

CHAPTER 9  
TITLE GUARANTY DIVISION

**265—9.1(16) Definitions.** The following words and phrases, when used in this chapter, shall have the meanings set forth below unless a meaning is inconsistent with the manifest intent or the context of a particular rule:

*“Abstract”* means a written or electronic summary of all matters of record affecting title to a specific parcel of real estate prepared in accordance with abstract minimum standards adopted by the division, provided however, that for nonpurchase transactions, “abstract” may also mean a written or electronic short-form summary setting forth the titleholders, liens, and encumbrances in accordance with guidelines adopted by the division.

*“Abstractor”* means a person who is engaged in the practice of searching public records for the purpose of creating abstracts.

*“Authority”* means the Iowa finance authority established by Iowa Code chapter 16.

*“Certificate”* means the form used to guarantee title, including any part or schedule thereof and any endorsements thereto.

*“Claim”* means loss or damage or potential loss or damage arising by reason of a matter actually, possibly, or allegedly within the coverage of a commitment, certificate, closing protection letter, mortgage release certificate, or by reason of any other matter for which the division is actually, possibly, or allegedly liable.

*“Claim loss”* means amounts paid by the division in the investigation and resolution of a claim including, but not limited to, payments to the guaranteed, payments to adverse claimants, attorneys’ fees, and all other expenses and costs related to or arising from the claim.

*“Closing protection letter”* means the division’s written agreement to indemnify a lender or borrower or both for loss caused by a participating closer’s theft of settlement funds or failure to comply with written closing instructions relating to title certificate coverage when agreed to by the participating closer.

*“Commitment”* means the division’s written offer to issue a certificate.

*“Division”* means Iowa title guaranty, a division of the Iowa finance authority.

*“Division board”* means the board of the division created pursuant to Iowa Code section 16.2A(1).

*“Field issuer”* means a participant authorized by the division to issue commitments and certificates.

*“Mortgage release certificate”* means a certificate of release or a certificate of partial release issued by the division, pursuant to Iowa Code section 16.92.

*“Participant”* means a participating attorney, a participating abstractor, or a participating closer.

*“Participating abstractor”* means an abstractor who is authorized by the division to prepare abstracts for division purposes.

*“Participating attorney”* means an attorney licensed to practice law in the state of Iowa who is authorized by the division to prepare title opinions for division purposes.

*“Participating closer”* means any of the following authorized by the division to issue a closing protection letter: an Iowa licensed attorney disbursing funds through an interest on lawyer trust account, a closing agent licensed by the Iowa division of banking, or a real estate broker licensed by the Iowa real estate commission disbursing funds through a real estate trust account.

*“Party”* means a participant, or any other person, that has a contractual relationship with the division to provide services for which a claim may be brought against the division.

*“Person”* means an individual or legal entity, including corporation, limited liability company, government or governmental subdivision or agency, business trust, estate, trust, partnership or association, or any other legal entity.

[ARC 2506C, IAB 4/27/16, effective 6/1/16; see Delay note at end of chapter]

**265—9.2(16) Purpose.** This chapter describes the mission, organization, programs and operations of the division, including the office where and the means by which a person may obtain information and make submissions or requests.

[ARC 2506C, IAB 4/27/16, effective 6/1/16; see Delay note at end of chapter]

**265—9.3(16) Mission.** The mission of the division is to operate a program that offers guaranties of real property titles in order to provide, as an adjunct to the abstract-attorney's title opinion system, a low-cost mechanism to facilitate mortgage lenders' participation in the secondary market and add to the integrity of the land-title transfer system in the state of Iowa and to perform other duties as assigned by Iowa law. Surplus funds generated by the division shall be transferred to the authority's housing assistance fund after providing for adequate reserves and for the operating expenses of the division.

