

The Massachusetts Automobile Insurance policy provides comprehensive guidance on coverage, premium shopping, and savings opportunities for policyholders. As of April 1, 2008, insurers in Massachusetts have the autonomy to set their own rates, fostering competition that may result in lower premiums based on individual risk factors such as driving history and location. Mandatory insurance coverage includes bodily injury to others, personal injury protection (PIP), uninsured motorist coverage, and property damage, with specified minimum limits. Optional coverages are available for higher limits, collision, comprehensive, and other protections, which may have certain limitations and exclusions.

To reduce premiums, drivers are encouraged to shop around, maintain a clean driving record, and utilize available discounts. Premium calculations are influenced by factors such as driving experience, accident history, and vehicle type, while prohibited factors for underwriting include gender, marital status, and credit history. Policyholders can achieve savings by selecting appropriate coverage options, adjusting deductibles, and participating in group marketing programs. The policy underscores the significance of a clean driving record, as it directly affects premium rates, with insurers employing Merit Rating Plans to evaluate driving records. These plans can lower premiums for accident-free years or increase them for at-fault accidents, with established rules for appealing surcharges.

Consumers are empowered to seek competitive rates, and the Division of Insurance offers resources for obtaining premium quotes and understanding consumer rights. The policy also prohibits discriminatory practices in insurance provision based on gender, race, creed, national origin, marital status, religion, age, occupation, income, principal place of garaging, education, or homeownership, as well as credit history. If an application is denied, insurers must provide reasons, and individuals can file complaints with the Division of Insurance if they believe the denial is unjust. For those unable to secure coverage, the Massachusetts Automobile Insurance Plan (MAIP) can assign them to a company for up to three years.

Coverage extends to any driver with the owner's consent, excluding unauthorized use, and bodily injury protections are limited to accidents occurring in Massachusetts unless optional coverage is purchased for incidents in the U.S. and Canada. Insurers cannot consider accidents or violations older than six years when determining premiums. Policyholders have the right to cancel their policies at any time and may receive refunds for unused premiums, although early cancellation may incur penalties. Coverage and limits can be adjusted at any time, with refunds available for reduced coverage. Claims must be processed promptly and fairly, and if a claim is denied, a written explanation is required. Policyholders deemed "at fault" in an accident can appeal the decision within 30 days for a fee. Insurers must provide a 20-day notice before canceling a policy, detailing the reason, and policyholders can appeal such cancellations. Non-renewal notices must be issued 45 days prior to policy expiration, specifying the reasons.

Personal information provided to insurers is required to be kept confidential, and individuals can file complaints with the Division of Insurance for assistance. Insurance fraud is treated as a serious offense, and policyholders are encouraged to report any suspected fraud. Certain coverages may require pre-insurance inspections, and cancellation refunds depend on returning license plates or transferring coverage. Newly licensed household members must be reported within 60 days, and providing false information can result in claim denial. For additional information, resources are available on the Division of Insurance's website.