

CHAPTER 60K

INSURANCE AGENTS, LICENSING

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60K.02 INSURANCE AGENTS; SOLICITORS LICENSE.

Subdivision 1. **Requirement.** No person shall act or assume to act as an insurance agent in the solicitation or procurement of applications for insurance, nor in the sale of insurance or policies of insurance, nor in any manner aid as an insurance agent in the negotiation of insurance by or with an insurer, including resident agents or reciprocal or interinsurance exchanges and fraternal benefit societies, until that person obtains from the commissioner a license for that purpose. The license must specifically set forth the name of the person authorized to act as an agent and the class or classes of insurance for which that person is authorized to solicit or countersign policies. An insurance agent may qualify for a license to sell: (1) life and health; (2) life and health and variable contracts; (3) property and casualty; (4) travel baggage; (5) bail bonds; (6) title insurance; and (7) farm property and liability.

No insurer shall appoint or reappoint a natural person, partnership, or corporation to act as an insurance agent on its behalf until that natural person, partnership, or corporation obtains a license as an insurance agent.

[For text of subs 2 to 4, see M.S.1998]

History: 1999 c 177 s 29

60K.03 LICENSE APPLICATION.

[For text of subd 1, see M.S.1998]

Subd. 2. **Resident agent.** The commissioner shall issue a resident insurance agent's license to a qualified resident of this state as follows:

(a) A person may qualify as a resident of this state if that person resides in this state or the principal place of business of that person is maintained in this state. Application for a license claiming residency in this state for licensing purposes constitutes an election of residency in this state. A license issued upon an application claiming residency in this state is void if the licensee, while holding a resident license in this state, also holds, or makes application for, a resident license in, or thereafter claims to be a resident of, any other state or jurisdiction or if the licensee ceases to be a resident of this state; provided, however, if the applicant is a resident of a community or trade area, the border of which is contiguous with the state line of this state, the applicant may qualify for a resident license in this state and at the same time hold a resident license from the contiguous state.

(b) The commissioner shall subject each applicant who is a natural person to a written examination as to the applicant's competence to act as an insurance agent. The examination must be held at a reasonable time and place designated by the commissioner.

(c) The examination shall be approved for use by the commissioner and shall test the applicant's knowledge of the lines of insurance, policies, and transactions to be handled under the class of license applied for, of the duties and responsibilities of the licensee, and pertinent insurance laws of this state.

(d) The examination shall be given only after the applicant has completed a program of classroom studies in a school, which shall not include a school sponsored by, offered by, or affiliated with an insurance company or its agents; except that this limitation does not preclude a bona fide professional association of agents, not acting on behalf of an insurer, from offering courses. The course of study shall consist of 30 hours of classroom study devoted to the basic fundamentals of insurance for those seeking a Minnesota license for the first time, 15 hours devoted to specific life and health topics for those seeking a life and health license,

and 15 hours devoted to specific property and casualty topics for those seeking a property and casualty license. Of the 30 hours of required classroom study, at least three hours must be devoted to state insurance laws, regulations, and rules. The program of studies or study course shall have been approved by the commissioner in order to qualify under this paragraph. If the applicant has been previously licensed for the particular line of insurance in the state of Minnesota, the requirement of a program of studies or a study course shall be waived. A certification of compliance by the organization offering the course shall accompany the applicant's license application. This program of studies in a school or a study course shall not apply to farm property perils and farm liability applicants, or to agents writing such other lines of insurance as the commissioner may exempt from examination by order.

(e) The applicant must pass the examination with a grade determined by the commissioner to indicate satisfactory knowledge and understanding of the class or classes of insurance for which the applicant seeks qualification. The commissioner shall inform the applicant as to whether or not the applicant has passed. Examination results are valid for a period of three years from the date of the examination.

(f) An applicant who has failed to pass an examination may take subsequent examinations. Examination fees for subsequent examinations shall not be waived.

(g) Any applicant for a license covering the same class or classes of insurance for which the applicant was licensed under a similar license in this state, other than a temporary license, within the three years preceding the date of the application shall be exempt from the requirement of a written examination, unless the previous license was revoked or suspended by the commissioner. An applicant whose license is not renewed under section 60K.12 is exempt from the requirement of a written examination.

Subd. 3. Nonresident agent. The commissioner shall issue a nonresident insurance agent's license to a qualified person who is a resident of another state or country as follows:

(a) A person may qualify for a license under this section as a nonresident only if that person holds a license in another state, province of Canada, or other foreign country which, in the opinion of the commissioner, qualifies that person for the same activity as that for which a license is sought.

(b) The commissioner shall not issue a license to a nonresident applicant until that person files with the commissioner a designation of the commissioner and the commissioner's successors in office as the applicant's true and lawful attorney upon whom may be served all lawful process in an action, suit, or proceeding instituted by or on behalf of an interested person arising out of the applicant's insurance business in this state. This designation constitutes an agreement that this service of process is of the same legal force and validity as personal service of process in this state upon that applicant.

