



**RULES OF  
THE  
TEXAS REAL ESTATE  
COMMISSION**

**As Revised and in Effect on  
June 1, 2008**

Texas Real Estate Commission  
P.O. Box 12188, Austin, Texas 78711-2188  
(512) 459-6544  
1-800-250-TREC (8732)

**World Wide Web: <http://www.trec.state.tx.us>**



## NOTES

This publication contains the Commission's Rules in effect on June 1, 2008. Changes are published in the Texas Register through the Secretary of State's Office.

The rules adopted by the Texas Real Estate Commission are located in Title 22 of the Texas Administrative Code. Each rule is identified by a section number in the Code (TAC Section). The rules are also divided into chapters relating to different subjects. For example, Chapter 535 relates to the Provisions of the Real Estate License Act. Lengthy rules may be divided below the subsection level using the following structure:

§ (section)

(a) subsection

(1) paragraph

(A) subparagraph

(i) clause

(I) subclause

For convenience, rules are generally cited to the section level. For example, Subclause II, Clause iii, Subparagraph C, Paragraph 6, Subsection (bb) of §535.71, which relates to regulations for examinations by computer of approved MCE courses, may be cited as 22 TAC §535.71(bb)(6)(C)(iii)(II).

Unless noted otherwise, the rules were first effective January 1, 1976. References are provided to the statutory provision the rule interprets or implements. Unless a different source is indicated, references are to Chapters 1101 and 1102, Texas Occupations Code.



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**RULES OF THE TEXAS  
REAL ESTATE COMMISSION**

§531

**CHAPTER 531 CANONS OF PROFESSIONAL ETHICS AND  
CONDUCT FOR REAL ESTATE LICENSEES**

**§531.1. Fidelity.** *[Adopted January 1, 1976; amended February 23, 1998]* A real estate broker or salesperson, while acting as an agent for another, is a fiduciary. Special obligations are imposed when such fiduciary relationships are created. They demand:

(1) that the primary duty of the real estate agent is to represent the interests of the agent's client, and the agent's position, in this respect, should be clear to all parties concerned in a real estate transaction; that, however, the agent, in performing duties to the client, shall treat other parties to a transaction fairly;

(2) that the real estate agent be faithful and observant to trust placed in the agent, and be scrupulous and meticulous in performing the agent's functions;

(3) that the real estate agent place no personal interest above that of the agent's client.

**§531.2. Integrity.** *[Adopted January 1, 1976; amended February 23, 1998]* A real estate broker or salesperson has a special obligation to exercise integrity in the discharge of the licensee's responsibilities, including employment of prudence and caution so as to avoid misrepresentation, in any wise, by acts of commission or omission.

**§531.3. Competency.** *[Adopted January 1, 1976; amended February 23, 1998]* It is the obligation of a real estate agent to be knowledgeable as a real estate brokerage practitioner. The agent should:

(1) be informed on market conditions affecting the real estate business and pledged to continuing education in the intricacies involved in marketing real estate for others;

(2) be informed on national, state and local issues and developments in the real estate industry; and

(3) exercise judgment and skill in the performance of the work.

**§§531.10-531.17. Minimum Appraisal Standards.** *[Repealed March 1, 1991]*

**§531.18. Consumer Information Form 1-1.** *[Adopted February 1, 1990; amended November 1, 1991; Ref: §1101.202(a)(2)]*

(a) The Texas Real Estate Commission adopts by reference Consumer Information Form 1-1 approved by the Texas Real Estate Commission in 1991. This document is published by and available from the Texas Real Estate Commission, P.O. Box 12188, Austin, Texas 78711-2188.

(b) Each real estate inspector or active real estate broker licensed by the Texas Real Estate Commission shall display Consumer Information Form 1-1 in a prominent location in each place of business the broker or inspector maintains.

**§531.19. Discriminatory Practices.** *[Adopted February 19, 1990; Ref: AG OP.JM-1093]* No real estate licensee shall inquire about, respond to or facilitate inquiries about, or make a disclosure which indicates or is intended to indicate any preference, limitation or discrimination based on the following: race, color, religion, sex, national origin, ancestry, familial status, or handicap of an owner, previous or current occupant, potential purchaser, lessor, or potential lessee of real property. For the purpose of this section, handicap includes a person who had, may have had, has, or may have AIDS, HIV-related illnesses, or HIV infection as defined by the Centers for Disease Control of the United States Public Health Service.



**RULES OF THE TEXAS  
REAL ESTATE COMMISSION**

**§§533.1-.2(a)**

**CHAPTER 533 PRACTICE AND PROCEDURE  
(Ref: Texas Government Code, Chapter 2001)**

**§§533.1.-533.30 Practice and Procedure.**  
*[Repealed December 29, 1998]*

**§533.1 Definitions.** *[Adopted December 30, 2007]* The following words and terms, when used in this chapter, have the following meanings, unless the context clearly indicates otherwise.

(1) ADR—Alternative dispute resolution.

(2) ADR Administrator--The trained coordinator in the commission office designated by the commission to coordinate and oversee the ADR procedures which may include conducting mediations. The ADR Administrator shall serve as a resource for ADR training and shall collect data concerning the effectiveness of the ADR procedures.

(3) Administrator—The Administrator of the Texas Real Estate Commission.

(4) ALJ--Administrative law judge employed by the State Office of Administrative Hearings.

(5) Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) Procedures--Alternatives to judicial forums or administrative agency contested case proceedings for the voluntary settlement of contested matters through the facilitation of an impartial third party.

(6) APA--The Administrative Procedure Act (Texas Government Code, Chapter 2001).

(7) Applicant--Any person seeking a license, certificate, registration, approval or permit from the commission.

(8) Commission--The Texas Real Estate Commission.

(9) Complainant--Any person who has filed a complaint with the commission against any person whose activities are subject to the jurisdiction of the commission.

(10) Contested case or proceeding--A proceeding in which the legal rights, duties, or privileges of a party are to be determined by the commission and/or administrator after an opportunity for adjudicative hearing.

(11) Final decision maker--The commission and/or the administrator, both of whom are authorized to render the final decision in a contested case.

(12) Judge--Administrative law judge employed by the State Office of Administrative Hearings.

(13) License--The whole or part of any commission registration, license, certificate,

approval, permit, or similar form of permission required or permitted by law.

(14) Mediator--The commission employee or other state employee who presides over ADR proceedings regardless of which ADR method is utilized.

(15) Party--A person admitted to participate in a case before the final decision maker.

(16) Person--Any individual, partnership, corporation, or other legal entity, including a state agency or governmental subdivision.

(17) Pleading--A written document submitted by a party, or a person seeking to participate in a case as a party, which requests procedural or substantive relief, makes claims, alleges facts, makes legal argument, or otherwise addresses matters involved in the case.

(18) Private Mediator--A person in the mediation profession who is not a Texas State employee and who has met all the qualifications prescribed by Texas law for mediators.

(19) Respondent--Any person, licensed or unlicensed, who has been charged with violating a law establishing a regulatory program administered by the commission or a rule or order issued by the commission.

(20) Rule--Any commission statement of general applicability that implements, interprets, or prescribes law or policy, or describes the procedure or practice requirements of the commission and is filed with the *Texas Register*.

(21) SOAH--State Office of Administrative Hearings.

**§533.2 Purpose and Scope.** *[Adopted December 30, 2007]*

(a) Purpose. Unless otherwise provided by statute or by the provisions of this subchapter, this subchapter will govern the institution and final conclusion of proceedings followed in handling all adjudicative matters under the APA. Once the commission files the Request to Docket Case form with SOAH, SOAH acquires jurisdiction over a contested case, and a hearing conducted by SOAH on a contested case proceeding pending before the commission is governed by SOAH's rules of procedure. In the case of a conflict with rules in this chapter, SOAH's rules, 1 TAC Chapter 155, control after the filing of the Request to Docket Case form and until after final amendments or corrections to the proposal for decision.

## §533.2(b) - 4(b)

(b) Scope. These rules govern the institution, conduct, and determination of adjudicative proceedings required or permitted by law, whether instituted by the commission or by the filing of an application, claim, complaint, or any other pleading. These rules shall not be construed so as to enlarge, diminish, modify, or otherwise alter the jurisdiction, powers, or authority of the commission, the administrator, or the substantive rights of any person or agency.

### §533.3. Filing and Notice. *[Adopted December 30, 2007]*

(a) The commission shall provide notice to all parties in accordance with the APA §2001.052, Chapters 1101 and 1102, Texas Occupations Code, and the following:

(1) If, after investigation of a possible violation and the facts surrounding that possible violation, the commission determines that a violation has occurred, the commission shall issue a written Notice of Alleged Violation.

(2) The Notice of Alleged Violation shall include:

(A) a brief summary of the alleged violation(s);

(B) a statement of the amount of the penalty and/or sanction recommended; and

(C) a statement of the right of the Respondent to a hearing.

(3) The commission shall base the recommendation on the factors set forth in this chapter.

(b) Not later than the 20th day after the date on which the notice is received, the Respondent may accept the determination of the commission, including the recommended penalty and/or sanction, or make a written request for a hearing on that determination.

(c) Upon receipt of a written request for hearing, the commission shall submit a Request for Docket Case form to SOAH accompanied by legible copies of all pertinent documents, including but not limited to the Notice of Hearing or other document describing the agency action giving rise to a contested case. In accordance with 1 TAC §155.9, the commission shall request one or more of the following actions on the Request to Docket Case form:

(1) Setting of hearing;

(2) Assignment of an administrative law judge; and/or

(3) Setting of alternative dispute

resolution proceeding, including but not limited to mediated settlement conference, mediation, or arbitration.

(d) The original of all pleadings and other documents requesting action or relief in a contested case, shall be filed with SOAH once it acquires jurisdiction. Pleadings, other documents, and service to SOAH shall be directed to: Docketing Division, State Office of Administrative Hearings, 300 West 15th Street, Room 504, P.O. Box 13025, Austin, Texas 78711-3025. The time and date of filing shall be determined by the file stamp affixed by SOAH. Unless otherwise ordered by the judge, only the original and no additional copies of any pleading or document shall be filed. Unless otherwise provided by law, after a proposal for decision has been issued, originals of documents requesting relief, such as exceptions to the proposal for decision or requests to reopen the hearing, shall be filed with the commission's administrator and/or commission as well as the commission's Enforcement Division, P.O. Box 12188, Austin, Texas 78711; 1101 Camino La Costa, Austin, Texas; or by facsimile mail at (512)465-3962 if the documents contain 20 or fewer pages including exhibits. Filings may be made until 5:00 p.m. on business days. Copies shall be filed with SOAH.

(e) If a real estate salesperson is a respondent, the commission also will notify the salesperson's sponsoring broker of the hearing. If an apprentice inspector or real estate inspector is a respondent, the commission also will notify the sponsoring professional inspector of the hearing.

(f) Any document served upon a party is prima facie evidence of receipt if it is directed to the party's last known complete, correct address as shown by the commission's records. This presumption is rebuttable. Failure to claim properly addressed certified or registered mail will not support a finding of nondelivery.

### §533.4. Failure to Answer, Failure to Attend Hearing and Default. *[Adopted December 30, 2007]*

(a) If, within twenty days after receiving a Notice of Alleged Violation, the Respondent fails to accept the commission's determination and recommended administrative penalty and/or sanction, or fails to make a written request for a hearing on the determination, the commission shall enter a default order against the Respondent, containing findings of fact and conclusions of law.

(b) After receiving a notice proposing

disapproval of an application an Applicant may request a hearing in writing within twenty days of receipt of the notice or forfeit the right to a hearing unless otherwise provided by applicable law.

(c) The commission may delegate to the administrator the commission's authority to act under Texas Occupations Code §1101.704(b) and subsection (a) of this section.

(d) 1 TAC §155.55 (SOAH rules) applies where a Respondent fails to appear on the day and time set for administrative hearing. In that case, the commission's staff may move either for dismissal of the case from SOAH's docket or for the issuance of a default proposal for decision by the judge.

**§533.5. The Adjudicative Hearing Record.**  
*[Adopted December 30, 2007]*

(a) On the written request by a party to a case or on request of the judge, a written transcript of all or part of the proceedings shall be prepared. The cost of the transcript is borne by the requesting party. This section does not preclude the parties from agreeing to share the costs associated with the preparation of a transcript. If only the judge requests a transcript, costs will be assessed to the Respondent(s) or Applicant(s), as appropriate.

(b) Any party who needs a certified language interpreter for presentation of its case shall be responsible for requesting the services of an interpreter. The requesting party shall be responsible for making arrangements with a certified language interpreter once a request is made. The cost of the certified language interpreter shall be borne by the party requiring the interpreter's services.

**§533.6. Filing of Exceptions and Replies.**  
*[Adopted December 30, 2007]*

(a) Any party of record who is adversely affected by the proposal for decision of the judge shall have the opportunity to file exceptions and a brief to the proposal for decision within 15 days after the date of service of the proposal for decision.

(b) A reply to the exceptions may be filed by the other party within 15 days of the filing of the exceptions.

(c) Exceptions and replies shall be filed with the judge with copies served on the opposing party. The proposal for decision may be amended by the judge pursuant to the exceptions, replies, or briefs submitted by the parties without again being served on the parties.

**§533.7. Proposals for Decision.** *[Adopted December 30, 2007]*

(a) Proposed decisions shall be brought before the commission for final decision.

(b) The proposal for decision may be acted on by the commission after the expiration of 10 days after the filing of replies to exceptions to the proposal for decision or upon the day following the day exceptions or replies to exceptions are due if no such exceptions or replies are filed.

(c) It is the policy of the commission to change a finding of fact or conclusion of law in a proposal for decision or to vacate or modify the proposed order of a judge when, the commission determines:

(1) that the judge did not properly apply or interpret applicable law, agency rules, written policies provided by staff or prior administrative decisions;

(2) that a prior administrative decision on which the judge relied is incorrect or should be changed; or

(3) that a technical error in a finding of fact should be changed.

**§533.8. Final Orders, Motions for Rehearing, and Emergency Orders.** *[Adopted December 30, 2007]*

(a) Unless otherwise authorized under §533.13(f) of this chapter, a final order in a contested case shall be in writing and shall be signed by the presiding officer of the commission. Final orders shall include findings of fact and conclusions of law separately stated.

(b) If the commission modifies, amends, or changes a proposal for decision, the order shall reflect the commissions changes as stated in the record of the meeting and state the specific reason and legal basis for the changes made according to §533.7(c) of this chapter.

(c) A party notified by mail of a final decision or order shall be presumed to have been notified on the third day after the date on which the notice is mailed.

(d) The timely filing of a motion for rehearing is a prerequisite to appeal.

(e) Motions for rehearing are controlled by Texas Government Code §2001.145 and §2001.146.

(f) If the commission and/or the administrator find that an imminent peril to the public health, safety, or welfare requires immediate effect of a final decision or order, that finding shall be recited in the decision or order as well as the fact that the decision or order is final and effective on the date signed, in which event the decision or order is final and appealable on the date signed and no motion for rehearing is required as a prerequisite for appeal.

## §§533.8(g)-.20(n)

(g) A petition for judicial review must be filed in a District Court of Travis County Texas within 30 days after the order is final and appealable, as provided by Government Code, Title 10, Subtitle A, Chapter 2001. A party filing a petition for judicial review must also comply with the requirements of Texas Occupations Code, §1101.707.

(h) If, after judicial review, the penalty is reduced or not assessed, the administrator shall remit to the person charged the appropriate amount, plus accrued interest if the penalty has been paid, or shall execute a release of the bond if a supersedeas bond has been posted. The accrued interest on amounts remitted by the administrator under this subsection shall be paid at a rate equal to the rate charged on loans to depository institutions by the New York Federal Reserve Bank, and shall be paid for the period beginning on the date that the assessed penalty is paid to the commission and ending on the date the penalty is remitted.

### **§533.20 Informal Proceedings.** *[Adopted December 30, 2007]*

(a) Informal disposition of any contested case involving a licensee or an applicant for licensure may be made through an informal conference pursuant to Texas Occupations Code §1101.660.

(b) The commission and the respondent or applicant may enter into an agreed order with-out first engaging in an informal conference under this subchapter.

(c) A licensee or applicant may request an informal conference; however, the decision to hold a conference shall be made by the Director of Enforcement.

(d) An informal conference shall be voluntary and shall not be a prerequisite to a formal hearing.

(e) An informal conference may be conducted in person, or by electronic, telephonic, or written communication.

(f) The Director of Enforcement or the director's designee shall decide upon the time, date and place of the informal conference, and provide written notice to the licensee or applicant. Notice shall be provided by certified mail no less than ten days prior to the date of the conference to the permanent mailing address of the licensee or applicant. The ten days shall begin on the date of mailing. The licensee or applicant may waive the ten-day notice requirement.

(g) A copy of the commission's rules concerning informal conferences shall be enclosed with the notice of the informal

conference. The notice shall inform the licensee or applicant of the following:

(1) that the licensee or applicant may be represented by legal counsel;

(2) that the licensee or applicant may offer documentary evidence as may be appropriate;

(3) that at least one public member of the commission shall be present;

(4) that two staff members, including the staff attorney assigned to the case, with experience in the regulatory area that is the subject of the proceedings shall be present;

(5) that the licensee's or applicant's attendance and participation is voluntary; and

(6) that the complainant involved in the alleged violations may be present.

(h) The notice of the informal conference shall be sent to the complainant at his or her last known address. The complainant shall be informed that he or she may appear in person or may submit a written statement for consideration at the informal conference.

(i) The conference shall be informal and need not follow the procedures established in this chapter for contested cases and formal hearings.

(j) The licensee or applicant, the licensee's or applicant's attorney, the commission member, and the staff attorney may question the respondent or complainant, make relevant statements, present statements of persons not in attendance, and present such other evidence as may be appropriate.

(k) The staff attorney assigned to the case shall attend each informal conference. The commission member or other staff member may call upon the attorney at any time for assistance in the informal conference.

(l) No formal record of the proceedings of the informal conference shall be made or maintained.

(m) The complainant may be excluded from the informal conference except during the complainant's oral presentation. The licensee or applicant, the licensee's or applicant's attorney, and commission staff may remain for all portions of the informal conference, except for consultation between the commission member and commission staff.

(n) The complainant shall not be considered a party in the informal conference but shall be given the opportunity to be heard if the complainant attends. Any written statement submitted by the complainant shall be reviewed at the conference.



(o) At the conclusion of the informal conference, the commission member or staff attorney may propose an informal settlement of the contested case. The proposed settlement may include administrative penalties or any disciplinary action authorized by the Act. The commission member or staff attorney may also recommend that no further action be taken.

(p) The licensee or applicant may either accept or reject the settlement recommendations at the conference. If the recommendations are accepted, an agreed order shall be prepared by the staff attorney and forwarded to the licensee or applicant. The order shall contain agreed findings of fact and conclusions of law. The licensee or applicant shall execute the order and return the signed order to the commission within ten days of his or her receipt of the proposed agreed order. If the licensee or applicant fails to return the signed order within the stated time period, the inaction shall constitute rejection of the settlement recommendation.

(q) If the licensee or applicant rejects the proposed settlement, the matter shall be referred to the Director of Enforcement for appropriate action.

(r) If the licensee or applicant signs and accepts the recommendation, the agreed order shall be submitted to the administrator for approval.

(s) If the administrator does not approve a proposed agreed order, the licensee or applicant shall be so informed and the matter shall be referred to the Director of Enforcement for other appropriate action.

(t) A licensee's opportunity for an informal conference under this subchapter shall satisfy the requirement of the APA, §2001.054(c).

(u) The commission may order a license holder to pay a refund to a consumer as provided in an agreement resulting from an informal conference instead of or in addition to imposing an administrative penalty. The amount of a refund ordered as provided in an agreement resulting from an informal conference may not exceed the amount the consumer paid to the license holder for a service regulated by the Act and this title. The commission may not require payment of other damages or estimate harm in a refund order.

**§533.30 Alternative Dispute Resolution Policy.** *[Adopted December 30, 2007]* It is the commission's policy to encourage the fair and expeditious resolution of all contested matters through voluntary settlement procedures. The commission is committed to working with all parties to achieve early settlement of contested

matters.

**§533.31. §533.39. Practice and Procedure.**  
*[Repealed December 30, 2007]*

**§533.31. Referral of Contested Matter for Alternative Dispute Resolution Procedures.**  
*[Adopted December 30, 2007]* The commission's Director of Enforcement or Human Resources Office, on behalf of the commission, may seek to resolve a contested matter through negotiation or mediation involving all parties and if so, shall refer the matter for mediation in accordance with §535.34 of this chapter (Relating to Commencement of ADR).

**§533.32. Appointment of Mediator.**  
*[Adopted December 30, 2007]*

(a) For each matter referred for ADR procedures, the ADR Administrator shall mediate or assign another commission mediator unless the parties agree upon the use of another agency's mediator or private mediator. The ADR Administrator may assign a substitute or additional mediator to a proceeding as the ADR Administrator deems necessary.

(b) A private mediator may be hired for commission ADR procedures provided that:

(1) the parties unanimously agree to use a private mediator;

(2) the parties unanimously agree to the selection of the person to serve as the mediator; and

(3) the mediator agrees to be subject to the direction of the commission's ADR Administrator and to all time limits imposed by the Administrator, statute or regulation.

(c) If a private mediator is used, the costs for the services of the mediator shall be apportioned equally among the parties, unless otherwise agreed upon by the parties, and shall be paid directly to the mediator.

(d) All mediators in commission mediation proceedings shall subscribe to the ethical guidelines for mediators adopted by the ADR Section of the State Bar of Texas.

**§533.33 Qualifications of Mediators.**  
*[Adopted December 30, 2007]*

(a) A commission mediator will receive at a minimum 40 hours of formal training in ADR procedures through a program approved by the commission's administrator.

(b) SOAH mediators, employees of other agencies who are mediators, and private pro

### **§533.33(b)-.40**

bono mediators, may be assigned to contested matters as needed.

(1) Each mediator shall first have received 40 hours of Texas mediation training as prescribed by Texas law.

(2) Each mediator shall have some expertise in the area of the contested matter.

(3) If the mediator is a SOAH judge, that person will not also sit as the judge for the case if the contested matter goes to public hearing. If the mediator is an employee of the commission and dispute does not settle, that mediator will not have any further contact or involvement concerning the disputed matter.

### **§533.34 Commencement of ADR.** *[Adopted December 30, 2007]*

(a) The commission encourages resolution of disputes at any time; however, ADR procedures may begin, at the discretion of the Director of Enforcement or the Human Resources Office, anytime after the commission anticipates initiation of an adverse action against an applicant, respondent, or employee. The commission may issue a Notice of Mediation along with a Notice of Alleged Violation or along with a notice of a proposed denial of licensure or opportunity to take an examination. Prior to the submission of a Request for Docket Case form to SOAH, and with agreement of all parties, the ADR Administrator may schedule mediation upon any party's request.

(b) A commission employee, subsequent to appealing a personnel action to the appropriate commission Division Director in accordance with the commission's Personnel Manual and without having obtained satisfaction, may request approval of mediation from the Human Resources Office.

(c) Upon unanimous motion of the parties and at the discretion of the administrative law judge, the provisions of this section may apply to contested case hearings. In such cases, it is within the discretion of the judge to continue the hearing to allow the use of ADR procedures.

**§533.35 Stipulations.** *[Adopted December 30, 2007]* When the ADR procedures do not result in the full settlement of a matter, the parties in conjunction with the mediator, may limit the contested issues through the entry of written stipulations. Such stipulations shall be forwarded or formally presented to the administrative law judge assigned to conduct the contested case hearing on the merits and shall be made part of the hearing record.

**§533.36. Agreements.** *[Adopted December 30, 2007]* All agreements between or among parties that are reached as a result of ADR must be committed to writing and will have the same force and effect as a written contract.

### **§533.37 Confidentiality.** *[Adopted December 30, 2007]*

(a) Except as provided in subsections (c) and (d) of this section, a communication relating to the subject matter made by a participant in an ADR procedure, whether before or after the institution of formal ADR proceedings, is confidential, is not subject to disclosure, and may not be used as evidence in any further proceeding.

(b) Any notes or record made of an ADR procedure are confidential, and participants, including the mediator, may not be required to testify in any proceedings relating to or arising out of the matter in dispute or be subject to process requiring disclosure of confidential information or data relating to or arising out of the matter in dispute.

(c) An oral communication or written material used in or made a part of an ADR procedure is admissible or discoverable only if it is admissible or discoverable independent of the procedure.

