

# Insights and Updates

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## Are you driving for Uber or Lyft?

We are all in for you making some extra cash. But, we don't want you to lose what you earned, and perhaps much more should you get into an auto accident. Insurance protection while "Ubering" is not a given without careful evaluation of your current auto insurance policy.

The New York Transportation Network Company law, effective June 29, 2017, will impact the insurance coverage you can expect, since it permits insurers to add specific liability exclusions for a vehicle's TNC use. The law states that a TNC vehicle is not a "public or livery vehicle" (which is already excluded in the policy), but insurers are permitted by regulation to exclude them. However, without a specific TNC exclusion, insurers are obliged to insure them because the "public or livery conveyance" exclusion in the auto policy is ineffective.

Since the effective date of the law gave insurers such a short time to prepare their filings in advance, it may be months before these filings

are approved and added to personal auto policies upon renewal (a delay that somewhat benefits you). This is why TNC group policies are required by regulation to provide primary mandatory coverage for all phases of TNC use until July 1, 2019, when it is expected that TNC coverage options will have been implemented by insurers. However, mandated coverage does not include comprehensive and collision coverage for the driver's car.

### For example:

- While on a prearranged trip, Uber has stated that it will provide its drivers with liability and supplementary uninsured/underinsured motorist coverages in the amount of \$1.25 million, personal injury protection benefits in the amount of \$50,000 and contingent comprehensive and collision coverage subject to a \$1,000 deductible.
- While drivers are merely logged in, Uber will provide them with minimum limits for liability and

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uninsured motorist coverages, along with the required personal injury protection benefits in the amount of \$50,000. There is no comprehensive and collision coverage provided for the driver's vehicle when it is just logged in to drive.

While the TNC does provide drivers with some protection, you are going to need to amend your auto policy with specific coverage if you do not want to suffer any coverage gaps. Call our agency to get a "Lyft" up to better policy protection.

## Vehicle safety

Seatbelts aren't the only safety feature your vehicle offers these days. Advanced Driver Assistance Systems such as blind spot monitoring, forward collision warning and more are continuously shaping the way we interact with our motor vehicles. Many of these complex technology systems can seem simple to understand on the surface, but they have important specifications and limitations that you must know.

Let's say you find out your vehicle has blind-spot monitoring. It's easy to take that new-found knowledge at face value and assume that anything that passes your blind spot will be detected. That's not taking into account pedestrians, cyclists or other vehicles passing at high speeds. Overreliance or ignorance of ADAS systems can result in false expectations, with the risk of causing a vehicle accident.

ADAS systems have massive potential to reduce the risk of vehicle crashes, as long as they're used correctly. This is especially important for new drivers, who often are left uneducated on how ADAS systems work; and sometimes, don't even know that their vehicle has such technology.

You are the best line of defense against over relying or being uninformed on ADAS systems. Be sure to read your vehicle manual to learn more about what sort of technology your vehicle offers and how to use it.

Give us a call to discuss your current insurance policy if you have any questions, you may be eligible for a discount on your auto policy if your vehicle has safety features.

## Time to give up the car keys?

According to a 2015 report by the Centers for Disease Control, more than 40 million U.S. drivers are aged 65 or older—that's a 50 percent jump from 1999. The U.S. Census Bureau projects that there will be 53.7 million drivers who are at least 70 years old on the road in 2030.

While teenage drivers still cause the most vehicle accidents, older drivers tend to run the risk of serious injury or being killed when they are involved in a car accident. So, as drivers get older, their insurance premiums tend to increase.

Often, people give up driving because it is no longer necessary for them to drive around anymore. However, for those drivers who may be more reluctant to relinquish their car keys, there are some factors to consider when making this decision, including the following:

- certain medical conditions or medications (e.g., dementia/ Alzheimer's disease, vision problems; heart problems, Parkinson's disease,

arthritis or diabetes) can affect a person's memory or attention span; vision; or mobility;

- the condition of the roads and signage may be in such need of repair that it is hard to navigate in your local area; or
- the vehicle is in need of service and it isn't safe to drive.

