



February 13, 2017

**BULLETIN NO. 5622**

**TO: Merchants Insurance Group Commercial Lines Agents [EXCEPT NEW YORK]**

**SUBJECT: Introduction of New Credit Card Payment Vendor**

Effective February 13, 2017, Merchants Insurance Group is pleased to introduce our new credit card payment vendor, JPMorgan Chase & Co. After much research, we have determined that this company best suits our needs and the needs of the policyholders.

With this change, we are introducing a few other changes to help policyholders:

- The ability to call our Integrated Voice Response (IVR) system (1-800-462-8182) and be transferred directly to JPMorgan Chase's IVR system for payment.
- The ability for policyholders to call Merchants Insurance Group's Direct Bill Department (1-800-462-8182) and be connected directly (by a Merchants' Billing Representative) to JPMorgan Chase for payment.
- You can also make a credit card payment directly on JPMorgan Chase's IVR at 1-800-852-4052; you will need your Merchants' account number and your credit card.
- The commercial transaction convenience fee for using a credit card has been reduced by 10% to \$18.00 per payment.
- Finally, users are now given the option to receive a confirmation email with their payment, ensuring their peace of mind that a payment has been received and credited.

As a reminder, any payments made after 8 p.m., on weekends and holidays, will be credited the next business day.

To begin, sign in to the Agents' portion of our website and click on "Billing Inquiry." On the next page, enter the Account Number, Policy Number of Insured Name.



On the next page (as shown below) select “Pay by credit card”, and then enter the amount you wish to pay. Click “Continue” on the bottom of the page.

The screenshot shows a web browser window titled "Make a Payment - Internet Explorer provided by Merchants Insurance Group". The page header includes the Merchants Insurance Group logo and a Norton Secured badge. The main content area displays the following information:

- Insured Name:** PETERS POLICYHOLDER
- Policy #:** BOP1
- Effective Date:** 1/04/2017

Below this information, there is a section titled "How would you like to make a payment \*?". It contains two radio button options:

- Pay by eCheck
- Pay by credit card

Underneath, there is a section titled "Please choose the amount you wish to pay \*:". It contains three radio button options:

- Amount Due \$ .00
- Remaining Balance \$2,829.60
- Other Amount:

A yellow highlighted note states: "NOTE: Payments received after 8:00 PM ET or received Saturday, Sunday or on a holiday, will be posted to your Merchants' account the next business day." At the bottom of the page, there are two buttons: "Cancel" and "Continue". Three blue arrows point to the "Pay by credit card" option, the "Other Amount" input field, and the "Continue" button.

You will then see the following page. To continue with credit card processing, click “Agree” and you will be taken to JP Morgan Chase & Co.’s site, as shown on the following page.

The screenshot shows a web browser window with the URL "https://secure.merchantsgroup.com:84/cgi-bin/lansaweb?procfun+MIGEFTPROC+CCSUBMT+UAP+FUNCPARMS+ - Internet Explorer provided by". The page content reads:

You are now leaving Merchants Insurance Group's website and are being connected to JPMorgan, our payment processor.

Convenience fees will apply. Do you want to continue?

At the bottom right of the page, there are two buttons: "Agree" and "Cancel". A blue arrow points to the "Agree" button.

En Español Privacy Customer Service Exit

### Make a Payment - Business Account

**Bold fields with \* are required.**

Payments received after 8:00 pm ET or received Saturday, Sunday or on a holiday will be posted to your Merchants account on the next business day.  
To change information on this page please click Cancel button below to return to Merchants Insurance Group "Make a Payment" page.

**PAYMENT INFORMATION**




Account Number: 80F1093434

**PAYMENT DETAILS**

Payment Amount\*: \$500.00 Payment Date: Jan 05, 2017

**PAYMENT METHOD**

New Account\*  
 Credit/Debit Card

Card Number\*: XXXXXXXXXXXX1111

**CARD ACCOUNT INFORMATION**

Cardholder Name\*: PolicyHolder

Expiration Date\*: 01 / 2018

Card Billing Information\*  
Country\*: United States  
Address 1\*: 23 Smith Street  
Address 2\*:  
City\*: Elizabeth  
State\*: New York  
Zip Code\*: 07033

**CONTACT INFORMATION**

First Name\*: Policy  
Last Name\*: PolicyHolder  
Company Name\*:  
Country\*: United States  
Phone Number\*: 716 549 2033  
E-mail Address\*: jpolkholder@at.com

Use BILLING Information as Contact Information  
 Use NEW Contact Information

Address 1\*: 23 Smith Street  
Address 2\*:  
City\*: Elizabeth  
State\*: New York  
Zip Code\*: 07033

This payment may be assessed a convenience fee. The fee amount will display on the payment verification screen. You will have the opportunity to cancel this payment before the fee is charged.

