whatever documentation on the umbrella that was in my possession and he indicated that it would be helpful since he was not very familiar with cantilever umbrellas.

We continued the review of damaged items and as we moved along, Matt became more and more defensive about the damages stating that these were mostly existing damages which I took exception to because he was basically calling me a liar and implying that I was trying to cheat him. At one point, Matt became indignant and began arguing with me about each item that I showed him. We got into a sharp dispute about one item, so I told him that he had made me angry and that I was not going to deal with him any further and had my wife show him the remaining damaged items.

The next week, I communicated with the moving company via email asking that they give me an update on the umbrella repair and to provide a damage claim form so we could submit the damages for repair. In a return email the moving company said:

“From: A Few Good Men [<mailto:info@afgmmoving.com>]

Sent: Monday, September 26, 2016 10:08 AM

To: Roger Scott

Subject: Re: Claim Form

Good Morning Roger,

After careful consideration, we have decided to replace the umbrella. When possible, please send us the make, model number, and color of the umbrella so that a replacement can be ordered. Please let us know if you would like the umbrella sent to your home or our office, either way we can help assemble it for you. Also, please return your completed claim form when you can so that your claim can be processed.

Thank you,

Rachel “

I immediately supplied the requested information regarding the umbrella make, model, etc. The moving company then supplied the claim form which we completed and submitted. We were then contacted by a furniture restoration company contracted by the moving company and scheduled repair of the household furnishings. These were completed to our satisfaction.

I again contacted the moving company and asked for an update on the umbrella asking when we could expect the new umbrella, but did not receive a reply. The following week, I inquired again, and received an emailed reply with an attached letter from the "claims department" signed by Raymond Sharpstein (Matt's father) stating that they were not going to replace the umbrella and that the damage could not have been caused in the move. Rather, the "claims department" claimed that the Kevlar cord that raises and lowers the umbrella had obviously been broken by me or my wife by applying excessive pressure to the cord when winding it. This accusation is absolutely false, so I again emailed the moving company requesting that they reconsider their decision. I received a prompt reply from Raymond Sharpstein reaffirming their decision to deny the claim and again blaming us for the damage.

We simply want our umbrella repaired. The moving company caused the damage. In my research on A Few Good Men Moving & Storage, LLC, I have found several complaints filed against them with many of the same symptoms and attitudes that we have been dealing with from Matt Sharpstein and the "claims department."