

What You Should Do After An Automobile Accident

If you have been involved in an accident which involves personal injury, death, or property damage, the law requires you to stop at the scene. However, you may temporarily leave the scene of the accident to get medical assistance or to call the police, and then return as soon as possible.

If there is someone seriously injured, call 911 and request an ambulance. Do not try to move the injured person as you may do more harm than good. You may try to make him comfortable while waiting for help to arrive.

Contact the local police department or the NC Highway Patrol for assistance immediately. This will help create an unbiased record of the events of the accident for liability purposes.

If there are witnesses present, try to get their names, addresses, and phone numbers for the police, so that they may obtain their statements about the accident and preserve evidence for liability purposes. Assist the police with their investigation by providing your side of the event. This can be done on the accident information form.

North Carolina law requires you to provide your name, address, operator's license number, and registration to the other driver or occupants of the other vehicle involved in the accident. If you have your insurance information, please provide this also.

Document any information from the accident scene which may help you establish when, where and how the accident took place. You should take pictures of the vehicles and the accident scene with your cell phone so that physical evidence will not disappear. You should step off distances of skid marks, as well as the distance traveled after impact to the location of the vehicles at rest. You should make written notes of any significant circumstances related to the accident to refresh your memory later.

Do not leave the scene until you have assisted anyone injured, contacted the police, obtained witness information, filled out the accident information form, assisted the police with their investigation, provided your name, address, license number, and registration to the other driver or occupants, and documented any information from the accident scene which will help you remember the detail of it later.

Once you have left the scene of the accident you should immediately:

1. Seek medical attention,
2. Inform your insurance company about the accident,
3. And by all means contact your attorney to protect your rights during the claims process, and to maximize your financial recovery from all available insurance policies.