[ARC 2506C, IAB 4/27/16, effective 6/1/16; see Delay note at end of chapter]

**265—9.4(16) Organization.**

**9.4(1) Location.** The office of the division is located at the address set forth in rule 265—1.3(16). Office hours are 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday, excluding legal holidays. The division's website address is [www.iowatitleguaranty.gov](http://www.iowatitleguaranty.gov), and the division's telephone and facsimile numbers are as follows: (515)725-4900 (general telephone number); 1-800-432-7230 (toll-free telephone number); and (515)725-4901 (facsimile). The division's email address is [titleguaranty@iowa.gov](mailto:titleguaranty@iowa.gov). Inquiries, submissions, applications and other requests for information may be directed to the division at the address set forth herein. Requests may be made personally or by telephone, fax, mail or email.

**9.4(2) Division board.** A chair and vice chair shall be elected annually by the members of the division board at the first quarterly meeting following July 1 of each year, which is the beginning of the division's fiscal year.

**9.4(3) Meetings.** Meetings of the division board shall generally be held quarterly on the date and time determined by the division board. Meetings of the division board may also be held at the call of the chair or on written request of two division board members. The division will give advance public notice of the specific date, time and place of each division board meeting. At least 24 hours before commencement of a division board meeting, the division will post the tentative agenda at the office of the division and on the division's website. Division board meetings may be conducted by conference call. Any person may attend and observe division board meetings except for any portion of a division board meeting that may be closed pursuant to Iowa Code section 21.5. The minutes of the division board meetings are available at the office of the division and on the division's website. Three members of the division board constitute a quorum. An affirmative vote of a majority of the division board members is necessary for any substantive action taken by the division board. The majority shall not include any division board member who has a conflict of interest, and a statement of a conflict of interest shall be conclusive for this purpose.

[ARC 2506C, IAB 4/27/16, effective 6/1/16; see Delay note at end of chapter; ARC 4319C, IAB 2/27/19, effective 4/3/19]

**265—9.5(16) Operation.** The division offers guaranties of real property titles in the state through the issuance of commitments and certificates.

**9.5(1) Commitments, certificates, forms and manuals.** The terms, conditions, and form of commitments and certificates shall be approved by the division board. The division may adopt and use manuals and other forms as the division deems necessary for implementation and administration of the title guaranty program.

*a.* The division will provide forms to a participant for use in issuing commitments and certificates on behalf of the division. A participant may not alter any form supplied by the division or use a form supplied by another person to bind the division. In addition, the participant shall not transfer or attempt to transfer unissued commitments or certificates to another participant or other person unless authorized in writing by the division.

*b.* If a participant fails to comply with the requirements of this rule, in addition to the division's other rights and remedies, the division may refuse to allow the participant access to any forms until the participant complies with the requirements of this chapter to the satisfaction of the division.

*c.* A participant shall be liable to the division for loss or damage sustained by the division by reason of the loss of, misuse of, or inability of the participant to account for any form supplied by the division, or the failure of the participant to comply with the requirements of this rule.

**9.5(2) Application for commitments and certificates.** The division shall make an application for commitments and certificates available at the office of the division and on the division's website.

**9.5(3) Rates.** The division shall set the rates for certificates and closing protection letters in an amount sufficient to permit the title guaranty program to operate on a self-sustaining basis, including payment of administrative costs and the maintenance of an adequate reserve against claims. In transactions involving extraordinary risk or unusual or unique endorsements, the division may charge additional fees.

[ARC 2506C, IAB 4/27/16, effective 6/1/16; see Delay note at end of chapter]

## **265—9.6(16) Participants.**

**9.6(1) General provisions.** An applicant shall submit a participant application and the first year's annual fee and shall sign a participation agreement in order to be authorized to provide one or more services on behalf of the division.

**9.6(2) Participant application.** Applications for participation and renewal are available on the division's website. An applicant shall submit an application to provide one or more services on behalf of the division. If the applicant is approved as a participant, the participant is required to submit a renewal application annually.

