

CAR ACCIDENT SETTLEMENT NEGOTIATION TIPS

Time Your Negotiations Appropriately

It is important to take time to prepare for your claim in order to improve your position in the negotiations. You should gather all evidence needed to support your claim, including:

- Medical bills and records of your treatment;
- Statements from witnesses to the accident;
- Police reports;
- Property damage estimates;
- Photos, notes, or any other relevant evidence that supports the amount of losses you have incurred.



Start With a High Number

In negotiations for home or auto purchases, the seller wants to start with a high sales price, the consumer wants to start with a low sales price, and they both likely hope they can meet somewhere in the middle. Insurance negotiations are similar and an adjuster will generally "lowball" your offer at the beginning. For this reason, it is important to make your initial claim for more than the amount you actually believe is reasonable.



Do Not Give Up Too Early

In many cases, insurance settlement negotiations will go back and forth several times before a reasonable amount is offered. This can be especially true in cases in which certain medical expenses or property damage valuations are contested. If you believe in the amount you are requesting, keep submitting evidence in support of your claim. The adjuster may withhold their best offer for several rounds of negotiations so it can be beneficial to hang in there and not give up negotiations too soon.



Identify When You Receive a Final Offer

Look for clues that may indicate whether the adjuster did not present a final offer, such as saying "I can't make a higher offer right now." Specifying "right now" may be an important indication that the offer may be increased in a later round of negotiations. If you believe you've received a final offer, you must decide whether to accept the settlement or to pursue other means of compensation. If the amount is close to what you have deemed reasonable and fair, you should always feel free to accept the offer and receive the funds to cover your losses.

