

Accessorial Cargo, Simplified:

Understand the additional drayage charges in Miami clearly and quickly: what they are, when they apply, and which ones are part of the operation or can be negotiated.

A guide designed for freight forwarders, commercial teams, and new clients who need to make decisions with more confidence and less friction.

Minimum Information to Quote

To generate an accurate quote without surprises, it is essential to have the following information before starting the process. Missing data can generate unexpected charges or operational delays.



POD

Port of Discharge



Destination

Warehouse or final delivery facility



Equipment

Size: 20', 40', or 45'



Cargo Weight

Total weight of the merchandise



Cargo Type

Palletized or loose (loose)



ZIP Code

Final destination postal code



ETA

Estimated time of arrival of the vessel at the destination port



Commodity

Whether it is dry cargo, refrigerated cargo, hazardous materials, or bonded cargo



The ZIP code is the determining factor for classifying the operation as **Local** or **OTR**, which directly impacts timing, included services, and costs.

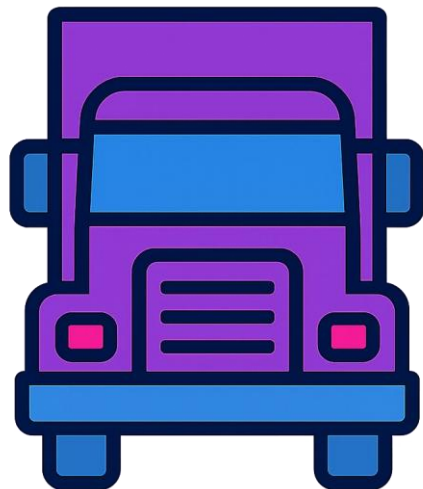
Local vs. OTR: Distance Classification

The distance between the port and the final destination is the determining factor because it defines the real complexity of the move and, therefore, the operation required to execute it efficiently. As the distance increases, the coordination needs, transit times, and the way costs are structured all change, which directly impacts the base rate, the services included, and delivery times. Understanding this difference is essential to budget correctly and avoid later adjustments, especially when the ZIP code of the destination confirms whether the movement is classified as Local or OTR.



Local: less than 80 miles. Same-day delivery possible, with 1 day of chassis included and 1 hour of free waiting time.

If delivery does not occur same-day, the base rate is charged plus additional charges separately: chassis per additional day, storage per additional day, and any other applicable accessories.

