

COUNTY MUTUAL INSURANCE ASSOCIATIONS

Footnotes

Memorandum of intent, 61 GA (1965), Senate Journal, page 1612;
House Journal, page 1785

518.1 Incorporation.

Corporations formed to operate as county mutual insurance associations shall be governed by the provisions of chapter 491, except as modified by the provisions of this chapter.

[C66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, § 518.1]

518.2 Articles approval.

An organization shall present to the commissioner of insurance for approval its articles of incorporation, which shall show its name, objects and purposes, the time and place of the annual meeting of the members, and the location of its principal place of business, and any subsequent amendments to its articles. The commissioner of insurance shall submit the articles of incorporation and any subsequent amendments to the articles to the attorney general for examination, and if found by the attorney general to be in accordance with the provisions of this chapter and the Constitution and the laws of the state, the attorney general shall certify such fact on the articles of incorporation and on any amendments to the articles and return them to the commissioner. Articles of incorporation and amendments to the articles shall not be approved by the commissioner or recorded unless certified by the attorney general.

[C66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, § 518.2]

99 Acts, ch 165, §15

518.3 Certificate recording.

If the commissioner of insurance approves the articles of incorporation, the commissioner shall so certify and the articles with the certificates of approval shall then be recorded and certified by the secretary of state.

[C66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, § 518.3]

518.4 Identification as to type of insurer.

Any association incorporated under the laws of this state for the purpose of furnishing insurance as provided for in this chapter shall be known as a county mutual insurance association. The words "mutual" and "association" shall be incorporated in and become a part of its name.

[C97, § 1760; S13, § 1759-b; C24, 27, 31, 35, 39, § 9030; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, § 518.2; C66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, § 518.4]

518.5 Commencement of business conditions.

No county mutual insurance association shall issue policies until applications for insurance of not less than fifty thousand dollars, representing at least fifty applicants, have been received, and no application for insurance during the period of organization shall exceed two percent of the amount required for organization, any reinsurance taking effect simultaneously with the policy being deducted in determining such maximum single risk.

[C66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, § 518.5]

518.6 Powers of the members.

Members of the association shall have the power to make or amend articles of incorporation at any membership meeting, provided that notice of such addition or amendment has been mailed to each member at least ten days in advance of the meeting in which such proposed action is to be considered, and provided that no amendment shall become effective until approved by the commissioner of insurance and recorded in the office of the secretary of state.

[C66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, § 518.6]

518.7 Officers and directors election.

Officers or directors shall be elected in the manner and for the length of time prescribed in the articles of incorporation. The same person shall not simultaneously hold the offices of president and secretary. A director shall be a member of the association.

[C66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, § 518.7]

97 Acts, ch 186, §22; 2000 Acts, ch 1023, §35

518.8 Bylaws.

The directors of the association shall have the authority to enact such bylaws and regulations not inconsistent with law as they consider necessary for the regulation and conduct of the business. No change in the bylaws shall have the effect of limiting coverage under existing policies of insurance. An association shall file with the commissioner bylaws and subsequent amendments to the bylaws within thirty days of the adoption of the bylaws and amendments.

[C66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, § 518.8]

2000 Acts, ch 1023, §36

518.9 Eligibility for membership.

The members of the association shall consist of those persons or organizations insured therein. The words "*persons*" and "*members*" as used in this chapter shall be construed to mean trustees, administrators, and all other individuals, public or private corporations or associations. Insurance on the property of one or more minors may be granted on application of an adult parent, friend or guardian who consents to become a member as representing such minor.

[C66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, § 518.9]

518.10 Territorial limitations.

The territory of any association shall be limited to the county in which its principal place of business is located, and to the counties contiguous thereto, and no coverage shall be placed on property located outside of this territory; provided, however, that the insurance may be extended, if the policy so provides, to cover personal property while temporarily removed to other locations.

[C97, § 1760; S13, § 1759-b; C24, 27, 31, 35, 39, § 9030; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, § 518.2; C66, 71, 73, 75, 77,

79, 81, § 518.10]

518.11 Kinds of insurance.

Any association organized under this chapter is authorized to insure or to accept reinsurance against loss or damage by:

1. Any peril or perils resulting in physical loss or damage to property;
2. Theft of personal property;
3. Injury, sickness or death of animals and the furnishing of veterinary service.

Such contracts of insurance shall be subject only to such provisions as are contained in this chapter and shall consist of:

An application on blanks furnished by the association and signed by the insured or the insured's representatives;

A policy issued by the association in accordance with its rules, and approved by the commissioner of insurance.