(d) If this section conflicts with other legal requirements for disclosure of communications or materials, the issue of confidentiality may be presented to the judge to determine, in camera, whether the facts, circumstances, and context of the communications or materials sought to be disclosed warrant a protective order or whether the communications or materials are subject to disclosure.

(e) All communications in the mediation between parties and between each party and the mediator are confidential. No shared information will be given to the other party unless the party sharing the information explicitly gives the mediator permission to do so. Material provided to the mediator will not be provided to other parties and will not be filed or become part of the contested case record. All notes taken during the mediation conference will be destroyed at the end of the process.

### **§533.40 Negotiated Rulemaking.** *[Adopted December 30, 2007]*

(a) It is the commission's policy to employ negotiated rulemaking procedures when appropriate. When the commission is of the opinion that proposed rules are likely to be complex, or controversial, or to affect disparate groups, negotiated rulemaking will be considered.

(b) When negotiated rulemaking is to be considered, the commission will appoint a convener to assist it in determining whether it is advisable to proceed. The convener shall have the duties described in Texas Government Code, Chapter 2008, and shall make a recommendation to the administrator to proceed or to defer negotiated rulemaking. The recommendation shall be made after the convener, at a minimum, has considered all of the items enumerated in Texas Government Code, §2008.052(c).

(c) Upon the convener's recommendation to proceed, the commission shall initiate negotiated rulemaking according to the provisions of Texas Government Code, Chapter 2008.

**RULES OF THE TEXAS  
REAL ESTATE COMMISSION**

**§§534.1-.3(i)**

**CHAPTER 534 GENERAL ADMINISTRATION**

**§534.1. Charges for Copies of Public Records.** *[Adopted December 1, 1994; amended January 7, 1997; Ref: §1101.151]*

(a) Charge for copies of public information provided by the commission shall be based upon the current charges established by the General Services Commission; provided, however, that the commission shall charge its actual costs if the actual costs of providing copies exceed the established charges, and an exemption has been granted by the General Services Commission.

(b) The commission may furnish copies of public information without charge or at a reduced charge if the commission determines that waiver or reduction of the fee is in the public interest. The commission also may waive the charge if the cost of processing the collection of a charge will exceed the amount of the charge.

**§534.2. Processing Fees for Dishonored Checks.** *[Adopted December 1, 1994; Ref: §1101.151]*

(a) If a check drawn to the commission is dishonored by a payor, the commission shall charge a fee of \$25 to the drawer or endorser for processing the dishonored check. The commission shall notify the drawer or endorser of the fee by sending a request for payment of the dishonored check and the processing fee by certified mail to the last known business address of the person as shown in the records of the commission. If the commission has sent a request for payment in accordance with the provisions of this section, the failure of the drawer or endorser to pay the processing fee within 15 days after the commission has mailed the request is a violation of this section.

(b) Collection of the fee imposed under this section does not preclude the commission from proceeding under Texas Civil Statutes, Article 6573a, §15(a)(4), against a licensee who has within a reasonable time failed to make good a check issued to the commission.

**§534.3 Employee Training and Education.** *[Adopted May 17, 2005; Ref: §1101.151]*

(a) The commission may use state funds to provide training and education for its employees in accordance with the State Employees Training Act (Texas Government Code, §§656.044-656.049).

(b) The training or education shall be related to

the duties or prospective duties of the employee.

(c) The commission's training and education program benefits both the commission and the employees participating by:

(1) preparing for technological and legal developments;

(2) increasing work capabilities;

(3) increasing the number of qualified employees in areas for which the commission has difficulty in recruiting and retaining employees; and

(4) increasing the competence of commission employees.

(d) A commission employee may be required to attend, as part of the employee's duties, a training or education program related to the employee's duties or prospective duties.

(e) Approval to participate in a training or education program is not automatic and is subject to the availability of funds within the commission's budget.

(f) The employee training and education program for the commission shall include:

(1) agency-sponsored training provided in-house or by contract;

(2) seminars and conferences;

(3) technical or professional certifications and licenses; and

(4) tuition reimbursement for degree and non-degree program courses.

(g) The administrator or administrator's designee shall develop policies for administering each of the components of the employee training and education program. These policies shall include:

(1) eligibility requirements for participation;

(2) designation of appropriate level of approval for participation; and

(3) obligations of program participants.

(h) Approval to participate in any portion of the commission's training and education program shall not in any way affect an employee's at-will status.

(i) Participation in the training and education

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program shall not in any way constitute a guarantee or indication of continued employment, nor shall it constitute a guarantee or indication of future employment in a current or prospective position.

### **§534.4 Historically Underutilized Businesses**

**Program.** *[Adopted May 17, 2005; Ref: §1101.151]* Pursuant to Chapter 2161, §2161.003, Texas Government Code, the commission adopts by reference the rules of the Texas Building and Procurement Commission in 1TAC §§111.11 - 111.28, relating to the Historically Underutilized Business Program.

### **§534.5 Bid Opening and Tabulation.** *[Adopted May 17, 2005; Ref: §1101.151]*

(a) The commission adopts by reference the rules of the Texas Building and Procurement Commission in 1 TAC §113.5(b) relating to bid submission, bid opening, and tabulation.

(b) The adoption of this rule is required by Texas Government Code, §2156.005(d).

### **§534.6 Negotiation and Mediation of Certain Contract Disputes.** *[Adopted May 17, 2005; Ref: §1101.151]*

The commission adopts by reference the rules of the Office of the Attorney General in Title 1, Part 3, Texas Administrative Code, Chapter 68 relating to Negotiation and Mediation of Certain Contract Disputes to comply with the requirements of Texas Government Code, Chapter 2260, §2260.052(c). The rules set forth a process to permit parties to structure a negotiation or mediation in a manner that is most appropriate for a particular dispute regardless of the contract's complexity, subject matter, dollar amount, or method and time of performance.

### **§534.7 Vendor Protest Procedures.** *[Adopted May 17, 2005; Ref: §1101.151]*

(a) The commission adopts by reference the rules promulgated by the Texas Building and Procurement Commission regarding purchasing protest procedures as set forth in Subchapter A of 1 TAC §111.3.

(b) The commission shall maintain documentation about the purchasing process to be used in the event of a protest by maintaining current information regarding applicable statutory law, administrative rules, and guidelines affecting the purchasing process.

**RULES OF THE  
TEXAS REAL ESTATE COMMISSION  
CHAPTER 535 GENERAL PROVISIONS**

**§§535.1-.12(a)**

**A. General Provisions Relating to the Requirement of Licensure**

**§535.1. License Required.** *[Adopted January 1, 1976. Amended August 29, 1979; December 25, 1980; March 11, 1981; June 9, 1981; March 19, 1990; April 14, 1998; July 1, 1999; October 11, 1999; and January 1, 2004; Ref: §1101.351]*

(a) Texas Occupations Code Chapter 1101 (the Act) applies to persons acting as real estate brokers or salespersons while physically within this state, regardless of the location of the real estate involved or the residence of the person's customers or clients. For the purposes of the Act, a person conducting brokerage business from another state by mail, telephone, the Internet, e-mail or other medium is also considered acting within this state if all the prospective buyers, sellers, landlords, or tenants are legal residents of this state, and the real property concerned is located wholly or in part within this state.

(b) This section does not prohibit cooperative arrangements between non-resident brokers and Texas brokers pursuant to the Act, §1101.651(a)(2) and §535.131 of this title (relating to Unlawful Conduct: Splitting Fees).

(c) Unless otherwise exempted by the Act, a person must be licensed as a real estate broker or salesperson to show a broker's listings, solicit listings of real property, or perform any act defined as that of a real estate broker by the Act. An unlicensed person may be hired by a broker to act as a host or hostess at a property being offered for sale by the broker, provided the unlicensed person engages in no activity for which a license is required.

(d) The employees, agents or associates of a licensed broker, including a corporation or limited liability company licensed as a broker, must be licensed as real estate brokers or salespersons if they direct or supervise other persons who perform acts for which a license is required. A license is not required for the performance of secretarial, clerical, or administrative tasks, such as training personnel, performing duties generally associated with office administration and personnel matters. Unlicensed employees, agents, or associates may not solicit business for the broker or hold themselves out as authorized to act as real estate brokers or salespersons.

(e) As used in this chapter, the terms "property" and "real property" have the same meaning as "real estate" as that term is defined in the Act.

**§535.2. Broker's Responsibility.** *[Adopted January 1, 1976. Amended April 14, 1998; July 1, 1999; November 26, 2002; and May 18, 2003; Ref: §1101.803]*

(a) A broker is responsible for the authorized acts of the broker's salespersons, but the broker is not required to supervise the salespersons directly.

(b) A real estate broker acting as an agent owes the very highest fiduciary obligation to the agent's principal and is obliged to convey to the principal all information of which the agent has knowledge and which may affect the principal's decision. A broker is obligated under a listing contract to negotiate the best possible transaction for the principal, the person the broker has agreed to represent.

(c) A broker is responsible for the proper handling of escrow monies placed with the broker, although the broker may authorize other persons to sign checks for the broker.

**§535.3. Compensation to or paid by a Salesperson.** *[Adopted January 1, 1976. Amended October 20, 1983; April 14, 1998 and July 1, 1999; Ref: §1101.651(b) & (c)]* A salesperson may not receive a commission or other fee except with the consent of the salesperson's sponsoring broker or the broker who sponsored the salesperson when the salesperson became entitled to the commission or fee. A salesperson may not pay a commission or other fee to another person except with the consent of the salesperson's sponsoring broker.

**§535.4. Compensation Paid by Salesperson.** *[Repealed July 1, 1999]*

**B. Definitions**

**§535.11. Real estate defined.** *[Repealed July 1, 1999]*

**§535.12. General.** *[Adopted January 1, 1976. Amended April 3, 1977; December 25, 1980; April 14, 1998; July 1, 1999 and January 1, 2004; Ref: §1101.002]*

(a) A person may invest in real estate or contract to purchase real estate and then sell it or offer to sell it without having a real estate license. A license is not required for a person to buy or sell real property only for the person's own account.

## §§535.12(b)-.17(a)

(b) A person who owns property jointly may sell and convey title to his or her interest in the property, but the person must be licensed to act for compensation as an agent for the other owner unless otherwise exempted by Texas Occupations Code, Chapter 1101, (the Act).

**§535.13. Dispositions of Real Estate.** *[Adopted January 1, 1976. Amended December 25, 1980; September 7, 1995; July 1, 1999 and January 1, 2004; Ref: §1101.002(1)(A)(i)]*

(a) Acting as a principal, a person may purchase, sell, lease, or sublease real estate for profit without being licensed as a real estate broker or salesperson.

(b) Unless otherwise exempted by Texas Occupations Code, Chapter 1101 (the Act), a person who manages real property or collects rentals for an owner of real property and for a valuable consideration must be licensed if the person also rents or leases the property for the owner.

(c) A person must be licensed as a real estate broker to operate a rental agency. This section does not prohibit employment of an answering service or unlicensed clerical or secretarial employees identified to callers as such to confirm information concerning the size, price and terms of property advertised.

(d) A real estate license is not required for an individual employed by a corporation or other business entity for the purpose of buying, selling, or leasing real property for the entity. An entity is considered to be an owner if it holds record title to the property or has an equitable title or right acquired by contract with the record title holder. A corporation or limited liability company is considered to be acting as a broker and is required to be licensed under the Act if it or its employee receives, or expects to receive, a valuable consideration from the record title holder for negotiating a sale or other disposition of the property.

(e) A real estate license is required of a subsidiary corporation, which, for compensation, negotiates in Texas for the sale of its parent corporation's real property.

(f) Arranging for a person to occupy a vacant residential property is an act requiring a real estate license if the actor:

(1) does not own the property or lease the property from its owner;

(2) receives a valuable consideration; and

(3) is not exempted from the requirement of a license by the Act, §1101.005.

**§535.14. Offers to Dispose of Real Estate.** *[Repealed July 1, 1999]*

**§535.15. Negotiations.** *[Adopted January 1, 1976. Amended April 3, 1977; April 14, 1998 and July 1, 1999; Ref: §1101.002(1)(A)(ii)]*

(a) Locating and bringing together a buyer and seller constitutes negotiation if done from within the borders of Texas.

(b) A real estate license is required for a person to solicit listings or to negotiate in Texas for listings.

**§535.16. Listings.** *[Adopted January 1, 1976. Amended April 14, 1998; July 1, 1999 and January 1, 2004; Ref: §1101.002(1)(A)(iv)]*

(a) Trade associations or other organizations which provide a computerized listing service for their members, but which do not receive compensation when the real estate is sold would not be required to be licensed under Texas Occupations Code, Chapter 1101 (the Act).

(b) A "net listing" is a listing agreement in which the broker's commission is the difference ("net") between the sales proceeds and an amount desired by the owner of the real property. A broker may not take net listings unless the principal requires a net listing and the principal appears to be familiar with current market values of real property. When a broker accepts a listing, the broker enters into a fiduciary relationship with the principal, whereby the broker is obligated to make diligent efforts to obtain the best price possible for the principal. The use of a net listing places an upper limit on the principal's expectancy and places the broker's interest above the principal's interest with reference to obtaining the best possible price. If a net listing is used, a broker should modify the listing agreement so as to assure the principal of not less than the principal's desired price and to limit the broker to a specified maximum commission.

(c) A real estate licensee is obligated to advise a property owner as to the licensee's opinion of the market value of a property when negotiating a listing or offering to purchase the property for the licensee's own account as a result of contact made while acting as a real estate agent.

**§535.17. Appraisals.** *[Adopted January 1, 1976. Amended [April 3, 1977,] March 1, 1991; August 19, 1991; April 14, 1998; July 1, 1999 and January 1, 2004; Ref: §1101.002(1)(A)(v)]*

(a) A salesperson may make, sign, and present real estate appraisals for the salesperson's sponsoring broker, but the salesperson must submit appraisals in the

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broker's name and the broker is responsible for the appraisals.

(b) Texas Occupations Code, Chapter 1101 (the Act) does not apply to appraisals performed by the employees of a financial institution or investment firm in connection with a contemplated loan or investment by their employers.

(c) Except as provided by this section, appraisals of real property performed in this state by Texas real estate licensees must be conducted in accordance with the Uniform Standards of Professional Appraisal Practice of the Appraisal Foundation in effect at the time the appraisal is performed. If a real estate licensee, for a separate fee, provides an opinion of value or comparative market analysis which does not conform with the Uniform Standards of Professional Appraisal Practice of the Appraisal Foundation, the licensee shall also provide the person for whom the opinion or analysis is prepared with a written statement containing the following language: "THIS IS AN OPINION OF VALUE OR COMPARATIVE MARKET ANALYSIS AND SHOULD NOT BE CONSIDERED AN APPRAISAL. In making any decision that relies upon my work, you should know that I have *not* followed the guidelines for development of an appraisal or analysis contained in the Uniform Standards of Professional Appraisal Practice of the Appraisal Foundation."

(d) The statement required by subsection (c) of this section must be made part of any written opinion or analysis report and must be reproduced verbatim.

(e) The exception allowed by subsection (c) of this section does not apply to a transaction in which the Resolution Trust Corporation or a federal financial institutions regulatory agency has required compliance with the Uniform Standards of Professional Appraisal Practice of the Appraisal Foundation.

### §535.18. Auctions. *[Repealed July 1, 1999]*

### §535.19. Locating Property. *[Adopted January 1, 1976. Amended July 17, 1992; Ref: §1101.002(1)(A)(viii)]*

(a) Except as provided by this section a real estate license is required for a person to receive a fee or other consideration for assisting another person to locate real property for sale, purchase, rent or lease, such as the operation of a service which finds apartments or homes.

(b) The compilation and distribution of information relating to rental vacancies or property for sale, purchase, rent or lease is activity for which a real estate license is required

if payment of any fee or other consideration received by the person who compiles and distributes the information is contingent upon the sale, purchase, rental or lease of the property. An advance fee is a contingent fee if the fee must be returned if the property is not sold, purchased, rented or leased.

### §535.20. Procuring Prospects. *[Adopted January 1, 1976. Amended October 21, 1997; April 14, 1998 and August 25, 1999; Ref: §1101.002(1)(A)(ix)]*

(a) Referring a prospective buyer, seller, landlord, or tenant to another person in connection with a proposed real estate transaction is an act requiring the person making the referral to be licensed if the referral is made with the expectation of receiving valuable consideration. For the purposes of this section, the term "valuable consideration" includes but is not limited to money, gifts of merchandise having a retail value greater than \$50, rent bonuses and discounts.

(b) A person is not required to be licensed as a real estate broker or salesperson if all of the following conditions are met.

(1) The person is engaged in the business of selling goods or services to the public.

(2) The person sells goods or services to a real estate licensee who intends to offer the goods or services as an inducement to potential buyers, sellers, landlords or tenants.

(3) After selling the goods or services to the real estate licensee, the person refers the person's customers to the real estate licensee.

(4) The payment to the person for the goods or services is not contingent upon the consummation of a real estate transaction by the person's customers.

### §535.21. Unimproved Lot Sales; Listing Publications. *[Adopted January 1, 1976. Amended July 17, 1992; July 1, 1999 and January 1, 2004; Ref: §1101.002(B)]*

(a) A person must be licensed as a real estate broker or salesperson to advertise for others regarding real property, accept calls received in response to such advertisements, and refer the callers to the owner of the property.

(b) A person may contract to advertise real estate for purchase, sale, lease or rental in a publication without being licensed under Texas Occupations Code, Chapter 1101, (the Act), unless payment of any fee or consideration the person receives is contingent upon the purchase, sale, lease, or rental of the property advertised

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in the publication. For the purposes of this section an advance fee is a contingent fee if the person is obligated to return the fee if the property is not purchased, sold, leased or rented. This section shall be narrowly construed to effectuate the purposes for which this section was adopted.

### C. Exemptions to Requirement of Licensure

**§535.31. Attorneys at Law.** *[Adopted January 1, 1976. Amended March 19, 1990; April 14, 1998; July 1, 1999 and January 1, 2004; Ref: §1101.005(1)]* A licensed attorney is exempt from the requirements of Texas Occupations Code, Chapter 1101, (the Act) but cannot sponsor real estate salespersons or serve as the designated officer or manager of a licensed corporation or limited liability company unless the attorney is also licensed as a real estate broker. This provision is not a waiver of the standards of eligibility and qualification elsewhere established in the Act.

**§535.32. Exemptions: Attorneys in fact.** *[Adopted January 1, 1976. Amended July 1, 1999; Ref: §1101.005(2)]* A person holding a power of attorney which is recorded in the county in which the particular real property is located and which specifically describes the real property to be sold may act as a real estate agent for the owner of such property without being licensed as a real estate broker or salesperson, provided the person does not use powers of attorney to engage in the real estate agency business.

**§535.33. Public officials.** *[Adopted January 1, 1976. Amended April 14, 1998 and July 1, 1999; Ref: §1101.005(3)]* Public officials and employees of governmental or quasi-governmental units are exempted from the requirement of being licensed as a real estate broker or salesperson while performing their official duties.

**§535.34. Salespersons Employed by an Owner of Land and Structures Erected by the Owner.** *[Adopted January 1, 1976. Amended July 1, 1999; Ref: §1101.005(6)]* "Salesperson employed by an owner" means a person employed and directly compensated by an owner.

**§535.35. Employees Renting and Leasing Employer's Real Estate.** *[Adopted January 1, 1976. Amended July 1, 1999; Ref: §1101.005(8)]* Withholding income and F.I.C.A. taxes from wages paid another person is considered evidence of employment.

### D. The Commission

**§535.41. Procedures.** *[Adopted January 1, 1976. Amended November 14, 1979; May 7, 1992; April 14, 1998; July 1, 1999 and January 1, 2004; Ref: §1101.051]*

(a) Meetings.

(1) The commission shall meet in February of each year and at such other times as it deems proper.

(2) Meetings will be held at such places as the commission deems proper.

(3) Meetings must be called by the chairperson on the chairperson's own motion or upon the written request of 5 members.

(b) Quorum. Five members constitutes a quorum.

(c) Officers.

(1) Officers of the commission consist of a chairperson, vice-chairperson and secretary.

(2) The commission shall elect a vice-chairperson and secretary at a regular meeting in February of each year. The governor shall designate one member to serve as chairperson at the pleasure of the governor. Elected officers shall serve until their successors are elected.

(d) Order of business.

(1) With the exception of proceedings in contested cases, meetings must be conducted in accordance with Roberts Rule of Order.

(2) Proceedings in contested cases will be conducted in accordance with the Administrative Procedure Act, Texas Government Code Chapter 2001, and Chapter 533 of this title (relating to Practice and Procedure).

**§535.42. Jurisdiction and Authority.** *[Adopted January 1, 1976. Amended March 19, 1990; July 1, 1999; January 1, 2004; and December 30, 2007; Ref: §1101.053]* The commission does not mediate disputes between or among licensees concerning entitlement to sales commissions or recommend individual licensees to the public.

### E. Requirements for Licensure

**§535.51. General Requirements.** *[Adopted January 1, 1976. Amended October 4, 1976; November 7, 1977; November 14, 1979; June 18, 1991, January 1, 1992; September 24, 1993; July 18, 1994; December 1, 1994; January 3, 1996; May 2, 1996; March 14, 1997; April 14, 1998; July 1, 1999; September 1, 2000; September 1, 2001; October 15, 2001;*



*March 4, 2002; April 1, 2003; January 1, 2004; May 10, 2004; September 1, 2004; July 4, 2005 and December 30, 2007; Ref: §1101.352(a)]*

(a) A person who wishes to be licensed by the commission must file an application for the license on the form adopted by the commission for that purpose. Prior to filing the application, the applicant must pay the required fee for evaluation of the education completed by the person and must obtain a written response from the commission showing the applicant meets current education requirements for the license.

(b) If the commission develops a system whereby a person may electronically file an application for a license, a person who has previously satisfied applicable education requirements and obtained an evaluation from the commission also may apply for a license by accessing the commission's Internet web site, entering the required information on the application form and paying the appropriate fee in accordance with the instructions provided at the site by the commission. If the person is an individual, the person must provide the commission with the person's signature prior to issuance of a license certificate. The person may provide the signature prior to the submission of an electronic application.

(c) The commission shall return applications to applicants when it has been determined that the application fails to comply with one of the following requirements.

(1) The applicant is not 18 years of age.

(2) The applicant does not meet any applicable residency requirement.

(3) An incorrect filing fee or no filing fee is received.

(4) The application is submitted in pencil.

(5) The applicant is not a citizen of the United States or a lawfully admitted alien.

(6) The applicant has not obtained, within one year from the date the application is filed, an evaluation from the commission showing the applicant meets education requirements or experience requirements have not been satisfied.

(d) An application is considered void and is subject to no further evaluation or processing when one of the following events occurs:

(1) the applicant fails to satisfy an examination requirement within six months from the date the application is filed;

(2) the applicant, having satisfied any examination requirement, fails to submit a required fee within sixty (60) days after the commission makes written request for payment;

(3) the applicant, having satisfied any examination requirement, fails to provide

information or documentation within sixty (60) days after the commission makes written request for correct or additional information or documentation;

(4) the applicant fails to provide fingerprints to the Department of Public Safety within six months from the date the application is filed.

(e) The commission adopts by reference the following forms approved by the commission which are published by and available from the Texas Real Estate Commission, P.O. Box 12188, Austin, Texas 78711-2188:

(1) Application for a Real Estate Broker License, TREC Form BL-8;

(2) Application for a Real Estate Broker License by a Corporation, TREC Form BLC-5;

(3) Effective September 1, 2007, Application for Late Renewal of A Real Estate Broker License, TREC Form BLR-8;

(4) Effective September 1, 2007, Application for Late Renewal of Real Estate Broker License by a Corporation, TREC Form BLRC-5;

(5) Effective November 1, 2007, Application for Real Estate Salesperson License, TREC Form SL-11;

(6) Effective September 1, 2007, Application for Late Renewal of Real Estate Salesperson License, TREC Form SLR-9;

(7) Application for Moral Character Determination, TREC Form MCD-5;

(8) Application for Real Estate Broker License by a Limited Liability Company, TREC Form BLLLC-5;

(9) Effective November 1, 2007, Application of Currently Licensed Real Estate Broker for Salesperson License, TREC Form BSL-6; and

(10) Effective September 1, 2007, Application for Late Renewal of a Real Estate Broker License by a Limited Liability Company, TREC Form BLRLLC-4.

**§535.52. Individuals.** *[Adopted January 1, 1976. Amended October 4, 1976; February 10, 1977; April 14, 1998 and July 1, 1999; Ref: §1101.354]*

(a) The commission may disapprove an application if the applicant fails to satisfy the commission as to the honesty, trustworthiness, or integrity of the applicant.