Service of process upon a licensee in an action or proceeding begun in a court of competent jurisdiction of this state may be made in compliance with section 45.028, subdivision 2.

(c) A nonresident agent shall be held to the same knowledge of state insurance law, regulations, and rules as that required of a resident agent according to subdivision 2, paragraph (d).

(d) A nonresident license terminates automatically when the resident license for that class of license in the state, province, or foreign country in which the licensee is a resident is terminated for any reason.

[For text of subs 4 to 6, see M.S.1998]

Subd. 7. Exceptions. The following are exempt from the general licensing requirements prescribed by this section:

- (1) agents of township mutuals who are exempted pursuant to section 60K.04;
- (2) fraternal benefit society representatives exempted pursuant to section 60K.05;
- (3) any regular salaried officer or employee of a licensed insurer, without license or other qualification, may act on behalf of that licensed insurer in the negotiation of insurance for that insurer, provided that a licensed agent must participate in the sale of the insurance;
- (4) employers and their officers or employees, and the trustees or employees of any trust plan, to the extent that the employers, officers, employees, or trustees are engaged in the ad-

ministration or operation of any program of employee benefits for the employees of the employers or employees of their subsidiaries or affiliates involving the use of insurance issued by a licensed insurance company; provided that the activities of the officers, employees and trustees are incidental to clerical or administrative duties and their compensation does not vary with the volume of insurance or applications for insurance;

(5) employees of a creditor who enroll debtors for credit life, credit accident and health, or credit involuntary unemployment insurance; provided the employees receive no commission or fee for it;

(6) clerical or administrative employees of an insurance agent who take insurance applications or receive premiums in the office of their employer, if the activities are incidental to clerical or administrative duties and the employee's compensation does not vary with the volume of the applications or premiums;

(7) rental vehicle companies and their employees in connection with the offer of insurance authorized under section 72A.125;

(8) employees of a retailer who enroll purchasers for credit insurance associated with a retail purchase; provided the employees receive no commission, fee, bonus, or other form of compensation for it; and

(9) representatives of prepaid legal service plans in connection with the sale and marketing of these plans.

History: 1999 c 177 s 30,31; 1999 c 236 s 1

60K.06 FEES.

Subdivision 1. **Renewal fees.** (a) Each agent licensed pursuant to section 60K.03 shall pay in accordance with the procedure adopted by the commissioner a renewal fee as prescribed by subdivision 2.

(b) Every agent, corporation, limited liability company, and partnership renewal license is valid for a period of 24 months. The commissioner may stagger the implementation of the 24-month licensing program so that approximately one-half of the licenses will expire on October 31 of each even-numbered year and the other half on October 31 of each odd-numbered year. Those licensees who will receive a 12-month license on November 1, 1994, because of the staggered implementation schedule, will pay for the license a fee reduced by an amount equal to one-half the fee for renewal of the license.

(c) Persons whose applications have been properly and timely filed who have not received notice of denial of renewal are approved for renewal and may continue to transact business whether or not the renewed license has been received on or before November 1. Applications for renewal of a license are timely filed if received by the commissioner on or before October 15 of the year due, on forms duly executed and accompanied by appropriate fees. An application mailed is considered timely filed if addressed to the commissioner, with proper postage, and postmarked by October 15.

Subd. 2. **Licensing fees.** (a) In addition to the fees and charges provided for examinations, each agent licensed pursuant to section 60K.03 shall pay to the commissioner:

(1) a fee of \$80 per license for an initial license issued to an individual agent, and a fee of \$80 for each renewal;

(2) a fee of \$200 for an initial license issued to a partnership, limited liability company, or corporation, and a fee of \$150 for each renewal;

(3) a fee of \$75 for an initial amendment (variable annuity) to a license, and a fee of \$50 for each renewal; and

(4) a fee of \$500 for an initial surplus lines agent's license, and a fee of \$500 for each renewal.

(b) Persons whose applications have been properly and timely filed who have not received notice of denial of renewal are approved for renewal and may continue to transact business whether or not the renewed license has been received on or before November 1 of the renewal year. Applications for renewal of a license are timely filed if received by the commissioner on or before the 15th day preceding the license renewal date of the applicant on forms duly executed and accompanied by appropriate fees. An application mailed is consid-

ered timely filed if addressed to the commissioner, with proper postage, and postmarked on or before the 15th day preceding the licensing renewal date of the applicant.

(c) Initial licenses issued under this section must be valid for a period not to exceed two years. The commissioner shall assign an expiration date to each initial license so that approximately one-half of all licenses expire each year. Each initial license must expire on October 31 of the expiration year assigned by the commissioner.

(d) All fees shall be retained by the commissioner and are nonreturnable, except that an overpayment of any fee must be refunded upon proper application.

Subd. 3. Initial license expiration; fee reduction. If an initial license issued under subdivision 2, paragraph (a), expires less than 12 months after issuance, the license fee must be reduced by an amount equal to one-half the fee for a renewal of the license.