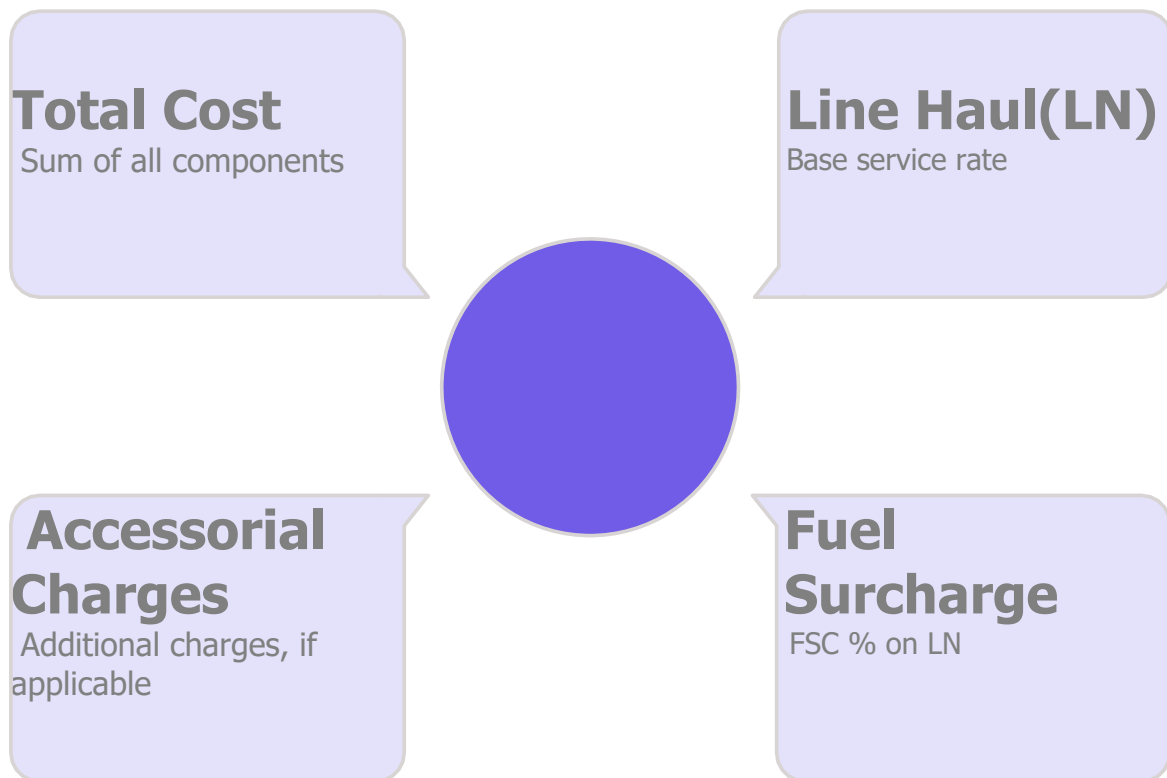


OTR: more than 100 miles. Next-day delivery, with pre-pull, 1 day of storage, 2 days of chassis, and 2 hours of free waiting time included in the base rate.

If delivery does not occur next-day, the base rate is charged plus additional charges separately: chassis per additional day, storage per additional day, and any other applicable accessories.

Quote Structure

Understanding how a drayage quote is composed helps anticipate costs and avoid surprises. The base rate includes fixed elements, while accessorial charges are activated depending on the operational conditions of each move.



The basic formula is: **Total = LN + FSC (+ Accessorials if applicable)**. The typical Fuel Surcharge in Miami is % of the Line Haul, adjusted periodically according to the fuel index.

Example: Orlando Destination

OTR operation with pre-pull, storage, and chassis included in the base rate. Accessorials are activated only if there are delays, last-minute changes, or special conditions at the destination.

When Do Accessorials Apply?

- Changes in address or date
- Warehouse delays
- Extreme port congestion
- Special loads (Hazmat, Reefer)
- Deliveries outside standard hours

Accessorial Charges:

Key Definitions

Accessorial charges are variable and not fixed because they depend on operational conditions that change from one load to another: port congestion, delivery windows, destination location, wait times, required equipment type, and special characteristics of the freight. When an operation falls outside the standard flow—for example, due to delays, appointment changes, rescheduling, limited access, or loads such as reefer or hazmat—different charges may be triggered depending on the event and the time involved. Not knowing them from the start can create budget surprises, erode margins, and complicate the profitability of each movement. That is why clear communication with the customer about which situations can trigger these charges is key to aligning expectations and avoiding friction. Understanding them also makes it possible to negotiate better, anticipate costs, and design more efficient operations; with good planning, many of these charges can be avoided or at least minimized.



Pre-Pull

Pick up the container from the port one day before delivery. Applies to warehouses with appointments and high port congestion.



Dry Run / TONU / Extra Stop

Applies when the delivery is not completed as planned or when there is an additional move. This can happen because of an incorrect address, refusal to receive, or rescheduling.



Chassis (per day)

Equipment used to transport the container. In Miami, it is charged for each day it remains on the chassis outside the port.



Storage (per day)

Cost of storing the container in a yard. Applies when delivery is delayed or the container cannot be returned to the port within the available free time.

Accessororial Charges: Special Charges and Conditions



Hazmat

Applies to hazardous cargo (Classes 1–9). Not all carriers handle every class. **Must be declared in advance.**



Reefer (No Genset) + Plug-In

Refrigerated containers require special handling and electrical connection. Availability is limited; it must be requested in advance. Less free time at the port.



Residential Delivery

Delivery to non-commercial locations: hotels, condominiums, or restricted-access areas. May require special permits and differentiated handling.



Weekend Deliveries

Standard port operations: Monday through Friday. Weekend deliveries may generate an additional cost, and empty container returns may not be possible the same day.



Layover

The driver must stay overnight due to delays, warehouse closure, or weather conditions. Charged per unplanned night of waiting.

Excess Weight and Waiting Times

Cargo weight and destination waiting times are two of the most common factors that generate additional charges. Knowing the limits allows for precise planning and helps avoid unbudgeted costs.

Weight Limits

Equipment	Overweight	Excessive Overweight
20'	+38,000 lbs	+44,000 lbs
40'	+43,500 lbs	+54,500 lbs

Exceeding these limits triggers overweight or excessive overweight charges, depending on the range. It is essential to declare the actual weight when requesting a quote.

