

INSURANCE MATTERS

A Newsletter for Delawareans

August 2025

COLLEGE STUDENT GUIDE TO INSURANCE



Why Insurance Matters with College

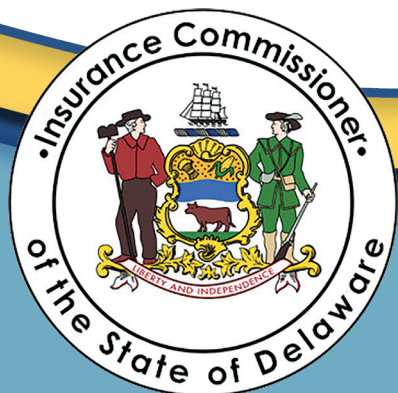
As college students gear up for back-to-school season, it's important to remember that insurance plays a key role in protecting both students and parents from life's unexpected moments. From ensuring students have access to the health care they need, to safeguarding valuable items like laptops, tablets, and bicycles, insurance provides peace of mind during a busy time of year.

For young drivers heading back to college, auto insurance is essential for safety and financial protection. Even renters' insurance can help students living off-campus protect their belongings. We want to take some time to go over a few different insurance policies that can be crucial for any student looking to take their education to the next step.

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- *Ask the Commissioner*

**To find out more about
college student insurance
tips continue
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COLLEGE STUDENT GUIDE TO INSURANCE



THE BASICS

Renters Insurance

When you rent an apartment or home your landlord is responsible for insuring the structure against damages caused by a fire or other destruction. Many renters believe purchasing this type of insurance is unnecessary and that the landlord's insurance will cover the replacement costs of their personal property, but that may not always be the case. Be sure to read through your policy thoroughly.

Health Insurance

With the passing of the Affordable Care Act (ACA) or more commonly known as Obamacare, there has been many changes to the health care market. One of those changes is the ability to stay on your parent's health insurance plan up to age 26 years. If your parents do not have family coverage or health coverage at all you may need to review your own options.

Auto Insurance

In Delaware, as all other states, drivers are required to carry automobile insurance. If you are planning on going to a college out-of-state and taking your car with you, you must make sure you meet all the minimum requirements of the state you will be living in.



Taking the Car with You

If your college allows you to bring your car with you, you will need to review your options for insurance coverage to make sure you have satisfied the new state's minimum coverage rules. In addition, your current coverage may need to be increased. While it is not often required, some companies may require you to enroll in a separate policy which may have a higher cost when the car will be located in another state.

However, the above discounts may still apply. When making your decision we suggest you discuss your options with a licensed agent. It may be helpful to get at least three different car insurance quotes to see which will offer the best rates for the coverage you will need. If you remain with your current carrier and policy, you will need to notify your insurance company where your car will now be located.

Do I need Renters Insurance?

If you live in a college owned housing you may have coverage for personal belongings through the college and your parent's homeowners' insurance policy. There are three questions to ask yourself when deciding if you should purchase this insurance:

- How much is my stuff worth?
- Could I afford to replace everything?
- What would happen if someone was injured on my property and sued me?

It is best to review your parents' homeowners' insurance policy with their agent or directly with the company to see what specifically will be covered while living away at college.

Individual or Self Coverage Plan

If your parent does not have health insurance that will cover you as a dependent you may need to consider purchasing your own insurance policy. Because of the ACA everyone is required to have health insurance to cover the 10 essential health benefits to avoid tax penalties.

However, if you are enrolled in a school sponsored plan you can avoid tax penalties as these are considered grandfathered plans and not subject to the ACA requirements. Please note that many colleges require proof of insurance at time of enrollment or you may be required to enroll in their school sponsored student health insurance plan (SHIP).

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Ways to Protect Yourself During Medicare Open Enrollment

During Medicare annual open enrollment (Oct. 15, 2025 – Dec. 7, 2025) you can expect to see plenty of advertisements promising the “latest and greatest” ways to save on your health plans and expenses if you’ll just “call right now!”

While some choices may look promising, some offers really are “too good to be true.”

The following three tips will help you navigate Medicare annual open enrollment to find a plan that works best for you, and spot misleading or fraudulent marketing.

