

Wedding Insurance Protects your Financial Investment

Stave off Bridezilla by insuring your deposits

A bride's heart, hopes and dreams aren't the only things she's invested in her wedding day: there's also a lot of money handed out in deposits. Now that the cost of an average wedding is \$27,000, it can be financially devastating if any contracted services aren't provided, or a Wisconsin blizzard or tornado wipes out any reasonable chance for the wedding to go on as scheduled.

"Your wedding day is one of the biggest high-pressure days of your life," says Linda Kraus of Prairie Land Insurance Agency in Madison, who carries the Wedding Protector Plan from Travelers. "If you can buy peace of mind and know that nonrefundable deposits aren't down the drain, you can lessen the pressure of the big day. Even if you only lost one deposit, you'd get your money back because there is no deductible. You'd insure a \$27,000 car, so why wouldn't you insure a \$27,000 wedding?" The only things the policy doesn't cover are cold feet or running away to Vegas instead.

The no-deductible Wedding Protector Plan covers cancellation or postponement. The plan protects against loss of your deposits in case the caterer goes out of business, the florist doesn't show up, the shop loses the bride's dress or groom's tux, the venue is destroyed by fire, or in case of severe weather. Lost or damaged rings and wedding gifts are covered. It also provides coverage if the bride or groom breaks a leg, becomes ill, or is deployed to military duty. The plan even protects against cancellation of military leave. If your photographer's film is defective, or negatives are lost or damaged, the Plan can help reconvene the wedding party to take new photos or video. A claim was paid for a new bride's dress when the father of the bride pulled the dress out of the trunk and ripped the delicate lace on the trunk latch; the tear was in the middle of the dress and could not be repaired.

Kraus says anyone who provides money towards the wedding is covered. Cancellation due to sickness of the bride, groom, mother, father, or anyone who is taking the place of the mother or father is covered. The uncle of a bride with deceased parents was to walk her down the aisle but when he had a massive stroke, the wedding was postponed indefinitely; all deposits were covered by the Wedding Protector Plan so that they could afford to pay for the wedding at a later date.

Destination weddings are covered in the U.S, Puerto Rico, Canada, the United Kingdom, Mexico, Bermuda, Bahamas, Turks and Caicos, the Caribbean Islands (except for Haiti and Cuba), and cruise ships leaving from a port in those areas, although there are some exceptions. Weather can be a significant issue in destination weddings, whether it's getting caught in a snowstorm at home, losing the venue to a natural disaster, or getting stuck if cruise ship can't depart because of a hurricane. If a bride's dress or groom's tux shipped to Mexico is lost, arrives too late for the ceremony, or arrives damaged, it's covered.

The plan begins at \$160 to cover a \$16,000 wedding, and liability can be added to protect yourself in case a guest is injured or causes damage to property. With this protection, you can postpone and reschedule the wedding without losing a significant sum of deposits. While there are numerous reasons a woman can become Bridezilla on the big day, loss of deposits doesn't have to be one of them.

Typical claims on this plan generally involve damage to wedding attire, problems with the photography, cancellation from illness or bereavement, and no-shows from vendors. Even if you've already paid deposits before buying the plan, those deposits are covered. The policy has to be purchased two weeks before the event, and as early as 24 months before. Policies that carry liability coverage provide coverage until 2 A.M. of the day after the wedding.

Kraus will be at the Wedding Planner and Guide Bridal Show at the Alliant Energy Center in Madison on January 12-13 to answer any questions in person and provide written information.

With the Wedding Protector Plan, there's no need to depend on luck.

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