**9.6(3) Eligibility considerations.** In determining whether to approve or deny a participant application, the division may consider the following, including but not limited to:

- a. The needs of the public and the needs of existing or potential customers of the applicant.
- b. A history of the operation and management of the applicant's business.
- c. The character, fitness, financial responsibility and experience of the applicant and the applicant's employees.
- d. A credit report or criminal background check of the applicant or the applicant's employees.
- e. A record of default in the payment of moneys collected for others by the applicant or the applicant's employees.
- f. A history of discharge of debts by the applicant or the applicant's employees through bankruptcy proceedings.
- g. Compliance with the title and settlement best practices adopted by the division.
- h. Other factors as determined by the division.

**9.6(4) Participation agreement.** The participation agreement sets forth the contractual relationship between the participant and the division. A new participation agreement is executed annually and when otherwise required by the division.

**9.6(5) Annual fee.** A participant may be required to pay an annual fee to be eligible to participate in the title guaranty program. The fee, if any, shall be set by the division.

**9.6(6) Professional liability insurance.** A participant shall maintain professional liability insurance, also known as errors and omissions insurance, at all times while acting as an agent of the division, with such coverage and in such amounts as the division may determine.

**9.6(7) Agent relationship.** A participant is only authorized to act as an agent of the division for the purposes and in the manner set forth in the participant's participation agreement, the Code of Iowa, these rules, manuals and any other written instructions given by the division. The authority of a participant to act as an agent of the division is not exclusive and is subject to the rights of the authority, the division, and other participants, agents, or representatives of the division.

**9.6(8) Conflict of interest.** A participant shall not, without prior authorization of the division, prepare an abstract or issue a title opinion, commitment, certificate, or closing protection letter for a transaction in which the participant has a personal or financial interest in the real estate that is the subject of that transaction.

**9.6(9) Clearance of title objections.** All title objections must be cleared in accordance with applicable division manuals and any other written instructions given by the division prior to the issuance of a certificate. Any underwriting determination about which there may be a bona fide difference of opinion among attorneys, which is not specifically addressed by division manuals or instructions, shall be approved by the division in writing.

**9.6(10) Commitment and certificate coverage limitations.** A field issuer shall obtain written authorization from the division prior to issuing a commitment or certificate that exceeds the allowable

maximum amount of coverage, as determined by the division. If authorization required under this subrule is not obtained through the act or omission of the field issuer, the field issuer shall be strictly liable to the division for any loss or damage resulting from issuance of the commitment or certificate.

**9.6(11) Document retention.** A participant shall maintain transaction files in such a manner that information pertaining to activities of the participant is readily available to the division while protecting confidential client information. A participant shall retain files for a period of ten years after the effective date of the certificate or the effective date of the commitment if a certificate is not issued. A participating abstractor shall retain a written or electronic copy of each abstract prepared for division purposes and shall provide a copy to the division upon request.

**9.6(12) Training.** The division may require a participant and the participant's staff, as a condition of participation, to participate in training sessions or continuing education seminars as deemed necessary by the division in order to ensure compliance with division requirements and procedures.

**9.6(13) Compliance.** Participants shall comply with the Code of Iowa, these rules, the participation agreement, manuals, and any other written instructions given by the division. The division may audit the participant, with or without notice, for verification of compliance. An audit may include, but not be limited to, a review of the participant's commitment and certificate issuance procedures, a test of title plants and tract indices, and a review of closing policies and procedures and escrow account details. An inspection of a title plant may be performed by the division or its designee to determine if the title plant meets the criteria set forth in paragraph 9.7(1) "a."

**9.6(14) Revocation.** The division has discretion to revoke a participant's authorization to provide services on behalf of the division for reasons including, but not limited to, the following:

- a. Failure to comply with the terms and conditions of the participation agreement.
- b. Failure to submit an annual renewal application.
- c. Knowingly withholding or misrepresenting material facts relied upon by the division.
- d. Fraud, theft, dishonesty, or misappropriation of funds or documents.
- e. Deterioration of the participant's financial condition adversely affecting the participant's ability to provide services on behalf of the division.
- f. A finding by the division director of material noncompliance with the Code of Iowa, these rules, manuals, and any other written instructions given by the division.
- g. Other factors as determined by the division.