[C66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, § 518.11]

518.12 Properties to be insured.

County mutual insurance associations are permitted to insure only the following classes of property:

1. Farm property, including residences and other farm buildings and all classes of personal property in connection therewith;
2. Buildings and personal property used in the processing of agricultural products in conjunction with a farming operation;
3. City and suburban residences, including household and personal effects;
4. Churches, schools and community buildings.

[C66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, § 518.12]

518.13 Premium charges.

Any association may by action of its board of directors establish premium charges for the purpose of payment of losses and expenses and for the establishment or maintenance of a reserve fund.

Any policy shall stand suspended if any default shall be made in the payment of any premium on or before the date specified in a written notice requiring the payment of such premium and mailed to the insured and directed to the insured's last known address not less than thirty days prior to such suspension date. Such notice shall specify the amount and due date of the premium. The association shall in no event be liable for any loss occurring during such period of suspension.

[C66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, § 518.13]

518.13A Assessments prohibited.

An association doing business under this chapter shall not levy an assessment on any member of the association.

2000 Acts, ch 1023, §37

518.14 Investments.

1. *General considerations.* The following considerations apply in the interpretation of this section:

a. This section applies to the investments of county mutual insurance associations.

b. The purpose of this section is to protect and further the interests of policyholders, claimants, creditors, and the public by providing standards for the development and administration of programs for the investment of the assets of associations organized under this chapter. These standards, and the investment programs developed by associations, shall take into account the safety of the association's principal, investment yield and growth, stability in the value of the investment, and liquidity necessary to meet the association's expected business needs, and investment diversification.

All investments made pursuant to this section shall have investment qualities and characteristics such that the speculative elements of the investments are not predominant.

c. Financial terms relating to county mutual insurance associations have the meanings assigned to them under statutory accounting methods. Financial terms relating to companies or associations other than county mutual insurance associations have the meanings assigned to them under generally accepted accounting principles.

d. Investments shall be valued in accordance with the valuation procedures established by the national association of insurance commissioners, unless the commissioner requires or finds another method of valuation reasonable under the circumstances.

e. If an investment qualifies under more than one subsection, an association may elect to hold the investment under the subsection of its choice. This section does not prevent an association from electing to hold an investment under a subsection different from the one under which it previously held the investment.

2. *Definitions.* For purposes of this section:

a. "*Admitted assets*", for purposes of computing percentage limitations on particular types of investments, means the assets which are authorized to be shown on the commissioner's annual statement blank as admitted assets as of the December 31 immediately preceding the date the association acquires the investment.

b. "*Clearing corporation*" means as defined in section 554.8102.

c. "*Custodian bank*" means as defined in section 515.35.

d. "*Issuer*" means as defined in section 554.8201.

e. "*Member bank*" means a national bank, state bank, or trust company which is a member of the United States federal reserve system.

f. "*National securities exchange*" means an exchange registered under section 6 of the federal Securities Exchange Act of 1934 or an exchange regulated under the laws of Canada.

g. "Obligations" includes bonds, notes, debentures, transportation equipment certificates, domestic repurchase agreements, and obligations for the payment of money not in default as to payments of principal and interest on the date of investment, which constitute general obligations of the issuer or payable only out of certain revenues or certain funds pledged or otherwise dedicated for payment of principal and interest on the obligations. A lease is an obligation if the lease is assigned to the insurer and is nonterminable by the lessee upon foreclosure of any lien upon the leased property, and if rental payments are sufficient to amortize the investment over the primary lease term.

3. Investments in name of association or nominee and prohibitions.

a. An association's investments shall be held in its own name or the name of its nominee, except as follows:

(1) Investments may be held in the name of a clearing corporation or of a custodian bank or in the name of the nominee of either on the following conditions:

(a) The clearing corporation, custodian bank, or nominee must be legally authorized to hold the particular investment for the account of others.

(b) When the investment is evidenced by a certificate and held in the name of a custodian bank or the nominee of a custodian bank, a written agreement shall provide that certificates so deposited shall at all times be kept separate and apart from other deposits with the depository, so that at all times they may be identified as belonging solely to the association making the deposit.

(c) If a clearing corporation is to act as depository, the investment may be merged or held in bulk in the name of the clearing corporation or its nominee with other investments deposited with the clearing corporation by any other person, if a written agreement between the clearing corporation and the association provides that adequate evidence of the deposit is to be obtained and retained by the association or a custodian bank.

