

## Motorcycle Insurance 101: Coverage Before Cruising

If you love motorcycles and the open road, you'll already be familiar with the insurance coverage necessary to take your weekend ride safely. It's always a good thing to refresh your memory, too! For those new riders that are less familiar with everything that comes along with that beautiful new *Harley, Indian, Triumph, or Honda*, it's important to fully understand the rules of the road as well as the insurance policies available to you for a safer, less expensive ride. Educating oneself doesn't stop after learning to ride that brand-new bike.

In fact, before ever revving that engine one should familiarize themselves with insurance coverage, accident prevention, and safety measures. You know, what may be considered the boring stuff? As much as you want to hop on the Harley for the first time and hit the road after your purchase, slow down and remember that a motorcycle can be dangerous when driven by an inexperienced rider. Not only are you putting your own safety at-risk, but the safety of those you share the road with as well.

Due to the rise in motorcycle accident claims our Personal Injury attorneys have litigated in recent months, Shaked Law Firm has provided readers with this helpful article to help new and experienced motorcycle riders alike get themselves familiarized for the first time—or as a refresher course—before they ride. Taking the time to read through this article can prevent accidents and provide the peace of mind needed should an accident occur.

### Coverage to get you started

Standard coverage is exactly what it sounds like—standard, basic coverage. However, it doesn't protect the rider or any accident victims from everything, and for those who want peace of mind, it may be wise to add further coverage to any motorcycle you plan to ride. Let's begin with a look at what standard coverage *does* entail.

**Bodily injury and property damage liability:** this type of coverage pays for damage caused to other vehicles and personal property. It's important to note that this coverage does apply to injuries sustained by other motorists in the event of an accident, as well as any passengers in their vehicles (or on their bikes). This insurance policy can cover legal expenses, if the other party chooses to file a lawsuit. All in all, this policy can get you started if you're on a budget and want to ride right away, but it's not recommended that you make this your only policy.

**Uninsured and underinsured motorist (UM/UIM coverage):** If you're injured in an accident such as a hit-and-run, or if the other party involved in the accident is at-fault and does not have proper insurance coverage, this is the policy you **MUST** employ to keep yourself safe. It's considered standard, because it's absolutely necessary to have it. UM/UIM protects you from having to pay for someone else's recklessness on the road. It can also cover medical expenses, should you become injured in an accident. Overall, this is not a policy you want to be without.

**Comprehensive/collision coverage:** This policy is also one you don't want to be without, if it can be helped. This type of coverage will pay to repair or even replace your motorcycle should it become the victim of theft or become damaged by no fault of your own. We've all seen the commercials boasting "total car replacement", and it's not something to be ignored. This coverage offers what's called a "deductible"; that means you pay up to a certain amount, and your insurance policy pays the rest. Deductibles vary so we can't provide exact estimates here on the blog. The best thing to do is check with your insurance company as to what the specifics on your deductible are.

There are specialty policies provided above and beyond "standard" coverage that can be added on to any policy you select, depending on your insurance carrier. These policies can include things such as medical expenses. An example of this policy is coverage that will pay your medical expenses, as well as those of any passengers, in the event of an accident regardless of who was at-fault. These policies can be costly, but medical expenses can cause families great financial burden. The best protection is to invest in your safety. It's better to have the policy and not need it, than to find yourself the victim of an unforeseen accident and not have enough coverage.

### **Not all carriers are created equal**

There are an array of options available to motorists when it comes to selecting the insurance policy that fits their budget and needs. Insurance carriers like Progressive tend to offer expanded packages, should the motorist want more coverage. These packages will foot the bill for everything from a totaled motorcycle to the expenses incurred after a traumatic brain injury. Some carriers also offer coverage in the event you *are* the driver at-fault. This is an option that's important to consider, because accidents happen to the best of us, and while we all may do our best to maintain a safe driving record, we can't see what the future holds.

Let's briefly look at some packages that insurance carriers offer above and beyond their basic coverage.

**Full replacement cost:** replacing the damaged motorcycle to the condition it was in prior to the accident (or replacing a totaled motorcycle) is the gold star of insurance policies, especially when it comes to motorcycles. They are often totaled or severely damaged after an accident, due to their small size. Having an insurance policy that can help replace or repair extreme damage to a prized possession is something those who can afford it should opt for.

**Large accident forgiveness:** this is an add-on for some insurance carriers that offers above and beyond the standard accident forgiveness policy. Under certain conditions and after a number of years without an accident, the policy will pay for an accident of any size. This type of coverage is good to have but may or may not have fine print applying a deductible to its terms and conditions.

**Small accident forgiveness:** your carrier won't raise your rate for a single, small accident if the accident costs them under a certain dollar amount. However, your deductible may apply. In most cases, it's quite possible that any insurance coverage you purchase regardless of what it offer will have some level of deductible you'll be responsible for in the event of an accident.

## **Safety first**

**Shaked Law Fact:** riders who cannot handle a motorcycle properly pose a serious and life-threatening risk not only to themselves, but to other motorists on the road. An inexperienced rider that causes an accident would be liable for any injuries sustained, as well as the damage they cause to those with whom they share the road.

Aside from the all-important insurance coverage, spending the time and investing the money in proper motorcycle riding classes should never be neglected. It's important to remain licensed, properly insured, diligent and practice in areas that are well lit (inexperienced riders should never ride when it's dark!) and where there are no other motorists that could be injured in the event of an accident.

*Never practice riding a motorcycle or ride a friend's motorcycle without proper insurance and licensure!*

**Contact us to schedule a complimentary consultation. There's no obligation. Take the first step and call today: (877). 529-0080**



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