(b) Texas residents who enter the military service and resume their Texas residence immediately upon separation from the military are not considered to have lost their Texas residence unless they have affirmatively established legal residence elsewhere.

## §§535.52(c)-.61(f)

(c) The fact that an individual has had disabilities of minority removed does not affect the requirement that an applicant be 18 years of age to be eligible for a license.

**§535.53. Corporations and Limited Liability Companies.** *[Adopted January 1, 1976. Amended August 29, 1979; September 24, 1993; April 14, 1998; July 1, 1999 and January 1, 2004; Ref: §1101.355]*

(a) For the purposes of qualifying for, maintaining, or renewing a license, a corporation or limited liability company must designate one person holding an active Texas real estate broker license to act for it. The corporation or limited liability company may not act as a broker during any period in which it has not designated a person to act for it who meets the requirements of Texas Occupations Code, Chapter 1101 (the Act). A broker may not act as a designated person at any time while the broker's license is inactive, expired, suspended or revoked.

(b) Section 1101.355 of the Act applies only to corporations or limited liability companies which are created under the laws of this state, provided, however, that a corporation or limited liability company formed under the laws of a state other than Texas will be considered to be a Texas resident for purposes of this section if it is qualified to do business in Texas; its officers or managers, its principal place of business and all of its assets are located in Texas; and all of its officers and directors or managers and members are Texas residents.

### **F. Education, Experience, Educational Programs, Time Periods and Type of License**

**§535.61. Examinations.** *[Repealed January 31, 2000.]*

**§535.61. Examinations.** *[Adopted January 31, 2000; amended January 1, 2004; July 10, 2006; October 22, 2006 and December 30, 2007; Ref: §1101.401]*

(a) The contents of examinations administered by the commission or by a testing service under contract with the commission are confidential. The following conduct with respect to licensing examinations is prohibited and is grounds to impose disciplinary action against any licensee of the commission or any education provider or instructor approved by the commission, and shall further be grounds for disapproval of an application for any license, accreditation, or approval issued by the commission:

(1) obtaining or attempting to obtain specific questions or answers from an applicant, a

commission employee or any person hired by or associated with the testing service, for the purpose of using the information to pass an examination or for the purpose of providing the questions or answers to another person who is either an applicant or a potential applicant;

(2) removing or attempting to remove questions or answers from an examination site; or

(3) providing or attempting to provide examination questions or answers to another person, knowing the person is an applicant or prospective applicant, or that the person intends to provide the questions or answers to an applicant or potential applicant.

(b) Examinations required for any license issued by the commission will be conducted by the testing service with which the commission has contracted for the administration of examinations. The testing service shall schedule and conduct the examinations in the manner required by the contract between the commission and the testing service. To pass the examination, an applicant must attain a passing score in each section of the examination.

(c) An applicant will not be admitted to the testing service's examination site unless the applicant provides a government issued photo-bearing identification card. The testing service may refuse to admit an applicant who arrives after the time the examination is scheduled to begin or whose conduct or demeanor would be disruptive to other persons taking examinations at the site. The testing service may confiscate examination materials, dismiss the applicant, and fail the applicant for violating or attempting to violate the confidentiality of the contents of an examination.

(d) Applicants may use silent, battery-operated, electronic, pocket sized calculators which are nonprogrammable. If a calculator has printout capability, the testing service must approve use of such calculator prior to the examination. Applicants may not use calculators with alphabetic keyboards.

(e) The testing service administering the examinations is required to provide reasonable accommodations for any applicant with a verifiable disability. Applicants must contact the testing service to arrange for a special examination. The testing service shall determine the method of examination, whether oral or written, based on the particular circumstances of each case.

(f) Notwithstanding Texas Occupations Code §1101.451(f), the commission shall waive the examination of an applicant for a broker license who has been licensed as a broker in this state no more than two years prior to the filing of the

application. The commission shall waive the examination of an applicant for a salesperson license who has been licensed in this state as a broker or salesperson no more than two years prior to the filing of the application.

(g) The commission may waive the national portion of the examination of an applicant for a broker or salesperson license if the applicant maintains a license equivalent to the license being applied for and has passed a comparable national examination accredited or certified by a nationally recognized real estate regulator association.

**§535.62. Waiver of Examination.** *[Repealed January 31, 2000]*

**§535.62. Acceptable Courses of Study.** *[Adopted January 31, 2000; amended October 15, 2001, January 1, 2004; November 9, 2004 and December 30, 2007; Ref: §1101.003]*

(a) Acceptable core real estate courses are those courses prescribed by Texas Occupations Code, Chapter 1101 (the Act), §1101.003 and by this section. Acceptable real estate related courses are those courses which have been determined to be acceptable by the commission. The commission will periodically publish lists of acceptable real estate related courses.

(b) The commission may require an applicant to furnish materials such as course outlines, syllabi and course descriptions in support of credit instruments. The commission may require official transcripts to verify course work. Provided all the requirements of this section are satisfied, the commission shall accept core real estate courses or real estate related courses submitted by an applicant for a real estate broker or real estate salesperson license if the course was offered by any of the following providers:

(1) a school accredited by the commission or the real estate regulatory agency of another state;

(2) a college or university accredited by a regional accrediting association, such as the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, or its equivalent, or by a recognized national or international accrediting body;

(3) a post-secondary educational institution established by any state;

(4) the United States Armed Forces Institute or other service-related school; or

(5) a professional trade association.

(c) The commission shall measure classroom

hour credits using the following equivalents:

(1) One semester hour: 15 hours.

(2) One quarter hour: 10 hours.

(3) One continuing education unit: 10 hours.

(d) A core real estate course also must meet each of the following requirements to be accepted.

(1) The course contained the content required by Texas Occupations Code, Chapter 1101, (the Act), §1101.003, or this section.

(2) The daily course presentation did not exceed ten hours.

(3) With the exception of courses conducted by correspondence or by an alternative delivery method such as by computer, the student was present in the classroom for the hours of credit granted by the course provider, or completed makeup in accordance with the requirements of the provider, or by applicable commission rule.

(4) For a classroom course, successful completion of a final examination or other form of final evaluation was a requirement for receiving credit from the provider.

(5) For a correspondence course, the course must have been offered by an accredited college or university, and students receiving credit for the course must pass either:

(A) a proctored final examination administered under controlled conditions to positively identified students and graded by the instructor or, if the examination is being graded mechanically or by use of a computer, by the provider, using answer keys approved by the instructor or provider; or

(B) an examination by use of a computer under conditions that satisfy the commission that the examinee is the same person who seeks course credit.

(6) For a course offered by an alternative delivery method, the course met the following requirements.

(A) The course must be certified by a distance learning certification center that is acceptable by the commission.

(B) The rationale for the education processes implemented in the course must be based on sound instructional strategies which have been systematically designed and proven effective through educational research and development. The basis and rationale for any proposed instructional approach must be specified in the application for approval. The following types of programs will not be approved:

**§535.62(d)(6)(B)(i)-.63(b)(2)(B)**

(i) those which consist primarily of text material; or

(ii) those which primarily consist of questions similar to those on the state licensing examination.

(C) An approved instructor or the provider's coordinator/director shall grade the written course work.

(D) Every provider offering an approved course under this subsection shall:

(i) ensure that a qualified person is available to answer students' questions or provide assistance as necessary;

(ii) satisfy the commission that procedures are in place to ensure that the student who completes the work is the student who is enrolled in the course; and

(iii) certify students as successfully completing the course only if the student:

(I) has completed all instructional modules required to demonstrate mastery of the material;

(II) has attended any hours of live instruction and/or testing required for a given course; and

(III) has passed either:

(-a-) a proctored final examination administered under controlled conditions to positively identified students, at a location and by an official approved by the commission and graded by the instructor or, if the examination is being graded mechanically or by use of a computer, by the provider, using answer keys approved by the instructor or provider; or

(-b-) an examination by use of a computer under conditions that satisfy the commission that the examinee is the same person who seeks credit.

(7) The student must not have completed more than one course with substantially the same course content within a three year period.

(8) The course did not primarily concern techniques or procedures utilized by a particular brokerage or organization.

(9) For a classroom course, the course was offered in a location conducive to instruction that is separate and apart from the work area, such as a classroom, training room, conference room, or assembly hall.

(e) Course credits awarded by an accredited college or university for life experience or by examination are acceptable only for real estate related courses.

(f) In addition to the courses of study specified

in the Act, §1101.003, the following shall be considered core real estate courses.

(1) Promulgated Contract Forms (or equivalent) shall include but not be limited to unauthorized practice of law, broker-lawyer committee, current promulgated forms, commission rules governing use of forms and case studies involving use of forms.

(2) Residential Inspection for Real Estate Agents (or equivalent) shall include but not be limited to repair-related contract forms and addenda, inspector and client agreement, inspection standards of practice and standard inspection report form, tools and procedures, electromechanical systems (plumbing, heating, air conditioning, appliances, energy-saving considerations) and structures (lot and landscape, roofs, chimney, gutters, paved areas, walls, windows and doors, insect damage and storage areas).

**§535.63. Brokers: Education and Experience.**  
*[Repealed January 31, 2000.]*

**§535.63. Education and Experience Requirements for a License.** *[Adopted January 31, 2000; amended June 27, 2002; January 1, 2004; July 10, 2006 and December 30, 2007]*

(a) License or experience in another state. Except as provided by this section, the commission will not accept a person's license in another state or experience in real estate brokerage or any related business in satisfaction of education or experience required for a license.

(b) Education and experience requirements for a broker license.

(1) Experience as a real estate broker or salesperson is accepted as experience for the purpose of applying for a real estate broker license. Experience is measured from the date a license is issued, and inactive periods caused by lack of sponsorship, or any other reason, cannot be included as active experience.

(2) Notwithstanding Texas Occupations Code §1101.451(f), the commission may waive education and experience required for a real estate broker license if the applicant satisfies each of the following conditions.

(A) The applicant must have been licensed as a Texas real estate broker or salesperson no more than six years prior to the filing of the application.

(B) If the applicant was previously licensed as a Texas real estate broker, the applicant must have completed at least 15 hours of mandatory continuing education (MCE) courses within the two-year period prior to the filing of an application

for an active license. If the applicant was previously licensed as a Texas real estate salesperson, the applicant must satisfy all current education requirements for an original broker license.

(C) The applicant must have had not less than two years of active experience as a licensed real estate broker or salesperson during the eight-year period prior to the filing of the application.

(3) Under the Texas Occupations Code, Chapter 1101 (the Act), §1101.357 a person who is the designated officer of a corporation or limited liability company which is licensed as a real estate broker in another state is deemed to be a licensed real estate broker in another state. The term "state" means one of the states, territories, and possessions of the United States and any foreign country or governmental subdivision thereof. A person licensed in another state may derive the required two years' experience from periods in which the person was licensed in two or more states.

(4) The commission shall require not less than 18 semester hours (270 classroom hours) in courses reflecting course titles or course descriptions in the real estate disciplines including, but not limited to, the statutory subject areas identified in the Act, §1101.003. The commission will publish periodically guidelines as to the acceptability of related courses.

(c) Education requirements for a salesperson license.

(1) In order to maintain a license, a salesperson subject to annual education requirements shall furnish documentation to the commission of successful completion of appropriate courses no later than 10 business days prior to the day the salesperson files an application with the commission to renew the salesperson's license.

(2) Notwithstanding Texas Occupations Code §1101.451(f), the commission may waive the education required for a real estate salesperson license if the applicant satisfies each of the following conditions.

(A) The applicant must have been licensed either as a Texas real estate broker or as a Texas real estate salesperson no more than six years prior to the filing of the application.

(B) The applicant must have completed any core real estate courses or real estate related courses which would have been required for a timely renewal of the prior license, or if the renewal of the prior license was not subject to

the completion of core real estate courses or real estate related courses, the applicant must have completed at least 15 hours of mandatory continuing education (MCE) courses within the two-year period prior to the filing of an application for an active license.

**§535.64. Salesman: Education.** *[Repealed January 31, 2000.]*

**§535.64. Accreditation of Schools and Approval of Courses and Instructors.** *[Adopted January 31, 2000; amended July 12, 2000; July 2, 2001; January 1, 2004; November 9, 2004; November 8, 2005; May 24, 2006 and December 30, 2007.]*

(a) Application. A person desiring to offer educational programs or courses of study under approval of the commission pursuant to Texas Occupations Code, Chapter 1101, (the Act), §1101.301, shall file an application on forms adopted by the commission accompanied by the fee prescribed pursuant to §1101.152(a)(10) of the Act. The commission may request additional information from an applicant which the commission deems to be relevant and material to the consideration of an application.

(b) Standards for approval of application for accreditation. To be accredited as a school, the applicant must satisfy the commission as to the applicant's ability to administer courses with competency, honesty, trustworthiness and integrity. If the applicant proposes to employ another person, such as an independent contractor, to conduct or administer the courses, the other person must meet this standard as if the other person were the applicant. The applicant also must demonstrate that the applicant has sufficient financial resources to conduct its proposed operations on a continuing basis without risk of loss to students attending the school and that the proposed facilities will be adequate and safe for conducting classes. If the applicant is currently accredited, the applicant will be deemed to meet financial requirements imposed by this subsection once the applicant has provided the statutory bond or other security acceptable to the commission under Section 1101.301 of the Act and there are no unsatisfied final money judgments against the applicant; otherwise, the application will be subject to the financial review provisions of this section.

(c) Financial review. The commission shall review the financial condition of each proposed school to determine whether the school has sufficient financial resources to conduct its proposed operations on a continuing basis. In making this determination, the commission shall

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be conservative in the financial assumptions it makes concerning the school's proposed operations and its future cash flows. The applicant shall provide the following information:

(1) business financial statements prepared in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles, which shall include a current statement of financial condition and a current statement of net worth;

(2) on an initial application, a proposed budget for the first year of operation; and

(3) on an initial application, a market survey indicating the anticipated enrollment for the first year of operation.

(d) Approval of application for accreditation. If it determines that the applicant meets the standards for accreditation and has furnished the bond or other acceptable security required by the Act, §1101.302, the commission shall approve the application and provide a written notice of the accreditation to the applicant. Unless surrendered or revoked for cause, the accreditation will be valid for a period of five years.

(e) Subsequent application for accreditation. No more than six months prior to the expiration of its current accreditation, a school may apply for accreditation for another five year period. If a school was accredited prior to the effective date of this section, the accreditation of the school expires January 1, 2001, and the school may apply for accreditation at any time.

(f) Disapproval of application. If it determines that an applicant does not meet the standards for accreditation, the commission shall disapprove the application in writing. An applicant may request a hearing before the commission on the disapproval by filing a written request for hearing within 10 days following the applicant's receipt of the notice of disapproval. Following the hearing, the commission shall issue an order which, in the opinion of the commission, is appropriate in the matter concerned. Venue for any hearing conducted under this section shall be in Travis County. The disapproval and hearing are subject to the Administrative Procedure Act, Texas Government Code, Chapter 2001, and to Chapter 533 of this title (relating to Practice and Procedure).

(g) Forms. The Texas Real Estate Commission adopts by reference the following forms approved by the commission. These documents are published by and available from the Texas Real Estate Commission, P.O. Box 12188, Austin, Texas 78711-2188, www.trec.state.tx.us.

(1) Form ED 1-0, Education Provider

Application;

(2) Form ED 2-0, Principal Information Form;

(3) Form ED 3-0, Course Application;

(4) Form ED 4-1, Instructor Application;

(5) Form ED 5-2, Real Estate Provider Bond;

(6) Form ED 6-0; Evaluation Form; and

(7) Form ED 7-1, Instructor Manual Guidelines.

(h) Obtaining approval to offer course. An applicant shall submit Form ED 3-0 the first time approval is sought to offer a course. Once a course has been approved, no further approval is required for another accredited school to offer the same course. Prior to advertising or offering the course, however, the subsequent provider shall complete Form ED 3-0, file the form with the commission and receive written or oral acknowledgment from the commission that all necessary documentation has been filed. A school shall submit an instructor's manual for each proposed course. The commission may require a copy of the course materials and instructor's manual to be submitted for each previously approved course the school intends to offer. Subsequent providers shall offer the course as originally approved or as revised with the approval of the commission and shall use all materials required in the original or revised course. Each manual must comply with Form ED 7-0, Instructor Manual Guidelines. Schools may offer a course using an alternative delivery method such as computers if the course satisfies the requirements for such a course contained in §535.62(d)(6) of this chapter.

(i) Standards for instructor approval. The application for commission approval of an instructor must be filed on forms adopted by the commission. To be approved as an instructor, a person must satisfy the commission as to the person's competency in the subject matter to be taught and ability to teach effectively. Each instructor must also possess the following qualifications:

(1) a college degree in the subject area or five years professional experience in the subject area; and

(2) three years experience in teaching or training; or

(3) the equivalent of paragraphs (1) and (2) of this subsection as determined by the commission after due consideration of the applicant's professional experience, research, authorship or other significant endeavors in the subject area.

(j) Approval of instructor. If the commission determines that the applicant meets the standards for instructor approval, the commission shall approve the application and provide a written notice of the approval to the applicant. Unless surrendered or revoked for cause, the approval will be valid for a period of five years.

(k) Subsequent application for instructor approval. No more than six months prior to the expiration of the current approval, an instructor may apply for approval for another five year period. If an instructor was approved prior to the effective date of this section, the approval of the instructor expires January 1, 2001, and the instructor may apply for approval at any time.

(l) Disapproval of application. The commission may disapprove an application for approval of an instructor for failure to meet the standard imposed by subsection (g) of this section, failure to satisfy the commission as to the applicant's honesty, trustworthiness or integrity, or for any reason which would be a ground to suspend or revoke a real estate license. If an application is disapproved, the commission shall provide written notice to the applicant detailing the basis of the decision. An applicant may request a hearing before the commission by filing a written request for hearing within 10 days following the applicant's receipt of the notice of disapproval. Venue for any hearing conducted under this section is in Travis County. Appeals from application disapprovals will be conducted in the manner required by the Act, §1101.364. Hearings are subject to the Administrative Procedure Act, Texas Government Code, Chapter 2001, and to Chapter 533 of this title (relating to Practice and Procedure).

(m) Additional information related to application. The commission may request an applicant to provide additional information related to the application, and the commission may terminate the application without further notice if the applicant fails to provide the information within 60 days after the mailing of a request by the commission.

(n) Delegation of authority. The commission may authorize its director of licensing and education, or that person's designate, to determine whether applications for schools, courses, and instructors should be approved.

(o) Examination preparation courses.

(1) No school may be accredited or operate under commission approval for the sole purpose of offering courses of instruction designed to prepare its students for the state examination for any license issued by the commission. A school may offer an examination preparation course on a non-credit basis, provided the requirements of

subsection (h) of this section have been met.

(2) Once an examination preparation course has been approved by the commission, the school may offer the course until the course approval expires. The approval for a course expires December 31 of the odd-numbered year following approval of the course. A school may apply for approval to offer a subsequent course no earlier than September 1 of the year in which the course approval expires. If the course was approved by the commission prior to the effective date of this subsection, the approval of the course expires December 31, 2001, and the school may apply for approval of another course beginning September 1, 2001. The commission is not required to approve a course sooner than 30 days after the filing of an application for course approval.

(3) Schools shall update examination preparation course materials in the manner required by §535.65 of this title (Relating to Change in Ownership or Operation of School; Presentation of Courses, Advertising, and Records).

(4) In the presentation of examination preparation courses, schools must ensure that the students are advised of the confidentiality of the contents of examinations administered for the commission and of the punishments for a violation of §535.61 of this title (Relating to Examinations).

**535.65. License: Issuance after January 1, 1985.** *[Repealed April 23, 1981]*

**§535.65. Changes in Ownership or Operation of School; Presentation of Courses, Advertising, and Records.** *[Adopted January 31, 2000; amended June 27, 2002; January 1, 2004; May 11, 2004 and December 30, 2007]*

(a) Changes in Ownership or Operation. A school shall obtain the approval of the commission in advance of any material change in the operation of the school, including but not limited to, ownership, location of main office and any other locations where courses are offered, management, and course formats. A request for approval of a change of ownership will be considered as if each proposed new owner had applied for accreditation of the school, and each new owner must meet the standards imposed by §535.64 of this title (relating to Accreditation of Schools and Approval of Instructors). A school requesting approval of a change in ownership shall provide all of the following information or documents to the commission:

(1) the proportion of ownership of each proposed new owner,

**§535.65(a)(2)-.65(e)(1)**

(2) a professional resume of each proposed new owner who would hold at least a 10% interest in the school;

(3) business financial statements of each proposed new owner who would hold at least a 10% interest in the school, which shall include the statement of financial condition and statement of net worth for the accounting period in which the application is made, prepared in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles;

(4) a statement of any proposed changes in the operation or location of the school;

(5) a new bond in the amount of \$20,000 for the proposed new owner(s), a statement from the bonding company indicating that the former bond will transfer to the proposed new owner(s), or other security acceptable to the commission under Texas Occupations Code, Chapter 1101, (the Act), §1101.302.

(6) a completed Form ED 1-0, Education Provider Application, reflecting all required information for the proposed new owner(s); and

(7) a completed Form ED 2-0, Principal Information Form, for each proposed new owner who would hold at least a 10% interest in the school.

**(b) School facilities.**

(1) A school shall maintain a fixed office in the State of Texas. The office must be large enough for maintenance of all records, office equipment, files, telephone equipment, and office space for customer service. A school shall ensure that its classroom facilities are adequate for the needs of the school and pose no threat to the health or safety of students.

(2) Except as provided by this section, every school shall be open to the public, and shall advertise all courses publicly so as to encourage reasonably an open enrollment. A school may obtain approval from the commission, however, to hold classes in facilities to which access has been limited by a governmental unit.

(c) Responsibility of schools. A school is responsible to the commission for the conduct and administration of each course presentation, punctuality of classroom sessions, student attendance records, instructor performance and attendance, examination administration, proper student certification, and certification of records. A school shall establish business hours during which school staff are available for public inquiry and assistance. A school shall ensure that instructors or other persons do not recruit or solicit prospective salespersons or brokers in a classroom during class time.

**(d) Instructors.**

(1) A school shall select each instructor on the basis of expertise in the subject area of instruction and ability as an instructor. Except as provided by this section, a school may not utilize an instructor unless the instructor has been approved by the commission. A school shall require specialized training or work experience for instructors for specialized subjects such as law, appraisal, investments, or taxation. A school may use as a guest speaker a person who has not been approved as an instructor, provided that no more than a total of three hours of instruction in a 30-hour course are taught by persons who are not approved instructors.

(2) An instructor shall teach a course in substantially the same manner represented to the commission in the instructor's manual or other documents filed with the application for course approval.

(3) A school shall provide instructor evaluation forms for completion by students in every class and establish procedures for instructional review. The school shall file in the school records any comments by the school's management relevant to instructor evaluation reports. On demand by the commission the school shall produce student instructor evaluation forms for inspection.

(4) A school shall ensure that at the beginning of each examination preparation course, the instructor reads aloud to all students the provisions of subsection (a) of §535.61 of this title (relating to Examinations).

(5) Schools may request MCE credit be given to instructors of real estate core courses subject to the following guidelines.

(A) The instructors may receive credit for only those portions of the course which they teach by filing a completed MCE Form 11-3, Instructor Credit Request.

(B) The instructors may receive full course credit by attending all of the remainder of the course.

**(e) Course examinations.**

(1) A school shall administer an examination approved by the commission in each course as a component of determining successful completion of a course of study. A school may not permit a student to take a final examination prior to the completion of any makeup required by this section. In the event of failure of a course final examination, a school may permit a student to retake a final examination once after at least a seven day waiting period and completion of additional course work prescribed by the school. A school shall require a student who fails the examination a second time to retake the course. A school shall require makeup final examinations to be completed within 90 days of the



termination of the original class or report the students who do not timely complete the examination requirement as dropped from the class with no credit.

(2) Except in the case of math courses which require a minimum of 20 questions, a school shall use final examinations consisting of at least 60 questions with an unweighted passing score of 70%. A school shall revise final course examinations for active courses at least annually and shall furnish the commission copies of all revisions. Each of the subjects required by statute or commission rule for a core course must be covered in the exam of that course. A school shall ensure that an examination proctor who is either a member of the school staff or faculty is present with the class during all regularly scheduled final course examinations.

(f) Pre-enrollment agreements, tuition and fees.