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Enter the credit card and related information, and click “Continue” at the bottom of the page. The next page you come to is a payment verification page (seen on following page). If the information you entered is correct, click “Confirm” at the bottom of the page.

En Español [Privacy](#) [Customer Service](#) [Exit](#)

### Verify Payment - Business Account

**Bold fields with \* are required.**

Please verify your payment, then choose **Confirm**.

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**Your Payment Detail**

Payment Amount: **\$566.00**  
Convenience Fee: **\$18.00**  
Total Payment Amount: **\$584.00**  
Scheduled Payment Date: **Jan-05-2017**  
Amount Due: **\$566.00**  
Account Number: **BOP**

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**Your Account Detail**

Cardholder Name \*: **Peter Policyholder**  
Credit Card or Debit Card Number: **XXXXXXXXXXXX1111**  
Credit Card or Debit Card Type: **Visa Credit**

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**Your Credit/Debit Card Billing Information**

Billing Street Address 1 \*: **23 Smith Street**  
Billing Street Address 2 :  
Billing City \*: **Elmsford**  
Billing State \*: **NY**  
Billing Zip Code \*: **10523**  
Billing Country \*: **United States**

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E-mail Address\*:

Send me an email confirmation:

Language Preference:

3 digit code on the signature strip of your credit/debit card\*:

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After clicking “Confirm”, you will see a confirmation page, which can be printed or saved for your records (shown on the following page). When you are finished, click on “ok”. The page you will be taken to returns you to the Merchants’ web page.



With this bulletin we have included the credit card frequently asked questions (FAQs), the flyer detailing general information on the credit card program, and the revised billing brochure quick tips. Our online billing manual has also been revised with these changes.

If you would like to discuss these revisions, please contact your Regional Vice President, Territory Manager, Regional Underwriting Manager, or Commercial Lines Underwriter. As always, thank you for your business with Merchants Insurance Group.

**Attachments:** F 294 02-17 General Information Flyer, F 296 Credit Card Frequently Asked Questions, M 727 02-17 Billing Program Quick Tips



***Merchants Insurance Group is pleased to partner with JPMorgan Chase & Co. for credit card processing!***

**JPMORGAN CHASE & CO.**

We accept:



**DISCOVER**

***To get started:***

1. Log in to the Policyholder Login page at [Merchantsgroup.com](http://Merchantsgroup.com).  
If you do not already have a user ID and password for our site, click on "Sign-up now!" on the Policyholder Login page.
2. Go to "My Billing" and then click the "Make Payment" button for the account, which will take you to our payments processor, JPMorgan Chase & Co.

For assistance, please contact our Help Desk at 1-800-362-3343 and select option 1.



## Frequently Asked Questions – Credit Card Payments

### **1. How can I pay my insurance bill with a credit card?**

To get started, log in to the Policyholder Login page at [www.merchantsgroup.com](http://www.merchantsgroup.com); if you do not already have a user ID and password for our site, go to Merchants' home page ([www.merchantsgroup.com](http://www.merchantsgroup.com)) and select the "Payment Options" tab in the horizontal navigation bar at the top of the page. Next, select "Policyholder Sign-up" and complete the information. You will receive a confirmation e-mail, and you will then be able to log in to our site. Once logged in, select "My Billing" and then click the "Make Payment" button. You will be walked through a few easy steps to make a payment using your credit card.

### **2. What credit cards can I use to make a payment?**

You may use a Visa, MasterCard or Discover card to make your payment.

### **3. Who is Merchants' credit card vendor?**

We have now partnered with JPMorgan Chase & Co. They are our designated vendor that is accepting payments on our behalf.

### **4. How secure is my payment and credit card information?**

JPMorgan Chase & Co. works with Safetech Fraud Tools® [VeriSign from Norton Security] to ensure the highest level of security. For more information regarding security and privacy, visit JPMorgan Chase & Co.'s website, <https://www.jpmorgan.com/country/US/en/privacy>.

