



Consumer guide

Vehicle service and repair

AMVIC recommends you choose products and services sold by AMVIC-licensed businesses. Licensed businesses commit to following the consumer protection rules set out in Alberta's *Consumer Protection Act*. Alberta is the only province in Canada to regulate automotive service and repair businesses in the same way it regulates automotive sales businesses.

Before you go:

- **Check if the business is licensed** by going to AMVIC's portal: amvic.ca.thentiacloud.net/webs/amvic/register/#
- Ask trusted friends and family for recommendations.

Beware of backyard mechanics:

- Backyard mechanics are service and repair businesses illegally operating without the proper AMVIC licence.
- Service and repair businesses that require a licence include: garages, service stations, autobody, specialty shops (such as mufflers, brakes, transmissions, etc.), mobile repair, and recycling and dismantling.
- If the business is working out of a residential address, is offering unbelievably low rates and does not come up in a licence search, they are a backyard mechanic and should be reported to AMVIC immediately.

While you're there:

- If you ask for an estimate, you should receive one in writing. A service and repair business is only required to provide an estimate if they are asked for one; an estimate is not automatically provided.
- Use the service and repair estimate and authorization checklist on the other side of this tip sheet to ensure you're on the right track.
- A **business can only exceed the estimate by 10 per cent to a maximum of \$100**. You must agree to additional service and added costs before the work is started.
- For larger repair jobs, it may be a good idea to compare prices among repair shops.
- Ask what types of parts will be used in the repair (new, used or reconditioned).
- Ask about manufacturer, supplier or other warranty information and get all warranty documents in writing.
- Ask if additional fees and charges apply, such as shop supply fees, and how much they cost.
- Ask questions if you are unsure or don't understand what you're agreeing to.
- Make sure that you keep copies of all documents you are given.

After you buy:

- Consumers who believe they were treated unfairly during the vehicle service and repair experience can [file a complaint with AMVIC](#).
- The [Compensation Fund](#) may be available to the customers of a failed and closed AMVIC-licensed business. However, consumers are not eligible to apply to the Compensation Fund if they buy from a private seller or curber.

Service and repair estimate and authorization checklist*



The following is a simplified checklist with regards to service and repair legislation in the Automotive Business Regulation [ABR] Sections 31.6, 31.7 and 31.8:

Estimate (Section 31.6): [Check all that apply]

✓	If an estimate is requested by the consumer prior to repair or servicing:
	Is it in writing?
	Does it describe the proposed repair or servicing?
	Does it contain the estimated total cost of the proposed repair or servicing including labour, parts and equipment?
	If a written estimate cannot be provided because the automotive business has to perform diagnostic work first:
	Has an estimate stating the maximum cost for the diagnostic work been provided to the consumer prior to the diagnostic beginning?

Authorization of work – written (Section 31.7): [Check all that apply]

✓	Before performing any repair or servicing to the consumer's vehicle, ensure that:
	Written authorization was obtained from the consumer prior to beginning any work or servicing.
	The written authorization must include:
	the name of the consumer or the person acting on their behalf that is giving authorization.
	the date the authorization is given.
	a description of the work being authorized.
	the estimated total cost of the work described above and confirmation from the consumer or the person acting on their behalf to authorize the work.

Authorization of work – not in writing (Section 31.8): [Check all that apply]

✓	If written authorization cannot be obtained from the consumer prior to any repair or servicing, then the following information must be recorded:
	the name of the consumer or the person acting on their behalf that is giving authorization.
	the time and date the authorization was given.
	a description of the work being authorized to be completed.
	the estimated total cost of the work described above and confirmation from the consumer or the person acting on their behalf to authorize the work.
	how the authorization was given [via email, phone, etc.].

*This guide is not a substitute for legal advice and is not designed as a substitute for advice from qualified independent legal counsel. This guide is not intended to be an exhaustive list of applicable legislation.