[ARC 2506C, IAB 4/27/16, effective 6/1/16; see Delay note at end of chapter]

## **265—9.7(16) Services offered.**

**9.7(1) Abstracting.** Abstracts utilized for division purposes must be prepared by a participating abstractor.

a. *Title plant.* A participating abstractor shall own and maintain, or lease and use, a title plant including tract indices for each county in which that participating abstractor prepares abstracts for division purposes, unless exempt under paragraph 9.7(1) "c" or authorized under paragraph 9.7(1) "d." Each of the tract indices shall be designated to encompass a geographical area of not more than one block in the case of platted real estate, nor more than one section in the case of unplatted real estate. The tract indices shall include a reference to all of the instruments affecting real estate recorded in the office of the county recorder, and the tract indices shall commence not less than 40 years prior to the effective date of the abstractor's participation in the title guaranty program. A government-maintained and -controlled database is not considered a title plant for division purposes.

b. *Intent to build title plant.* The division may authorize an abstractor that is building or that intends to build a title plant to prepare abstracts for use by the division, upon review of the following:

- (1) The abstractor's business plan;
- (2) Evidence that a title plant will be built for a specific county or counties within three years;
- (3) A time line for completion of the title plant; and
- (4) A description of the applicant's abstracting experience.

c. *Grandfathered attorney.* A participating attorney who has provided abstracts continuously from November 12, 1986, to the date of application to provide abstracts for division purposes, either personally

or through persons under the participating attorney's supervision and control, shall be exempt from the requirements to own or lease a title plant. This exemption is unique to the participating attorney, is nontransferable, and terminates at such time as the participating attorney ceases providing abstracts for division purposes or upon the death or incapacity of the participating attorney.

*d. Title plant waivers.* The division recognizes the 40-year title plant as the preferred method of providing title evidence for the purpose of issuing commitments and certificates. The division must weigh the benefits of the traditional title plant with other alternatives to ensure buyers and lenders high quality of certificates throughout the state, rapid service, and a competitive price. Iowa Code section 16.91(5) "b" allows the division board to waive the up-to-date title plant requirements under certain conditions.

(1) General provisions. The division board shall consider an application for a title plant waiver upon submission by an attorney or an abstractor.

(2) Submission of application. The division shall provide an application form at the office of the division and on the division's website. An applicant must submit an application in writing to the attention of the division director at the office of the division.

(3) Content of application. The applicant must provide, at a minimum, the following information:

1. The name, business address, email address, and telephone number of the applicant;
2. The applicant's business plan;
3. The county or counties in which the applicant intends to abstract;
4. A description of the applicant's abstracting experience;
5. Samples of abstracts prepared by the applicant;
6. A history of any professional disciplinary action against the applicant;
7. Professional references in support of the applicant;
8. The relevant facts that the applicant believes would justify a waiver under 9.7(1) "d"(5) and 9.7(1) "d"(6) "4"; and
9. A signed statement from the applicant attesting to the accuracy of the facts provided in the application.

(4) Notification and response.

1. The division shall notify the applicant upon receipt of a complete application.
2. The division shall publish notice of an application on the division's website within 7 calendar days of receipt of a complete application. A copy of the application and supporting documents will be provided to any interested person upon request.
3. The Iowa State Bar Association and Iowa Land Title Association shall be provided notice of an application. Provision of the notice to the identified associations is not a requirement for the division board to consider the application, and failure to inform an interested person of an application shall not void or otherwise nullify any action or decision of the division board.

4. If a complete application is received at least 90 days prior to the next scheduled division board meeting, the application shall be placed on the agenda for that division board meeting. The division shall receive public comments up to 45 calendar days prior to that division board meeting.

