

INSURANCE LAW

2021 Auto Insurance Complaint Rankings

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I am privileged yet again to report upon the State of New York Department of Financial Services' recently published 2021 Automobile Insurance Complaint Rankings.

The 2021 "Annual Ranking," based upon data for the calendar year 2020, ranks 135 automobile insurance companies actively doing business in New York State. As in the past, this report ranks the individual companies themselves, rather than just the corporate groups of which those companies may be members. This method of listing is intended to give consumers a more accurate picture of their insurer's performance. Also, as in the past, insurers are ranked based upon a complaint ratio, which is determined by the number of private passenger automobile insurance complaints upheld against them and closed by the Department of Financial Services ("DFS"), as a percentage of their average total private passenger automobile premium volume in New York State over a two-year period.

In 2020, the Department received a total of 3,136 private passenger auto insurance complaints (down from 3,171 in 2018, and up from 2,960 in 2019), of which 424 (up from 310 in 2018, and down from 427 in 2019) were upheld. Neither *commercial* auto complaints nor complaints made *directly to the insurer* are included in determining the complaint ratios. Complaints either not upheld by the Department or withdrawn by the consumer are also not included in the calculations of the ratios. An upheld complaint occurs when the Department agrees with a consumer that an auto insurer made an inappropriate decision. Typical complaints are those involving such issues as delays in the payment of no-fault claims, and nonrenewals of policies. Complaints about the value of

monetary settlements and policy terminations are also common. The DFS cautions that "Large insurance companies doing a lot of business typically generate more complaints than smaller companies, so while ratios may allow you to compare small companies with large companies by looking at complaints as a percentage of premiums written, only one or two additional upheld complaints per year can have a significant impact on a smaller insurer."

The 2020 average complaint ratio for all companies was 0.0301 per \$1 million in premiums (up from 0.0228 in 2018, and down slightly from 0.0303 in 2019). This average ratio was derived by dividing the number of complaints upheld against all companies in 2020 (424) by the average 2020 premiums for all companies (\$14,101,929 million, or \$14.10 billion) (up from \$13,611,942 million, or \$13.61 billion, in 2018 and up from \$14,078,265 million, or \$14.07 billion, in 2019). The average number of upheld complaints per company was 3.1 (up from 2.1 in 2018, and the same as in 2019).

Charts

The first chart below lists the "Top 63," i.e., the sixty-three insurance companies with the fewest upheld complaints against them, or, the best performers of 2020 -- each of which achieved a complaint ratio of 0.00. Although these companies all have the same complaint ratio, they are ranked differently because of the differences in their average annual premiums.

The second chart below reveals the *opposite* side of the spectrum; it lists the "Bottom 25," the twenty-five auto insurers with the worst performance record for the

calendar year 2020. In that chart, the company with the highest (worst) ratio is listed first; the company with the lowest ratio is listed last.

The third, and last, chart, denominated "The 'Big Ten'," separately lists the performance of the ten largest auto insurers in New York, as measured by their average premiums written in 2019-2020 .

It should be noted that the Department urges readers or users of its ranking to consider that "large insurance companies doing a lot of business typically generate more complaints than smaller companies, so while ratios may allow you to compare small companies with large companies by looking at complaints as a percentage of premiums written, only one or two additional upheld complaints per year can have a significant impact on a smaller insurer." The Department also notes that "Because the ranking includes all of the auto insurers in New York, some must be at the bottom of each year's list even if every company is performing well." Finally, the Department advises consumers that "While this ranking might provide information to consider when choosing an insurance company, it should not be your only consideration," and suggests that the consumer visit the "Automobile Owners Resource Center" of its website –

https://www.dfs.ny.gov/consumers/auto_insurance/Auto_resource_center -- for more information on shopping for auto insurance.

With those caveats in mind, I present below the pertinent charts:

The "Top 63":
The Best Performers of 2020

| <u>Rank</u> | <u>Insurance Company</u> | <u>2020 Complaint Ratio</u> | <u>2020 Complaint Total</u> | <u>2020 Upheld</u> | <u>2019-20 Avg. Premium \$ (Millions)</u> |
|-------------|--|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|------------------------|---|
| 1. | Adirondack Ins. Exchange | 0.00 | 20 | 0 | 107.124 |
| 2. | Chubb National | 0.00 | 2 | 0 | 64.993 |
| 3. | Preferred Mutual | 0.00 | 13 | 0 | 63.510 |
| 4. | Erie Ins Co. of N.Y. | 0.00 | 5 | 0 | 53.212 |
| 5. | Main Street America Protection | 0.00 | 0 | 0 | 43.802 |
| 6. | Plymouth Rock Assurance | 0.00 | 4 | 0 | 42.874 |
| 7. | Progressive Northwestern | 0.00 | 5 | 0 | 35.986 |
| 8. | Travelers Prop. Cas. of America | 0.00 | 5 | 0 | 28.203 |
| 9. | AIG Prop. Cas. | 0.00 | 3 | 0 | 26.590 |
| 10. | Palisades | 0.00 | 5 | 0 | 23.890 |
| 11. | Encompass Home & Auto | 0.00 | 3 | 0 | 20.306 |
| 12. | Farm Family | 0.00 | 7 | 0 | 19.305 |
| 13. | Merchants Preferred | 0.00 | 2 | 0 | 18.387 |
| 14. | Safeco Ins. Co. of Indiana | 0.00 | 1 | 0 | 17.157 |
| 15. | Old Dominion | 0.00 | 6 | 0 | 16.053 |
| 16. | Bankers Standard | 0.00 | 0 | 0 | 15.510 |
| 17. | Great Northern | 0.00 | 0 | 0 | 13.614 |
| 18. | Standard Fire | 0.00 | 3 | 0 | 11.226 |
| 19. | Harleysville | 0.00 | 3 | 0 | 11.078 |