(2) An association may loan stocks or obligations held by it under this chapter to a broker-dealer registered under the federal Securities Exchange Act of 1934 or to a member bank. The loan must be evidenced by a written agreement which provides all of the following:

(a) That the loan will be fully collateralized by cash or obligations issued or guaranteed by the United States or an agency or an instrumentality of the United States, and that the collateral will be adjusted as necessary each business day during the term of the loan to maintain the required collateralization in the event of market value changes in the loaned securities or collateral.

(b) That the loan may be terminated by the association at any time, and that the borrower will return the loaned stocks or obligations within five business days after termination.

(c) That the association has the right to retain the collateral or use the collateral to purchase investments equivalent to the loaned securities if the borrower defaults under the terms of the agreement, and that the borrower remains liable for any losses and expenses incurred by the association due to default that are not covered by the collateral.

(3) An association may participate through a member bank in the United States federal reserve book entry system, and the records of the member bank shall at all times show that the investments are held for the association or for specific accounts of the association.

(4) An investment may consist of an individual interest in a pool of obligations or a fractional interest in a single obligation if the certificate of participation or interest or the confirmation of participation or interest in the investment is issued in the name of the association, the name of the custodian bank, or the nominee of either, and, if the interest as evidenced by the certificate or confirmation is, if held by a custodian bank, kept

separate and apart from the investments of others so that at all times the participation may be identified as belonging solely to the association making the investment.

(5) Transfers of ownership of investments held as described in paragraph "a", subparagraph (1), subparagraph subdivision (c), and subparagraphs (3) and (4), may be evidenced by bookkeeping entry on the books of the issuer of the investment, its transfer or recording agent, or the clearing corporation without physical delivery of a certificate evidencing the association's investment.

b. Except as provided in paragraph "a", subparagraph (5), if an investment is not evidenced by a certificate, adequate evidence of the association's investment shall be obtained from the issuer or its transfer or recording agent and retained by the association, a custodian bank, or clearing corporation. Adequate evidence, for purposes of this paragraph, means a written receipt or other verification issued by the depository or issuer or a custodian bank which shows that the investment is held for the association.

4. *Investments.* Except as otherwise permitted by this section, an association organized under this chapter shall only invest in the following:

a. *United States government obligations.* Obligations issued or guaranteed by the United States or an agency or instrumentality of the United States.

b. *Certain development bank obligations.* Obligations issued or guaranteed by the international bank for reconstruction and development, the Asian development bank, the inter-American development bank, the export-import bank, the world bank, or any United States government-sponsored organization of which the United States is a member, if the principal and interest is payable in United States dollars. An association shall not invest more than five percent of its total admitted assets in the obligations of any one of these banks or organizations, and shall not invest more than a total of ten percent of its total admitted assets in the obligations authorized by this paragraph.

c. *State obligations.* Obligations issued or guaranteed by a state, a political subdivision of a state, or an instrumentality of a state.

d. *Canadian government obligations.* Obligations issued or guaranteed by Canada, by an agency or province of Canada, by a political subdivision of such province, or by an instrumentality of any of those provinces or political subdivisions.

e. *Corporate and business trust obligations.* Obligations issued, assumed, or guaranteed by a corporation or business trust organized under the laws of the United States or a state, or the laws of Canada or a province of Canada, provided that an association shall not invest more than five percent of its admitted assets in the obligations of any one corporation or business trust. Investments shall be made only in investment grade bonds.

f. *Stocks.* Common stocks, common stock equivalents, mutual fund shares, securities convertible into common stocks or common stock equivalents, or preferred stocks issued or guaranteed by a corporation incorporated under the laws of the United States or a state, or the laws of Canada or a province of Canada. Aggregate investments in nondividend paying stocks shall not exceed five percent of surplus.

(1) Stocks purchased under this lettered paragraph shall not exceed fifty percent of surplus. With the approval of the commissioner, an association may invest any amount in common stocks, preferred stocks, or other securities of one or more subsidiaries provided that after such investments the association's surplus as regards policyholders will be reasonable in relation to the association's outstanding liabilities and adequate to its financial needs.

(2) An association shall not invest more than ten percent of its surplus in the stocks of any one corporation.

g. Home office real estate. Funds may be invested in a home office building, at the direction of the board of directors and with the prior approval of the commissioner of insurance. An association shall not invest more than twenty- five percent of its total admitted assets in such real estate. With the prior approval of the commissioner, an association may exceed the real estate investment limitation to effectuate a merger with, or the acquisition of, another association.

[C66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, § 518.14]

95 Acts, ch 185, §26; 96 Acts, ch 1138, § 3, 84

518.15 Reports and examinations.

The president or the vice president and secretary of each association authorized to do business under this chapter shall annually before the first day of March prepare under oath and file with the commissioner of insurance a full, true and complete statement of the condition of such association on the last day of the preceding year. The commissioner of insurance shall prescribe the report forms and shall determine the information and data to be reported.