(5) Criteria for title plant waiver. Pursuant to Iowa Code section 16.91(5) "b," the division board may issue a ruling waiving the title plant requirement set forth in Iowa Code section 16.91(5) "a"(2) if the board finds the following:

1. The title plant requirement imposes a hardship to the applicant; and
2. The waiver is:
  - Clearly in the public interest; or
  - Absolutely necessary to ensure availability of certificates throughout the state.
3. For purposes of paragraph 9.7(1) "d," "hardship" means deprivation, suffering, adversity, or long-term adverse financial impact in complying with the title plant requirement that is more than minimal when considering all the circumstances.
4. For purposes of paragraph 9.7(1) "d," "public interest" means that which is beneficial to the public as a whole, including but not limited to increasing competition among abstractors, encouraging the use of certificates throughout the state, making certificates more competitive than out-of-state title

insurance, increasing the division's market share, improving the quality of land titles, and protecting consumers.

(6) Board meeting and ruling.

1. The review of a waiver application is not a contested case proceeding.

2. The division director or designee shall review an application and its supporting documentation.

The division director shall present to the division board a proposed written ruling. The division board shall adopt, amend or reject the proposed written ruling. If the proposed written ruling is rejected, the division board shall instruct the division director to prepare an alternative written ruling to be considered at a subsequent division board meeting.

3. The written ruling shall summarize the relevant facts and the basis for granting or denying the waiver. The written ruling may specify the scope and duration of the waiver and any restrictions, conditions, or requirements.

4. The final decision on whether the circumstances justify the granting of a waiver shall be made at the sole discretion of the division board upon consideration of all relevant factors. Relevant factors to be considered include, but are not limited to, the division director's proposed written ruling, the facts and circumstances set out in the application, any history of professional disciplinary action against the applicant, adverse claims made against the applicant, prior waiver withdrawal actions against the participating attorney or participating abstractor, public comments, the professional knowledge and expertise of the board members and division staff, and any other resources available to the entire division board. The division board shall give considerable weight to an applicant's experience abstracting under the supervision of a participating abstractor or participating attorney with whom the applicant has had a close working relationship or with whom the applicant is a partner or associate. The division board shall also give considerable weight to a recommendation from a participating abstractor or participating attorney who supervised the applicant's abstracting for a period of two years or more and who attests in writing or in person before the division board regarding the applicant's ability to abstract. Consideration should be afforded to rulings on prior waiver requests, but the division board shall not be bound by such rulings. The division board may limit a waiver as to county, or transaction type, or both.

5. The written ruling shall be mailed to the applicant within 7 days of its issuance.

6. The decision of the division board shall be final agency action, and all appeals shall be filed with the Iowa District Court for Polk County.

(7) Conditions. A waiver is unique to the recipient and is nontransferable. A waiver recipient shall be accountable to the division for abstracts prepared for division purposes. The division may require a waiver recipient to provide a guarantee, performance bond, or other form of indemnification, as assurance for abstracts prepared by the waiver recipient on behalf of the division. The division may review the waiver recipient annually and may require a renewal, modification or addition to any required assurances. Retention of a waiver is dependent on the applicant's meeting the requirements for a participant in rule 265—9.6(16). If the waiver recipient fails to meet the terms of the recipient's participation agreement, the waiver may be withdrawn by the division board.

(8) Withdrawal of a waiver. A waiver issued by the division board may be withdrawn or modified if, after public notice and division board meeting, the division board issues a written ruling finding any of the following:

1. That the waiver recipient knowingly withheld or misrepresented material facts relied upon by the division board in granting the waiver; or

2. That the waiver recipient failed to comply with all conditions contained in the written ruling; or

3. That the abstracts prepared by the waiver recipient fail to meet the abstract minimum standards adopted by the division; or

4. That the division has revoked the waiver recipient's authorization to provide services on behalf of the division pursuant to subrule 9.6(14).

The decision of the division board shall be final agency action, and all appeals shall be filed with the Iowa District Court for Polk County.

(9) Public availability. Applications for waivers and written rulings are public records under Iowa Code chapter 22. Some applications or written rulings may contain information that the division is

authorized or required to keep confidential. The division may redact confidential information from applications or written rulings prior to public inspection or dissemination.

**9.7(2) Issuing title opinions.**

a. All title opinions shall be prepared by participating attorneys and issued in compliance with division procedures as specified in manuals and any other written instructions given by the division.

b. A participating attorney who is a field issuer may issue a commitment as the preliminary title opinion and the certificate as the final title opinion.

c. A participating attorney shall be licensed to practice law in the state of Iowa and shall be in good standing with the Iowa supreme court at all times while acting as an agent of the division.

