



AAHA BUSINESS INSURANCE PROGRAM
 P.O. BOX 1629 CHICAGO, IL 60690-9850
 PHONE: 866-380-AAHA (2242)
 FAX: 866-381-AAHA
 AAHA@HUBINTERNATIONAL.COM
 WWW.AAHAINSURANCE.ORG



Questions to Ask When Buying Commercial Auto Insurance

Purchasing commercial auto insurance is an important decision for a veterinary practice owner. To get the best coverage at the best rate, ask yourself the following questions:

Do You Know What Defines Commercial Vehicle Usage?

Although you may infrequently use a vehicle for conducting business, your personal auto coverage excludes using a vehicle for commercial purposes. Insurance policies clearly define commercial use of a vehicle. It is important to understand the differences so your claim is not denied.

If your employees are using their own autos to conduct practice business, make sure they are covered for liability under your commercial policy. You could be held partially responsible for damages even when a vehicle is not company-owned. Employees may not inform their personal insurance agent that they drive for business because this would increase their insurance premium.

How Many Total Drivers and Vehicles Does your Business Require?

Insurance companies base their rates on number of drivers, number of vehicles, and class of vehicles. If you have multiple vehicles and drivers, consider purchasing fleet insurance.

Do You Know Your Driver's Records?

Drivers with multiple claims or traffic violations are going to cause your premium to increase. Ensure that you are aware of the driving records of any new or current employees. Have all employees who drive for your practice report any and all accidents or driving infractions immediately. Make it a written policy.

You may also want to consider requiring proof of insurance every six months for employees who use their auto for business purposes. Ask your employees to provide the declaration page of their personal policy to confirm that they have the required insurance limits plus an endorsement that removes the exclusion of driving for the practice.

What Kind of Car Are You Buying or Leasing?

Having a luxury or sports car makes a statement, but you will pay more for insurance. Instead, consider a mid-sized sedan with a superior safety rating.



Broker and Consultant: HUB International Midwest Limited, HUB International Midwest Insurance Agency (CA)



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What Anti-Theft and Safety Devices Will the Vehicle Have?

When insuring your vehicle, an insurer is going to consider:

- Location of your practice. Higher crime areas will most often lead to higher premiums.
- Presence of alarms, GPS devices, air bags, and other safety devices in the vehicle. Make sure that you tell your insurance broker about these devices.

What Deductible Can You Afford?

The amount of deductible you are willing to absorb can have a dramatic impact on your premium because all insurers pretty much adhere to a simple formula: **the higher the deductible—the lower the premium.**

Will Federal or State Laws Impact Your Coverage?

Certain vehicles and what they transport can also be affected by federal laws and, in some instances, can be state-specific. Investigate any legislative requirements that may impact you.

For more information on how to reduce or transfer the risks associated with practice-owned vehicles and employees who drive for business purposes, contact the AAHA Business Insurance Program.



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