### **5. Why is there a convenience fee included in my payment?**

JPMorgan Chase & Co. charges a convenience fee for processing the payment transaction. This fee is not charged by Merchants Insurance Group. The convenience fee is assessed to cover operating costs and the costs associated with servicing payment transactions. Users will be informed of the fee before authorizing the payment.

### **6. If I am unwilling to pay the convenience fee, can I still make a credit card payment?**

No. The convenience fee covers the cost of processing the payment transaction and is set by JPMorgan Chase & Co.

### **7. Will I receive confirmation of my payment?**

Yes. You will receive an email verification of your payment from JPMorgan Chase & Co. if payment is made on the website. If a telephone payment is made, you will receive a confirmation number.

### **8. How will the charge appear on my credit card statement?**

The payment charge and convenience fee charge will appear separately on your credit card statement.



## Frequently Asked Questions – **Credit Card Payments** (continued)

**9. Who do I call if my payment doesn't appear on my card or bank statement?**

Call JPMorgan Chase & Co.'s IVR toll-free line at 1-800-852-4052.

**10. Can I use my card to pay through Merchants' automated phone service or by calling in and speaking with one of Merchants Insurance Group's customer service representatives?**

Merchants will not take your credit card payment but we will transfer to to JPMorgan's automated credit card service.





# **Billing Program**

## ***Agents' Quick Tips***

## 1. EQUITY CONCEPT

Merchants Insurance Groups' billing program is based on the "equity concept" whereby each payment by an insured purchases a pro rata portion of the policy period. Simply stated, should an annual policy be issued for \$365.00, each dollar that the insured pays will purchase one day's worth of insurance coverage.

Cancellations: The billing program bases non-payment cancellations on equity expiration for each specific policy.

## 2. INSTALLMENT OPTIONS

A variety of installment options are available for both Personal and Commercial Policies. The tables below (Tables 1-3) outline the payment plan options, deposit requirements and approximate schedule of future billing dates.

**Table 1. Installment Plans and Deposit Guidelines**

	Full Pay	Two Pay	Three Pay	Quarterly Pay	Ten Pay	Twelve Pay-EFT only
<b>Deposit</b>	100%	60%	40%	25%	20%	20%
<b>Installment</b>		40% due in 60 days	30% due in 90 days; remaining 30% due 90 days after that	3 equal installments to be billed every 90 days	9 equal installments billed every 30 days	11 equal installments billed for the next 11 months

**Table 2. Personal Lines Policies**

Full Pay Plan - Any policy
Two Pay Plan - 6 month Personal Auto policy only
Quarterly Pay Plan - Any policy
Ten Pay Plan - Any policy
Twelve Pay Plan (EFT only) - Any policy

**Table 3. Commercial Lines Policies**

Full Pay Plan - Any policy
Two Pay Plan - MAP® Contractors, Short-Term Commercial policies*
Three Pay Plan - Short Term Commercial*
Quarterly Pay Plan - Any policy**
Ten Pay Plan - Any policy**
Twelve Pay Plan (EFT only) - Any policy**

\*Short-term commercial policies:

1-pay plan for any short term Commercial policies that are 1-3 months duration.

2-pay plan for any short term Commercial policies that are 4-6 months duration.

3-pay plan for any short term Commercial policies that are 7-11 months duration.

\*\* Except monoline MAP® Contractors with premium less than \$750.00.

### 3. PAYMENT OPTIONS

Merchants Insurance Group works hard to make paying your premiums easy. We accept the following payment methods:

-Mail your payment via check or money order to  
Merchants Insurance Group  
P.O. Box 4031  
Buffalo, NY 14240-4031

-Phone: Call 1-800-462-8182. Our Automated Phone System is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. To speak to a billing analyst, please call between the hours of 8:00am - 5:00pm, Monday - Thursday, and 8:00am - 4:00p.m. Friday. Any payments made after 8 p.m., on weekends and holidays, will be credited the next business day.

-Online: We accept echecks and credit card payments online through JPMorgan Chase & Co.'s payment services. Please visit [www.merchantsgroup.com](http://www.merchantsgroup.com) and click on "Policyholder Sign In" to set up a user ID and password.

-EFT: An Electronic Funds Transfer payment option direct from your insured's financial institution account is available when submitting a new business application on our website or by completing a Merchants Insurance Group Electronic Funds Transfer Payment Form, which is located online at [www.merchantsgroup.com](http://www.merchantsgroup.com). The customer has the option to choose their withdrawal date at the time of new business or renewal. All policies placed on EFT need to have their payment deducted from the same account number at the same financial institution. Available EFT withdrawal date is the 1st-28th of the month.

