



Maryland
INSURANCE ADMINISTRATION

HOW TO CHOOSE AN INSURANCE PRODUCER

Let's start by explaining who an insurance producer is. An insurance producer is an insurance agent or broker who advises their clients on their insurance needs and binds the policies for their clients. When your insurance producer binds a policy, it means that he or she, as a representative of the insurer, confirms that coverage is in place.

Insurance producers may represent a single insurer or multiple insurers, depending upon whether they are authorized (or "appointed") by the insurer(s). While an independent insurance producer (sometimes called an "independent agent") or broker can represent multiple insurers, a captive insurance producer (sometimes called a "captive agent") only represents a single insurer. A captive insurance producer usually represents one insurer for most types of property and casualty insurance policies such as auto, home, boat, motorcycle and commercial insurance, as well as life insurance.

So how do you know which type of insurance producer to contact? The answer is that you might want to speak with both types. You could start by asking friends or family for referrals and recommendations. Another option is to ask the insurer for the names of insurance producers - either captive or independent agents or brokers - who sell their insurance located in your area. Another resource is the Maryland Insurance Administration's (MIA) website. Although we cannot recommend an insurance producer, you can check to make sure that the insurance producer you selected is licensed.



→ CONTINUED



CONTINUED

If you are shopping around for insurance - either because you are unhappy with your current insurer, are shopping for a better premium, or perhaps you are a first-time insurance buyer - you might want to start by visiting the MIA's website at insurance.maryland.gov. The MIA's website has comparison rate guides for both auto and homeowners insurance. After finding a few companies that you want to receive quotes from, you can reach out to them for the names of insurance producers in your area who represent that insurer.

Once you have decided on a few producers, either from referrals from family and friends or insurance companies, you can ask the insurance producer for quotes for the policies you need. It is important to ask for the quotes for the same types and amounts of coverage from all of the insurance producers so that you can do an apples to apples comparison. If you currently have insurance and are looking to make a change, you may find it helpful to have a copy of your current insurance policy declarations page handy so you can get a quote for the coverages that are the same as your current policy. The declarations page - which is often within the first few pages of your insurance package - is the part of your policy that is specific to you and provides important information about your policy limits for each type of coverage.

If you decide to make a change, it is a good idea to review your current policy, including coverage amounts, deductibles and endorsements, with your new insurance producer to see if they make any suggestions as to things you might want to consider changing to provide better coverage or to help the policy costs (premiums) better fit your budget.

For additional information on shopping for your insurance needs and information to help you better understand your policies, please visit the MIA's website or call us at 410-468-2000 or toll free 1-800-492-6116.

Declarations Page Sample

Your Insurance Company
3535 Second Street
Company Town, USA 54321

Policy number XX-XXXXXX-XX
Policy period: 6 months
Effective date: January 1, 2015
Expiration date: July 1, 2015

Homeowners Insurance Policy <SAMPLE>

Named Insured	Address	Mortgagee	Address
John E. Doe	123 E. Main Street Insured Town, USA 12345	Bank of USA	1212 First Street Company Town, USA 54321

XYZ Insurance Company considers your claims history when determining whether to cancel or to non-renew your insurance policy.

Coverages & property	Liability limits	Inflation coverage index
SECTION I		XXX.X
A Dwelling	\$250,000	Deductibles All peril \$2,000
B Dwelling extension (garage)	\$25,000	
C Personal property	\$125,000	
D Loss of use	Actual loss sustained	
SECTION II		Policy premium \$1,000
L Personal liability (each occurrence)	\$300,000	
M Medical payments to others (each person)	\$1,000	

Loss of settlement provisions (see policy)
A1: Replacement cost - Similar construction
B1: Limited replacement cost - Coverage B

Forms, options and endorsements

Replacement cost coverage	xx-xxxx
Mold, fungus, wet rot, dry rot or bacteria	xx-xxxx
Ordinance or law coverage:	
10% of Coverage A	xx-xxxx
Earthquake excl. masonry veneer	xx-xxxx
Sewer, water backup coverage:	
\$10,000/\$500 deductible	xx-xxxx
Increase dwelling, up to \$50,000	Option XX
Jewelry and furs, \$5,000 each	Option YY

Your policy consists of this page, any endorsements and the policy form. Keep together.

Homeowners



Automobile



<https://bit.ly/miahodeclarationspagesample>



<https://bit.ly/miaautodeclarationspagesample>