Free Waiting Times

Local: 1 free hour. **OTR:** 2 free hours. After free time expires, hourly charges apply. **Drop Service** is a useful alternative when more operational flexibility is needed and at least 24 hours of planning is available.

1

Start

The waiting time begins once the container arrives at the site and is received, and a dock is assigned to start unloading/loading.

2

Local: 1 Hour

1 free hour, then hourly rate.

3

OTR: 2 Hours

2 free hours, then hourly charge.

4

Drop Alternative

Drop Service: Must be requested and planned at least 24 hours in advance. Availability is subject to equipment (chassis) capacity.

In some cases, carriers have limited chassis availability (for example, only one unit), which can prevent the drop from being completed.

Failure to provide advance notice can generate additional costs, including double trips, returns to the port, and other operational charges, which will be billed to the party that did not promptly inform the drop request.

Key Operational Notes: Miami

The Port of Miami is one of the busiest in the United States, and that activity creates operating conditions that directly impact costs. Planning with awareness of the port environment is essential to control the budget.



High Congestion

Port operations in Miami are highly congested. Terminal wait times can extend significantly, triggering chassis and storage charges.



Limited Appointments

Appointment slots are limited and fill up quickly. Lack of a confirmed appointment can result in Dry Run or Layover charges, creating avoidable additional costs. (There are appointments for both gate-in and pickup.)



Time Is Cost

Every hour of delay carries a direct cost. Precise coordination between the forwarder, the warehouse, and the carrier is the best strategy to minimize accessorial.



Yard Stop-Off

This applies when the container cannot be returned to the port the same day because of a late delivery or port closure. The container remains in the yard until the next business day.



Empty Returns:

Depending on the container type, the shipping line, and operational availability at the time of return, the empty container may need to be returned to a port, terminal, or depot different from the one it was originally picked up from.

It is the shipping line's responsibility to indicate the current return location. Any change in the return instruction may create operational adjustments and additional costs.

When Does Each Charge Apply?

Not every charge applies to every shipment. Accessorial charges depend on specific operational variables for each move. This matrix helps identify which factors trigger each charge.



☐ **Golden rule:** Charges that depend on **timing and communication** are the easiest to avoid. Early planning can eliminate most unwanted accessorials.

Checklist: Before Quoting

- What are the exact origin and destination for the shipment?
- Is the move local, OTR, or does it require a pre-pull?
- Does the cargo require special handling such as Hazmat, Reefer, or overweight?
- Is there a confirmed appointment at the port, warehouse, or destination?
- Is there a risk of Waiting Time or a delayed unload?
- Will the equipment need to stay on site or return the same day?
- Are there access restrictions, permits, or residential requirements?
- Does the operation fall on a weekend or outside normal business hours?
- Are additional stops, plan changes, or rescheduling expected?
- Who confirms warehouse, carrier, and terminal availability before the move?

Frequently Asked Questions About Accessorials

Do all shipments generate accessorials ?

No. They are only triggered when specific operational conditions justify them, such as time, equipment, distance, or cargo type.

What is the most common charge to avoid?

Charges related to timing, missed appointments, and poor coordination are usually the easiest to avoid with good planning.

Can a small delay generate multiple charges?

Yes. A delay at a warehouse or port can trigger Waiting Time, Drop Service, Storage, or even a change in plan.

What charge appears when the cargo cannot move as planned?

Depending on the case, it may be Dry Run, Layover, TONU, or Extra Stop if the operating plan changes.

How can you reduce the risk of surprise charges?

By confirming appointments, validating destination requirements, and reviewing the cargo type, equipment, and schedule in advance.

Helpful Tip:

When you negotiate directly with the carrier, you get real access to the operation, greater control over timing, and transparent communication. This translates into faster solutions and, in many cases, lower unnecessary costs.

When there are intermediaries (brokers), the operational reality is often filtered. In many cases, additional charges are driven not only by the operation, but also by the need to protect commercial margins, which can create higher costs and less visibility for the customer.

If your goal is to optimize costs, improve ~~trig~~ have real control over your cargo, working directly with reliable carriers is the most efficient strategy or their dispatcher.

Decision Matrix: Common Scenarios



Local Shipment to Jupiter (80 miles)

Short movement within the regional area, with a relatively direct delivery.