(1) Prior to the start of a course, a school shall provide each student with a pre-enrollment agreement signed by a representative of the school and the student. The agreement must include all of the following information:

(A) the tuition for the course;

(B) any fees charged by the school for supplies, materials, or books needed in course work, shown in an itemized fashion;

(C) the school's policy regarding the refund of tuition and other fees, including a statement addressing refund policy when a student is dismissed or withdraws voluntarily;

(D) attendance requirements;

(E) acceptable makeup procedures, including any applicable time limits and any fees that may be charged for makeup sessions; and

(F) the procedure and fees for taking any permitted makeup final examination or any permitted re-examination, including any applicable time limits.

(2) If the school cancels a course, the school shall fully refund all fees collected from students or, at the student's option, the school may credit the student for another course. The school shall inform the commission when a student requests a refund because of a withdrawal due to the student's dissatisfaction with the quality of the course.

(3) Any written advertisement by the school which contains a fee charged by the school must display all fees for the course in the same place in the advertisement and with the same degree of prominence.

(g) Course materials.

(1) A school shall update course materials during the period of time a course may be given

to ensure that current and accurate information is provided to students. The school shall file updated course materials and revisions of the course outline with the commission prior to implementation, and the commission may direct a school to revise the materials further or cease use of materials. The commission may direct that the school withdraw texts.

(2) A school shall provide each student with copies for the student's permanent use of any printed material which is the basis for a significant portion of the course. The school shall provide ample space on handouts for notetaking or completion of any written exercises.

(h) Presentation of courses.

(1) A school shall present core real estate courses prescribed by the Act, §1101.003 and real estate related courses accepted by the commission in no less than 30 classroom hours of instruction. The school shall advertise and schedule a course for the full clock hours of time for which credit is awarded.

(2) A school may give one hour of credit for a minimum of 50 clock minutes of actual classroom session time. A school shall provide a break of at least 20 minutes to be given at least every two hours. While a school is expected to ensure that each student is present in the classroom for the hours of time for which credit is awarded, this section is not intended to penalize students who must leave the classroom for brief periods of time for personal reasons such as taking medication or responding to the call of nature.

(i) Course credit and records.

(1) Within ten days following the completion of other than an alternative delivery method course or correspondence course, a school shall provide the commission with a class roster in a format approved by the commission. For an alternative delivery method course or correspondence course, a school shall provide a roster of those students completing the course within 10 days after the end of the month in which the student completed the course. The listing of students must be numbered and in alphabetical order, with each student's last name shown first, and must show after each student's name the final grade of either passed, failed, incomplete, or dropped, in language or symbols that can be correlated with these categories. The school shall explain any other grade concisely but clearly. The school shall list all instructors used in the course on the roster.

(A) "Passed" must be limited to those students who attended all of the scheduled classes or completed acceptable makeup and who successfully passed the final course examination based on passing standards approved by the commission.

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(B) "Failed" must be limited to those students who had acceptable classroom attendance but failed the final course examination. If, however, the school permits the student to retake the examination in accordance with subsection (e) of this section, the first failure must be reported as an incomplete grade.

(C) "Incomplete" must be limited to those students who met the attendance requirements, but did not take the final course examination; those who attended at least two-thirds of the scheduled course hours but did not complete acceptable makeup; or those who fail the final course examination but will be permitted to take a second examination. If a student is reported incomplete and later completes acceptable makeup and the final examination, the school shall file a supplemental report with the commission giving the student's name and final grade report and using the same format and course data as the original class report. The school shall file a separate supplemental report for each individual class but may include more than one student on the report if all students were in the same original class.

(D) "Dropped" must be limited to those students who missed more than one-third of the scheduled class in which they were originally enrolled; those who voluntarily terminated their enrollment; or those whose enrollment was terminated for cause by a school director.

(2) A school may permit a student who attends at least two-thirds of a scheduled course to complete makeup work to satisfy attendance requirements. Acceptable makeup procedures are the attendance in the corresponding class sessions in a subsequent offering of the same course or the supervised presentation by audio or video recording of the class sessions actually missed. A school shall require all class makeup sessions to be completed within 90 days of the completion of the original course, or the student must be considered dropped with no credit for the course. A member of the school's staff must approve the makeup procedure to be followed. A student attending less than two-thirds of the originally scheduled course must automatically be dropped from the course without credit and reported as dropped. Dropped status may not be changed by makeup sessions, and any hours accumulated may not be transferred to any other course.

(3) A school shall issue to the students successfully completing a course of instruction an official certificate which reflects the school's name, branch, course title, course numbers, and the number of classroom hours (or other recognized educational unit) involved in the course. All core course certificates must show the statutory core course title or other identification as prescribed by the commission.

Certificates also must show the date of issuance and be signed by an official of the school, or if the certificate is computer printed, the school logo may be substituted for the signature. Letters or other official communications also may be provided to students for submission to the commission as evidence of satisfactory completion of the course. Such letters must fully reflect the school name, the course title and number, educational units, and be dated and signed by an official of the school, or if the letter is computer printed, the school logo may be substituted for the signature. A school shall maintain adequate security for completion certificates and letters. Compliance with this requirement will be determined by the commission during all school audits. A school may withhold a student's certificate of completion of a course until the student has fulfilled the student's financial obligation to the school.

(4) A school shall maintain records of each student enrolled in any course for a minimum of five years. The full class file and student enrollment agreements must be retained for at least 12 months following completion of the class.

(5) A school shall maintain financial records sufficient to reflect at any time the financial condition of the school. A school's financial statement and balance sheets must be available for audit by commission personnel, and the commission may require presentation of financial statements or other financial records.

(j) Advertising. The following practices are prohibited:

(1) using any advertising which does not contain the school's name;

(2) representing that the school's program is the only vehicle by which a person may satisfy educational requirement for licensing;

(3) conveying a false impression of the school's size, importance, location, equipment or facilities;

(4) making unsubstantiated claims that the school's programs are superior to any other course of instruction;

(5) promoting the school directly or indirectly as a job placement agency, unless the school is participating in a program recognized by federal, state, or local government and is providing job placement services to the extent the services are required by the program; or

(6) making any statement which is misleading, likely to deceive the public, or which in any manner tends to create a misleading impression.

**§ 535.66. Educational Programs: Accreditation.** [Repealed January 31, 2000.]

**§535.66. Payment of Annual Fee, Audits, Investigations and Enforcement Actions.** [Adopted January 31, 2000; amended January 1, 2004;]

(a) Payment of annual fee. A school shall pay the fee prescribed by Section 1101.152(a)(11) of Texas Occupations Code, Chapter 1101 (the Act) and by §535.101 of this title (relating to Fees) no later than the anniversary of the date of the school's accreditation. At least 30 days prior to the day the fee is due, the commission shall send a written notice to the school to pay the fee, but the school's obligation to pay the fee is not affected by any failure to receive the notice.

(b) Audits and evaluations. Schools are subject to audit by commission employees. Commission employees may conduct on-site audits without prior notice to the school, and may enroll and attend a course without identifying themselves as employees of the commission. Commission employees also may evaluate the effectiveness of course materials or instructors through surveys of students. The commission may require a school to furnish students with an evaluation form approved by the commission and to request that the students complete and return the form directly to the licensing and education division of the commission. An audit report or evaluation indicating noncompliance with these sections will be treated as a written complaint against the school or instructor concerned and will be referred to the enforcement division of the commission for appropriate resolution.

(c) Complaints, investigations and hearings. The commission shall investigate complaints against schools or instructors which allege acts constituting violations of these sections. Complaints must be in writing, and the commission may not initiate an investigation or take action against a school or instructor based on an anonymous complaint. Complaints against a school or instructor received by any division of the commission will be referred to the enforcement division for appropriate resolution. Commission employees may file written complaints against a school or instructor if course completion rosters or other documents filed with the commission provide reasonable cause to believe a violation of these sections has occurred. The school or instructor named in the complaint will be provided with a copy of the complaint. Proceedings against schools and instructors will be conducted in the manner required by the Act, §1101.657, the Administrative Procedure Act, Texas Government Code, Chapter 2001 and Chapter 533 of this title (relating to Practice and Procedure). Venue for

any hearing conducted under this section will be in Travis County.

(d) Grounds for disciplinary action against a school. The commission may issue a reprimand, place on probation, suspend or revoke accreditation of a school, or impose an administrative penalty when it has been determined that the school has been guilty of engaging in any of the following acts:

(1) procuring or attempting to procure approval for a school, course or instructor by fraud, misrepresentation or deceit, or by making a material misrepresentation of fact in an application filed with the commission;

(2) making a false representation to the commission, either intentionally or negligently, that a person had attended a course or a portion of a course for which credit was awarded, that a person had completed an examination, or that the person had completed any other requirement for course credit;

(3) aiding or abetting a person to circumvent the requirements for attendance established by these sections, the completion of any examination, or any other requirement for course credit;

(4) failing to provide within 15 days information requested by the commission as a result of a complaint which would indicate a violation of these sections;

(5) making a materially false statement to the commission in response to a request from the commission for information relating to a complaint against the school or instructor;

(6) disregarding or violating a provision of these sections or of the Act; or

(7) failing to maintain sufficient financial resources to continue operation of the school without placing students at risk of financial loss.

(e) The existence of any of the following conditions shall constitute *prima facie* evidence that a school's financial condition is insufficient for continuing operation:

(1) nonpayment of a liability when due, if the balance due is greater than 5% of the school's current assets in the current or prior accounting period;

(2) nonpayment of three or more liabilities when due, in the current or prior accounting period, regardless of the balance due for each liability;

(3) a pattern of nonpayment of liabilities when due, in two or more accounting periods, even if the liabilities ultimately are repaid;

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(4) a current ratio of less than 1.75 for the current or prior accounting period, this ratio being total current assets divided by total current liabilities;

(5) a quick ratio of less than 1.60 for the current or prior accounting period, this ratio being the sum of all cash equivalents, marketable securities, and net receivables divided by total current liabilities;

(6) a cash ratio of less than 1.40 for the current or prior accounting period, this ratio being the sum of cash equivalents and marketable securities divided by total current liabilities;

(7) a debt ratio of more than .40 for the current or prior accounting period, this ratio being total liabilities divided by total assets;

(8) a debt-to-equity ratio of greater than .60 for the current or prior accounting period, this ratio being total liabilities divided by owners' or shareholders' equity;

(9) a final judgment obtained against the school for nonpayment of a liability which remains unpaid more than 30 days after becoming final; or

(10) execution of a writ of garnishment on any of the assets of the school.

(f) Grounds for disciplinary action against instructor. The commission may issue a reprimand, place on probation, suspend or revoke approval of an instructor, or impose an administrative penalty when it has been determined that the instructor has been guilty of engaging in any of the following acts:

(1) making a false representation to the commission, either intentionally or negligently, that a person had attended a course or a portion of a course for which credit was awarded, that a person had completed an examination, or that the person had completed any other requirement for course credit;

(2) aiding or abetting a person to circumvent the requirements for attendance established by these sections, the completion of any examination, or any other requirement for course credit;

(3) failing to provide within 15 days information requested by the commission as a result of a complaint which would indicate a violation of these sections;

(4) making a materially false statement to the commission in response to a request from the commission for information relating to a complaint against a school or instructor; or

(5) violating or disregarding any provision of the Act or a rule of the commission.

(g) Probation. An order of suspension or revocation issued under this section may be probated upon reasonable terms and conditions as determined by the commission.

### **§535.67. Education and Experience: Nonapplicability.** *[Repealed June 22, 1990]*

### **§535.68. Brokers: Alternative Education and Experience.** *[Repealed January 31, 2000]*

### **§535.69. Additional Core Real Estate Courses.** *[Repealed January 31, 2000]*

### **§535.70. Required Coursework.** *[Repealed January 31, 2000]*

## **G. Mandatory Continuing Education**

### **§535.71. Mandatory Continuing Education: Approval of Providers, Courses and Instructors.** *[Repealed September 1, 2004.]*

### **§535.71. Mandatory Continuing Education: Approval of Providers, Courses and Instructors.** *[Adopted September 1, 2004; amended July 4, 2005; November 8, 2005; September 1, 2007 and December 30, 2007; Ref: §1101.455]*

(a) The following words and terms, when used in these sections, shall have the following meanings, unless the context clearly indicates otherwise.

(1) Act--The Real Estate License Act, Texas Occupations Code, Chapter 1101.

(2) Applicant--A person seeking approval to be a provider or instructor of a course for which mandatory continuing education credit is given.

(3) Hour--Fifty minutes of actual session time.

(4) Certified legal course instructor--An instructor approved by the Texas Real Estate Commission and certified to teach the required legal update course or the required ethics course.

(5) Commission--The Texas Real Estate Commission.

(6) Day--A calendar day.

(7) Distance learning course--A correspondence course, alternative delivery method course or course offered through video presentation.

(8) Elective credits--The nine hours of non-legal mandatory continuing education required by §1101.455 of the Act.

(9) Instructor--A person approved by the Texas Real Estate Commission to teach mandatory continuing education courses.

(10) MCE--Mandatory Continuing Education.

(11) Person--An individual, partnership, or a corporation, foreign or domestic.

(12) Proctor--A person who monitors a final examination for a course offered by a provider under the guidelines contained in this section. A proctor may be a course instructor, the provider, an employee of a college or university testing center, a librarian, or other person approved by the commission.

(13) Provider--A person approved by the Texas Real Estate Commission to offer courses for which mandatory continuing education credit is given.

(14) Required legal ethics course--A required course created for and approved by the Texas Real Estate Commission to satisfy three of the six legal hours of mandatory continuing education required by §1101.455 of the Act.

(15) Required legal update course--A required course created for and approved by the Texas Real Estate Commission to satisfy three of the six legal hours of mandatory continuing education required by §1101.455 of the Act.

(16) Required legal course or legal credits--The required legal update or legal ethics courses or credits earned for attending such courses.

(17) Student--An individual taking an MCE course for credit.

(b) Mandatory Continuing Education Requirements. On or after January 1, 2005 and except as authorized by §535.92 of this chapter, for the next and all subsequent renewals of a license on active status that is not subject to the annual education requirements of §1101.454 of the Act, the license holder must attend during the term of the current license, two Commission-developed legal courses consisting of a three-hour required legal update course and a three-hour required legal ethics course to satisfy the six legal hours of mandatory continuing education required by §1101.455 of the Act. The remaining nine hours required by §1101.455 of the Act may consist of elective credit courses registered with the commission under this section.

(c) Application. A person who wishes to offer courses accepted by the commission for MCE credit shall apply to the commission for approval to be an MCE provider and shall register each MCE course using application forms prepared by the commission. The commission may refuse to accept any application which is not complete or

which is not accompanied by the appropriate filing fee. Each prospective provider shall submit a provider application and at least one principal information form.

(d) Forms. The commission adopts by reference the following forms published and available from the commission, P.O. Box 12188, Austin, Texas 78711-2188:

(1) MCE Form 1A-2, MCE Provider Application;

(2) MCE Form 1B-2, MCE Provider Application Supplement;

(3) MCE Form 2-3, MCE Principal Information Form;

(4) MCE Form 3A-3, MCE Course Application;

(5) MCE Form 3B-3, MCE Course Application Supplement;

(6) MCE Form 8-4, MCE Course Completion Roster;

(7) MCE Form 9-8, Alternative Instructional Methods Reporting Form;

(8) MCE Form 10-2, MCE Credit Request for an Out of State Course;

(9) MCE Form 11-4, MCE Instructor Credit Request;

(10) MCE Form 12-2, Individual MCE Elective Credit Request for State Bar Course;

(11) MCE Form 14-1, Individual MCE Partial Credit Request Form

(12) MCE Form 15-0, Individual MCE Elective Credit Request for Professional Designation Course; and

(13) MCE Form 16-0, MCE Instructor Application.

(e) Provider application. To be approved as an MCE provider, a person must satisfy the commission as to the person's ability to administer with honesty, trustworthiness and integrity a course of continuing education in MCE subjects registered with the commission. If the person proposes to employ independent contractors to conduct or to administer the courses, any independent contractor named in the application must meet this standard as if the independent contractor were the applicant; however, the applicant is responsible for responding to communications from the commission relating to the application.

(f) Additional information related to application. The commission may request that an applicant provide additional information, and the commission may terminate an application without further notice if the applicant fails to provide the additional information within 60 days of the mailing of a request by the commission.

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(g) Fees. The commission shall establish fees in accordance with the provisions of the Act, §1101.152, at such times as the commission deems appropriate. Fees are not refundable and must be submitted in the form of a check or money order, or, in the case of state agencies, colleges or universities, in a form of payment acceptable to the commission.

(h) Approval of applicants. The commission may authorize the manager or director of the education division of the commission, or a designate, to determine whether applications for MCE providers or instructors should be approved or certified. The commission may disapprove an application for failure to satisfy the commission as to the applicant's honesty, trustworthiness or integrity, or for any reason which would be a ground to suspend or revoke a real estate license. If an application is disapproved, the commission shall provide written notice to the applicant detailing the basis of the decision.

(i) Appeal. An applicant may appeal a disapproval by filing with the commission a written request for a hearing within 10 days after the receipt of the notice of disapproval. Following the hearing, the commission may sustain or withdraw the disapproval or establish conditions for the approval of a provider, course or instructor. Proceedings involving applications shall be conducted in accordance with the Administrative Procedure Act, Texas Government Code, Chapter 2001. Venue for any hearing conducted under this section shall be in Travis County.

(j) Power of attorney. If a provider does not maintain a fixed office in this state for the duration of the provider's approval to offer courses, the provider shall designate a resident of this state as attorney-in-fact to accept service of process and act as custodian of any records in Texas which the provider is required to maintain by these sections. A power-of-attorney designating the resident must be filed with the commission in a form acceptable to the commission.

(k) Subsequent application for provider approval or course registration. Unless withdrawn earlier for cause as provided by these sections, a provider's authority to offer courses for which MCE credit is given expires two years from the date the provider is approved by the commission. Authority to offer any MCE courses ends with the expiration of the provider's approval, and the provider must pay current fees and reapply for approval as a provider in order to offer MCE courses again. An elective credit course registered with the commission may be offered by the provider for a period of two years after the course is registered or until the provider's authority to act as a provider finally expires or is withdrawn for cause, whichever first

occurs. If a course was originally registered by another provider, the registration period is measured from the date of registration for the original provider. A provider may apply for approval to be a provider for another two years no sooner than six months prior to the expiration of existing provider approval.

(l) Approval of instructor. A person who wishes to be an instructor of any MCE course shall apply to the commission for approval using an application form approved by the commission. To be approved as an instructor of any MCE course, an applicant must satisfy the commission as to the applicant's honesty, trustworthiness and integrity. Subsections (f) - (i) of this section apply to an applicant for approval of an instructor.

(m) Term of instructor approval. If the commission determines that the applicant meets the standards for instructor approval, the commission shall approve the application and provide a written notice of the approval to the applicant. Unless surrendered or revoked for cause, the approval will be valid for a period of five years.

(n) Subsequent application for instructor approval. No more than six months prior to the expiration of the current approval, an instructor may apply for approval for another five year period.

(o) Required legal update and ethics courses. The commission shall approve bi-annually a legal update course and a legal ethics course which shall be conducted through providers by instructors certified by the commission under this subchapter. The subject matter and course materials for the courses shall be created for and approved by the commission. The courses expire on December 31 of each odd-numbered year and shall be replaced with new courses approved by the commission. A provider may not offer a new course until an instructor of the course obtains recertification by attending a new instructor training program. Providers must acquire the commission-developed course materials and utilize such materials to conduct the required legal courses. The required legal courses must be conducted as prescribed by the rules in this subchapter and the course materials developed for the commission.

(p) Modification of the required legal courses. Providers and instructors may modify a required legal course only to provide additional information on the same or similar topics covered in the course or to create distance learning courses that are substantially similar to the live courses developed for the commission. To the extent that a required legal course is modified or integrated into a longer course for which additional elective credit is requested, the

commission shall grant elective and legal credit for the combined course.

(q) Instructor certification. Only instructors certified by the commission may teach the required legal courses or develop distance learning courses for the presentation of required legal courses. An instructor must obtain prior commission approval under subsection (m) of this section prior to attending an instructor training program. The commission shall issue a written certification to an instructor to teach the applicable required legal course(s) upon the instructor's satisfactory completion of a training program to teach the required legal course(s) that is acceptable to the commission. An instructor may obtain certification to teach either one or both required legal courses. A certified legal course instructor may teach the required legal courses for any approved provider after the instructor has attended an instructor training program. A certified legal course instructor may not independently conduct a required legal course unless the instructor has also obtained approval as a provider. An instructor must obtain written certification from the commission prior to teaching the required legal courses and prior to representing to any provider or other party that he or she is certified or may be certified as a legal course instructor. An instructor's certification to teach a required legal course expires on December 31 of every odd-numbered year. An instructor may obtain recertification by attending a new instructor training program.

(r) Elective credit courses. To be approved to offer a course for MCE elective credit, the provider must demonstrate that the course subject matter is appropriate for a continuing education course for real estate licensees and that the information provided in the course will be current and accurate by submitting a brief statement that describes the objective of the course and explains how the subject matter is related to activities for which a real estate license is required, including but not limited to relevant issues in the real estate market or topics which increase or support the licensee's development of skill and competence.

(s) Elective course application. A provider applicant must submit an MCE Form 3A-3, MCE Course Application and receive written acknowledgment from the commission prior to offering an MCE elective course. Prior to advertising or offering a course offered by another provider, the subsequent provider must submit an MCE Form 3B-3, Course Application Supplement and receive written acknowledgment from the commission.

(t) Legal update and legal ethics course application. A provider must submit an MCE form 3B-3, Course Application Supplement and receive written acknowledgment from the

commission prior to offering a required legal update or required legal ethics course. (u) Core courses for elective credit. Courses approved by the commission for core real estate course credit provided in the Act, §1101.356 and §1101.358, may be accepted for satisfying MCE elective credit course requirements provided the student files a course completion certificate with the commission.

(v) Acceptable combined courses. An elective credit course offered by a provider to satisfy all or part of the nine hours of other than legal topics required by the Act, §1101.455, may be offered with the required legal update course or required legal ethics course.

(w) Required legal courses for real estate related courses. MCE legal update and legal ethics courses may be accepted by the commission as real estate related courses for satisfying the education requirements of §1101.356 and §1101.358, of the Act.

(x) Correspondence courses for elective credit. An MCE provider may register an MCE elective course by correspondence with the commission if the course is subject to the following conditions:

(1) the course must be offered by a college or university accredited by a regional accrediting association, such as the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, or its equivalent, which offers correspondence courses, whether credit or noncredit, in other disciplines;

(2) the content of the course must satisfy the requirements of the Act, §1101.455, and these sections; and

(3) the course does not include a request for required legal course credit.

(y) Alternative delivery method courses for elective credit. An MCE provider may register an MCE elective course by alternative delivery method with the commission if the course is subject to the following conditions:

(1) The content of the course must satisfy the requirements of the Act, §1101.455, and these sections;

(2) the course does not include a request for required legal course credit; and

(3) every provider offering a registered course under this subsection shall:

(A) ensure that a qualified person is available to answer students' questions or provide assistance as necessary;

(B) provide that procedures are in place to ensure that the student who completes the work is the student who is enrolled in the course; and

**§535.71 (y) (3) (C) - .71 (bb) (3)**

(C) certify students as successfully completing the course only if the student:

(i) has completed all instructional modules; and

(ii) has attended any hours of live instruction and/or testing required for a given course.

(z) Correspondence courses for required legal credit. The commission may approve a provider to offer an MCE required legal ethics course by correspondence subject to the following conditions:

(1) the course must be offered by a college or university accredited by a regional accrediting association, such as the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, or its equivalent, which offers correspondence courses, whether credit or noncredit, in other disciplines;

(2) the content of the course must satisfy the requirements of the Act, §1101.455 and these sections, and must be substantially similar to the legal courses disseminated and updated by the Commission;

(3) students receiving MCE credit for the course must pass either:

(A) a proctored final examination administered under controlled conditions to positively identified students, at a location and by an official approved by the commission and graded by the instructor or, if the examination is being graded mechanically or by use of a computer, by the provider, using answer keys approved by the instructor or provider; or

(B) an examination by use of a computer under conditions that satisfy the commission that the examinee is the same person who seeks MCE credit; and

(4) written course work required of students must be graded by an approved instructor or the provider's coordinator or director, who is available to answer students' questions or provide assistance as necessary, using answer keys approved by the instructor or provider.

(aa) Each required legal course offered by correspondence must contain the following:

- (1) course description;
- (2) learning objectives;
- (3) evaluation techniques;
- (4) lessons;
- (5) learning activities;
- (6) final examination;
- (7) source materials disseminated by the

Commission including all updates; and

(8) instructor grading guidelines, including acceptable answers for lessons, assessments and examinations.

