

CLIENT NEWSLETTER NO. 2

MEDICAL PAYMENT COVERAGE AS PART OF YOUR AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE

The Law Office of Neal H. Sobol has handled over 7000 claims for people like you who were involved in an automobile accident or other accident that caused injury.

In handling such personal injuries, we are often told by our clients that they have “full coverage” automobile insurance. However, as we mentioned in our last newsletter to you, these same clients were often found to be missing important protection. For example, while having liability coverage (in case someone is injured due to negligent use of their car) and coverage for loss or damage to vehicles, these clients seldom had Uninsured Motorist coverage to cover them for injuries and damages caused by the negligence of uninsured drivers. This coverage is important because there is such a high percentage of uninsured drivers in Los Angeles (as high as 25%), and because the coverage is quite inexpensive.

In addition to that coverage, MEDICAL PAYMENT coverage, as part of your automobile policy, is also quite important, and we would like to devote the balance of this article to a summary of that topic.

MEDICAL PAYMENTS AS PART OF YOUR AUTO INSURANCE POLICY

This coverage (“Med-Pay” for short) is provided by your auto insurance company and is separate from any type of private health insurance (HMO, etc.) you might have. Most people tend to purchase \$2,000 or \$5,000, per person, as part of their auto policy, although some carry as much as \$10,000 or even \$25,000. The amount purchased is what is available for payment of medical bills resulting from an automobile collision. It costs about \$150 per year for \$5,000 of this type of coverage.

The following are some of the important things to be aware of with regard to the benefits of this type of coverage (this is meant only as a brief summary, and we would strongly suggest that you seek specific legal advice on any particular situation you might encounter):

- 1) The Med-Pay on your policy is available even if you were at fault in the accident;
- 2) While many private health insurance companies (HMOs, etc.) will not cover chiropractic and other care, Med-Pay usually will do so;
- 3) Med-Pay on your policy not only covers you but also covers passengers in your car at the time of an accident. The coverage applies to injuries “arising out of use of a motor vehicle” and this may also include an injury sustained while removing cargo from the vehicle owned by the insured person.
- 4) Remember, this is coverage on YOUR policy; if another driver causes an accident, and that driver had Med-Pay, that person’s Med-Pay policy will not cover payment of your medical bills (although the liability portion of their policy, may do so);

5) IMPORTANT: NOT ALL “MED-PAY” POLICIES ARE THE SAME: Some policies will require you to reimburse (pay back) any money the insurance company pays from your Med-Pay coverage if you receive a financial settlement from another party responsible for the accident. This is often referred to as “Reimbursable Med-Pay.” Other insurance companies offer Med-Pay policies that only cover medical bills once you prove

to them that your private health insurance (HMO, etc.) will not cover the expense, or has covered all that is allowed by its contract with you. These are often called “Excess Med-Pay policies”. Insurance companies sometimes package Med-Pay coverage in other ways to, in effect, dilute it. If you purchase Med-Pay, insure that it is “NON-REIMBURSABLE AND NON-EXCESS MED-PAY”, based on the above definitions. You can simply ask for it in those terms to confirm what you are being sold. Please note also that insurance companies sometimes change the nature of your Med-Pay coverage without it always being very clear that they are doing so, although they will send you notice. It is wise to confirm that you have the coverage you think you have, each time your policy is renewed.

6) Med-Pay typically covers medical expenses that are “reasonable and necessary.” We suggest that you consult a personal injury attorney in case of a specific accident involving injuries for proper handling of this and other aspects of your claim.

Neal H. Sobol, Esq., is an attorney in Glendale, California, who has handled over 7000 personal injury claims arising from the negligent actions of others. He is available for free consultation at (818) 547-6650.

FREE CONSULTATIONS AVAILABLE

If you or a friend has a personal injury claim and don't yet have an attorney, The Law Office of Neal H. Sobol will give a free legal consultation to help find out what is best. The Law Office of Neal H. Sobol has specialized for 18 years in handling personal injury claims resulting from automobile and other accidents (the firm was previously called The Law Office of Sobol & Raldiris but changed its name to The Law Office of Neal H. Sobol, to reflect a change of legal ownership. Our address and telephone number have not changed). The firm handles personal injury claims and lawsuits throughout Los Angeles, Ventura, Orange, Riverside and San Bernardino counties.

Just call Neal H. Sobol at 818-547-6650 for a free consultation. Even if you already have another attorney in a personal injury case, you may benefit from a free “second opinion.”