

## COLORADO INSURANCE APPRAISAL GUIDE

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*How appraisal works in Colorado, what to watch for, and why it is often best handled through an attorney.*

### **How appraisal works**

- Appraisal is generally used when the parties disagree about the amount of loss rather than whether the policy covers the claim.
- Each side typically selects an appraiser, and if the appraisers do not agree, an umpire helps resolve the value dispute.
- The process is most useful when the file is ready for a clean valuation decision supported by photos, estimates, and documentation.

### **Things to watch for in Colorado**

- Make sure the dispute is really about amount of loss and not a coverage dispute dressed up as an appraisal issue.
- Read the policy appraisal clause carefully before demanding appraisal.
- Choose an impartial and credible appraiser, because neutrality matters in Colorado appraisal practice.
- Keep a complete record of scope, pricing, photographs, and communications so the record stays organized.

### **Why attorney involvement helps**

- An attorney can decide whether appraisal is the right mechanism and whether the issue belongs in appraisal or litigation.
- Counsel can help preserve deadlines, manage the record, and reduce waiver or procedure problems.
- When the carrier is disputing causation or denying parts of the claim, the legal issues are often better handled by an attorney than by a stand-alone appraisal process.
- Attorney involvement can help keep the process focused, strategic, and tied to the policy language and Colorado law.
- Appraisal can be an effective tool for resolving claim value disputes, but in Colorado it should be handled carefully.
- Because appraisal involves policy interpretation, neutrality requirements, deadlines, and potential coverage issues, it is often best managed by an attorney who can protect your rights and keep the claim on track.

**Practical cautions**

- Do not treat appraisal as a substitute for resolving exclusions or other coverage defenses.
- Be careful before starting appraisal, because the process can narrow later arguments if it is not handled correctly.
- The strongest appraisal presentations usually combine a clear scope comparison, local pricing support, and a clean claim record.