



Dealing with an insurance claim can be a difficult process. Every loss is unique, and every insurance company has different procedures. **To assist you in dealing with your loss, we have created this form to answer some of the common questions you may have about your insurance claim.**

Who will assist me with my claim?

- Your claims adjuster is the main contact for your claim. They will work with you regarding all aspects of your loss. Depending on the type of claim, this may be a local independent adjuster or a telephone adjuster from the insurance company. However, as your broker, we are always there to assist. Don't hesitate to contact us if you have any difficulty reaching your adjuster or if you simply have an issue you would like to discuss in more detail. We will work with you and your adjuster to assist in any way we can. The name of your personal insurance representative at Brownridge & Company is noted above.

What are some of my responsibilities in the claims process?

- Every insurance policy in Canada has standard Statutory Conditions that govern an insurance contract. A number of these apply to the claims process and we would suggest that you refer to your policy wordings for further reference.
- You have a responsibility to provide complete information to your claims adjuster that is accurate and truthful regarding the nature and extent of your loss.
- It is important to note that you have a responsibility to take reasonable steps to prevent any further loss or damage to your property, or it could affect the insurance coverage responding to cover your loss.
- Lastly, it is important to note the principal of subrogation. If the insurer feels that a third party negligently contributed to your loss, then they are very likely to seek to recover damages from that party after your claim is settled. You are obligated to cooperate with the insurer's efforts to recover these amounts, even if you have a relationship with the party in question. If it is likely that the third party was negligent, then the insurer has every right to attempt to recover the amount they paid out on your claim. If successful in subrogation, then the insurer will typically be able to refund your policy deductible.

How long do I have to complete my claim?

- There are exceptions, but the general rule is that a claim is to be completed within **one year** of the date of loss.

My adjuster sent me a Proof of Loss Form. What is it and when do I complete it?

- A Proof of Loss is a formal document that must be provided to you by law. It is a means of formally stating all the relevant details pertaining to your loss. Your adjuster will normally provide this to you at the opening of your claim. They will let you know if and when they require it to be completed, and whether or not the form must be signed and notarized.

What is the procedure on dealing with contractors for repairs?

- Your adjuster will work with you in obtaining estimates for necessary repairs to your property. Typically two or more estimates are obtained from contractors to compare prices for the final repairs or reconstruction. If you have a contractor you prefer, don't hesitate to let your adjuster know. While the insurer will only pay based on the lowest bid, your desired contractor would usually be given the opportunity to match the lowest quote. Some insurers have their own "Preferred Contractors." Keep in mind if you use a different one of your own choosing, the insurance company may not be able to guarantee the quality of work.

What is the procedure for replacement of contents?

- On most policies, particularly residential policies, your contents are covered on a Replacement Cost (RC) basis. With this coverage you get to replace items with similar new contents, without any depreciation. However, you also have the option not to replace an item. In this case you will only be paid the Actual Cash Value (ACV), or "depreciated value," as a cash settlement.
- The typical process would be to make a detailed listing (or schedule of loss) of all items lost or damaged. Include as much detail as you can about where or when purchased, attach any original receipts you may have, and then estimate the replacement cost of each item. On smaller items, usually under \$200 or so, you are normally fine to just write an estimate down. For higher valued items, you should attach 1 or 2 written quotes for replacement of the item. **Your adjuster will confirm at what dollar amount you should be obtaining written estimates.**
- There may be some items that you simply need to replace right away. If possible, you should discuss these with your adjuster before replacing them, especially for larger items. In a large loss such as a fire, the insurer will typically pay you an "advance" payment on your contents in a lump sum, to get you started on some of the more urgent contents replacement. In each of these cases, **be sure to keep receipts for everything you replace.**
- Once the insurance company reviews and accepts your schedule of loss, they will be able to issue your ACV settlement. They will go through & depreciate each item accordingly, and then issue you a settlement based on that depreciated amount. You now have been paid out the actual cash value, and if you chose not to replace anything, then the claim would be closed.
- However, you are likely to replace most, if not all, of your lost contents, so you can then go ahead and start replacing your belongings. You can bring in the receipts to your adjuster to submit to the insurance company to "top-up" to the replacement cost. You should do this in one or two batches, and not keep submitting a small amount of receipts at a time. **When submitting receipts you should write the item # on the receipt that corresponds to its place on your schedule of loss.**
- Lastly, it is important to note that the estimated replacement cost you originally put on the schedule of loss does not bind you to that RC value. For example, if you estimated \$80 for an item and it ends up costing \$96, you likely won't have a problem at the time of the "top-up." If there are drastic differences, then the insurer may question it. However since the insurer normally requires estimates ahead of time for larger items, these differences in values are usually for inexpensive items and therefore are not much of a concern. Once you have replaced the items you want, then your contents claim is complete.

Do I have to provide receipts for everything I lost to prove I owned it?

- Insurance deals on the principal of utmost good faith. The insurer will certainly ask for any information you can provide on lost property, including receipts, warranty documents, owners manuals, photos etc. Understandably, you won't be able to provide proof of ownership for every single item lost or damaged. The insurer will use common sense in dealing on your claim, and if you are open, fair and honest in declaring your loss, then the insurer will very likely have some flexibility on the extent of information they will require to validate your claim.

When do I have to pay my deductible?

- **Your adjuster will confirm when to pay your deductible.** The insurer might pay all costs associated with your claim and then collect the deductible from you at the end. Alternatively, if a contractor is involved, the adjuster may confirm you should pay your deductible to them, usually at the start of the repairs to your property.