

Ohio's Minimum Coverage Requirements for Auto Insurance

What is Financial Responsibility?

In Ohio, it is illegal to drive any motor vehicle without insurance or other proof of financial responsibility (FR). It is also illegal for any motor vehicle owner to allow another person to drive the owner's vehicle without FR proof. To comply with Ohio's FR requirements, individuals must maintain insurance or get a bond. Both types of coverage are described on this tip sheet.

If I obtain insurance, what is required?

Ohio law requires the following for insurance coverage:

- If a person purchases automobile insurance, the state requires the person to purchase Bodily Injury Liability Coverage as well as Property Damage Liability Coverage.
- A motor vehicle liability insurance policy. Insurance cards are issued by an insurer to the policyholder for each motor vehicle insured under a motor vehicle liability insurance policy.
- A certificate of proof of financial responsibility on a form prescribed by the Ohio Bureau of Motor Vehicles (BMV).

If I purchase auto insurance, what are the minimum coverage requirements in Ohio?

In Ohio the required minimum for Bodily Injury Liability Coverage is currently \$25,000 per person injured in any one accident and \$50,000 for all persons injured in any one accident. The required minimum for Property Damage Liability Coverage is \$25,000 for injury to or destruction of property of others in any one accident.

Why should I get more coverage than the minimum?

The value of your assets (what you may have to lose in the event you cause an accident) may help you determine the amount of coverage you should carry. Having additional coverage could protect you and your assets in the event of a serious accident. If you do not have adequate coverage, the law allows the victim to take any assets that you may have in order to cover the costs of any damages that occur.

What could happen to me if I get in an accident and only have minimum coverage?

Your insurance should cover you up to the amount of the policy limits. If the damage in the accident exceeds an amount greater than your policy limits, you would be held legally responsible to pay for any damages that your insurance does not cover, including medical costs, costs to repair any property damage and legal costs for any court proceedings that may take place because of the accident. To pay for the damages, your home, car and other assets could be taken away from you. Your present and future wages could be garnished. If your child was driving a car that was underinsured and was in an accident, they too would be held responsible for any damages and could face significant debt. You and your family could end up paying for one accident for the rest of your life!