(bb) Alternative delivery method courses for required legal credit. The commission may accept required legal courses offered by alternative delivery method subject to the following conditions.

(1) The content of the course must satisfy the requirements of the Act, §1101.455 and these sections, and must be substantially similar to the legal courses disseminated and updated by the Commission.

(2) Every course accepted under this subsection shall teach to mastery. Teaching to mastery means that the course must, at a minimum:

(A) divide the material into major units of instruction that follows the outline of the applicable required legal course for delivery on a computer or other approved interactive audio or audiovisual programs;

(B) specify the learning objectives for each unit of instruction;

(C) specify an objective, quantitative criterion for mastery used for each learning objective;

(D) implement a structured learning method by which each student is able to attain each learning objective;

(E) provide a means of diagnostic assessment of each student's performance on an ongoing basis during each unit of instruction, measuring what each student has learned and not learned at regular intervals throughout each unit of instruction;

(F) provide a means of tailoring the instruction to the needs of each student as identified in subparagraph (D) of this paragraph. The process of tailoring the instruction shall ensure that each student receives adequate remediation for specific deficiencies identified by the diagnostic assessment;

(G) continue the appropriate remediation on an individualized basis until the student demonstrates achievement of mastery of each unit; and

(H) require that the student demonstrate mastery of all material covered by the learning objectives for the module before the module is completed.

(3) The commission must approve the method by which each of the above elements of mastery in paragraph (2)(A) - (H) of this subsection is accomplished.



(4) The rationale for the education processes implemented in the course must be based on sound instructional strategies which have been systematically designed and proven effective through educational research and development. The basis and rationale for any proposed instructional approach must be specified in the application for approval. Programs which consist primarily of text material will not be approved.

(5) An approved instructor or the provider's coordinator/director shall grade the written course work.

(6) Every provider offering an approved course under this subsection shall:

(A) ensure that a qualified person is available to answer students' questions or provide assistance as necessary;

(B) satisfy the commission that procedures are in place to ensure that the student who completes the work is the student who is enrolled in the course;

(C) certify students as successfully completing the course only if the student;

(i) has completed all instructional modules required to demonstrate mastery of the material;

(ii) has attended any hours of live instruction and/or testing required for a given course; and

(iii) has passed either:

(I) a proctored final examination administered under controlled conditions to positively identified students, at a location and by an official approved by the commission and graded by the instructor or, if the examination is being graded mechanically or by use of a computer, by the provider, using answer keys approved by the instructor or provider; or

(II) an examination by use of a computer under conditions that satisfy the commission that the examinee is the same person who seeks MCE credit; and

(D) provide the students with the same materials given to students who attend the same course by live instruction.

(cc) Supervised Video Instruction for elective course credit. A provider may register a course under subsection (s) of this section to be taught by supervised video instruction if:

(1) the provider complies with §535.72 of this chapter when offering and advertising the course and when completing rosters and retaining records;

(2) a proctor is present during the time the video is shown; and

(3) the provider discloses in any advertisement for the course that the instruction will be by supervised video instruction.

(dd) Supervised Video Instruction for required legal course credit. A provider may register a course under subsection (o) of this section to be taught by supervised video instruction if the provider:

(1) complies with subsection (cc)(1) - (3) of this section;

(2) ensures that a certified instructor is available to answer students' questions or provide assistance as necessary; and

(3) ensures that students receiving MCE credit for the course passed a proctored final examination administered under controlled conditions to positively identified students, at a location and by an official approved by the commission and graded by the instructor or, if the examination is being graded mechanically or by use of a computer, by the provider, using answer keys approved by the instructor or provider.

(ee) An applicant must submit an MCE Form 3B-3, MCE Course Application Supplement to seek approval to offer an MCE distance learning required legal course and receive written acknowledgment from the commission prior to offering the course. Distance learning legal courses may be offered on or after July 1, 2005.

(ff) For a distance learning course, an online course will not be considered complete until credit is awarded by the provider. The provider shall award the student credit for the course no earlier than 24 hours after the student starts the course and after the student completes the course requirements for credit. The provider shall report the awarding of credit to the commission either by filing a completed MCE Form 9-8, Alternative Instructional Methods Reporting Form, signed by the student, or submitting the information contained in MCE form 9-8 by electronic means acceptable to the commission.

(gg) A provider may use as guest speakers persons who have not been approved as instructors, provided that no more than a total of 50% of the course is taught by the unapproved persons for a registered MCE elective credit course. The commission-registered instructor must remain in the classroom during the guest speaker's presentation.

(hh) A provider may use guest speakers who have not been approved as instructors to conduct a registered MCE elective credit course if:

## §535.71(hh)(1)-.72(e)

(1) the provider is an accredited college or university or a professional trade association as defined by §535.62(b) of this chapter; and

(2) the course is supervised and coordinated by a commission-approved instructor who is responsible for verifying the attendance of all who request MCE credit.

### **§535.72. Mandatory Continuing Education: Presentation of Courses, Advertising and Records.** [*Repealed September 1, 2004*]

### **§535.72. Mandatory Continuing Education: Presentation of Courses, Advertising and Records.** [*Adopted September 1, 2004; amended December 30, 2007; Ref: §1101.455*]

(a) Course completion roster. A provider offering each MCE course shall file an MCE Course Completion Roster, MCE Form 8-4 with the commission within 10 days following completion of the course for licensees who have attended the entire course registered with the commission. Course completion rosters may be transmitted for filing by facsimile machine. MCE Form 8-4 shall be signed by an authorized representative of the provider who was in attendance and for whom an authorized signature exemplar is on file with the commission or the instructor for the course. Providers are responsible for the security of the course completion rosters. The commission may not accept signature stamps or unsigned forms. Providers must make every reasonable effort to ensure that no student is certified for full MCE credit who has not attended all class sessions.

(b) Partial credit.

(1) A provider may, but is not required, to permit a student to claim partial credit for a course if:

(A) the course is approved for elective credit only;

(B) the course is not a distance learning course;

(C) the student attends less than the complete number of hours in the course;

(D) the student, by completing MCE Form 14-0, Individual MCE Partial Credit Request Form, requests credit only for the hours the student completed and the student does not claim credit for an hour that the student did not attend in its entirety except as provided by subsection (c) of this section.

(E) the provider signs the MCE Partial Credit Request Form as evidence that the provider has no reason to believe the amount of credit claimed is inaccurate;

(F) the provider submits the MCE Partial

Credit Request Form to the commission within the time required to submit the course completion roster under subsection (a) of this section.

(2) Partial credit may not be granted for any course that contains as part of its curriculum all or part of the six legal hours of mandatory continuing education required by §1101.455 of the Act.

(c) Attendance. While a provider is expected to ensure that each student is present in the classroom for the hours of time for which credit is awarded, this section is not intended to penalize students who must leave the classroom for brief periods of time for personal reasons. Providers shall make every reasonable effort to ensure that no student is given course credit if the student persists in disrupting the orderly conduct of a class after being cautioned by the provider or the instructor to cease disruptive behavior. Providers may not use students for administration or monitoring duties during the course if the use prevents the student's participation in a significant portion of the course.

(d) Proof of distance learning course completion. In a distance learning course, the provider shall award the student credit for the course no earlier than 24 hours after the student starts the course and after the student completes course requirements for credit. The provider shall report the awarding of credit to the commission. Course credit must be reported either by the provider filing a completed MCE Form 9-8, signed by the student, or submitting the information contained in MCE Form 9-8 by electronic means acceptable to the commission. If the provider chooses to use an electronic reporting process, the process must ensure that only students who complete the course are reported to the commission as receiving course credit and that the process does not compromise the security of commission records.

(e) Pre-course announcements. A provider shall, prior to commencement of a course, announce that the provider will not certify a student for full MCE credit unless the student attends all sessions of the course, that no makeups or written work will be allowed for MCE credit, that students may evaluate the course and instructor by downloading an evaluation form from the TREC web site and submitting the form electronically or by mail, and that the student must determine if the course is timely and appropriate for the student's MCE requirement. If the provider accepts partial credit for partial attendance at an elective credit course, the provider shall explain the procedure for granting partial credit. If the provider has not advertised or otherwise made students aware of the provider's refund policy, the pre-course announcement must also contain the refund

policy. The provider may allow a ten-minute break for every 50 minutes of session time, but a break must be given at least every two hours, using all accumulated break time, and the daily course presentation may not exceed ten hours.

(f) Facilities. Facilities used by providers for classroom presentations must be adequate to accommodate students. Providers shall ensure each student has seating, a writing surface and writing materials. Rigid tablets or clipboards may be provided as a writing surface. For a classroom course, the provider must offer the course in a location conducive to instruction that is separate and apart from the work area, such as a classroom, training room, conference room, or assembly hall.

(g) Course materials. Providers must furnish students with copies, for students' permanent use, of any material which is the basis for a significant portion of the course. Providers offering any of the required legal courses must provide the students with the materials identified as student course materials for the required legal courses. The course materials provided to the students may be in printed form or electronic media such as a CD-ROM or diskette that the student may access through commonly available software such as common word-processing programs and slide presentation programs. Ample space must be provided on handouts for note taking or completion of any written exercises. If a provider charges fees for supplies, materials, or books needed in course work, the fees must be itemized in a written statement provided to each student by the provider before the student registers for the course.

(h) Open enrollment. All MCE courses must be open to enrollment by the general public. Providers may give preference in enrollment to persons who need MCE credit to obtain, renew or activate a license and may enroll all others on a space available basis.

(i) Advertising. Advertising of MCE shall be subject to the following conditions.

(1) A provider applicant may not advertise a specific MCE course or represent in advertising that the applicant is a provider until the applicant has received written approval from the commission for the providership and registered at least one course. A provider applicant may advertise an intention to offer MCE courses if no specific course is described and the advertisement clearly indicates the applicant has not been approved as a provider.

(2) A provider may not advertise a course as acceptable for MCE credit until the provider has received written acknowledgment of registration of the course. A provider may advertise that approval of the course for MCE credit is pending

provided that an application has been submitted to the commission and is awaiting approval.

(3) A provider may not offer a course until the provider has received written acknowledgment of registration of the course.

(4) Any advertisement or promotional material used by a provider must indicate the MCE provider's name or assumed business name as reflected in the commission's records and the MCE provider number assigned by the commission. The advertisement or promotional material also must include the specific MCE course numbers and course titles or a statement that MCE course numbers and titles are available from the provider; or, if approval of the course is pending, the course title and a statement that MCE approval is pending. When a provider offers a course that is hosted by another person or organization, the advertisement or promotional material must show clearly that the approved MCE provider is offering the course.

(5) A provider may not publish advertisements which are misleading or which are likely to deceive the public.

(6) Any name a provider uses in advertising must not be deceptively similar to the name of any other approved MCE provider or school accredited by the commission or falsely imply a governmental relationship.

(7) Any written advertisement which contains a fee charged by the provider shall display all fees for the course in the same place in the advertisement and with the same degree of prominence. If a provider requires students to purchase course materials which are not included in the tuition, any such fees must appear in the advertisement of the course.

(j) Record retention. Providers shall retain student attendance records for a period of three years following the completion of a course and shall make copies of the records available to former students. A provider may charge a reasonable fee to defray the cost of copying student records. A provider's records must be kept at the location designated in the MCE Provider Application. Providers must obtain prior approval from the commission to change the location at which the provider's records are kept.

(k) Course administration. Providers of MCE courses are responsible to the commission for the conduct and administration of each course presentation, the punctuality of classroom sessions, verification of student attendance, and instructor performance. Providers shall ensure that the required legal courses are administered by instructors in substantially the same manner as disseminated and updated by the commission. During the presentation of a course, providers may not promote the sale of goods or services.

## §§535.72(I)-.73(e)(2)

(l) Updates. If the commission determines that it is in the public interest to update the required legal courses about changes in the law, the commission may require the provider to furnish each student with a copy of the information. The commission also may require the provider to ensure that the provider's instructors include the material in the presentation of the course. The commission shall furnish the provider with a copy of the information and notify the provider that the commission requires compliance with this subsection in a required legal course or any elective course combined with a legal course offered after the provider's receipt of the notice.

(m) Change in ownership. In the event of a change of ownership, the provider must obtain approval from the commission prior to the change, and proposed new owners shall submit an MCE Form 2-2, Principal Information Form. Providers shall report a change in business name, street or mailing address, person responsible for records or day-to-day operations, or persons authorized to sign MCE forms at least 15 days prior to the desired date of change. Providers shall report any change in refund policy, attorney-in-fact, address of attorney-in-fact or business telephone number as the change occurs.

(n) MCE credit for instructors. Providers may request MCE credit be given to instructors of MCE courses subject to the following guidelines.

(1) The instructors may receive credit for only those portions of the course that they teach by filing a completed MCE Form 11-4, Instructor Credit Request.

(2) The instructors may receive full course credit by attending all of the remainder of the course and signing the course completion roster.

(o) Written policies. Each provider shall establish written policies governing refunds and contingency plans in the event of course cancellation. If the provider cancels a course, the provider shall fully refund all fees collected from students, or at the student's option, the provider may credit the student for another course of equal or greater credit hours.

### **§535.73. Compliance and Enforcement.** *[Repealed September 1, 2004]*

### **§535.73. Compliance and Enforcement.** *[Adopted September 1, 2004; Ref: §1101.455]*

(a) Complaints. The commission shall investigate complaints against MCE providers or instructors that allege acts constituting violations of these sections. Complaints must be in writing and the commission shall not initiate an investigation or take action against a provider or instructor based on an anonymous complaint. Commission employees may file written complaints against providers or instructors if

documents filed with the commission provide reasonable cause to believe a violation of these sections has occurred.

(b) Complaint investigation. Complaints received by the MCE section of the education division of the commission or by any other division of the commission shall be referred to the enforcement division for appropriate resolution. The provider or instructor named in the complaint shall be provided with a copy of the complaint. Proceedings involving MCE providers or instructors shall be conducted in accordance with the Administrative Procedure Act, Texas Government Code, Chapter 2001 and the commission's general rules of practice and procedure. Venue for any hearing conducted under this section shall be in Travis County.

(c) Audits and evaluations. Commission employees may conduct on-site audits of any course offered by an approved MCE provider. Audits shall be conducted without prior notice to the MCE provider and commission employees may enroll and attend an MCE course without identifying themselves as employees of the commission. Commission employees also may evaluate the effectiveness of course materials or instructors through evaluations submitted by students to the commission. An audit report or evaluations indicating noncompliance with these sections will be treated as a written complaint against the provider or instructor concerned and will be referred to the enforcement division for appropriate resolution.

(d) Cooperation with investigation. A provider or instructor shall fully assist any employee of the commission engaged in the performance of an audit or investigation of a complaint and shall provide records in his possession for examination by the commission or provide such information as is requested by the commission within 15 days of receiving a request for examination of records or information.

(e) Disciplinary action. The commission may reprimand, suspend or revoke the authority of a provider to offer MCE courses or suspend or revoke the approval of an instructor to teach MCE courses when it has been determined that the provider or instructor has been guilty of:

(1) procuring or attempting to procure approval for a provider, course or instructor by fraud, misrepresentation or deceit, or by making a material misrepresentation of fact in an application filed with the commission;

(2) making a false representation to the commission, either intentionally or negligently, that a person had attended a course or portion of a course for which MCE credit was awarded, that a person had completed an examination, or that the person had completed any other requirement for an MCE course;

(3) aiding or abetting a person to circumvent the requirements for attendance established by these sections, the completion of any examination or any other requirement for completion of an MCE course;

(4) failing to provide within 15 days information requested by the commission as a result of a complaint which would indicate a violation of these sections;

(5) disregarding or violating a provision of these sections or the Act; or

(6) making a materially false statement to the commission in response to a request from the commission for information relating to a complaint against the provider or instructor.

(f) Instructor teaching skills. Instructors must conduct themselves in a professional and courteous manner when performing their instructional duties. An instructor must have reasonable experience or education in the subject matter to be taught. An instructor must maintain an appropriate learning environment and effective control of the class. An instructor must present information in an accurate, logical, and orderly manner. Providers are responsible to utilize instructors who meet the requirements under this section.

(g) Orders. An order of suspension or revocation issued under this section may be probated upon reasonable terms and conditions as determined by the commission.

## H. Recovery Fund

**§535.81. Recovery fund: Fee.** *[Adopted January 1, 1976. Amended May 27, 1998; Ref: §1101.603]* If a person licensed as a real estate salesperson has paid the recovery fund fee, the person would not be required to pay a recovery fund fee in connection with the processing of an application for real estate broker licensure.

## I. Licenses

**§535.91. Renewal Notices.** *[Adopted January 1, 1976. Amended July 20, 1981; June 1, 1990; August 19, 1991 July 18, 1994; July 16, 1996; September 1, 2000; October 4, 2001; January 1, 2004; September 1, 2004; July 1, 2006 and December 30, 2007. Ref: §1101.363]*

(a) Each real estate license expires on the date shown on the face of the license certificate issued to the licensee. The licensee has the responsibility to apply for renewal of a license by making proper application, paying the fee set by the commission and completing mandatory continuing education (MCE) courses within the time periods required by the Act, §1101.455.

(b) Except as authorized by §535.92 of this chapter, for the renewal [next and all subsequent renewals] of a license on active status that is not subject to the annual education requirements of §1101.454 of the Act, the license holder must attend during the term of the current license, at least two Commission developed legal courses consisting of a three-hour legal update course and a three-hour legal ethics course to comply with the six legal hours of mandatory continuing education required by §1101.455 of the Act. The remaining nine hours required by §1101.455 of the Act may consist of elective credit courses registered with the commission under subchapter G of this chapter.

(c) The commission shall mail a renewal notice for an active broker or an inactive licensee to the last known permanent mailing address of the broker or licensee as shown in the commission's computerized records. The commission shall mail a renewal notice for an active salesperson to the permanent mailing address of the salesperson's sponsoring broker. The commission shall mail the notice three months before the expiration of the current license. Each licensee shall furnish a permanent mailing address to the commission and report all subsequent address changes within 10 days after a change of address. If a licensee fails to provide a permanent mailing address, the last known mailing address provided by the licensee will be deemed to be the licensee's permanent mailing address. Failure to receive a license renewal notice does not relieve a licensee of the obligation to renew a license. A licensee shall provide information requested by the commission in connection with an application to renew a license within 30 days after the commission requests the information. Failure to provide information requested by the commission in connection with a renewal application within the required time is grounds for disciplinary action under the Act, §1101.656.

**§535.92. Renewal: Time for Filing; Satisfaction of Mandatory Continuing Education Requirements.** *[Adopted January 1, 1976. Amended November 14, 1979; July 20, 1981; October 13, 1982; April 7, 1983; March 17, 1989; June 1, 1990; November 9, 1990; June 18, 1991; January 1, 1992; April 8, 1993; November 23, 1993; May 27, 1998; October 5, 1998; March 1, 1999; September 1, 2000; October 4, 2001; September 1, 2004; July 1, 2006; December 30, 2007 and June 1, 2008. Ref: §1101.363]*

(a) A renewal application is timely filed if it is received by the commission or postmarked on or before the expiration date of the license. If the license expires on a Saturday, Sunday or other day on which the headquarters office of the commission is not open for business, the renewal application is timely filed if the application is received or postmarked no later than the first business day after the expiration date of the license.

**§§535.92(b)-.92(g)**

(b) If an application is filed within one year after the expiration of an existing license, the commission may issue the new license prior to completing the investigation of any complaint pending against the applicant or of any matter revealed by the application. The commission may thereafter initiate an action to suspend or revoke the license after notice and hearing in accordance with the Administrative Procedure Act, Texas Government Code, Chapter 2001.

(c) The commission shall advise each licensee of the time period for filing a renewal application and paying the renewal fee by mailing an appropriate notice to the licensee as prescribed by §535.91 of this title (Relating to Renewal Notices). If the licensee is subject to mandatory continuing education (MCE) requirements, the notice must also contain the number of MCE hours for which the licensee has been given credit and the number of additional MCE hours required for renewal of the license. The commission shall have no obligation to so notify an inactive licensee who has failed to furnish the commission with the person's permanent mailing address or a corporation, limited liability company or partnership that has failed to designate an officer, manager or partner who meets the requirements of the Real Estate License Act (the Act).

(d) A licensee shall renew an unexpired license by accessing the commission's Internet web site, entering the required information on the renewal application form, satisfying applicable education requirements and paying the appropriate fee in accordance with the instructions provided at the site by the commission.

(e) The commission may not renew a license issued to a corporation, limited liability company or partnership unless the corporation, limited liability company or partnership has designated an officer, manager or partner who meets the requirements of the Act, including satisfaction of MCE requirements. No person may act as designated officer, manager or partner if the person has failed to meet MCE requirements. For the purpose of this section, MCE requirements for the designated officer, manager or partner must be satisfied during the term of any individual broker license held by the officer, manager or partner. A designated partner who is not licensed individually as a broker must complete MCE required for a two-year license within the term of the partnership's license in order to renew the license of the partnership. If the individual real estate broker license of a designated partner expires, the partnership may only renew its license if the designated partner has satisfied MCE requirements that would have been imposed if the license of the designated partner had not expired.

(f) Notwithstanding any provisions of the Act to the contrary, when a licensee in an active status files a timely application to renew a current license and has satisfied all requirements other than the completion of applicable MCE requirements, the commission shall renew the current license in an active status.

(1) If the licensee has not completed MCE requirements prior to the expiration of the current license, the licensee must, within 60 days after the effective date of the new license, pay an additional MCE deferral fee of \$200 AND complete the required number of MCE hours.

(2) If, within 15 days after the end of the 60 day period set out in paragraph (1), the commission has not been provided with evidence that the licensee has completed the required number of MCE hours and paid the MCE deferral fee of \$200, the renewed license shall be placed on inactive status.

(3) In order to reactivate a license placed on inactive status under this subsection, the licensee must:

(A) provide the commission with evidence that the licensee has completed the required MCE hours;

(B) certify, on a form acceptable to the commission, that the licensee has not engaged in activity requiring a license at any time after the license became inactive;

(C) complete and submit a Request to Return to Active Status Form if a broker or a Salesperson Sponsorship Form if a salesperson and pay the appropriate fee;

(D) if the license was placed on inactive status because the licensee failed to timely pay the \$200 MCE deferral fee required by paragraph (1), the licensee must, because the licensee received the benefits of the 60-day deferral, pay the \$200 MCE deferral fee; and

(E) pay a late reporting fee of \$250.

(4) For the purpose of this section, a renewed license is effective the day following the expiration of the current license. MCE courses completed after expiration of the current license under this provision may not be applied to the following renewal of the license.

(g) Credit will not be given for attendance of the same course more than once during the term of the current license or during the two-year period preceding the filing of an application for late renewal or return to active status. Each licensee attending all sessions of a course shall sign the course completion roster, MCE Form 8-4 and provide the information required for each

licensee on the form. A real estate licensee may receive partial credit for partial attendance at an MCE elective credit course if the provider permits partial credit and the provider and student verify attendance on MCE Form 14-0, Individual MCE Partial Credit Request Form. A false statement to the commission concerning attendance at an MCE course will be deemed a violation of the Act and of this section.

(h) A course taken by a Texas licensee to satisfy continuing education requirements of another state may be approved on an individual basis for MCE elective credit in this state upon the commission's determination that:

(1) the Texas licensee held an active real estate license in the other state at the time the course was taken;

(2) the course was approved for continuing education credit for a real estate license by the other state and, if a correspondence course, was offered by an accredited college or university;

(3) the Texas licensee's successful completion of the course has been evidenced by a course completion certificate, a letter from the provider or such other proof as is satisfactory to the commission;

(4) the subject matter of the course was predominately devoted to a subject acceptable for MCE credit in this state; and

(5) the Texas licensee has filed MCE Form 10-2, MCE Credit Request for an Out of State Course Credit Request, with the commission.

(i) To request MCE elective credit for real estate related courses approved by the State Bar of Texas for minimum continuing legal education participatory credit, a licensee shall file MCE Form 12-2, Individual MCE Credit Request for State Bar Course.

(j) Real estate licensees may receive MCE elective credit for core real estate courses or core real estate inspection courses that have been approved by TREC or that are accepted by TREC for satisfying educational requirements for obtaining or renewing a license. Core real estate courses must be at least 30 classroom hours in length to be accepted for MCE elective credit.

(k) A course taken by a licensee to obtain any of the following professional designations, or any other real estate related professional designation course deemed worthy by the commission, may be approved on an individual basis for MCE elective credit if the licensee files for credit for the course using MCE Form 15-0 Individual MCE Elective Credit Request for Professional Designation Course and provides the Commission with a copy of the course

completion certificate.

