

Risky Drivers

Have you seen your driving record go up in smoke, only to learn that your insurer has cancelled your auto policy? It may be quite difficult to find a company that is willing to provide insurance down the road. And if you do find one, be prepared to pay the high premiums demanded of a high-risk driver.

A non-renewal means only that your company does not want to offer you a policy any longer — possibly because of your driving or claims record over the last three to five years. More than likely, you will find other insurers that are willing to provide insurance at a higher price.

Auto insurers may cancel your policy at any time if you fail to pay your premium, lose your driving privileges, or have not accurately reported the facts relating to your level of risk. A cancellation will make it hard to get insurance for a long time to come.

A driver who cannot find any insurance must resort to the assigned-risk pool and will be randomly assigned to a member company who must provide a policy. In most states, coverage is limited to the amount required by law. The premiums are set by the state, but they may depend on the driver's record and other specific factors.

If you are forced to enter the assigned-risk pool, the insurer must keep you for three years. However, you may want to shop for less expensive or more complete coverage from time to time. The longer your record is free of accidents and citations, the easier it will be to get insurance outside of the pool.