Such associations shall pay the same expenses of any examination made or ordered to be made by the commissioner of insurance and the same fees for the annual reports and annual certificates of authority as are required to be paid by domestic companies organized and doing business under chapter 515, which certificates shall expire June 1 of the year following the date of issue.

[C66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, § 518.15]

88 Acts, ch 1112, § 108

518.16 Soliciting application for insurance license required.

A person shall not solicit any application for insurance for an association in this state without having procured from the commissioner of insurance a license authorizing the person to act as an insurance producer pursuant to chapter 522B.

[C66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, § 518.16; 82 Acts, ch 1003, § 8]

95 Acts, ch 185, §27; 2001 Acts, ch 118, §16

518.16A Limitation on termination of independent insurance producers.

A county mutual insurance association authorized to do business in this state shall not terminate a contract of an insurance producer who is an independent contractor but who is not an exclusive insurance producer as defined in section 522B.1 without at least one hundred eighty days' notice, except for loss of license, fraud, nonpayment of association premiums that are due and not in dispute by the producer, or the withdrawal of operations in the state by the association.

2002 Acts, ch 1111, §25

518.17 Reinsurance.

A county mutual insurance association may reinsure a part or all of its coverages written pursuant to this chapter with an association operating under this chapter, or with any other association or company licensed in this state and authorized to write the kinds of insurance enumerated in section 518.11.

Reinsurance sufficient to protect the financial stability of the state mutual insurance association is also required. In general, reinsurance coverage obtained by a county mutual insurance association shall not expose the association to losses from coverages written pursuant to this chapter of more than fifteen percent from surplus in any calendar year. The commissioner of insurance may require additional reinsurance if necessary to protect the policyholders of the association.

[C66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, § 518.17]

91 Acts, ch 26, §47; 99 Acts, ch 165, §16; 2000 Acts, ch 1023, §38; 2002 Acts, ch 1111, §26; 2002 Acts, ch 1119, §183

518.18 Premium tax.

After January 1, 1966, every association doing business under this chapter shall be required to pay to the director of the department of revenue, or a depository designated by the director, as taxes an amount equal to the following:

1. The applicable percent of the gross amount of premiums received during the preceding calendar year, after deducting the amount returned upon the canceled policies, certificates, and rejected applications; and after deducting premiums paid for windstorm or hail reinsurance on properties specifically reinsured. However, the reinsurer of such windstorm or hail risks shall pay the applicable percent of the gross amount of reinsurance premiums received upon such risks after deducting the amounts returned upon canceled policies, certificates, and rejected applications. For purposes of this section, "*applicable percent*" means the same as specified in section 432.1, subsection 4.

2. Except as provided in subsection 3, the premium tax shall be paid on or before March 1 of the year following the calendar year for which the tax is due. The commissioner of insurance may suspend the certificate of authority of a county mutual insurance association that fails to pay its premium tax on or before the due date.

3. *a.* Each county mutual insurance association transacting business in this state whose Iowa premium tax liability for the preceding calendar year was one thousand dollars or more shall remit on or before June 1, on a prepayment basis, an amount equal to one-half of the premium tax liability for the preceding calendar year.

b. In addition to the prepayment amount in paragraph "*a*", each association shall remit on or before August 15, on a prepayment basis, an additional amount equal to the following percent of the premium tax liability for the preceding calendar year as follows:

(1) For prepayment in the 2003 and 2004 calendar years, eleven percent.

(2) For prepayment in the 2005 calendar year, twenty-six percent.

(3) For prepayment in the 2006 and subsequent calendar years, fifty percent.

c. The sums prepaid by a county mutual insurance association under this subsection shall be allowed as credits against its premium tax liability for the calendar year during which the payments are made. If a prepayment made under this subsection exceeds the annual premium tax liability, the excess shall be allowed as a credit against subsequent prepayment or tax liabilities. The commissioner of insurance may suspend the certificate of authority of an association that fails to make a prepayment on or before the due date.

[C66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, § 518.18]

2003 Acts, ch 145, §286; 2003 Acts, ch 179, §136, 159; 2004 Acts, ch 1175, §339, 348

518.19 Proof of loss requirement for reporting.

The insured shall give immediate written notice to the association of any loss for which claim is made and shall then furnish a written proof of loss to the association within sixty days from the time the loss occurred, unless such time is extended in writing by the association. The proof of loss shall contain such information as is required by the policy provisions of the association, which information shall be signed and sworn to by the insured.

