

"Your Massachusetts Auto Body Association"



April 22, 2020

Insurance Commissioner Anderson,

AASP-MA is writing to ask that you take immediate steps to stop exploitive practices being employed by insurance providers regarding issues arising from the COVID-19 pandemic. As the "first responders" meeting the needs of the motoring public, the collision repair industry and the customers we serve are subjected to the potentially life-threatening exposure of the pandemic virus. New procedures and protocols are now required to protect both the customer and our entire workforce. This requires that insurers must acknowledge and pay for the procedures and the associated costs that will help protect the vehicle owners and the dedicated professionals who repair collision damaged vehicles.

In many instances, Insurers have indicated that they have no obligation under the policy to cover such procedures. This unfairly forces repairers to consider charging the vehicle owner directly during what is already a stressful situation, only to be compounded by the threat of exposure to the Covid-19 virus.

In addition to little or no compensation towards the application of disinfecting materials to the vehicle environment pre and post repair, insurers have also avoided/eliminated personal inspection of damaged vehicles by their appraisers.

The Insurance Industry has forced collision repairers to take on the duties of their *insurance appraisers*. The insurers expect repairers to jeopardize the health of collision repair professionals, by transferring the burden of physical inspection and estimate writing so they don't subject their own staff to the imminent danger of Covid-19. Then the insurer refuses to properly reimburse collision repairers for undertaking the associated risk and liability.

The following items require your immediate attention through a directive to the insurance industry to ensure the health and safety of vehicle owners requiring

collision repair services and collision repair technicians during the COVID19 pandemic.

1. Proper time allowance for the application of disinfecting materials
2. Proper reimbursement for the additional PPE items required, which includes covering of interiors of the vehicle and high contact components such as steering wheels shifters and door handles.
3. Proper reimbursement for additional administrative costs such as picking up and delivering of vehicles, from and to the vehicle owner, the preparation of all documentation required and uploading of the required documentation to the insurer.
4. The inclusion of "hazard pay", much like other industries have implemented

The insurance industry has been saving millions during this current state of emergency. Some insurers have provided minimal discounts of premiums (the average is about 15%) due to a dramatic reduction in driving that has reduced claims by as much as 70%. They do so while exploiting those of us in the "essential" business of collision repair. The actions of the insurance industry are unfair to consumers and repairers alike and it only magnifies the insurers commitment to subordinating "consumer safety" to "corporate profit".

Please contact me at your earliest opportunity so that we may discuss a plan to move forward to protect the motoring public and our collision repairers.

Sincerely



Evangelos "Lucky" Papageorg

Executive Director, AASP-MA

671.574.0741

CC: Governor Charles Baker, Lt Governor Karyn Polito, AG Maura Healey