Keep in mind, newer cars offer improved safety features (e.g., air bags, rear-view cameras and stay-in-lane technology) that can keep drivers of all ages safer on the road. Some of these safety features also can offer drivers discounts on their auto insurance premiums.

As your lifestyle continues to evolve, remember that your insurance coverages need to evolve to keep up with any changes. Give our agency a call, we can review your insurance policies (e.g., auto policy's collision coverage, life insurance and homeowners) to make sure you have the coverage to protect you at any stage of life.





## Travel well

With the warming of the weather, now is the time to start planning your summer getaways. It seems like every time we go to book a trip or rent a car (either in-person or online) there is a prompt: “Would you like to purchase insurance to cover that?” And, the answer is: “It depends.”

If you already have certain insurance policies (e.g., auto, health and life), some of the insurance policies offered through various companies—car rental, emergency medical and accidental death insurance—may be superfluous. And, if you are on Medicare or Medicaid, you won’t be covered for emergency medical treatment if you are traveling outside of the U.S. If you are on either of these programs and you are traveling out of the country, there is emergency medical insurance that you can purchase for your trip.

Your homeowners policy will cover your personal belongings, subject to the policy’s deductible and covered causes of loss. Protection for lost luggage (not stolen) is one area your credit-card company could help you,

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as well as the airline that is responsible for the lost luggage. Keep in mind that an airline has certain limitations on the amount it must compensate the luggage owner.

And, now for the big question: Do you purchase the extra insurance for your airplane or hotel reservation? If

you get a bargain on the airfare or room rate, it might not be worth the money you would have to put down to get the coverage. However, if you have spent a considerable amount of money on your trip, the insurance would give you extra peace of mind if your trip is canceled or delayed.

As with all your insurance needs, give our agency a call. We will be happy to review your current insurance coverages with you; review the details of your trip; and offer our advice on any additional insurance coverage you may need. We also can examine the insurance coverages you have to protect your property that is staying at home, so that if the worst-case scenario happens while you are away, you’ll have the coverage you need to help you get back on your feet when you return.



## April showers bring more than May flowers



Spring rains can be refreshing and renewing, but they also can be torrential and destructive. Melting snow and spring rains mean that there can be a lot of water accumulating, which can cause flooding—even in areas that haven't been prone to flood in the past.

We want you to know that a standard homeowners policy will protect your home and your property in the event of theft, fire and similar damage. However, homeowners policies exclude water damage caused by flooding or mudslides. So, you will need additional coverage.

Don't panic. You can purchase a National Flood Insurance Program policy to cover your losses should a flood occur. However, keep in mind, there is 30-day waiting period before NFIP coverage goes into effect. So, the time to think about this type of insurance is now.

In addition to making sure you have the necessary insurance policies, make sure you also have the supplies on hand that will help you weather any storm. These include the following: battery-powered radios and flashlights, water, nonperishable food, first-aid supplies, plywood, security fencing, tarps, mops and sandbags.

The perfect time to prepare for a disaster is well before it happens. Call our agency today. We are happy to review your insurance policies with you to make sure you have the coverage you need when you need it.

## News from our agency

### Decisions, decisions ...

Almost everybody needs guidance when it comes to decisions in life. There are often many factors to consider, meaning you need all the help you can get. Decisions lead to change, and change affects many aspects of your life, whether you know it or not. One of the most overlooked changes that can happen is changes to your insurance policies.

Thinking of building an in-ground pool on your property? Did you purchase or receive a new vehicle? Are you planning to get married? It's important to stay up to speed on all of your recent changes, because these events could trigger a change in your insurance policies.

We want to make sure that you're covered no matter what decisions you make in life. Give us a call so we can talk about if you have the right insurance coverage.