1. Don't give into pressure

- There's no such thing as a “limited-time offer” or “special discount if you sign up right away” when it comes to these plans.
- You don't have to make a decision after a single phone call or website visit. Take your time.
- Don't hesitate to ask anyone calling you for their full name and contact information, company license information, or a copy of the plan.
- NOTE: Medicare and Social Security will never contact you by phone to offer a health plan.
- You don't need to provide your Social Security number, bank account, Medicare number, or credit card before you can see plan details or receive a quote for legitimate plans.

2. Do your research before you commit

- Read Medicare.gov's breakdown to learn more about what each part of Medicare covers and the difference between Medicare, Medicare Supplement Insurance (Medigap), Medicare Advantage, and Medicaid.
- Check with us or your state's department of insurance (DOI) to ask any questions or ensure an agent or company is licensed to provide plans in your state.
- You can also contact your State Health Insurance Assistance Program for help navigating your Medicare options. In some states, these are known as a SHIP program, but they may have a different name in other states.
- Keep in mind that not all the benefits you hear about on TV or see on the internet may be offered by every plan or even be available in your local area.
- Familiarize yourself with the rules those representing a Medicare health plan have to follow.

3. Follow basic cybersecurity practices online

- Beware of clicking on random internet ads or pop-ups.
- Know that some websites will change their colors or layout to look like a government site but aren't actually affiliated with the government.
- Use caution and avoid responding to unsolicited messages, texts, or emails.

THE DOI CORNER

Jessica Luff Wins the Chartrand Communications Award

The Delaware Department of Insurance would like to acknowledge and send a huge congratulations to our very own Deputy Director of Consumer Services and Investigations, Jessica Luff! Recently, Jessica was nominated for and won the Chartrand Communications Award, which honors industry excellence in insurance regulation.

For more than 20 years, David Chartrand and his incredible associates—Susan Morrison, Elaine Bickel, Joy Moore, and Art Chartrand—were at the helm of the Insurance Regulatory Examiners Society (IRES).

The Chartrand Communications Award is given to recognize those who have made a difference to IRES through their actions—those who strive to keep IRES moving toward the future, help increase membership, promote the organization beyond conferences and within the insurance community, and continually work to make a difference. These unsung heroes deserve to be recognized.

Please join us in congratulating Jessica Luff on this tremendous milestone!



ASK THE COMMISSIONER

How Can I Maximize My Insurance Coverage?

At the Delaware Department of Insurance, we encourage all Delawareans to take an active role in making sure their insurance policies provide the best protection possible. Reviewing your policies regularly is one of the most important steps you can take—life changes such as buying a home, starting a family, or preparing for retirement often create new coverage needs. It's also essential to understand the details of your policies, including deductibles, limits, and exclusions, so you aren't caught off guard in the event of a claim. Keeping your records up to date—such as documenting valuables or property improvements—can also help ensure smooth claims processing and fair compensation when you need it most.

Maximizing your insurance coverage also means looking for opportunities to save while staying protected. Many insurers offer discounts for bundling home and auto coverage, maintaining a safe driving record, or adding safety features to your property. Taking advantage of these savings helps you get more value from your policies without sacrificing protection. And remember, you don't have to navigate insurance alone—our team at the Delaware Department of Insurance is here to answer your questions and provide support. By staying informed and engaged, you can make sure your insurance works harder for you and your family.



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The consumer comes first.

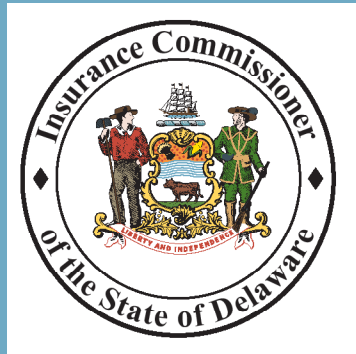
Our office is here to help if you have questions about or problems with your insurance coverage or insurance company.

Questions about insurance or complaints about an insurance company or insurance agent can be made to the Consumer Services Division by phone, by fax, by letter, by email or with an online complaint form.

Phone: 302-674-7300

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Our Mission

Protecting Delawareans through regulation and education while providing oversight of the insurance industry to best serve the public.