**9.7(3) Issuing commitments and certificates.** Pursuant to a participation agreement with the division, a participant may be authorized to issue a commitment or certificate on behalf of the division. A participant's right to issue commitments and certificates is a privilege for the convenience of the division and may be terminated pursuant to terms of the participation agreement.

**9.7(4) Issuing closing protection letters.**

a. Pursuant to a participation agreement with the division, a participant may be authorized to issue a closing protection letter on behalf of the division.

b. The division may require the participating closer to provide an irrevocable letter of direction to the institution at which each escrow account is established, authorizing the division to review and audit the institution's records of such account at any time that the division, in its discretion, deems necessary. [ARC 2506C, IAB 4/27/16, effective 6/1/16; see Delay note at end of chapter]

**265—9.8(16) Claims.**

**9.8(1) Claim procedures.** In the event of a claim, the rights of the division and a party are as follows:

a. Upon receipt of notice by a party of a claim, the party must notify the division in writing within three business days of receipt of information about a claim by the party and shall mail notification to the division by first-class mail at the division's address as set forth in subrule 9.4(1). In addition, if the nature of the claim is such that the guaranteed claimant or the division, or both, may suffer loss or damage that might be reduced or avoided by notice given more promptly than required by the preceding sentence, the party shall notify the division by telephone, facsimile transmission, email, overnight mail or other overnight delivery service, or any combination of these methods.

b. When a party receives a request from the division for information with respect to a claim, the party shall supply to the division any documents, correspondence, surveys, abstracts of title, title searches, other writings, or other information known by or available to the party and relevant to the claim, even if not specifically requested by the division.

c. A party shall cooperate fully in the investigation and resolution of a claim and shall supply any additional, new information that may come to the party's attention with such promptness as the circumstances permit.

d. The division may, with or without prior notice to the party or parties involved, investigate and resolve any claim in any manner that, in the division's sole discretion, the division may deem advisable.

**9.8(2) Claim loss recovery.**

a. Any claim losses paid are recoverable from a party by the division.

b. In the absence of knowledge by the party about the title defect or other matter causing the claim loss, the division shall not seek recovery from the party when a claim loss arises from one or more of the following:

(1) Hidden defects, including, but not limited to, forged deeds and mortgages, false affidavits, and false statements of marital status;

(2) Errors by public officials in maintaining and indexing the public records, including, but not limited to, errors by county assessors, recorders, clerks, and treasurers;

(3) Errors in these rules, manuals, and any other written instructions given by the division that the party relies upon in issuing an abstract, title opinion, commitment or certificate;

(4) Errors in surveys provided by registered Iowa land surveyors that the party relies upon in issuing a certificate that provides survey coverage; or

(5) Underwriting determinations or title risks approved by the division prior to issuance of the abstract, title opinion, commitment, or certificate.

*c.* The party shall reimburse the division for a claim loss when the division determines, in accordance with paragraph 9.8(2)“*d*,” that the party is liable and when the claim loss arises from one or more of the following:

(1) Errors by the party in the preparation of an abstract or any other report of information in the public record;

(2) Reliance by the party upon sources of title searches and other title information that had not been approved by the division at the time of the reliance;

(3) Errors made by the party in examining the title information provided in an abstract, survey, affidavit, or other source of title information;

(4) Errors made by the party in the preparation or review of an abstract, title opinion, commitment or certificate;

(5) Issuance of an abstract, title opinion, commitment or certificate by the party with knowledge that title is defective; or

(6) Failure of the party to follow the Code of Iowa, these rules, manuals, or any other written instructions given by the division.

