



# INSURANCE AND SAFETY FIRE COMMISSIONER

- State of Georgia -

## *NEWS RELEASE*

**Jim Beck**

Commissioner of Insurance  
Safety Fire Commissioner  
Industrial Loan Commissioner  
Twitter: @GA\_DOI  
Facebook: @GeorgiaDOI  
Instagram: @GeorgiaDOI

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**Contact: Brandon Wright**  
**Office: 404-463-0729**

### COMMISSIONER JIM BECK'S FIRST 100 DAYS

**Atlanta** – It has been 100 days since Insurance Commissioner Jim Beck took over at the Georgia Department of Insurance and significant strides have been taken in this short time. Several policies, consumer tools, and actions have been put into place to help the Department better protect consumers, provide transparency, and defend against fraud.

- **Consumer Protection Services**

Consumers can now determine how many complaints have been made against a particular insurance company by visiting the [Department's Website](#). This tool will allow citizens to make better informed decisions when purchasing insurance by comparing complaint statistics of each company.

Additionally, [Directive 19-EX-2](#) states that companies are now required to update their information in the [auto rate comparison tool](#) on the Department's website on a timely basis. This will allow consumers to have accurate, up-to-date information from an official and unbiased source when comparing prices or shopping for their auto insurance policy.

In order to expedite the handling and resolution of consumer complaints, Beck's [first directive as Commissioner](#) requires all insurance companies responding to an inquiry from the Department to utilize the communication portal on the Department's Website.

- **Enhancing Transparency**

The Commissioner was proud to announce the [Open Checkbook Program](#). This program gives Georgians a closer view of how the Department spends the money entrusted to it by taxpayers. The first version is now available on the Department's website, but the Commissioner has promised to continue to refine it to provide more and better information on fiscal decisions made by the Department.

- **Public Access To Rate Changes**

Commissioner Beck has authorized broader access for Georgians who are now able to see pending rate filings at any time through the [System for Electronic Rates & Forms Filings](#) by visiting the Department's Website.

- **Defending Against Fraud**

On his first day in office, Commissioner Beck directed the market conduct examination team to begin reporting directly to him instances where consumers known to be over the age of 65 or veterans of our U.S Military have been harmed through unfair practices. The Commissioner will then use these findings to double the penalties and fines assessed against these companies for these occurrences. Commissioner Beck is committed to eradicate fraud against our seniors and those who have worn the uniform of our armed forces.

To date, the Fraud Unit at the Department of Insurance has made or assisted with 26 arrests in 2019. At the current pace, the Unit will double the total number of arrests made last year. In these 26 arrests, a total of 158 various counts of insurance fraud, firearm possession, and drug-related charges have been filed.

- **Accessibility and Service**

Consumers who have complaints against their insurance companies can now schedule meetings through the [Department's Rolling Regional Offices](#) where they can sit down face-to-face with an investigator in their own community.

- **Miscellaneous Programs**

Stakeholder Meetings – On March 28<sup>th</sup>, Commissioner Beck and some of his staff held the [first stakeholder meeting at the Department](#). This open discussion brought health providers and insurance professionals together to discuss problems they face and propose potential solutions.

“I am very proud of what we have accomplished in our first 100 days. We will continue to fulfill our promises of transparency, consumer protection, and defending against fraud as we carry out the Department's vital mission. This is just the beginning,” said Commissioner Beck.

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