Factors that trigger charges:

- short distance
- possible waiting at pickup or delivery
- need for precise coordination

Charges that apply:

- Waiting Time, if the warehouse delays service.
- Drop Service, if the equipment must stay on site.
- Extra Stop, only if an additional stop is added.

How to minimize it: confirm the appointment, validate receiving times, and avoid last-minute changes.



OTR Shipment to Jacksonville (350 miles)

Intercity route with advance planning through pre-pull.

Factors that trigger charges:

- OTR distance
- use of pre-pull
- possible coordination of delivery windows

Charges that apply:

- OTR, for the longer-distance movement.
- Pre-Pull, if the container needs to be pulled before delivery.
- Waiting Time, if the receiver is not ready.

How to minimize it: make sure the load is ready before pickup and confirm destination availability.



Hazmat Load

Shipment with special handling and compliance requirements.

Factors that trigger charges:

- type of cargo
- documentation
- additional operational needs

Charges that apply:

- Hazmat, due to the nature of the freight.
- Permits, if the destination or route requires them.
- Waiting Time, if there are additional inspections or validations.

How to minimize it: prepare complete documentation and validate requirements before dispatching.



Delivery with Warehouse Delay

The load arrives, but the warehouse does not unload it within the expected window.

Factors that trigger charges:

- extended waiting times
- possible equipment stay on site

Charges that apply:

- Waiting Time, due to the receiving delay.
- Drop Service, if the equipment must be left at the warehouse.
- Daily chassis, if the equipment remains longer than expected.

How to minimize it: coordinate the appointment, confirm warehouse staffing, and reschedule before arrival if there are delays.



Weekend + Port Congestion

Scenario: Pickup or return affected by high activity and limited hours. In Miami, the weekend usually concentrates more operationally sensitive activity because there is less operational flexibility, more pressure on appointments, and lower response capacity at terminals and yards. For drayage, this means that any delay quickly escalates and can complicate the move, coordination, and equipment return.

Factors that trigger charges:

- **Timing outside business days:** service hours are usually more limited, staffing may be restricted, and the availability of gates, appointments, and operational support decreases, making it harder to complete the pickup or return on time.
- **Terminal congestion:** in Miami, port activity can intensify during the weekend due to accumulated pending moves, greater pressure on truck flow, and higher wait times at entry, loading, or unloading.
- **Possible lack of appointments:** available windows can fill up quickly, and when that happens the operation is exposed to rescheduling, additional waiting, or even being unable to complete the move within the expected window.

Charges that apply:

- **Weekend:** surcharge associated with operations carried out on weekends or outside the usual Monday-to-Friday routine, especially when special coordination or greater operational availability is required.
- **Storage:** is triggered when the container remains in port longer than planned; the cost accumulates over time if the unit is not removed within the agreed window.

Chassis: may apply if congestion delays the release or return of the equipment, keeping it held longer than expected and generating a daily or extended-use charge.

Layover or Dry Run: occurs when the move cannot be completed; it may reflect unproductive equipment waiting time or a failed pickup/return attempt due to lack of appointment, congestion, or inability to access the facility.

How to minimize it:

Anticipate the operation before the weekend.

Reserve the appointment in advance: confirm availability, hours, and restrictions.

Negotiate with the receiver to align timing and confirm capacity.

Conclusion:

Drayage is Coordination

Drayage is not just transportation — it is **coordination, timing, and precise execution**. Every operational decision has a direct impact on the final cost. Costa Freight focuses on preventing unnecessary costs, improving communication, and ensuring reliable operations.

→ **Provide complete information when quoting**

POD, ZIP code, weight, cargo type, and the correct equipment from the start help avoid requotes and surprise charges.

→ **Classify correctly: Local or OTR**

Distance determines the services included, free waiting times, and the planning needed for each movement.

→ **Anticipate special conditions**

Hazmat, Reefer, overweight shipments, and residential deliveries must be declared in advance to ensure the availability of the right equipment and carriers.

→ **Coordinate appointments and timing with the warehouse**

Most avoidable accessorials (Waiting Time, Layover, Dry Run) stem from a lack of coordination at the delivery point.

Costa Freight: Prevent unnecessary costs, improve communication, and ensure reliable operations in every drayage movement in Miami.



Note:

If you want to understand how drayage costs really work and avoid unnecessary surcharges, ask about our ebooks and practical guides.

< Learn to take control of your logistics operation.