



INSURANCE AND SAFETY FIRE COMMISSIONER

- State of Georgia -

NEWS RELEASE

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COMMISSIONER KING RELEASES

2019 INSURANCE AND SAFETY FIRE YEAR-IN-REVIEW

ATLANTA – Today, Commissioner John F. King released highlights from the various divisions within the Insurance and Safety Fire Commissioner’s Office for the 2019 year.

“I’m proud of the men and women of this office who are hard at work every day on behalf of Georgia families,” said Commissioner King. “From money we’ve recovered for consumers to the number of insurance fraud arrests we’ve made over the past 12 months, this 2019 year-in-review serves to highlight this important work.”

The Consumer Services Division investigates policyholder complaints and responds to inquiries from the public. Their goal is to answer insurance-related questions promptly and to ensure fair and equitable resolution of disputes involving insurance transactions between insurers, agents, and policyholders. In 2019, they answered 68,371 consumer phone calls, closed 10,577 cases, and recovered \$7,093,625.84.

In 2019, the State Fire Marshal’s Office made the most significant updates to the [Georgia State Fire Code in over a decade](#). Our employees also completed 19,536 elevator inspections, 674 boiler inspections, 1,169 amusement ride inspections, and 889 plan reviews.

The Agents Licensing Division, which grants licenses to resident and non-resident insurance agents and agencies, approved 71,966 new licenses in 2019. In addition to the new licenses that were approved, 77,391 licenses were renewed in 2019.

The Criminal Investigations Division saw significant structural changes this year, from the addition of a new Director to the combining of Fire Investigations and Fraud Investigations under one roof. In 2019, Fire Investigators conducted 417 total investigations, ruling 133 fires arson and arresting 25 criminals. Fraud Investigation Agents made 53 arrests for 275 various insurance fraud and drug-related charges and assisted local jurisdictions in bringing 32 indictments to individuals arrested by the Criminal Investigations Division over the past several years.

One of the many jobs of the Legal Division in the office is to investigate and make recommendations to the Commissioner regarding agents' license revocations, cease and desist orders, and other such matters involving the Commissioner's regulatory responsibilities. In just the first three quarters of 2019, the Legal Division took administrative action against 144 licensees, with 117 licenses placed on probationary status, 15 revocations, 5 consent orders, and 7 suspensions.

The Insurance Product Review – Life, Accident, and Sickness Section reviews, regulates, and approves all policy forms for life and health insurance used in the state. In 2019, Georgia welcomed two new health insurance carriers (CareSource and Oscar Health Plan) to the Federal ACA Exchange, providing Georgians with more options for health insurance carriers on the federal marketplace. These two additions also effectively cut down the number of counties in Georgia with only one option on the federal marketplace by nearly 25%.

The Premium Tax Division is responsible for ensuring compliance with the insurance tax laws, rules and regulations, and for processing the premium tax returns for all insurance companies and surplus lines transactions in the State of Georgia. In addition, the Premium Tax Division assesses, collects, and distributes the County/Municipal Tax and assesses and collects the Special Insurance Fraud Fund. In Fiscal Year 2019, the Premium Tax Division collected an estimated \$1.2 billion in premium taxes and distributed roughly \$700 million of that back to local jurisdictions.

The Insurance Financial Oversight Division is responsible for the licensing of companies desiring to transact business in Georgia. In 2019, I.F.O. licensed 4 new domestic life/health companies, approved 38 foreign expansion applications, and approved 5 new captive companies.

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The mission of the Office of the Insurance and Safety Fire Commissioner is to protect Georgia families by providing access to vital insurance products and safe buildings through fair regulation that creates economic opportunities for all Georgians.