(1) ABR--Accredited Buyer Representative

(2) CRE--Counselor in Real Estate

(3) CPM--Certified Property Manager

(4) CCIM--Certified Commercial-Investment Member

(5) CRB--Certified Residential Broker

(6) CRS--Certified Residential Specialist

(7) GRI--Graduate, Realtor Institute

(8) IREM--Institute of Real Estate Management

(9) SIOR--Society of Industrial and Office Realtors

(l) Effective September 1, 2007, a member of the Texas Legislature who is a licensee need only take three (3) hours in legal ethics to satisfy the legal mandatory continuing education requirements. To obtain an exemption, the licensee must be a current member of the Legislature.

(m) If a licensee is unable to renew a license on the commission's Internet website, the licensee may renew an unexpired license by obtaining a renewal application form from the Texas Real Estate Commission, P.O. Box 12188, Austin, Texas 78711-2188 and complying with the requirements of this section and §535.91 of this chapter.

**§535.93. Licensing: Possession of License as Prerequisite.** *[Repealed September 1, 2000.]*

**§535.94. Hearing on Application Disapproval: Probationary Licenses.** *[Adopted February 5, 1981; amended June 22, 1990; September 20, 2000 and September 1, 2004; Ref: §§1101.364, 1101.365]*

(a) For the purposes of the Real Estate License Act, Texas Government Code, Chapter 1101, (the Act), §§1101.364 and 1101.505, "denial of a license" means to disapprove an applicant for a real estate license for failure to comply with the requirement of the Act, §1101.354(2) to satisfy the commission as to the applicant's honesty, trustworthiness and integrity, or, if the applicant seeks registration as an easement or right-of-way agent, to disapprove an application for registration under §535.400 of this title (relating to Registration of Easement or Right-of-Way Agents).

## §§535.94(b)-.95(e)

(b) If the commission or an employee of the commission authorized by it to conduct hearings and render final decisions in contested cases determines that issuance of a probationary license is appropriate, the order entered with regard to the application must set forth the terms and conditions for the probationary license. Terms and conditions for a probationary license may include any of the following:

(1) that the probationary licensee comply with the Act and with the rules of the Texas Real Estate Commission;

(2) that the probationary licensee fully cooperate with the enforcement division of the Texas Real Estate Commission in the investigation of any complaint filed against the licensee;

(3) that the probationary licensee attend a prescribed number of classroom hours in specific areas of study during the probationary period;

(4) that the probationary licensee limit real estate brokerage practice as prescribed in the order;

(5) that the probationary licensee report regularly to the commission on any matter which is the basis of the probationary license; or

(6) that the probationary licensee comply with any other terms and conditions contained in the order which have been found to be reasonable and appropriate by the commission or commission employee rendering the final decision after due consideration of the circumstances involved in the particular application.

(c) The commission or an employee of the commission authorized to render final decisions in contested cases may, after notice and hearing as provided in §533.17 of this title (relating to Contested Case: Notice of Hearing) and Administrative Procedure Act, Texas Government Code, §§2001.001, et seq. The commission shall advise licensees in renewal notices and license application forms that default on a loan guaranteed by the TGSLC may prevent a subsequent renewal of a license.

(d) Unless the order granting a probationary license specifies otherwise, a probationary licensee may renew the license after the probationary period by filing a renewal application, satisfying applicable education requirements and paying the prescribed renewal fee.

## §535.95. Miscellaneous Provisions Concerning License or Registration

**Renewals.** [Adopted February 11, 1992; May 27, 1998; September 1, 2000 and June 1, 2008; Ref: H.B. 1393, 72nd Leg.; §57.491 Education Code]

(a) As used in this section, the term "license" includes a registration issued by the commission, and the term "licensee" includes registrants.

(b) A licensee on active duty in the United States armed forces serving outside the State of Texas may renew an expired license without being subject to any increase in fee, any education or experience requirements or examination if the licensee:

(1) provides a copy of official orders or other official documentation acceptable to the commission showing that the licensee was on active duty outside the state during the licensee's last renewal period;

(2) applies for the renewal within 90 days after the licensee's active duty ends; and

(3) pays the renewal application fee in effect when the previous license expired.

(c) Education requirements that would have been imposed for a timely renewal shall be deferred under this section to the next renewal of the license.

(d) Renewals of licenses issued by the commission are subject to the policies established by the Texas Education Code, §57.491. Before the commission declines to renew a license due to a default on a loan guaranteed by Texas Guaranteed Student Loan Corporation (TGSLC), a default on a repayment agreement with TGSLC or a failure to enter a repayment agreement with TGSLC, the commission shall give notice and provide an opportunity for a hearing in accordance with the provisions of the Administrative Procedure Act, Texas Government Code, §§2001.001, et seq. The commission shall advise licensees in renewal notices and license application forms that default on a loan guaranteed by the TGSLC may prevent a subsequent renewal of a license.

(e) To provide for an orderly implementation of fingerprinting requirements and minimize disruption of licensure, the commission may issue a renewal license on active status if the licensee has provided at least one set of fingerprints to the Department of Public Safety (DPS), the fingerprints were rejected by the DPS or the Federal Bureau of Investigation FBI, and the licensee has otherwise complied with all other renewal requirements. If it is subsequently determined that the DPS or the FBI requires additional data from the licensee to complete a criminal history record check, the commission shall so notify the licensee. The commission may



take disciplinary action against a licensee for failing to provide the requested data within a reasonable time, as specified in the notice.

**J. Fees**

**§535.101. Fees.** *[Adopted January 1, 1976; amended October 27, 1978; November 14, 1979, March 19, 1990; July 1, 1992 and August 31, 1992; November 1, 1993; September 1, 1995; May 27, 1998; October 11, 1999; September 1, 2000; October 15, 2001; June 24, 2002; January 1, 2004; May 10, 2004; August 31, 2004; October 25, 2007 and June 1, 2008; Ref: §1101.152]*

(a) Fees for the issuance of a license due to a change of address, additional place of business or change of sponsoring broker are due when requests for such licenses are received. A change of address or name submitted with an application to renew a license, however, does not require payment of a fee in addition to the fee for renewing the license. If the commission receives a request for issuance of a license certificate which requires payment of a fee, and appropriate fee was not filed with the request, the commission shall return the request and notify the person filing the request that the person must pay the fee before the certificate will be issued. The commission may require written proof of a licensee's right to use a different name prior to issuing a license certificate reflecting a change of name. As used in this section, the term "license" includes a certificate of registration.

(b) The commission shall charge and collect the following fees:

(1) a fee not to exceed \$75 for the filing of an original application for a real estate broker license;

(2) a fee of \$30 for annual renewal of a real estate broker license;

(3) a fee of \$75 for the filing of an original application for a real estate salesperson license;

(4) a fee of \$30 for annual renewal of a real estate salesperson license;

(5) a fee of \$59 for taking a license examination;

(6) a fee of \$20 for filing a request for a license for each additional office or place of business;

(7) a fee of \$20 for filing a request for a license for a change of place of business change

of name, return to active status or change of sponsoring broker;

(8) a fee of \$20 for filing a request to replace a license lost or destroyed;

(9) a fee of \$400 for filing an application for accreditation of an education program under Texas Occupations Code (the Act), §1101.301;

(10) a fee of \$200 a year for operation of a real estate education program under the Act, §1101.301;

(11) a fee of \$30 for transcript evaluation;

(12) a fee of \$20 for preparing a license history;

(13) a fee of \$25 for the filing of an application for a moral character determination;

(14) a fee of \$25 for the filing of an instructor application;

(15) a fee of \$45 for the annual late renewal of a real estate salesperson or broker license for a person whose license has been expired 90 days or less;

(16) a fee of \$60 for the annual late renewal of a real estate salesperson or broker license for a person whose license has been expired more than 90 days but less than one year;

(17) the fee charged by the Federal Bureau of Investigation for a national criminal history check in connection with a license renewal; and

(18) a late reporting fee of \$250 to reactivate a license under §535.92(f) of this chapter.

**K. Place of Business**

**§535.111. Residence.** *[Repealed September 1, 2000.]*

**§535.112. Branch Office.** *[Adopted January 1, 1976; amended November 8, 1977; May 28, 1984; June 22, 1990; May 27, 1998 and September 1, 2000. Ref: §1101.552]* A broker shall apply for a branch office license if the broker maintains more than one place of business. A "place of business" means a place where the licensee meets with clients and customers to transact business. A license is required for each branch office maintained by the broker, and the license certificate for each branch office must display the address at which the broker's office is located.

**§535.113. Display of Licenses.** *[Repealed January 1, 2004.]*

## §§535.121-.123(b)(2)

### L. Termination of Salesperson's Association with Sponsoring Broker

**§535.121. Inactive License.** *[Adopted January 1, 1976; amended November 14, 1979; July 20, 1981; March 19, 1990; January 4, 1993; May 27, 1998; September 1, 2000 and July 4, 2005; Ref: §1101.367]*

(a) The license of a salesperson immediately becomes inactive upon each of the following circumstances:

(1) the death of the salesperson's sponsoring broker;

(2) the expiration, suspension, revocation or inactivation of the license of the sponsoring broker;

(3) if the sponsoring broker is a corporation, the dissolution of the corporation or the forfeiture of its charter, which also places the license of the entity on inactive status; or

(4) if the sponsoring broker is a corporation, limited liability company or partnership, the expiration, suspension, revocation or inactivation of the license of the person designated as broker, manager, or partner on the license certificate of the entity, which also places the license of the entity on inactive status.

(b) When the sponsorship of a salesperson ends, the broker shall immediately return the salesperson's license or copy thereof to the commission or otherwise notify the commission that the sponsorship has ended. The commission will no longer consider the broker to sponsor the salesperson upon receipt of the license or upon receipt of a written request from a new sponsoring broker to sponsor the salesperson, whichever first occurs. If the sponsorship has ended because the broker has terminated the sponsorship, the broker shall immediately so notify the salesperson in writing. If the sponsorship has ended because the salesperson has left the sponsorship, the salesperson shall immediately so notify the broker in writing. If the commission receives a request from a broker to sponsor a salesperson shown in the commission's records as sponsored by another broker, the commission shall notify the former broker of the change in sponsorship.

(c) A salesperson's license becomes inactive when a broker returns a salesperson's license to the commission until a new sponsorship form for the salesperson is mailed or delivered to the commission.

**§535.122. Reactivation of License.** *[Adopted January 1, 1976; amended June 1, 1990, March 1, 1991; [January 3, 1991;] March 19, 1991; June 18, 1991; May 27, 1998; September 1, 2000 and August 31, 2004; Ref: §1101.367]*

(a) When a salesperson whose license status is active enters the sponsorship of a broker, the salesperson and broker whose sponsorship the salesperson has entered shall notify the commission within 10 days, submit the appropriate fee, and request issuance of a new license reflecting the new association. The salesperson may act as the broker's salesperson from the date the notice and fee are mailed or delivered to the commission.

(b) When a salesperson whose license status is inactive enters the sponsorship of a broker and the salesperson is subject to mandatory continuing education (MCE) requirements, the salesperson is not returned to active status until MCE requirements are satisfied and the commission has received documentation of course completion in a form satisfactory to the commission. A salesperson whose original application or renewal application was subject to educational requirements imposed by the Real Estate License Act, Texas Occupations Code, Chapter 1101 (Act), §1101.358 and §1101.454, is not subject to MCE requirements as a condition of returning to active status during the term of the license issued from the original application or renewal application.

**§535.123. Inactive Broker Status.** *[Adopted November 18, 1991; Amended November 23, 1993; May 27, 1998 and August 31, 2004; Ref: §1101.366]*

(a) For the purposes of this section, "inactive broker" means a licensed broker who does not sponsor salespersons or perform any activities for which a broker license is required and who has been placed on inactive status by the commission.

(b) To be placed on inactive status, a broker must do the following:

(1) apply to the commission on a form approved by the commission for that purpose or by a letter providing the broker's name, license number and current mailing address;

(2) confirm in writing that the broker has given any salespersons sponsored by the broker written notice of termination of sponsorship at least 30 days prior to filing the request for

inactive status; and

(3) return the broker's current license certificate to the commission.

(c) To return to active status a broker who has been placed on inactive status must apply to the commission for return to active status on a form approved by the commission, pay the appropriate fee and satisfy mandatory continuing education (MCE) requirements specified in Texas Occupations Code, Chapter 1101, (the Act) §1101.455 and the Rules of the Texas Real Estate Commission.

(d) A broker who has been on inactive status may resume practice once the broker has satisfied MCE requirements, and the application for return to active status and appropriate fee have been mailed to or delivered to the commission.

### M. Nonresidents

**§535.131. Unlawful Conduct; Splitting Fees.** *[Adopted January 1, 1976; amended March 11, 1981; May 27, 1998; October 1, 2000 and August 31, 2004; Ref: §1101.651]*

(a) The Real Estate License Act, Texas Occupations Code, Chapter 1101, (the Act) permits Texas-licensed brokers to cooperate with and share earned commissions with persons licensed as brokers in other states, but all negotiations physically conducted within Texas must be handled by Texas licensees.

(b) As used in §1101.651 of the Act, the word "state" refers to the states, territories, and possessions of the United States and any foreign country or governmental subdivision thereof.

(c) An unlicensed person may share in the income earned by a real estate brokerage operation if the person engages in no acts for which a license is required and does not lead the public to believe that the person is in the real estate brokerage business.

(d) If a member of a partnership or an officer of a corporation does not engage in acts for which a license is required, the person is not required to be licensed and may share in the income earned by the partnership or corporation.

(e) A resident of a foreign state that does not require a person to be licensed to act as a real estate broker is considered to be licensed as a broker for the purposes of the Act, §1101.651, if the person complies with the law of the foreign state and practices there as a real estate broker.

**§535.132. Eligibility for Licensure.** *[Adopted January 1, 1976; amended November 14, 1979; July 20, 1981, April 15, 1982; November 23, 1993; April 1, 1996; December 1, 1997; October 1, 2000 and August 31, 2004; Ref: §§1101.357, 360, .552]*

(a) A person residing in another state may apply for a license under the provisions of Texas Occupations Code, Chapter 1101, (the Act), Subchapter H and this section if the person:

(1) is licensed as a broker by the other state; or

(2) was licensed as a Texas real estate salesperson or broker no more than six years prior to the filing of the application. The commission may waive examination, education and experience requirements if the applicant satisfies the conditions established by §535.61 of this title (relating to Waiver of Examinations) and by either §535.62 of this title (relating to Brokers: Education and Experience) or §535.63 of this title (relating to Salespersons: Education).

(b) A limited liability company created under the laws of another state or a corporation chartered in a state other than Texas may apply for a Texas real estate broker license if the entity meets one of the following requirements.

(1) The entity is licensed as a broker by the state in which it was created or chartered.

(2) The entity is licensed as a broker in a state in which it is permitted to engage in real estate brokerage business as a foreign limited liability company or corporation.

(3) The entity was created or chartered in a state that does not license limited liability companies or corporations, as the case may be, and the entity is lawfully engaged in the practice of real estate brokerage in another state and meets all other requirements for applications for a license in Texas.

(c) An individual licensed as a broker who subsequently moves to another state is not required to maintain an office in Texas unless the individual sponsors a salesperson in this state.

(d) The word "state" refers to the states, territories, and possessions of the United States and any foreign country or governmental subdivision thereof.

(e) To be eligible to receive a license and maintain an active license, a limited liability company or corporation created or chartered in another state must designate a person to act for

## §§535.132(e)-.141(h)

it who meets the requirements of the Act, §1101.453, although the designated person is not required to be a resident of Texas. Foreign corporations and limited liability companies also must be permitted to engage in business in this state to receive a Texas real estate broker license.

**§535.133. Consent to be Sued; Exception to Requirements.** *[Adopted January 1, 1976; amended April 7, 1983 and May 27, 1998; Ref: §1101.360]* A consent to service of legal process must be filed with the commission by a broker or salesperson who moves to another state.

### N. Suspension and Revocation of Licensure

**§535.141. Initiation of Investigation.** *[Adopted January 1, 1976; amended October 20, 1983; February 8, 1991; May 7, 1992; November 23, 1993; May 27, 1998; October 1, 2000; August 31, 2004 and March 23, 2008; Ref: §§1101.204, 1101.652]*

(a) As used in this section, the term "licensee" includes a person licensed or registered under Texas Occupations Code Chapters 1101 and 1102 and the term "license" includes a registration issued by the commission.

(b) Except as authorized under Texas Government Code §402.031(b), the commission may not conduct an undercover or covert investigation of a person licensed under Texas Occupations Code Chapters 1101 or 1102. Notwithstanding §1101.204(d), the commission shall not disclose to any person who is the subject of an investigation of fraudulent activity that the activity has been reported pursuant to §402.031.

(c) A real estate broker is responsible for all acts and conduct performed by a real estate salesperson associated with or acting for the broker. A complaint which names a licensed real estate salesperson as the subject of the complaint but does not specifically name the salesperson's sponsoring broker, is a complaint against the broker sponsoring the salesperson at the time of any alleged violation for the limited purposes of determining the broker's involvement in any alleged violation and whether the broker fulfilled his or her professional responsibilities to the commission, members of the public, and his or her clients, provided the complaint concerns the conduct of the salesperson as an agent for the broker.

(d) The person designated by a licensed corporation, limited liability company or partnership to act as its officer, manager or partner is responsible for all acts and conduct as a real estate broker performed by or through the business entity. A complaint which names a corporation, limited liability company or partnership licensed as a broker as the subject of the complaint but which does not specifically name the designated officer, manager or partner of the business entity, is a complaint against the broker acting as the designated officer, manager or partner at the time of any alleged violation for the limited purposes of determining the designated person's involvement in any alleged violation and whether the designated person fulfilled his or her professional responsibilities to the commission, members of the public, and his or her clients. A complaint which names a salesperson sponsored by a licensed corporation, limited liability company or partnership but which does not specifically name the designated person of the business entity is a complaint against the broker who was acting as designated person at the time of any alleged violation by the salesperson for the limited purposes of determining the designated person's involvement in any alleged violation and whether the designated person fulfilled his or her professional responsibilities to the commission, members of the public, and his or her clients, provided the complaint concerns the conduct of the salesperson as an agent of the business entity.

(e) Once a complaint has been filed with the commission, the commission has jurisdiction to consider, investigate and take action based on the complaint. Complaints may be withdrawn only with the consent of the commission.

(f) If information obtained by the commission in the course of the investigation of a complaint or as a result of an investigation authorized by the members of the commission constitutes reasonable cause to believe the respondents to the complaint may have committed other violations of the Act or a rule of the commission, no additional authorization shall be required for the commission to investigate and take appropriate action based on the information.

(g) If the commission suspends or revokes a license or probates an order of suspension or revocation against a licensee, the commission may monitor compliance with its order and initiate action based on the authority of the original complaint or original authorization by the members of the commission.

(h) A person whose license has been suspended may not during the period of any suspension:

(1) perform or attempt to perform any act for which a license is required by law or commission rule; or

(2) unless instructed otherwise by the principals to the transaction, continue to hold any funds received in a real estate transaction in which the person acted as a real estate broker or salesperson.

(i) A person whose license is subject to an order suspending the license must prior to the suspension taking effect:

(1) if the person is a real estate salesperson, notify his or her sponsoring broker in writing that his or her license will be suspended;

(2) if the person is a real estate broker, notify in writing any salespersons he or she sponsors, or any corporation, limited liability company or partnership for which the person is designated as an officer, manager or partner that:

(A) his or her real estate broker license will be suspended; and,

(B) once the suspension is effective any salesperson he or she sponsors or who are sponsored by the corporation, limited liability company or partnership will not be authorized to engage in real estate brokerage unless the salespersons associate with another broker and file a change of sponsorship with the commission or the business entity designates a new person and files a change of designated officer, manager or partner with the commission;

(3) if the person has a contractual obligation to perform services for which a license is required by law or commission rule, notify in writing all other parties to the contract that the services cannot be performed due to the suspension;

(4) if the person is a real estate salesperson and is directly involved in any real estate transaction in which the salesperson acts as an agent, notify in writing all other parties, including principals and other real estate brokers, that the person cannot continue performing real estate brokerage services due to the suspension; and

(5) if the person holds money in trust in any transaction in which the person is acting as a real estate broker, remit such money in accordance with the instructions of the principals.

(j) A person may not assign to another licensee a personal service contract to which the person is a party and which obligates the person to perform acts for which a license is required without first obtaining the written consent of the other parties to the contract.

**§535.142. Outstanding judgment.** *[Repealed March 19, 1990]*

**§535.143. Fraudulent Procurement of License.** *[Adopted January 1, 1976; amended March 19, 1990; May 27, 1998; October 1, 2000 and August 31, 2004; Ref: §1101.652(a)(2)]* A violation of Texas Occupations Code, §1101.652(a)(2), occurs if an applicant for licensure for the applicant or a salesperson omits material information or makes material misstatements, written or oral, in connection with the filing of an application to obtain licensure. This does not include an unintentional mistake of fact; however, a broker submitting an application as sponsor of a proposed salesperson has an affirmative duty to ascertain that all information called for in the application is given and is true, correct and complete, whether the application is filled out by the broker or the prospective salesperson.

**§535.144. When Acquiring or Disposing of Own Property.** *[Adopted January 1, 1976; amended March 22, 1978; August 6, 1980; October 20, 1983; May 27, 1998; October 1, 2000 and May 24, 2006; Ref: §1101.652(a)(3)]*

(a) For purposes of §1011.652(a)(3), Texas Occupations Code, "a person related to the license holder within the first degree by consanguinity" means a license holder's parent or child.

(b) A licensee, when engaging in a real estate transaction on his or her own behalf, on behalf of a business entity in which the licensee is more than a 10% owner, or on behalf of the licensee's spouse, parent, or child, is obligated to inform any person with whom the licensee deals that he or she is a licensed real estate broker or salesperson acting on his or her own behalf or on behalf of the licensee's spouse, parent, or child either by disclosure in any contract of sale or rental agreement, or by disclosure in any other writing given prior to entering into any contract of sales or rental agreement. A licensee shall not use the licensee's expertise to the disadvantage of a person with whom the licensee deals.

**§535.145. False Promise.** *[Adopted January 1, 1976; amended October 1, 2000; Ref: §1101.652(b)(5)]* "False promise" includes both oral and written promises. The fact that a written contract between the parties to a real estate transaction does not recite a promise made by a real estate licensee to one of the parties or that a person did not detrimentally rely on the false promise will not prevent the commission from

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determining that a false promise was made. When deciding whether this section has been violated, neither a written contractual provision disclaiming oral representations nor the parol evidence rule shall prevent the commission from considering oral promises made by a licensee.

### **§535.146. Failure to Properly Account for Money; Commingling.** *[Adopted January 1, 1976; amended August 7, 1977; May 27, 1998; and October 1, 2000; Ref: §1101.652(b)(9) & (10)]*

(a) For the purposes of this section, "trust account" includes any trust, escrow, custodial, property management account, or other account in which a licensee holds money on behalf of another person.

(b) A licensee maintaining a trust account shall retain for a period of four years a documentary record of each deposit or withdrawal from the account.

(c) If a licensee accepts money belonging to others, the licensee holds such money in a fiduciary capacity. If any or all of the parties to a real estate transaction make demand for the money, the licensee must, within a reasonable time, properly account for or remit the money. "Reasonable time" means within 30 days after demand is made for an accounting or for remittance of money belonging to others.

(d) "Properly account for or remit" means to pay the money to the party or parties entitled to the money if it can be reasonably determined to which party or parties the money should be paid. A licensee may pay the money into the registry of a court and interplead the parties if it cannot be reasonably determined to which party or parties the money should be paid.

(e) If, by written agreement of the parties to the real estate transaction, the licensee holding money belonging to others has the right to require the receipt, release and authorization in writing from all parties before paying the money to any party or parties, and if the licensee chooses to exercise that right, "properly account for or remit" means to furnish every party with a written statement requesting such receipt, release and authorization and detailing the amount and place of custody of the money and to pay the money to the party or parties in accordance with the receipts, releases and authorizations, if obtained. A licensee may pay the money into the registry of a court and interplead the parties if the receipts, releases and authorizations that the licensee has the right to require cannot be obtained.

(f) If escrow or other money belonging to another is held by a licensee, it must be maintained in a trust account. Placing such money in a licensee's operating account constitutes commingling.

(g) If a licensee acquires ownership of money in the licensee's trust account that was originally held in trust for another, such money must be removed from the trust account within a reasonable time. "Reasonable time" in this context means within 30 days after the licensee acquires ownership of the money.

