

The "Instant Insurance Guide: Home" from the Delaware Department of Insurance provides vital information for homeowners and renters regarding insurance coverage. Homeowners insurance is essential for protecting the structure of the home and personal property, while renters insurance safeguards personal belongings. Coverage typically includes damage to the home and its contents from various perils, liability for injuries to others, and temporary living expenses if the home becomes uninhabitable due to damage. Homeowners policies generally cover structures, personal property, and liability, with specific types such as Broad (HO-2) and Special (HO-3) policies offering varying levels of coverage against numerous perils, although certain risks like floods and earthquakes are excluded.

Exclusions include floods, valuable personal items with specific limits, and other perils such as nuclear accidents and war. Homeowners should understand the difference between replacement cost and actual cash value, as policies may cover contents based on the latter, potentially resulting in lower payouts for older items. Premium prices are influenced by factors such as the type and age of the home, coverage levels, local fire protection, and the chosen deductible. Homeowners can save on premiums by shopping around, enhancing home safety, raising deductibles, and inquiring about available discounts.

Conducting a home inventory is recommended to ensure adequate coverage and document possessions for claims. The guide emphasizes the importance of regularly reviewing insurance policies and consulting with agents for specific coverage needs, especially for unique situations like home-based businesses or valuable items. For further assistance, the Delaware Department of Insurance encourages contacting their office or visiting their website for additional resources.

To effectively manage insurance coverage, it is essential to assess the cost of replacing possessions, particularly furniture and appliances. Creating a comprehensive inventory is crucial; documenting belongings through photos or videos from various angles, including closets and

cabinets, is advised. This inventory should be stored securely, such as in a safe deposit box or a fireproof container, and updated annually. Renters insurance is vital for those who rent, as it covers personal possessions against theft, damage, or destruction, and provides liability coverage similar to homeowners insurance. Renters insurance is generally affordable, with policies costing between \$15 to \$30 per month, and can be shared among roommates. College students living off-campus should consider renters insurance for their valuable items, while those under 26 living on-campus may be covered under their parents' policies. Notably, renters insurance does not cover flood damage.

Regarding policy termination, cancellation occurs when an insurer cancels coverage during the policy term, while non-renewal happens at the end of the term. Insurers can cancel policies within the first 60 days for any reason, and after that, for specific reasons such as non-payment of premiums, criminal convictions, or material misrepresentation. Written notice must be provided for both cancellations and non-renewals, with at least 30 days' notice required for non-renewals. Additionally, pet ownership can affect policy status, particularly with certain breeds or wild animals.

Conducting a home insurance checkup is advisable to understand coverage limits for home replacement and personal possessions. Consulting with a builder or insurance agent to determine current rebuilding costs is essential to ensure policy limits are adequate. An inventory of possessions should be compared against policy limits to assess the need for increased coverage or endorsements for high-value items. Flood insurance must be purchased separately, as it is not included in standard homeowners policies. Regularly reviewing your policy is crucial to understand coverage and exclusions, ensuring adequate protection. For further assistance, the Delaware Department of Insurance offers resources and support for insurance-related inquiries and complaints.