

CHAPTER 610

INSURERS IN GENERAL

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Cross-reference: See definitions in ss. 600.03 and 628.02.

NOTE: Chapter 260, laws of 1971, which created this chapter of the statutes, contained notes explaining the revision. See the 1971 session law volume.

610.001 Purposes. The purposes of chs. 611 to 616 are:

- (1) To provide an orderly procedure by which insurers may be created, governed and dissolved;
- (2) To provide for procedures to merge, consolidate or convert various kinds of insurers;
- (3) To provide for structure and management that will maximize democratic participation in the operation of insurers; and
- (4) To prevent or control self-dealing by management in order to protect the interests of shareholders, policyholders, members, subscribers and the public.

History: 1971 c. 260; 1979 c. 102 s. 237; 1979 c. 261.

610.01 Definitions. In chs. 610 to 620, unless the context requires otherwise:

- (1) “Director” includes “trustee”.
- (2) “Officer” does not include “director”.
- (3) “Promoter stock” means shares issued by a domestic stock corporation under ss. 611.18 (2) (a) 2. and 611.32 (1), and shares issued within 5 years after the initial issuance of the certificate of authority, to incorporators, directors, principal officers, members of the families of any of these persons, and to any corporations controlled by, or any trustee acting in behalf of, any of these persons.
- (4) In any provision of ch. 180 or 181 made applicable by any section of chs. 600 to 646, “department” shall be read “commissioner of insurance”.

History: 1971 c. 260; 1979 c. 102, 177; 1983 a. 189; 1995 a. 27.

610.11 Qualified insurers. No person may do an insurance business as defined in s. 618.02 (2) on the person’s own account in this state, either in person, or through agents or brokers, or through the mail or any other method of communication, except:

- (1) An insurer authorized to do business in this state, within the limits of its certificate of authority; or
- (2) An insurer doing business under s. 618.41.

History: 1971 c. 260; 1991 a. 316.

610.21 Other business. (1) **PROHIBITION FOR DOMESTIC INSURERS.** No domestic insurer may engage, directly or indirectly, in any business other than insurance and business reasonably incidental to its insurance business, except as specifically authorized by s. 611.26 (4), 611.26 (4) as incorporated by s. 614.24 (1), or s. 613.26 or any other provision of chs. 600 to 646; except that a domestic insurer not restricted under s. 620.03 may engage directly in any activity to the extent it is authorized to do so through a subsidiary.

(2) **PROHIBITION FOR NONDOMESTIC INSURERS.** No nondomestic insurer may engage in this state in any business forbidden to a domestic insurer, nor may the insurer engage in such business elsewhere if:

- (a) The law of the insurer’s domicile forbids an insurer to engage in such business; or
- (b) The statutes of this state specifically prohibit a nondomestic insurer to engage in such business elsewhere; or

(c) The commissioner orders it to cease doing such business upon finding that doing such business is not consistent with the interests of its insureds, creditors or the public in this state; or that it gives the insurer a substantial competitive advantage in relation to domestic insurers.

(3) **INCIDENTAL BUSINESS.** “Incidental business” includes:

(a) The business of preparing and selling abstracts of title and related documents, if done by an insurer authorized to transact title insurance;

(b) Business that could be done through ancillary subsidiaries authorized under s. 611.26 (3), or, in the case of a nondomestic insurer, through corporations that would be so authorized if the insurer were domestic.

(4) **ANNUITIES.** For purposes of this section, “insurance” includes “annuities”.

History: 1971 c. 260; 1975 c. 373; 1979 c. 102, 177; 1981 c. 307.

610.23 Power to hold property in other than own name.

An insurer shall hold all investments and deposits of its funds in its own name except that:

(1) **CUSTODIAL OR TRUST ARRANGEMENTS.** Securities kept under a custodial agreement or trust arrangement with a bank or banking and trust company may be issued in the name of a nominee of the bank or banking and trust company; and

(2) **BEARER SECURITIES.** Any insurer may acquire and hold securities in bearer form.

History: 1975 c. 373.

Legislative Council Note, 1975: This section continues s. 201.24 (4), made applicable to all insurers. The power certainly exists under ss. 180.04 (17) and 181.04 (16) as incorporated in ss. 611.07 (1), 612.03 and 614.07 (1), but this section places it beyond doubt for all insurers and permits the repeal of s. 201.24 (4). [Bill 643–S]

610.24 Insurers as fundholders. All assets shall be held, invested and disbursed for the use and benefit of the insurer and no policyholder, member or beneficiary may have or acquire individual rights in such assets or become entitled to any apportionment or the surrender of any part of such assets, except as provided in the contract. An insurer may create, maintain, invest, disburse and apply any special funds necessary to carry out any purpose permitted by the laws of this state and the articles and bylaws of the insurer.

History: 1979 c. 102.

610.40 Continued effect of transitional provisions.

Sections 610.41 to 610.53, 1981 stats., continue to apply to insurers affected by those sections before April 27, 1984.

History: 1983 a. 215.

610.50 Vital records. An insurer or an employe, agent or attorney of an insurer is not subject to s. 69.24 (1) (a) for copying a certified copy of a vital record for the insurer’s own internal administrative use in connection with the payment of insurance claims or benefits if the copy is marked “FOR ADMINISTRATIVE USE” and is retained in the files of the insurer or attorney.

History: 1987 a. 247.

610.61 Duty of life insurers to report abandoned property. An insurer doing a life insurance business shall report under s. 177.17 any property presumed abandoned under s. 177.07.

History: 1979 c. 102; 1983 a. 408 s. 16.