(h) Paying operating expenses or making withdrawals from a broker's trust account for any purpose other than proper disbursement of money held in trust is prima facie evidence of commingling money held in trust with the broker's own funds.

### **§535.147. Splitting Fee with Unlicensed Person.** *[Adopted January 1, 1976; amended March 11, 1981; October 1, 2000 and August 31, 2004; Ref: §1101.652(b)(11)]*

(a) "Any other state" means the states, territories, and possessions of the United States and any foreign country or governmental subdivision thereof.

(b) "Commission or fees" includes any form of compensation received for engaging in an act for which a license is required by Texas Occupations Code, Chapter 1101.

(c) It is not a violation of this section for a licensee to pay a portion of the licensee's fee or commission to a party in the transaction. A licensee who intends to pay a portion of the licensee's fee or commission to a party the licensee does not represent must obtain the consent of the party represented by the licensee prior to making the payment.

### **§535.148. Failing to Specify Date of Termination of Listing Contract or Other Contract for Services.** *[Repealed October 1, 2000.]*

### **§535.148. Receiving an Undisclosed Commission or Rebate.** *[Adopted January 1, 1976; amended October 1, 2000; amended July 2, 2001; Ref: §1101.652(b)(13)]*

(a) A licensee may not receive a commission, rebate, or fee in a transaction from a person other than the person the licensee represents without first disclosing to the licensee's client that the licensee intends to receive the commission, rebate or fee, and obtaining the consent of the licensee's client. This subsection does not apply to referral fees paid by one

licensed real estate broker or salesperson to another licensed broker or salesperson.

(b) If a person the licensee does not represent agrees to pay a service provider in the transaction, the licensee must also obtain the consent of that person to accept a fee, commission or rebate from the service provider. As used in this subsection, the term "service provider" does not include a person acting in the capacity of a real estate broker or salesperson.

**§535.149. Lottery or Deceptive Trade Practice.** *[Adopted January 1, 1976; Ref: §1101.652(b)(14)&(15)]*

(a) The elements of a "lottery" are the award or distribution of a prize or prizes by chance and the payment of consideration for the opportunity to win the prize.

(b) The giving of gifts as an inducement for prospective clients is not violative of this section.

**§535.150. Acting in Dual Capacity.** *[Repealed October 1, 2000.]*

**§535.151. Guaranteeing Profits.** *[Repealed October 1, 2000.]*

**§535.152. Offering Property Without Owner's Consent.** *[Repealed October 1, 2000.]*

**§535.153. Violating an Exclusive Agency.** *[Adopted January 1, 1976; amended June 22, 1990 and August 31, 2004; Ref: §1101.652(b)(22)]* Although a licensee, including one acting as agent for a prospective buyer or prospective tenant, may not attempt to negotiate a sale, exchange, lease, or rental of property under exclusive listing with another broker, Texas Occupations Code, §1101.652(b)(22) does not prohibit a licensee from soliciting a listing from the owner while the owner's property is subject to an exclusive listing with another broker.

**§535.154. Misleading Advertising.** *[Adopted January 1, 1976; amended March 22, 1978; February [March] 1, 1980; June 24, 1984; June 22, 1990, February 8, 1991; January 1, 1997; May 27, 1998; March 15, 1999; October 1, 2000 and August 31, 2004; Ref: §1101.652(b)(23)]*

(a) For the purposes of this section, an "advertisement" is a written or oral statement which induces or attempts to induce a member of the public to use the services of a real estate

licensee. The term "advertisement" includes, but is not limited to all publications, radio or television broadcasts, all electronic media including E-mail and the Internet, business stationary, business cards, signs and billboards. The provisions of this section apply to all advertisements by a real estate licensee unless the context of a particular provision indicates that it is intended to apply to a specific form of advertisement. Provided, however, a communication from a licensee to a member of the public after the member of the public agreed for the licensee to provide services is not an advertisement for the purposes of this section.

(b) A licensee may not utilize a copyrighted trade name unless the licensee has legal authority to use the name.

(c) A broker shall notify the commission in writing within 30 days after the broker, or a salesperson sponsored by the broker, starts or stops using a name in business other than the name in which the person is licensed. Licensees may not use the name of a salesperson, including an assumed name, in advertisements unless the sponsoring broker's name or assumed name also appears. If the commission is notified of a licensee's use of an assumed name which contains only the name of a salesperson, including an assumed name, the commission shall notify the licensee, and the licensee's sponsoring broker, if any, that use of the name alone in advertising is grounds for disciplinary action under this section.

(d) In an advertisement placed by a licensee that does not readily identify the licensee as a real estate agent, the advertisement must include an additional designation such as "agent," "broker" or a trade association name which serves clearly to identify the advertiser as a real estate agent.

(e) Because salespersons may lawfully engage in brokerage activity only when they are associated with, and acting for, a broker, a listing may be solicited and accepted only in a broker's name. Advertisements concerning a broker's listings must include information identifying the advertiser as a real estate broker or agent. The name of a salesperson sponsored by the broker may also be included in the advertisement, but in no case shall a broker or salesperson place an advertisement which in any way implies that the salesperson is the person responsible for the operation of a real estate brokerage.

(f) A corporation or limited liability company licensed as a real estate broker may do business in the name in which it was chartered or registered by the Secretary of State.

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(g) A licensee's advertising must not cause a member of the public to believe that a person not authorized to conduct real estate brokerage is personally engaged in real estate brokerage, provided that an advertisement of a trade, business, or assumed name does not constitute a holding out that a specific person is engaged in real estate brokerage.

(h) An advertisement placed where it is likely to attract the attention of passing motorists or pedestrians must contain language that clearly and conspicuously identifies as a real estate broker or agent the person publishing the advertisement. Advertisements in which the required language is not clear and conspicuous shall be deemed by the commission to be deceptive and likely to mislead the public for the purposes of Texas Occupations Code, Chapter 1101(the Act), §1101.652(b)(23). The commission shall consider language as clear and conspicuous if it is in at least the same size of type or print as the largest telephone number in the advertisement, or it otherwise clearly and conspicuously identifies as a real estate broker or agent the person who published it. The commission shall consider advertisements not to be in compliance with this subsection if the required language is in print or type so small that it cannot be easily read from the street or sidewalk. This subsection does not apply to signs placed on real property listed for sale, rental or lease with the broker who has placed the sign, provided the signs otherwise comply with this section and the provisions of the Act regarding advertising.

(i) A real estate licensee placing an advertisement on the Internet, electronic bulletin board, or similar mechanism must include on each page on which the licensee's advertisement appears any information required by this section and the disclosure relating to the advertiser's status as a broker or agent required by §1101.652(b)(23) of the Act.

(j) A real estate licensee placing an advertisement by using any electronic communication, including but not limited to E-mail and E-mail discussion groups, must include in the communication and in any attachment which is an advertisement the information required by this section and the disclosure relating to the advertiser's status as a broker or agent required by §1101.652(b)(23) of the Act.

(k) An advertisement containing an offer to rebate to a principal a portion of a licensee's commission must disclose that payment of the rebate is subject to the consent of the party the licensee represents in the transaction. If payment of the rebate is contingent upon a

party's use of a selected service provider, the advertisement also must contain a disclosure that payment of the rebate is subject to restrictions.

(l) If an advertisement offers, recommends or promotes the use of services of a real estate service provider other than the licensee and the licensee expects to receive compensation if a party uses those services, the advertisement must contain a disclosure that the licensee may receive compensation from the service provider.

**§535.155. Associating with Unlicensed Person; Conspiring to Violate Act.** *[Repealed October 1, 2000.]*

**§535.156. Dishonesty; Bad Faith; Untrustworthiness.** *[Adopted January 1, 1976; amended May 24, 1976; June 9, 1981; May 27, 1998; and October 1, 2000; Ref: §1101.652(b)(2)]*

(a) A licensee's relationship with the licensee's principal is that of a fiduciary. A licensee shall convey to the principal all known information which would affect the principal's decision on whether or not to make, accept or reject offers; however, if the principal has agreed in writing that offers are not to be submitted after the principal has entered into a contract to buy, sell, rent, or lease a property, the licensee shall have no duty to submit offers to the principal after the principal has accepted an offer.

(b) The licensee must put the interest of the licensee's principal above the licensee's own interest. A licensee must deal honestly and fairly with all parties; however, the licensee represents only the principal and owes a duty of fidelity to such principal.

(c) A licensee has an affirmative duty to keep the principal informed at all times of significant information applicable to the transaction or transactions in which the licensee is acting as agent for the principal.

(d) A licensee has a duty to convey accurate information to members of the public with whom the licensee deals.

**§535.157. Negligence; Incompetence.** *[Repealed October 1, 2000.]*

**§535.158. Violation of Act.** *[Repealed October 1, 2000.]*

**§535.159. Failing to Properly Deposit Escrow Monies.** *[Adopted January 1, 1976; amended April 3, 1980; May 27, 1998; and October 1, 2000; Ref: §1101.652(b)(3)]*



(a) A broker is not required to maintain a trust account unless the broker undertakes to accept monies belonging to others.

(b) When money is deposited with a broker to be held in escrow, the broker becomes the trustee accountable both to the party making the deposit and to the party for whose benefit said funds are deposited.

(c) It is up to principals to a transaction to decide who shall act as escrow agent for them. A broker may not require the principals to a real estate transaction to designate the broker as their escrow agent.

(d) Nonresident brokers acting as real estate agents in Texas who accept money as escrow agents must deposit said funds in a custodial, trust or escrow account at a banking institution or title company authorized to do business in Texas.

(e) It is permissible for a broker to establish a savings account as an escrow account, provided said funds may be withdrawn at the appropriate time for disbursement. In the absence of an agreement to the contrary signed by the person depositing the funds with the broker, any interest earned on a savings account must be distributed to the person or persons who are the equitable owners of the funds during the time the interest is earned.

(f) A salesperson may not maintain an escrow account or act as an escrow agent. Any money received by a real estate salesperson which is to be held in trust pursuant to a real estate transaction must be delivered to the salesperson's sponsoring broker to be deposited in accordance with the agreement of the principals in the transaction.

(g) A trust or escrow account may contain any money held by the real estate broker as a trustee for another pursuant to a real estate transaction in which the broker acted as agent, provided the principals have agreed that the broker is to act as trustee. A broker may, but is not required to, maintain separate trust accounts for earnest money deposits, security deposits received for the management of rental property, and for other money received in trust.

(h) If a broker maintains a trust or escrow account, that account must be identified as such.

(i) Unless a different time to deposit money is expressly agreed upon in writing by the principals to the transaction, "reasonable time" as used in this section means by the close of business of the second working day after execution of the contract by the principals. If all principals agree, a deposit may be delayed in

accordance with their agreement.

(j) If money held in trust by a broker is held in a noninterest bearing account, the broker is not liable for interest or for charges on the funds unless there is an agreement to the contrary.

(k) If a broker accepts a check as escrow agent and later finds that such check has been dishonored by the bank on which it was drawn, the broker shall immediately notify all parties to the transaction.

**§535.160. Failing to Properly Disburse Escrow Money.** *[Adopted January 1, 1976; amended May 27, 1998; Ref: §1101.652(b)(31)]*  
A broker shall make no disbursement from the broker's escrow account except in accordance with the agreement under which the money was received.

**§535.161. Failing to Provide Information.** *[Adopted January 1, 1976; Ref: §1101.652(a)(6)]*  
As used in this section "reasonable time" means ten (10) working days from receipt of a request made by the commission.

**§535.164. Disclosure of Agency.** *[Repealed January 1, 1996.]*

**§535.165. Disclosure of Buyer or Tenant Agency.** *[Repealed November 23, 1993]*

**O. Hearing on Suspension or Revocation of Licensure**

**§535.171. Hearing: Subpoenas and Fees.** *[Adopted January 1, 1976; amended December 25, 1980 and August 31, 2004; Ref: §1101.157]*

(a) Process may be served by an employee of the Texas Real Estate Commission if that person is designated by the commission.

(b) A witness or deponent who is not a party and who is subpoenaed or otherwise compelled to attend any hearing or proceeding to give a deposition or to produce books, records, papers, or other objects that may be necessary and proper for the purposes of the proceeding is entitled to receive mileage of \$.20 a mile for going to and returning from the place of the hearing or where the deposition is taken, if the place is more than 25 miles from the person's place of residence and a fee of \$20 a day for each day or part of a day the person is necessarily present as a witness or deponent.

(c) Pursuant to Texas Government Code §2001.177, a party seeking judicial review of a final decision of the Texas Real Estate

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Commission in a contested case shall pay all costs of preparing the original or certified copy of a record of the contested case proceedings.

**P. Penalty for Unlicensed Activity**

**§535.181. Penalty.** *[Amended January 1, 1976; amended December 25, 1980; Ref: §1101.758]* If the Texas Real Estate Commission receives information that indicates that a person has engaged in unlicensed activity, it shall conduct an investigation to determine if such information is accurate. If the information establishes evidence to indicate a probable violation of the Act, the commission may file a complaint, alleging unlicensed activity, with the appropriate law enforcement official or take such other action as may be necessary and proper.

**Q. Administrative Penalties**

**§535.191. Schedule of Administrative Penalties.**

(a) The commission may suspend or revoke a license in addition to assessing the administrative penalties set forth in this section.

(b) The administrative penalties set forth in this section take into consideration all of the criteria listed in §1101.702(b) of the Texas Occupations Code.

(c) An administrative penalty range of \$100 - \$1,500 per violation per day may be assessed for violations of the following sections of the Texas Occupations and Administrative Codes:

- (1) §1101.652(a)(8);
- (2) §1101.652(b)(23);
- (3) §1101.652(b)(29);
- (4) 22 TAC §535.92(f);
- (5) 22 TAC §535.91(c); and
- (6) 22 TAC §535.144.

(d) An administrative penalty range of \$500 - \$3,000 per violation per day may be assessed for violations of the following sections of the Texas Occupations Code:

- (1) §1101.652(a)(7);
- (2) §1101.652(b)(1);
- (3) §1101.652(b)(7);

- (4) §1101.652(b)(8);
- (5) §1101.652(b)(10) - (12);
- (6) §1101.652(b)(14);
- (7) §1101.652(b)(22);
- (8) §1101.652(b)(26) - (28);
- (9) §1101.652(b)(30) - (31); and
- (10) §1101.654(a).

(e) An administrative penalty range of \$1,000 - \$5,000 per violation per day may be assessed for violations of the following sections:

- (1) §1101.351(a);
- (2) §1101.652(a)(3);
- (3) §1101.652(a)(9);
- (4) §1101.652(b)(2) - (6);
- (5) §1101.652(b)(9);
- (6) §1101.652(b)(13);
- (7) §1101.652(b)(15) - (17);
- (8) §1101.652(b)(19) - (21);
- (9) §1101.652(b)(24) - (25); and
- (10) §1101.652(b)(32).

(f) The commission may assess an additional administrative penalty of up to two times that assessed under subsections (c), (d) and (e) of this section if a person has a history of previous violations.

**§535.191. Prerequisites.** *[Repealed October 1, 2000.]*

**§535.192. Written Agreement Required.** *[Repealed October 1, 2000.]*

## R. Real Estate Inspectors

**§535.201. Registered Real Estate Inspectors: Registration and Certification: Fees.** *[Repealed May 15, 1986.]*

**§535.202. Licensed Real Estate Inspectors.** *[Repealed October 28, 1991.]*

**§535.203. Licensed Real Estate Inspectors: Violations.** *[Repealed October 28, 1991.]*

**§535.204. Licensed Real Estate Inspectors: Voiding of Applications.** *[Repealed October 28, 1991.]*

**§535.205. Inspectors Licensed Under Prior Law.** *[Repealed January 1, 2001.]*

**§535.206. The Texas Real Estate Inspector Committee.** *[Adopted January 1, 1992; amended January 1, 2001; August 31, 2004 and December 30, 2007]*

(a) The functions of the committee are as prescribed by Texas Occupations Code, Section 1102.058.

(b) The committee consists of nine members appointed by the commission as follows:

(1) six members who have been engaged in the practice of real estate inspecting as professional inspectors for at least five years before the member's appointment and who are actively engaged in that practice; and

(2) Three members who represent the public, who are not registered, certified, or licensed by an occupational or regulatory agency in the real estate industry.

(c) Appointments to the committee shall be made without regard to the race, color, disability, sex, religion, age, or national origin of the appointee.

(d) Members of the committee serve staggered six-year terms, with the terms of two inspector members and one public member expiring on February 1 of each odd-numbered year. Initial appointments may be made for terms shorter than six years in order to establish staggered terms. A member holds office until the member's successor is appointed. If a vacancy occurs during a member's term, the commission shall appoint a person to fill the unexpired term.

(e) At a regular meeting in February of each year, the committee shall elect from its members a presiding officer, assistant presiding officer, and secretary.

(f) The commission may remove a committee member if the member:

(1) does not have the qualifications required by subsection (b)(1);

(2) cannot discharge the member's duties for a substantial part of the member's term;

(3) is absent from more than half of the regularly scheduled commission meetings that the member is eligible to attend during each calendar year, unless the absence is excused by majority vote of the committee; or

(4) violates Texas Occupations Code, Chapter 1102.

(g) If the administrator of the commission has knowledge that a potential ground for removal exists, the administrator shall notify the presiding officer of the commission that the potential ground exists.

(h) The validity of an action of the committee is not affected by the fact that it is taken when a ground for removal of a committee member exists.

(i) The committee may meet at the call of a majority of its members. The committee shall meet at the call of the commission.

(j) A quorum of the committee consists of five members.

(k) The committee shall conduct its meetings in substantial compliance with Robert's Rules of Order.

(l) The secretary of the committee, or in the secretary's absence, a member designated by the chairman, shall prepare written minutes of each meeting and submit the minutes to the committee for approval and for filing with the commission.

(m) The committee shall submit semiannual reports to the commission on or before March 1 and September 1 of each year detailing the performance of the committee. The commission may require the report to be submitted on a form approved by the commission for that purpose. The committee may submit its written recommendations concerning the licensing and regulation of real estate inspectors to the commission at any time the committee deems appropriate. If the commission submits a rule to the committee for development, the chairman of the committee or the chairman's designate shall report to the commission after each meeting at which the proposed rule is discussed on the committee's consideration of the rule.

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(n) The committee is automatically abolished on September 1, 2019 unless the commission subsequently establishes a different date.

### **§535.208. Application for a License.**

*[Adopted January 1, 1992; amended December 21, 1993; September 15, 1994; January 3, 1996; May 2, 1996; March 14, 1997; December 1, 1999; January 1, 2001; October 4, 2001 and December 24, 2001; April 1, 2003; August 31, 2004; November 15, 2005 and December 30, 2007.]*

(a) A person desiring to be licensed shall file an application using forms prescribed by the commission. Prior to filing an application for a real estate inspector license or for a professional inspector license, the applicant must pay the required fee for evaluation of the education completed by the person and must obtain a written response from the commission showing the applicant meets current education requirements for the license. The commission may require an applicant to furnish materials such as source outlines, syllabi, course descriptions or official transcripts to verify course content or credit. The commission may not accept an application for filing if the application is materially incomplete or the application is not accompanied by the appropriate fee. The commission may not issue a license unless the applicant:

(1) pays the fee prescribed by the commission;

(2) satisfies any experience or education requirements established by Texas Occupations Code, Chapter 1102 (Chapter 1102), or by these sections;

(3) successfully completes any qualifying examination required by Chapter 1102;

(4) provides all supporting documentation or information requested by the commission in connection with the application; and

(5) submits proof of professional liability insurance, or any other insurance that provides coverage for violations of Subchapter G of Texas Occupations Code, Chapter 1102 (Chapter 1102), as required by Chapter 1102 and §535.211 of this title (relating to Professional Liability Insurance, or Any Other Insurance That Provides Coverage for Violations of Subchapter G of Texas Occupations Code, Chapter 1102).

(b) A person who has previously satisfied applicable education requirements and obtained an evaluation from the commission also may

apply for a license by accessing the commission's Internet web site, entering the required information on the application form and paying the appropriate fee in accordance with the instructions provided at the site by the commission. An applicant for an apprentice inspector license must provide the commission with the applicant's photograph and signature prior to issuance of a license certificate. An applicant for a real estate or professional inspector license must provide the commission with the applicant's signature prior to issuance of a license certificate. An applicant may provide the required item(s) prior to the submission of an electronic application.

(c) The Texas Real Estate Commission adopts by reference the following forms approved by the commission. These forms are published by and available from the Texas Real Estate Commission, P.O. Box 12188, Austin, Texas 78711-2188:

(1) Inspection Log, Form REI 1-3;

(2) Application for a License as an Apprentice Inspector, Form REI 2-7;

(3) Application for a License as a Real Estate Inspector, Form REI 4-9;

(4) Application for a License as a Professional Inspector, Form REI 6-9; and

(5) Certificate of Insurance, Form REI 8-0.

(d) An application shall be considered void and subject to no further evaluation or processing when one of the following events occurs.

(1) The applicant fails to satisfy a required examination within six months from the date the application is accepted for filing.

(2) The applicant fails to provide information or documentation within 60 days after the commission makes written request for the information or documentation.

(3) The applicant fails to submit a required fee within 60 days after the commission makes written request for payment of the fee.

(4) The applicant fails to submit the required proof of professional liability insurance, or any other insurance that provides coverage for violations of Subchapter G of Chapter 1102, within 60 days after the commission makes written request for proof of insurance.

(e) An application for a license may be denied if the commission determines that the applicant has failed to satisfy the commission as to the

applicant's honesty, trustworthiness and integrity or if the applicant has been convicted of a criminal offense which is grounds for disapproval of an application under §541.1 of this title (relating to Criminal Offense Guidelines). Notice of the denial and any hearing on the denial shall be as provided in Texas Occupations Code, §1101.364, and §533.34 of this title (relating to Disapproval of an Application for a License or Registration). For the purposes of this section, the term "late renewal" means an application for a license by a person who held the same type of license no more than two years prior to the filing of the application.

(f) Procuring or attempting to procure a license by fraud, misrepresentation or deceit or by making a material misstatement of fact in an application is grounds to deny the application or suspend or revoke the license. It is a violation of this section for a sponsoring professional inspector knowingly to make a false statement to the commission in an application for a license or late renewal of a license for an apprentice or a real estate inspector.

**§535.209. Professional Inspector Corporations and Limited Liability Companies.** *[Repealed December 30, 2007.]*

**§535.210. Fees.** *[Adopted January 1, 1992; amended December 31, 1993; October 11, 1999; and October 4, 2001; September 1, 2002; December 29, 2005; May 24, 2006 and December 30, 2007.]*

(a) The commission shall charge and collect the following fees:

(1) a fee of \$35 for filing an original application for a license as an apprentice inspector;

(2) a fee of \$45 for filing an original application for a license as a real estate inspector;

(3) a fee of \$60 for filing an original application for a license as a professional inspector;

(4) a fee of \$22 for the annual renewal of the license of an apprentice inspector;

(5) a fee of \$27 for the annual renewal of the license of a real estate inspector;

(6) a fee of \$27 for the annual renewal of the license of a professional inspector;

(7) a fee of \$59 for taking a license examination;

(8) a fee of \$20 for requesting a change of address or replacement of a lost or destroyed license certificate;

(9) a fee of \$30 for transcript evaluation;

(10) a fee of \$20 for requesting issuance of a license because of a change of name, return to active status, or change in sponsoring professional inspector; and

(11) a fee of \$100 for deposit in the real estate inspection recovery fund upon an applicant's successful completion of an examination.

(b) Fees established by this section which are paid when an application is filed are not refundable once an application has been accepted for filing.

**§535.211. Professional Liability Insurance, or Any Other Insurance That Provides Coverage for Violations of Subchapter G of Texas Occupations Code, Chapter 1102.** *[Adopted December 30, 2007.]*

(a) When an applicant for a license issued under Texas Occupations Code, Chapter 1102 (Chapter 1102), has met all other licensing requirements, the commission shall notify the applicant that the applicant must provide proof of professional liability insurance, or any other insurance that provides coverage for violations of Subchapter G of Texas Occupations Code, Chapter 1102, before the license will be issued.

(b) An inspector must maintain professional liability insurance coverage, or any other insurance that provides coverage for violations of Subchapter G of Chapter 1102, during the period the license is active.

(c) The applicant must provide proof of insurance on Certificate of Insurance form REI 8-0 signed by the applicant's insurance agent.

(d) An inspector must notify the commission within 10 days of the cancellation or non-renewal of professional liability insurance coverage, or any other insurance that provides coverage for violations of Subchapter G of Chapter 1102.