| <u>Rank</u> | <u>Insurance Company</u> | <u>2020 Complaint Ratio</u> | <u>2020 Complaint Total</u> | <u>2020 Upheld</u> | <u>2019-20 Avg. Premium \$ (Millions)</u> |
|-------------|---|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|------------------------|---|
| 20. | Travelers Commercial | 0.00 | 0 | 0 | 9.885 |
| 21. | Hartford Ins. Co. of the Midwest | 0.00 | 0 | 0 | 8.912 |
| 22. | First Liberty | 0.00 | 0 | 0 | 8.738 |
| 23. | Electric | 0.00 | 3 | 0 | 8.705 |
| 24. | American Family Connect | 0.00 | 1 | 0 | 7.750 |
| 25. | Main Street America Assurance | 0.00 | 4 | 0 | 7.272 |
| 26. | Economy Premier | 0.00 | 1 | 0 | 7.065 |
| 27. | Chubb Indemnity | 0.00 | 2 | 0 | 7.032 |
| 28. | Countryway | 0.00 | 1 | 0 | 6.657 |
| 29. | Central Mutual | 0.00 | 2 | 0 | 6.564 |
| 30. | Unitrin Preferred | 0.00 | 1 | 0 | 6.041 |
| 31. | American Modern Home | 0.00 | 0 | 0 | 5.917 |
| 32. | Phoenix | 0.00 | 0 | 0 | 5.631 |
| 33. | Unitrin Auto & Home | 0.00 | 0 | 0 | 5.557 |
| 34. | Unitrin Direct | 0.00 | 0 | 0 | 5.546 |
| 35. | State National | 0.00 | 0 | 0 | 5.497 |
| 36. | Republic-Franklin | 0.00 | 1 | 0 | 5.147 |
| 37. | National General Assurance | 0.00 | 6 | 0 | 5.136 |
| 38. | Pacific Insurers | 0.00 | 0 | 0 | 5.107 |
| 39. | Allstate Indemnity | 0.00 | 10 | 0 | 5.071 |
| 40. | 21st Century North Am. | 0.00 | 0 | 0 | 4.939 |
| 41. | Ins. Co. of America | 0.00 | 0 | 0 | 4.876 |

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|-------------|--|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|------------------------|---|
| 42. | Auto Ins. Co. of Hartford, CT. | 0.00 | 1 | 0 | 4.850 |
| 43. | NGM | 0.00 | 0 | 0 | 4.807 |
| 44. | Travco | 0.00 | 1 | 0 | 4.281 |
| 45. | Sterling | 0.00 | 0 | 0 | 4.072 |
| 46. | Encompass Indemnity | 0.00 | 0 | 0 | 3.573 |
| 47. | National Assurance | 0.00 | 1 | 0 | 3.509 |
| 48. | Amica Prop. & Cas. | 0.00 | 0 | 0 | 3.320 |
| 49. | Charter Oak | 0.00 | 1 | 0 | 2.444 |
| 50. | Vigilant | 0.00 | 0 | 0 | 2.102 |
| 51. | Ins. Co. of State of PA. | 0.00 | 2 | 0 | 1.968 |
| 52. | Ironshore Indem. | 0.00 | 0 | 0 | 1.963 |
| 53. | Farmers New Century | 0.00 | 0 | 0 | 1.953 |
| 54. | 21st Century Advantage | 0.00 | 2 | 0 | 1.716 |
| 55. | American Family Home | 0.00 | 0 | 0 | 1.556 |
| 56. | Hartford Acc. & Indem. | 0.00 | 2 | 0 | 1.359 |
| 57. | United Farm Family | 0.00 | 0 | 0 | 1.310 |
| 58. | Citizens Ins. Co. of America | 0.00 | 1 | 0 | 1.222 |
| 59. | Travelers Indem. | 0.00 | 1 | 0 | 1.202 |
| 60. | Prop. & Cas. Ins. Co. of Hartford | 0.00 | 0 | 0 | 1.183 |
| 61. | Blue Ridge | 0.00 | 0 | 0 | 1.136 |
| 62. | Berkley | 0.00 | 0 | 0 | 1.114 |
| 63. | Travelers Cas. Co. of CT. | 0.00 | 0 | 0 | 1.084 |

