

507A.6 Secretary of state as process agent.

1. Any act of doing an insurance business as set forth in this chapter by any unauthorized person or insurer is equivalent to and shall constitute an irrevocable appointment by such person and insurer, binding upon the person or insurer, the person's or insurer's executor or administrator, or successor in interest if a corporation, of the secretary of state or the secretary of state's successor in office, to be the true and lawful attorney of such person or insurer upon whom may be served all legal process in any action, suit, or proceeding in any court by the commissioner of insurance or by the state and upon whom may be served any notice, order, pleading or process in any proceeding before the commissioner of insurance and which arises out of doing an insurance business in this state by such person or insurer. Any act of doing an insurance business in this state by any unauthorized person or insurer shall be signification of its agreement that any such legal process in such court action, suit, or proceeding and any such notice, order, pleading, or process in such administrative proceeding before the commissioner of insurance so served shall be of the same legal force and validity as personal service of process in this state upon such person or insurer.

2. Service of process in such action shall be made by delivering to and leaving with the secretary of state or some person in apparent charge of the secretary of state's office, two copies thereof. Service upon the secretary of state as such attorney shall be service upon the principal.

3. The secretary of state shall forthwith forward by certified mail one of the copies of such process or such notice, order, pleading, or process in proceedings before the commissioner to the defendant in such court proceeding or to whom the notice, order, pleading, or process in such administrative proceeding is addressed or directed at the last known principal place of business and shall keep a record of all process so served on the secretary of state which shall show the day and hour of service. Such service is sufficient, provided:

a. Notice of such service and a copy of the court process or the notice, order, pleading, or process in such administrative proceeding is sent within ten days thereafter by certified mail by the plaintiff or the plaintiff's attorney in the court proceeding or by the commissioner of insurance in the administrative proceeding to the defendant in the court proceeding or to whom the notice, order, pleading, or process in such administrative proceeding is addressed or directed at the last known principal place of business of the defendant in the court or administrative proceeding.

b. The defendant's receipt or receipts issued by the post office with which the letter is registered, showing the name of the sender of the letter and the name and address of the person or insurer to whom the letter is addressed, and an affidavit of the plaintiff or the plaintiff's attorney in court proceeding or of the commissioner of insurance in administrative proceeding, showing compliance therewith are filed with the clerk of the court in which such action, suit, or proceeding is pending or with the commissioner in administrative proceedings, on or before the date the defendant in the court or administrative proceeding is required to appear or respond thereto, or within such further time as the court or commissioner of insurance may allow.

4. No plaintiff shall be entitled to a judgment or a determination by default in any court or administrative proceeding in which court process or notice, order, pleading, or process in proceedings before the commissioner of insurance is served under this section until the expiration of forty-five days from the date of filing of the affidavit of compliance.

5. Nothing in this section shall limit or abridge the right to serve any process, notice, order, or demand upon any person or insurer in any other manner now or hereafter permitted by law.

[C50, 54, 58, 62, 66, § 507A.3; C71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, § 507A.6]