*d.* Unless another rule, the Code of Iowa, manuals, or any other written instruction given by the division provides for a different standard of liability or other rule for determining whether the party shall be liable for a claim loss, the division shall apply the following standards:

(1) In the event that a claim loss occurs for which the division may seek recovery from the party under subparagraph 9.8(2)“*c*”(1), the division may demand reimbursement from the party if the party was grossly negligent in preparing the abstract. Gross negligence includes the failure to make a search or the use of inadequate search procedures. Gross negligence under the preceding sentence includes but is not limited to failure to search certain indices, failure to search all names of parties with an interest in the real estate, or failure to search in all public offices required by the division search procedures or procedures used by prudent title searchers if the division has not established specific search procedures. In making its determination whether to seek recovery, the division may consider the complexity of the public record, the reliance of the party upon division-approved search procedures, the training and experience of the person who made the error, and the existence or nonexistence of previous search errors by the party.

(2) In the event that a claim loss occurs for which the division may seek recovery from a party under subparagraph 9.8(2)“*c*”(2), the division may demand reimbursement from that party if the party relied upon sources of abstracts or other title information that had not been approved by the division at the time of the reliance.

(3) In the event that a claim loss occurs for which the division may seek recovery from the party under subparagraph 9.8(2)“*c*”(3), the division may demand reimbursement from the party if the party negligently examined the title information used in making a title determination, failed to raise an appropriate exception, waived an exception, or endorsed a commitment or certificate.

1. The division may make full review of local county abstracting standards and bar title rules as a guide to determine whether the party has failed to meet the standard of skill and competence of an abstractor who prepares an abstract or an attorney who examines titles in the community where the claim arose.

2. The division may also consider whether the party followed the Code of Iowa, these rules, manuals, or any other written instructions given by the division in examining the title.

3. In addition, the division may seek input from other parties in the community in which the claim arose as to the standard of care of an abstractor who prepares an abstract or of an attorney who examines titles in that community.

(4) In the event that a claim loss occurs for which the division may seek recovery from the party under subparagraph 9.8(2)“*c*”(4), the division may demand reimbursement from the party if the party negligently prepared or reviewed an abstract, title opinion, commitment or certificate.



(5) In the event that a claim loss occurs for which the division may seek recovery from the party under subparagraph 9.8(2) “c”(5), the division may demand reimbursement from the party if the issuance of the abstract, title opinion, commitment or certificate constituted fraud, concealment or dishonesty, or if the issuance of the abstract, title opinion, commitment or certificate was based upon an underwriting decision on an unusual risk that was made without contacting the division for approval.

(6) In the event that a claim loss occurs for which the division may seek recovery from the party under subparagraph 9.8(2) “c”(6), the division may demand reimbursement from the party if the party failed to follow the Code of Iowa, these rules, manuals, or any other written instructions given by the division with respect to the matter causing the claim loss.

(7) In the event the division seeks reimbursement from a party, the division shall state the basis of the reimbursement.

*e.* The division board may establish levels of authority, including dollar amounts, for the division for the settlement of claims made against the division.

[ARC 2506C, IAB 4/27/16, effective 6/1/16; see Delay note at end of chapter]

**265—9.9(16) Mortgage release certificate.** Pursuant to Iowa Code section 16.92, the division is charged with the administration of a program to release, after proper notification, paid-off mortgages from real estate titles in Iowa by executing and filing with the county recorder a mortgage release certificate.

**9.9(1) Application.** The division shall provide a mortgage release application at the office of the division and on the division’s website. The following may submit an application for a mortgage release certificate:

*a.* A person authorized to regularly lend moneys to be secured by a mortgage on real property in Iowa.

*b.* A licensed real estate broker.

*c.* A licensed attorney.

*d.* A participating abstractor.

*e.* A licensed closing agent.

**9.9(2) Application fee.** An applicant may be required to pay a fee to apply for a mortgage release certificate. The fee shall be set by the division.

**9.9(3) Maximum principal amount of mortgage.** The division board may set a maximum principal amount for mortgages that may be released by a mortgage release certificate.

**9.9(4) Authority to sign certificate.** A mortgage release certificate shall be executed by the division director or designee of the division director.