**The "Bottom 25":
The 25 Worst Performers of 2020**

| <u>Rank</u> | <u>Ins. Company</u> | <u>2020 Complaint Ratio</u> | <u>2020 Complaint Total</u> | <u>2020 Upheld</u> | <u>2019-20 Avg. \$ Premiums (Millions)</u> |
|-------------|---|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|------------------------|--|
| 1. | CSAA Fire & Cas. | 2.4631 | 7 | 2 | 0.812 |
| 2. | Trumbull | 1.5048 | 2 | 1 | 0.665 |
| 3. | Midvale Indem. | 0.9356 | 2 | 1 | 1.069 |
| 4. | Hartford Fire | 0.7527 | 2 | 1 | 1.329 |
| 5. | Encompass Prop. & Cas. | 0.4083 | 1 | 1 | 1.954 |
| 6. | National Liability & Fire | 0.4665 | 5 | 1 | 2.14 |
| 7. | Philadelphia Indem. | 0.4414 | 6 | 2 | 4.531 |
| 8. | Permanent General Assurance | 0.3208 | 10 | 3 | 9.35 |
| 9. | Country-Wide | 0.3017 | 75 | 23 | 76.24 |
| 10. | National General Ins. Online | 0.2989 | 13 | 8 | 26.76 |
| 11. | Travelers Indem. of CT. | 0.2889 | 1 | 1 | 3.46 |
| 12. | Sentinel | 0.2663 | 1 | 1 | 3.756 |
| 13. | Plymouth Rock Assur. Corp. | 0.2600 | 19 | 5 | 19.22 |
| 14. | Tri-State Consumer | 0.1913 | 20 | 3 | 15.68 |
| 15. | State Farm Fire & Cas. | 0.1469 | 49 | 18 | 122.53 |
| 16. | American Family Connect | 0.1347 | 8 | 2 | 14.84 |
| 17. | USAA General Indem. | 0.1310 | 43 | 14 | 106.83 |

| <u>Rank</u> | <u>Ins. Company</u> | <u>2020 Complaint Ratio</u> | <u>2020 Complaint Total</u> | <u>2020 Upheld</u> | <u>2019-20 Avg. \$ Premiums (Millions)</u> |
|-------------|---|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|------------------------|--|
| 18. | American Bankers | 0.1298 | 3 | 1 | 7.70 |
| 19. | Unitrin Safeguard | 0.1257 | 19 | 4 | 31.82 |
| 20. | National General | 0.1195 | 10 | 2 | 16.73 |
| 21. | Progressive Direct | 0.1193 | 20 | 2 | 16.76 |
| 22. | Utica Mutual | 0.1010 | 1 | 1 | 9.90 |
| 23. | 21st Century Centennial | 0.0843 | 10 | 2 | 23.73 |
| 24. | USAA Casualty | 0.0779 | 44 | 10 | 128.30 |
| 25. | CSAA General | 0.0777 | 8 | 1 | 12.86 |

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The "Big 10": Largest Auto Insurers in New York

| <u>Rank</u> | <u>Ins. Company</u> | <u>2020 Complaint Ratio</u> | <u>2020 Complaint Total</u> | <u>2020 Upheld</u> | <u>2019-20 Avg. \$ Premiums (Millions)</u> |
|-------------|---|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|------------------------|--|
| 78. | GEICO General | 0.0189 | 502 | 49 | 2,588,248 |
| 93. | State Farm Mut. Auto | 0.0376 | 364 | 60 | 1,597,288 |
| 65. | GEICO Indemnity | 0.0080 | 200 | 9 | 1,127,107 |
| 83. | Allstate Fire & Cas. | 0.0232 | 216 | 26 | 1,122,437 |
| 69. | Government Employees (GEICO) | 0.0137 | 140 | 10 | 729,196 |
| 87. | Progressive Casualty | 0.0311 | 142 | 19 | 610,082 |
| 104. | Allstate Ins. Co. | 0.0597 | 139 | 32 | 535,815 |
| 75. | LM General | 0.0170 | 110 | 9 | 529,974 |

| <u>Rank</u> | <u>Ins. Company</u> | <u>2020 Complaint Ratio</u> | <u>2020 Complaint Total</u> | <u>2020 Upheld</u> | <u>2019-20 Avg. \$ Premiums (Millions)</u> |
|-------------|---------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|------------------------|--|
| 71. | Travelers Personal | 0.0151 | 35 | 5 | 331,381 |
| 68. | Progressive Advanced | 0.0131 | 115 | 6 | 458,715 |

Copies of the Department of Financial Services' annual rankings may be obtained free of charge by calling the Department's toll-free telephone number: (800) 342-3736. In addition, the annual rankings are accessible on the Department's website:

https://www.dfs.ny.gov/consumers/auto_insurance/auto_insurance_complaint_ranking.

Complaints against insurance companies may be filed on-line at <https://www.dfs.ny.gov>.