History: 1999 c 223 art 2 s 7

60K.08 [Repealed, 1999 c 177 s 88]

60K.11 DENIAL, REVOCATION, SUSPENSION, AND CENSURE OF LICENSES.

Subdivision 1. Grounds. The commissioner may by order take any or all of the following actions:

- (1) deny, suspend, or revoke an insurance agent or agency license;
- (2) censure the licensee; or
- (3) impose a civil penalty as provided for in section 45.027, subdivision 6.

In order to take this action the commissioner must find that the order is in the public interest and that the applicant; licensee; or in the case of an insurance agency, partner, director, shareholder, officer, or agent of that insurance agency:

(i) does not intend to or is not in good faith carrying on the business of an insurance agent;

(ii) has filed an application for a license which is incomplete in any material respect or contains any statement which, in light of the circumstances under which it is made, contains any misrepresentation, or is false, misleading, or fraudulent;

(iii) has engaged in an act or practice, whether or not such act or practice involves the business of insurance, which demonstrates that the applicant or licensee is untrustworthy, financially irresponsible, or otherwise incompetent or unqualified to act as an insurance agent or agency;

(iv) has pled guilty, with or without explicitly admitting guilt, pled nolo contendere, or been convicted of a felony, gross misdemeanor, or misdemeanor involving moral turpitude, including, but not limited to, assault or similar conduct;

(v) has violated or failed to comply with any of the provisions of the insurance laws including chapter 45 or chapters 60A to 72A or any rule or order under those chapters;

(vi) is permanently or temporarily enjoined by any court of competent jurisdiction from engaging in or continuing any conduct or practice involving any aspect of the insurance business;

(vii) has violated or failed to comply with any order of the insurance regulator of any other state or jurisdiction;

(viii) has had an insurance agent or agency license denied, suspended, or revoked, has been censured or reprimanded, has been the subject of any other discipline imposed by, or has paid or has been required to pay a monetary penalty or fine to, another state or jurisdiction;

(ix) has misrepresented the terms of any actual or proposed insurance contract;

(x) has engaged in any fraudulent, coercive, deceptive, or dishonest act or practice whether or not such act or practice involves the business of insurance;

(xi) has improperly withheld, misappropriated, or converted to the licensee's or applicant's own use any money belonging to a policyholder, insurer, beneficiary, or other person;

(xii) has forged another's name to any document whether or not the document relates to an application for insurance or a policy of insurance; or

(xiii) has, while performing residential mortgage activity regulated under chapter 58, violated any notification, disclosure, or recordkeeping requirement, or any standard of conduct, imposed by chapter 58.

[For text of subsds .2 to .6, see M.S.1998]

History: 1999 c 151 s 38

60K.19 CONTINUING INSURANCE EDUCATION.

[For text of subsds 1 to 6, see M.S.1998]

Subd. 7. **Criteria for course accreditation.** (a) The commissioner may accredit a course only to the extent it is designed to impart substantive and procedural knowledge of the insurance field. The burden of demonstrating that the course satisfies this requirement is on the individual or organization seeking accreditation. The commissioner shall approve any educational program approved by Minnesota Continuing Legal Education relating to the insurance field. The commissioner is authorized to establish a procedure for renewal of course accreditation.

(b) The commissioner shall approve or disapprove professional designation examinations that are recommended for approval by the advisory task force. In order for an agent to receive full continuing education credit for a professional designation examination, the agent must pass the examination. An agent may not receive credit for classroom instruction preparing for the professional designation examination and also receive continuing education credit for passing the professional designation examination.

(c) The commissioner may not accredit a course:

- (1) that is designed to prepare students for a license examination;
- (2) in mechanical office or business skills, including typing, speedreading, use of calculators, or other machines or equipment;
- (3) in sales promotion, including meetings held in conjunction with the general business of the licensed agent; or
- (4) in motivation, the art of selling, psychology, or time management.

Subd. 8. **Minimum education requirement.** Each person subject to this section shall complete a minimum of 30 credit hours of courses accredited by the commissioner during each 24-month licensing period, two hours of which must be devoted to state law, regulations, and rules applicable to the line or lines of insurance for which the agent is licensed. Any person whose initial licensing period extends more than six months shall complete 15 hours of courses accredited by the commissioner during the initial license period. Any person teaching or lecturing at an accredited course qualifies for 1-1/2 times the number of credit hours that would be granted to a person completing the accredited course. No more than 15 credit hours per licensing period may be credited to a person for courses sponsored by, offered by, or affiliated with an insurance company or its agents. Courses sponsored by, offered by, or affiliated with an insurance company or agent may restrict its students to agents of the company or agency.

[For text of subsds 9 to 11, see M.S.1998]

History: 1999 c 177 s 32,33

NOTE: The amendment to subdivision 7 by Laws 1999, chapter 177, section 32, is effective July 1, 2000. Laws 1999, chapter 177, section 89.