[ARC 2506C, IAB 4/27/16, effective 6/1/16; see Delay note at end of chapter]

**265—9.10(16) Rules of construction.** In this chapter, the following rules of construction shall be observed:

1. The word “shall” means mandatory and not permissive and the word “may” means permissive and not mandatory.

2. Nothing contained in this chapter shall be construed to require a participating attorney to disclose privileged information of a client to the division or to any other person.

3. Any rule that provides a specific remedy or sanction for violation of the rule shall not be construed as limiting the ability of the division to pursue and enforce other remedies or sanctions under this chapter, or otherwise against a participant or other person responsible or liable, either separately, concurrently, cumulatively, or in any combination, at the sole discretion of the division.

4. The failure of the division to enforce a right or remedy under this chapter, a statute, or common law shall not be construed as a waiver of such right or remedy either in the specific instance or in any other instance.

[ARC 2506C, IAB 4/27/16, effective 6/1/16; see Delay note at end of chapter]

**265—9.11(16) Seal.** The division shall have a corporate seal that may be altered by the division from time to time.

[ARC 2506C, IAB 4/27/16, effective 6/1/16; see Delay note at end of chapter]

These rules are intended to implement Iowa Code sections 16.2A, 16.4C, 16.5, 16.90 to 16.94, 17A.3, 17A.9, 17A.10 and 535.8(10).

[Filed 2/28/86, Notice 1/15/86—published 3/26/86, effective 4/30/86]

[Filed 12/12/86, Notice 10/22/86—published 12/31/86, effective 2/4/87]

[Filed 7/10/87, Notice 6/3/87—published 7/29/87, effective 9/2/87]

[Filed 4/13/90, Notice 12/13/89—published 5/2/90, effective 6/6/90]

[Filed 3/19/91, Notice 10/17/90—published 4/3/91, effective 5/8/91]

[Filed emergency 9/3/99 after Notice 4/21/99—published 9/22/99, effective 9/3/99]

[Filed emergency 11/12/99 after Notice 9/22/99—published 12/1/99, effective 11/12/99]

[Filed emergency 7/14/00 after Notice 5/3/00—published 8/9/00, effective 7/14/00]

[Filed 7/15/04, Notice 4/28/04—published 8/4/04, effective 9/8/04]

[Filed emergency 2/9/06 after Notice 1/4/06—published 3/1/06, effective 2/9/06]

[Filed emergency 5/5/06 after Notice 3/29/06—published 5/24/06, effective 5/5/06]

[Filed 9/21/06, Notice 8/2/06—published 10/11/06, effective 11/15/06]

[Filed emergency 4/3/07—published 4/25/07, effective 4/3/07]

[Filed 7/10/08, Notice 6/4/08—published 7/30/08, effective 9/3/08]<sup>◇</sup>

[Filed 11/12/08, Notice 8/27/08—published 12/3/08, effective 1/7/09]<sup>1</sup>

[Editorial change: IAC Supplement 1/14/09]

[Filed ARC 7892B (Notice ARC 7702B, IAB 4/8/09), IAB 7/1/09, effective 8/5/09]

[Filed ARC 8458B (Notice ARC 8264B, IAB 11/4/09), IAB 1/13/10, effective 2/17/10]

[Filed ARC 0826C (Notice ARC 0682C, IAB 4/3/13), IAB 7/10/13, effective 8/14/13]

[Filed ARC 2506C (Notice ARC 2128C, IAB 9/2/15), IAB 4/27/16, effective 6/1/16]<sup>2</sup>

[Filed ARC 4319C (Notice ARC 4196C, IAB 1/2/19), IAB 2/27/19, effective 4/3/19]

<sup>◇</sup> Two or more ARCs

<sup>1</sup> Effective date of 9.7(2), definition of “Title plant” delayed 70 days by the Administrative Rules Review Committee at its meeting held December 9, 2008.

<sup>2</sup> June 1, 2016, effective date of the rescission of former 9.1 to 9.22 and the adoption of new 9.1 to 9.11 [ARC 2506C] delayed until the adjournment of the 2017 General Assembly by the Administrative Rules Review Committee at its meeting held May 10, 2016.