[C66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, § 518.19]

518.20 Reporting of livestock losses.

In the event of loss of livestock, the insured shall give notice to the association in sufficient time to permit the performance by a licensed veterinarian of a postmortem examination of the livestock for which claim is made, but in no event later than forty-eight hours from the time of occurrence.

[C66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, § 518.20]

518.21 Reporting of losses of crops by hail.

In the event of loss to growing crops by hail, notice of such loss must be given by mailing to the association a certified letter within ten days from the time such loss or damage occurred.

[C66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, § 518.21]

518.22 Limitation of action.

No action on any loss shall be begun sooner than forty days after proof of loss has been given to the association, and unless commenced within twelve months next after the inception of the loss.

[C66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, § 518.22]

518.23 Cancellation or nonrenewal of policies notice.

1. *Cancellation by insured.* A policy shall be canceled at any time at the request of the insured upon the return of the policy to the home office of the association, and the payment of all premium charges against such policy.

2. *Cancellation by association.*

a. Except as provided in paragraph "b", notice of cancellation is not effective unless mailed or delivered by the association to the named insured at least thirty days before the effective date of cancellation.

b. Notice of cancellation resulting from nonpayment of a premium or installment provided for in the policy, or provided for in a note or contract for the payment of such premium or installment, is not effective unless mailed or delivered by the association to the named insured at least ten days prior to the date of cancellation.

c. If a notice of cancellation under paragraph "a" or "b" fails to include the reason for such cancellation, the association, upon receipt of a timely request by the named insured, shall provide in writing the reason for the cancellation.

3. *Nonrenewal by association.* A notice of intention not to renew is not effective unless mailed or delivered by the insurer to the named insured at least thirty days prior to the expiration date of the policy. If the reason

does not accompany the notice of nonrenewal, the association, upon receipt of a timely request by the named insured, shall provide the reason for the nonrenewal in writing.

4. *Notice.* Service of notice under subsection 2 or 3 may be delivered in person or mailed to the insured at the insured's post office address as given in or upon the policy, or to such other address as the insured shall have given to the association in writing. A post office department certificate of mailing shall be deemed proof of receipt of such mailing. If in either case the cash payments exceed the amount properly chargeable, the excess shall be refunded to the insured upon the surrender of the policy to the association at its home office.

[C66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, § 518.23]

2000 Acts, ch 1023, §39; 2001 Acts, ch 69, §35; 2003 Acts, ch 91, §47

518.24 Reserved.

518.25 Surplus.

An association organized under this chapter shall at all times maintain a surplus of not less than fifty thousand dollars or one-tenth of one percent of the gross risk in force, whichever is greater.

90 Acts, ch 1234, §70; 99 Acts, ch 165, §17; 2002 Acts, ch 1111, §27

518.26 Loans to officers prohibited.

Assets or other funds shall not be loaned directly or indirectly to an officer, director, or employee of the association, or directly or indirectly to a relative of an officer, director, or an employee of the association.

95 Acts, ch 185, §28

518.27 Form approval.

The form of all policies, applications, agreements, and endorsements modifying the provisions of policies, and all permits and riders used in this state, issued or proposed to be issued by a county mutual insurance association doing business in this state under the provisions of this chapter, shall first be examined and approved by the commissioner of insurance.

95 Acts, ch 185, §29

518.28 Failure to file copy.

Upon the failure of a county mutual insurance association to file a copy of its forms of policies or contracts pursuant to section 518.27, the commissioner of insurance may suspend its authority to transact business within the state until such forms of policies or contracts have been filed and approved.

95 Acts, ch 185, §30; 2001 Acts, ch 24, §56

518.29 Disapproval of filings.

If the commissioner finds that a filing does not meet the requirements of this chapter, written notice of disapproval shall be sent to the county mutual insurance association specifying in what respect the filing fails to meet the requirements of this chapter and stating that the filing is not effective. If a filing is disapproved by the commissioner, the association may request a hearing on the disapproval within thirty days. The association bears the burden of proving compliance with the standards established by this chapter.

If, at any time after a form has been approved, the commissioner finds that the form no longer meets the requirements of this chapter, the commissioner may order the discontinuance of the use of the form. The order of discontinuance shall be in writing and may be issued only after a hearing with at least ten days' prior notice to all county mutuals affected by the order. The order shall state the grounds upon which the order is based and when the order of discontinuance is effective.

95 Acts, ch 185, §31

518.30 Certificate suspension.

The commissioner of insurance may suspend a county mutual insurance association's certificate of authority to do business if the association neglects or fails to comply with this chapter.

95 Acts, ch 185, §32