-Policyholders can also make payments with their iPhone or Android smartphone. The Merchants' app may be downloaded from the respective app store. Users will then login with their Merchants' user ID and password to make a payment and access payment history.

### 4. INSTALLMENT FEE

The following charge will be applied when a bill is generated.

°If all policies are enrolled in EFT, a \$1 fee will be applied.

°For insurance bills with some, but not all policies

enrolled in EFT:

- A \$1 service fee will be applied to the account enrolled in EFT.
- A \$5 installment charge will be applied to all non-EFT personal insurance bills.
- A \$7 installment charge will be applied to all non-EFT commercial insurance bills.

### 5. NEW BUSINESS

All Personal and Commercial Lines New Business is automatically placed on Direct (Insured) Bill unless otherwise specified.

PLEASE NOTE: All New Business requires a deposit.

### 6. RENEWAL POLICIES

If a change in payment plan is desired, Merchants can make the requested payment plan change on the current term up to 5 months into the policy. If a payment plan change is requested after 5 months, Merchants will make the change at the next renewal. Payment plan changes can be requested by calling our toll free billing number, 1-800-462-8182.

### 7. LATE ISSUED NEW BUSINESS OR RENEWALS

Late issued policies may result in the loss of one or more installments normally available to your insured. When an invoice is generated on a late issued policy, the billing system will combine the first minimum payment due and any installments that would have been due had the policy been issued on time.

### 8. ENDORSEMENTS

Additional or return premiums resulting from endorsements will be divided among the remaining payment installments. Additional premium resulting from endorsements processed after the last installment bill has been produced will be billed in full at the next billing cycle.

### 9. AUDITS

Audit transactions processed for prior policy terms will be billed as follows: For Cancelled Policies and Expiring Renewals, audit premium will be billed on a separate audit bill and is due in full.

### 10. FINANCED POLICIES

Policies with financed premium must be placed on Agency Bill.

## 11. BILLS

All bills for any policy or account will be mailed electronically or via the post office directly to the insured for Personal and Commercial Lines policies. For EFT payments, the insured will receive a bill displaying the date on which the minimum amount due will be deducted from their financial institution account. If a returned item occurs, Merchants will immediately send a "Past Due" Pay Now invoice for the amount of the returned item plus a \$25 fee.

## 12. RETURN PREMIUM

Return premium checks on any Direct Billed policies will be sent directly to the insured. Return premium checks on any Account Billed Policies will be sent directly to the insured after all balances within the account are paid.

## 13. PAYMENT PLAN CHANGES

If a change in payment plan is desired, Merchants can make the requested payment plan change on the current term up to 5 months into the policy. If a payment plan change is requested after 5 months, Merchants will make the change at the next renewal. Payment plan changes can be requested by calling our toll free billing number, 1-800-462-8182.

## 14. LATE FEE

If the amount due is not received by the company on or before the due date and a cancellation notice is issued, a \$20.00 late fee will be assessed per policy. Exception: In the state of New Jersey, a late fee does not apply.

## 15. RETURNED ITEMS

A \$25.00 processing fee will apply to dishonored checks, EFT payments or errors in financial institution account information. If more than one dishonored check is received on a policy or account, installments will no longer be offered and payment in full will be required. Exception: In the state of New Jersey, the returned item fee is \$8.00.

## 16. COMMISSION PAYMENT

Commissions are paid monthly, based on premiums written. The commission statements are available in the password-protected "Agency Principal Access" area of our website ([www.merchantsgroup.com](http://www.merchantsgroup.com)).

### **Billing inquiries?**

Call Merchants Insurance Group at 1-800-462-8182.

### **Integrated Voice Response**

Merchants Insurance Group is pleased to offer our insureds and agents access to billing information via our automated Integrated Voice Response System. The system uses the 10-digit policy or account number to access payment information accurately and efficiently. You can access payment due dates, premium and payment information, and the system allows our customers to make a payment over the telephone.

***Our Billing Inquiry System is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week!***

### **Hours to speak to a Merchants' billing analyst:**

Monday - Thursday, 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m., and Friday, 8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. EST.

Any payments made after 8 p.m., on weekends and holidays, will be credited the next business day.

### ***Payments for all states should be made payable and mailed to:***

Merchants Insurance Group

P.O. Box 4031

Buffalo, New York 14240-4031

