



Your Best Insurance
is an Insurance Broker.

A Consumer's Guide to Property and Casualty (P&C) Insurance Transactions in B.C.

Insurance protects your most important assets and makes it possible for you to obtain credit, free up capital and create wealth. P&C insurance brokers take their role in protecting people's assets very seriously.

The P&C insurance industry operates on the principle of utmost good faith which applies equally to customers, insurance companies and brokers. Insurance brokers rely on you to provide fair and honest information about your P&C insurance needs. You can then rely on your insurance broker to act in your best interests to meet those needs.

The insurance industry is strictly regulated: generally speaking, insurance companies at the federal level, and brokers at the provincial level. Insurance brokerages and each of their representatives are required to be licensed and to work to high professional and ethical standards. In B.C. those standards include continuing their education over the term of their license. However, like any other profession, individual licensees can choose to offer a general range of products and services, or to specialize in certain areas such as, for example, commercial insurance. Consequently, you may want to talk with more than one P&C broker

when choosing a broker for your particular needs.

Insurance brokers are paid a commission on the policies they sell. Some insurance companies also pay a performance bonus to brokers. In B.C. the *Financial Institutions Act* has for the past decade outlined the level of disclosure that the broker is required to make to customers about their remuneration. This disclosure, which can be made verbally or in writing, outlines the particulars of the relationship between the insurance broker and the insurance company (including financial interests and whether commission is payable). In addition, insurance companies disclose compensation information on their websites.

In your dealings with a P&C insurance broker, you should always seek further information if you do not feel comfortable with your level of understanding of products or services that you are purchasing. Asking questions will help you avoid any potential misunderstandings regarding the information that is being presented to you.



From the insurance brokers of British Columbia who are members of their professional association, the Insurance Brokers Association of B.C.
When buying insurance, look for a broker who displays this symbol.



When you buy P&C insurance you can expect to receive a fair transaction based on these principles:

1. Your interests come first, before the interests of P&C insurance brokers and the companies they represent.
2. You should expect to have your P&C insurance needs assessed by that individual and, when he or she makes a recommendation, to be offered products that meet your needs.
3. You should expect a P&C broker to enable your purchasing decision to be based solely on the attributes of the insurance product or service being offered, including the value of the services of the P&C broker.
4. You should expect your instructions to be carried out faithfully. Your P&C broker must not transact business which is unlawful.
5. You should expect your transactions to be handled with professionalism by a qualified P&C broker. If you have any doubts you may inquire about the P&C broker's qualifications or conduct with the appropriate regulatory body. In B.C., the Insurance Council of B.C. has the government mandate to regulate and govern the insurance brokerage industry. For information go to www.insurancecouncilofbc.com
6. You should expect to have your personal information safeguarded and only used for the purpose for which it was originally collected, unless you have given permission for it to be used for other reasons. Your personal information may be divulged without your consent to law enforcement agencies when required or authorized by law.
7. You should expect to be informed if he or she has a conflict of interest, and you should be given the opportunity to halt further dealings with him or her.
8. You are entitled to receive all relevant information before making a decision about a financial product. This includes product features, risks and benefits, and the company(ies) involved.
9. You should expect to have any complaints dealt with in a timely and forthright manner. In the event that a dispute with an insurance industry practitioner cannot be resolved, you should be given information about available avenues for resolving your complaint. For information go to www.ibabc.org.



***For more information please contact your broker
or the
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