(e) An inspector must retain sufficient records of professional liability insurance coverage, or any other insurance that provides coverage for violations of Subchapter G of Chapter 1102, to document to the commission continuous coverage for the preceding two year license period.

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(f) The requirement that an inspector carry professional liability insurance or any other insurance that provides coverage for violations of Subchapter G of Chapter 1102 does not require coverage for violations wherein providing such insurance coverage would be as against public policy.

**§535.212. Education and Experience Requirements for a License.** *[Repealed January 1, 2001.]*

**§535.212. Education and Experience Requirements for an Inspector License.** *[Adopted January 1, 2001; amended May 11, 2004 and December 30, 2007]*

(a) Education requirements.

(1) To be accepted for inspector licensing, a course must meet each of the following requirements.

(A) The course was devoted to a subject listed in Texas Occupations Code, Section 1102.001(5) or this section; provided, however, no more than 30 cumulative classroom hours in course credit may be accepted by the commission for inspection-related business, legal, report writing or ethics courses.

(B) The student was present in the classroom for the hours of credit granted by the course provider, or completed makeup in accordance with the requirements of the provider, or by applicable commission rule.

(C) Successful completion of a final examination or other form of final evaluation was a requirement for receiving credit from the provider.

(D) The daily course presentation did not exceed ten hours.

(E) The course was offered by one of the following providers:

(i) a school accredited by the commission;

(ii) a school accredited by an inspector regulatory agency of another state;

(iii) a college or university accredited by a regional accrediting association, such as the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, or its equivalent, or by a recognized national or international accrediting body;

(iv) a unit of federal, state or local government;

(v) a nationally recognized building,

electrical, plumbing, mechanical or fire code organization;

(vi) a professional trade association; or

(vii) an entity whose courses are approved and regulated by an agency of this state.

(2) The term "code organization" means a non-profit organization whose members develop and advocate scientifically based codes and standards relating to one or more of the systems found in an improvement to real estate. The term "professional trade association" means a nonprofit, cooperative, and voluntarily joined association of business or professional competitors that is designed to assist its members and its industry or profession in dealing with mutual business or professional problems and in promoting the common interest of its members.

(3) Except as provided to the contrary by this section, the review and acceptance of correspondence courses or courses offered by alternative delivery systems such as computers will be conducted in the manner prescribed by §535.62 of this title (relating to Acceptable Courses of Study). Correspondence courses are acceptable only if offered by an accredited college or university.

(4) Providers may obtain prior approval of a classroom course by submitting the following items to the commission:

(A) a course description, including the number of hours of credit to be awarded;

(B) a timed course outline;

(C) a copy of any textbook, course outline, syllabus or other written course material provided to students;

(D) a cross reference to the course material which demonstrates in a manner that is satisfactory to the commission where the required subject matter is covered in the course; and

(E) a copy of the written final examination which measures a student's mastery of the course.

(5) The following subjects shall be considered core real estate inspection courses for purposes of additional education requirements under subsection (b)(1)(B) of this section.

(A) Foundations, which shall include the following topics:

(i) site analysis/location;

(ii) grading;

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- (iii) foundations;
- (iv) flat work;
- (v) material;
- (vi) foundation walls;
- (vii) foundation drainage;
- (viii) foundation waterproofing and damp proofing;
- (ix) columns; and
- (x) under floor space.

(B) Roof Systems, which shall include the following topics:

(i) review - rafters, roof joist, ceiling joist, collar ties, knee walls, purling, trusses, wood I joist, roof sheathing, steel framing

- (ii) roof water control;
- (iii) skylights;
- (iv) flashing;
- (v) ventilation/non-ventilation;
- (vi) attic access;
- (vii) re-roofing;
- (viii) slopes -step roof/low slope/near flat;
- (ix) materials -asphalt, fiberglass, wood shake, wood shingle, slate, clay tile, concrete tile, fiber cement (asbestos cement, mineral cement), metal, roll, build up, modified bitumen, synthetic rubber (EPDM), plastic (PVC); and
- (x) valleys.

(C) Framing, which shall include the following topics:

- (i) flashing;
- (ii) wood frame - stick/balloon;
- (iii) roof structure - rafters/trusses;
- (iv) floor structure;
- (v) porches/decks/steps/landings/balconies;
- (vi) doors;
- (vii) ceilings;
- (viii) interior walls;
- (ix) stairways;
- (x) guardrails/handrails/balusters;
- (xi) fireplace/chimney;

- (xii) sills/columns/beams/joist/sub-flooring;
- (xiii) wall systems/structure headers;
- (xiv) rammed earth;
- (xv) straw bale;
- (xvi) ICF;
- (xvii) panelized;
- (xviii) masonry;
- (xix) wood I joist;
- (xx) roof sheathing;
- (xxi) wood wall;
- (xxii) steel wall;
- (xxiii) wood structural panel; and
- (xxiv) conventional concrete.

(D) Electrical Systems, which shall include the following topics:

- (i) general requirements, equipment location and clearances;
- (ii) electrical definitions;
- (iii) services;
- (iv) branch circuit and feeder requirements;
- (v) wiring methods;
- (vi) power and lights distribution;
- (vii) devices and light fixtures; and
- (viii) swimming pool.

(E) HVAC Systems which shall include the following topics:

- (i) heating;
- (ii) ventilation;
- (iii) air conditioning; and
- (iv) evaporative coolers.

(F) Plumbing, which shall include the following topics:

- (i) water supply systems;
- (ii) fixtures;
- (iii) drains;
- (iv) vents;
- (v) water heaters (gas and electric);

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- (vi) gas lines; and
- (vii) hydro-therapy equipment.

(G) Building Enclosure, which shall include the following topics:

- (i) review of foundation and roofing relation;
- (ii) review of flashing;
- (iii) cladding;
- (iv) windows/glazing;
- (v) weather barriers;
- (vi) vapor barriers;
- (vii) insulation;
- (viii) energy codes; and
- (ix) ingress/egress.

(H) Appliances, which shall include the following topics:

- (i) dishwasher;
- (ii) food waste disposer;
- (iii) kitchen exhaust hood;
- (iv) range, cooktop, and ovens (electric and gas);
- (v) microwave cooking equipment;
- (vi) trash compactor;
- (vii) bathroom exhaust fan and heater;
- (viii) whole house vacuum systems;
- (ix) garage door operator;
- (x) doorbell and chimes; and
- (xi) dryer vents.

(I) Standards of Practice/Legal/Ethics, which shall include the following topics:

- (i) review of general principals;
- (ii) inspection guidelines for structural systems;
- (iii) inspection guidelines for mechanical systems;
- (iv) inspection guidelines for electrical systems;
- (v) inspection guidelines for optional systems;
- (vi) ethics; and
- (vii) legal.

(J) Standard Report Form/Report Writing, which shall include the following topics:

- (i) required use of report form REI 7A-0;
- (ii) allowed reproductions;
- (iii) allowed changes;
- (iv) exceptions from use of the form;
- (v) review of typical comments for each heading in the report; and
- (vi) review of generally accepted technical writing techniques.

(K) Other Approved Courses as they relate to real estate inspections, which shall include the following topics:

- (i) Environmental Protection Agency;
- (ii) Consumer Product Safety Commission; and
- (iii) general business practices.

(6) A course approved to satisfy the additional education hours required by subsection (b)(1)(B) of this section in lieu of the number of real estate inspections required by Chapter 1102, Texas Occupations Code, and in lieu of the requirement that the applicant has previously been licensed for a specified time as an apprentice inspector or a real estate inspector must meet each of the following requirements.

(A) The course must cover one subject only.

(B) The course must include all the topics as described for each subject under subsection (a)(5) of this section.

(C) The total hours of credit to be awarded for the course must be equal to the hours required for each subject under subsection (b)(1)(B) of this section.

(D) A classroom course may include up to 10% of classroom time on site for appropriate field work relevant to the course topic. Such field work may not be included as part of correspondence or alternative delivery courses.

(7) A course that combines more than one subject into a composite course may be approved by the commission to satisfy core course education requirements under Texas Occupations Code §§1102.108 and 1102.109; however, composite courses will not satisfy the additional education requirements to obtain a professional inspector license under Texas Occupations Code §1102.111 and subsection (b)(1)(B) of the section.

(8) A course approved under subsection (a)(5) of this section may not be used more than



once by an applicant to satisfy education course requirements under Texas Occupations Code §§1102.108 and 1102.109, and additional education course requirements under Texas Occupations Code §1102.111.

(9) An applicant must not have completed more than one course with substantially the same course content within a two year period.

(b) Experience and additional education requirements.

(1) An applicant may substitute the following experience and additional education in lieu of the number of real estate inspections required by Chapter 1102, Texas Occupations Code, (Chapter 1102) and in lieu of the requirement that the applicant has previously been licensed for a specified time as an apprentice inspector or a real estate inspector:

(A) To meet the additional education and experience requirements in connection with an application for a license as a real estate inspector:

(i) Actively practicing licensed or registered architects, professional engineers, or engineer-in-trainings meet some of the education requirements by taking 8 hours in Standards of Practice/Legal/Ethics and 8 hours in Standard Report Form/Report Writing from an approved education provider. They meet the other education requirements by virtue of meeting the education requirements for obtaining and maintaining their licenses as architects or engineers. They meet the experience requirement through two years of active practice under their respective license or registration.

(ii) Persons other than those described in clause (i) of this subparagraph may meet the education requirement by completing 30 additional education hours acceptable to the commission. The additional 30 education hours must include foundation systems, roof systems, framing, electrical systems, HVAC systems, plumbing, building enclosures, and appliances.

(iii) Persons other those described in clause (i) of this subparagraph may meet the experience requirement by either completing an approved experience training module of at least 60 hours from an approved education provider; accompanying a licensed professional inspector who is approved to be a sponsor under Texas Occupations Code §1102.113 for at least 60 hours on actual inspections and related work and having that licensed professional inspector certify such attendance; or by having at least three years of personal experience in a field directly

related to home inspecting, including but not limited to installing, servicing, repairing or maintaining the structural, mechanical and electrical systems found in improvements to real property. Documentation of experience must include two reference letters from persons other than the applicant who have personal knowledge of the applicant's occupation and work.

(B) To meet the additional education and experience requirements in connection with an application for a license as a professional inspector:

(i) Actively practicing licensed or registered architects, professional engineers, or engineer-in-trainings meet some of the education requirements by taking 8 hours in Standards of Practice/Legal/Ethics and 8 hours in Standard Report Form/Report Writing from an approved education provider. They meet the other education requirements by virtue of meeting the education requirements for obtaining and maintaining their licenses as architects or engineers. They meet the experience requirement through three years of active practice under their respective license or registration.

(ii) Persons other than those described in clause (i) of this subparagraph may meet the education requirement by completing 200 additional education hours acceptable to the commission. The additional 200 education hours must include 30 hours in Foundation Systems, 25 hours in Roof Systems, 30 hours in Framing, 25 hours in Electrical Systems, 25 hours in HVAC Systems, 25 hours in plumbing, 12 hours in Building Enclosure, 6 hours in Appliances, 8 hours in Standards of Practice/Legal/Ethics, 8 hours in Standard Report Form/Report Writing, and 6 hours of other approved courses.

(iii) Persons other those described in clause (i) of this subparagraph may meet the experience requirement by either completing an approved experience training module of at least 120 hours from an approved education provider; accompanying a licensed professional inspector who is approved to be a sponsor under Texas Occupations Code §1102.113 for at least 120 hours on actual inspections and related work and having that licensed professional inspector certify such attendance; or by having at least five years of personal experience in a field directly related to home inspecting, including but not limited to installing, servicing, repairing or maintaining the structural, mechanical and electrical systems found in improvements to real property. Documentation of experience must be in verified form and from persons other than the applicant who have personal knowledge of the applicant's occupation and work.

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(iv) Not more than two persons may accompany a licensed professional inspector who is qualified to be a sponsor under Texas Occupations Code §1102.113 on actual inspections to meet the experience requirement of §1102.111(a).

(C) Persons other than those described in subparagraphs (A)(i) and (B)(i) who, prior to September 1, 2007, were also enrolled in and attending an educational program that met the requirements of Texas Occupations Code, §1102.111 in effect prior to September 1, 2007, may meet the experience requirement by successfully completing that program if it includes in its curriculum applied teaching that includes an experience segment in a lab or simulator environment, actual on-site inspections, or a similar setting that provides direct experience with the inspection of those systems covered in the course and the use of the basic inspection-related tools. The education provider offering the program must confirm to commission staff, in writing, that the program includes such an experience segment. This subparagraph (C) of this paragraph expires automatically and may not be relied upon for any license application made after January 1, 2008.

(2) For the purpose of measuring the number of inspections required to receive a license or to sponsor apprentice inspectors or real estate inspectors, the commission will consider an improvement to real property to be any unit which is capable of being separately rented, leased or sold. Subject to the following restrictions, an inspection of an improvement to real property which includes the structural and equipment/systems of the unit will constitute a single inspection.

(A) Half credit will be given for an inspection limited to structural components only or to equipment/systems only.

(B) No more than 80% of the inspections for which experience credit is given may be limited to structural components only or to equipment/systems components only.

(C) A report which covers two or more improvements will be considered a single inspection.

(D) Real estate inspectors and professional inspectors may not receive experience credit for an inspection performed by an apprentice under their supervision.

(E) The commission may not give experience credit to the same applicant or professional inspector for more than three complete or six partial inspections per day. No more than three applicants may receive credit for the inspection of the same unit within a 30 day period, and no more than three apprentice

inspectors may receive credit for an inspection of the same unit on the same day.

(F) For the purpose of satisfying any requirement that a license be held for a period of time prior to an applicant's being eligible for a license as a real estate inspector or professional inspector, the commission may not give credit for periods in which a license was on inactive status. An applicant for a real estate inspector license must have been licensed on active status for a total of at least three months within the 12 month period prior to the filing of the application. An applicant for a professional inspector license must have been licensed on active status for a total of at least 12 months within the 24 month period prior to the filing of the application.

**§535.213. Schools and Courses of Study in Real Estate Inspection.** *[Adopted September 15, 1994; amended January 1, 2001 and August 31, 2004]*

(a) Except as provided by this section, the accreditation and regulation of schools and courses of study in real estate inspection and the approval of instructors will be conducted as required for real estate schools by §535.64 of this title (relating to Accreditation of Schools and Approval of Courses and Instructors, §535.65 of this title (relating to Changes in Ownership or Operation of School; Presentation of Courses, Advertising, and Records) and §535.66 of this title (relating to Payment of Annual Fee, Audits, Investigations and Enforcement Actions).

(b) A person applying for accreditation of a real estate inspection school shall use application forms approved by the commission. All courses must be approved by the commission prior to being offered for credit. A school accredited by the commission to offer real estate courses is not required to apply for an accreditation under this section to offer real estate inspection courses, provided all courses offered by the school have been approved by the commission. The commission may submit proposed courses to the Texas Real Estate Inspector Committee for review and recommendation.

**§535.214. Examinations.** *[Adopted January 1, 1992; amended December 21, 1993; September 15, 1994; January 1, 2001; September 1, 2002 and August 31, 2004]*

(a) There shall be an examination for a real estate inspector license and for a professional inspector license. Questions shall be used which will measure competency in the subject areas required for a license by Texas Occupations Code, Chapter 1102 (Chapter 1102), and which will demonstrate an awareness of its provisions relating to inspectors. Each real estate inspector applicant must achieve a score of at least 70%

on the examination. Each professional inspector applicant must achieve a score of at least 80% on the examination.

(b) Except as otherwise required by Chapter 1102 or this section, examinations shall be conducted as provided by §535.61 of this title (relating to Examinations).

**§535.215. Inactive Inspector Status.**  
*[Adopted September 15, 1994; amended November 19, 2001; August 31, 2004 and December 30, 2007]*

(a) For the purposes of this section, an "inactive" inspector is a licensed professional inspector, real estate inspector, or apprentice inspector who is not authorized by law to engage in the business of performing real estate inspections as defined by Texas Occupations Code, Chapter 1102 (Chapter 1102), and who has been placed on inactive status by the commission for any of the following reasons:

(1) the written request of the inspector to be placed on inactive status;

(2) termination of sponsorship by a professional inspector;

(3) the death of the inspector's sponsoring professional inspector;

(4) the failure of the licensee to satisfy continuing education requirements for an active license;

(5) the expiration, suspension, or revocation of the license of the inspector's sponsoring professional inspector;

(6) the failure of the licensee to provide to the commission proof of professional liability insurance or any other insurance that provides coverage for violations of Subchapter G of Chapter 1102; or

(7) the expiration or non-renewal of the inspector's professional liability insurance or any other insurance that provides coverage for violations of Subchapter G of Chapter 1102.

(b) To be placed on inactive status by request, an inspector must do the following:

(1) apply to the commission on a form approved by the commission for that purpose, or by a letter containing the inspector's name, license number and current mailing address;

(2) if the inspector is a licensed professional inspector, confirm in writing that the inspector has given any real estate inspectors or apprentice real estate inspectors sponsored by the inspector written notice that the inspector will no longer be their sponsor at least 30 days prior to filing the request for inactive status; and

(3) return the inspector's license certificate to

the commission.

(c) A professional inspector who has been placed on inactive status may apply to the commission for return to active status on a form approved by the commission. A professional inspector may apply on a form approved by the commission to sponsor an apprentice inspector or real estate inspector who has been on inactive status. The commission may not return an inspector to active status or issue a license certificate to the inspector unless the inspector has completed within one year prior to the filing the request for return to active status any applicable continuing education courses required for renewal of the type of license held by the inspector or satisfied the continuing education requirements in order to obtain the current license.

(d) An inspector who applies to renew a license and pays the applicable fee but who fails to complete any continuing education required by the Act as a condition of license renewal shall be placed on inactive status by the commission. The inspector must comply with the requirements of this section in order to return to active status.

(e) If a professional inspector terminates the sponsorship of an apprentice real estate inspector or real estate inspector, the license of the apprentice inspector or real estate inspector becomes inactive. The apprentice real estate inspector or real estate inspector must be sponsored by a professional inspector in order to return to active status.

(f) Inactive inspectors may not perform inspections. Performance of inspections while on inactive status is grounds for disciplinary action against the inactive licensee. An professional inspector who has been placed on inactive status may not return to practice or sponsor apprentices or inspectors until the professional inspector has completed applicable continuing education requirements and, if the inspector was placed on inactive status at the inspector's own request, applied to the commission for return to active status and paid the applicable fee for the filing. An apprentice inspector or real estate inspector who has been placed on inactive status may return to practice if the inspector has completed applicable continuing education requirements, and the inspector's sponsoring professional inspector has requested that the apprentice inspector or real estate inspector be returned to active status under the professional inspector's sponsorship in accordance with the provisions of this section. It is a violation of this section and grounds for disciplinary action against a professional inspector for the professional inspector to permit an inactive apprentice inspector or an inactive real estate inspector to perform inspections in association with, or on behalf of, the professional inspector.

## §§535.216-.218(d)

**§535.216. Renewal of License.** *[Adopted February 11, 1992; amended December 21, 1993; September 15, 1994; December 1, 1999 and January 1, 2001; October 4, 2001 and August 31, 2004; December 29, 2005 and December 30, 2007]*

(a) A person licensed by the commission under Texas Occupations Code, Chapter 1102 (Chapter 1102), may renew the license by timely filing the prescribed application for renewal, paying the appropriate fee to the commission and satisfying applicable continuing education requirements as required by Chapter 1102, and by §535.218 of this title (relating to Continuing Education), and providing to the commission proof of professional liability insurance, or any other insurance that provides coverage for violations of Subchapter G of Chapter 1102, with a minimum limit of \$100,000 per occurrence as required by 535.211 of this title (relating to Professional Liability Insurance) and §1102.203, Texas Occupations Code.

(b) The commission shall mail the prescribed renewal application form to the last known permanent mailing address of the licensee as shown in the commission's computerized records at least 90 days prior to the expiration of the license. Each licensee shall furnish a permanent mailing address to the commission and report all subsequent address changes within 10 days after a change of address. If a licensee fails to provide a permanent mailing address, the last known mailing address for the licensee will be deemed to be the licensee's permanent mailing address. An apprentice inspector or a real estate inspector must be sponsored by a licensed professional inspector in order to renew a license on an active status. It is the responsibility of the licensee to apply for renewal, and failure to receive a renewal application form does not relieve the licensee of the responsibility of applying for renewal.

(c) A licensee also may renew an unexpired license by accessing the commission's Internet web site, entering the required information on the renewal application form, satisfying applicable education and professional liability insurance, or any other insurance that provides coverage for violations of Subchapter G of Chapter 1102 requirements and paying the appropriate fee in accordance with the instructions provided at the site by the commission.

(d) A licensee shall provide information requested by the commission in connection with an application to renew a license within 30 days after the commission requests the information. Failure to provide information requested by the commission in connection with a renewal

application within the required time is grounds for disciplinary action under Texas Occupations Code, §1101.656.

(e) A renewal application is deemed filed when placed in the mail properly addressed to the commission with appropriate postage paid.

(f) An inspector licensed on active status who timely files a renewal application together with the applicable fee, evidence of completion of any required continuing education courses, and proof of professional liability insurance, or any other insurance that provides coverage for violations of Subchapter G of Chapter 1102, may continue to practice prior to receiving a new license certificate from the commission. If the license has expired and the licensee files an application to renew the license, the licensee may not practice until the new certificate is received.

**§535.217. Dishonest Conduct as Grounds for Disciplinary Action.** *[Repealed August 28, 2006]*

**§535.218. Continuing Education.** *[Adopted February 11, 1992; amended December 21, 1993; September 15, 1994; January 1, 2001; June 27, 2002 and May 11, 2004; December 29, 2005]*

(a) Except as provided by this section, core real estate inspection courses submitted by professional inspectors or real estate inspectors to satisfy the requirements of Texas Occupations Code §1102.205 for continuing education must comply with §535.212 of this title (relating to Education and Experience Requirements for a License).

(b) Courses submitted for continuing education credit must be successfully completed during the term of the current license. The commission may not grant continuing education credit twice for the same course taken by a licensee within a 2-year period.

(c) Other than for correspondence courses or courses offered by alternative delivery methods, such as by computer, completion of a final examination is not required for a licensee to obtain continuing education credit for a course.

(d) A professional inspector or real estate inspector who fails to renew a license which was subject to continuing education requirements and who files an application for renewal within one year after the previous license has expired must provide evidence satisfactory to the commission that the applicant has completed any continuing education that would have been required for renewal of the previous license. Continuing education courses submitted as part

of the application must have been completed within a 24-month period prior to the filing of the application.

(e) In addition to the core real estate inspection courses defined in Texas Occupations Code, §1102.001(5) and §535.212 of this title, the commission also will accept a course related to wood-destroying insects, radon, asbestos, lead, or other hazardous substances to satisfy continuing education requirements.

(f) Licensed professional inspectors, real estate inspectors and apprentice inspectors may renew a license on inactive status. Professional inspectors and real estate inspectors are not required to complete continuing education courses as a condition of renewing a license on inactive status. Continuing education requirements for return to active status must be satisfied as provided by §535.215 of this title (relating to Inactive Inspector Status).

(g) providers may request continuing education credit be given to instructors of core real estate inspection courses subject to the following guidelines.

(1) The instructors may receive credit for only those portions of the course which they teach.

(2) The instructors may receive full course credit by attending all of the remainder of the course.

(h) The commission will accept a course approved to satisfy the additional education hours required by §535.212(b)(1)(B) of this title to satisfy continuing education requirements, provided that the licensee attends the entire course.

**§535.220. Professional Conduct and Ethics.**  
*[Adopted March 6, 1992; amended August 31, 2004 and August 28, 2006]*

(a) The responsibility of those persons who engage in the business of performing independent inspections of improvements in real estate transactions imposes integrity beyond that of a person involved in ordinary commerce. Each inspector must maintain a high standard of professionalism, independence, objectivity and fairness while performing inspections in a real estate transaction. Each inspector licensee must also uphold, maintain, and improve the integrity, reputation, and practice of the home inspection profession.

(b) The relationship between an inspector and a client should at a minimum meet the following guidelines.

(1) In accepting employment as an inspector, the inspector should protect and promote the interest of his client to the best of his ability and knowledge, recognizing that the client has placed his trust and confidence in the inspector.

(2) In the interest of his client and his profession, the inspector should endeavor always to maintain and increase his level of knowledge regarding new developments in the field of inspection.

(3) The inspector should conduct his business in a manner that will assure his client of the inspector's independence from outside influence and interests that might compromise his ability to render a fair and impartial opinion regarding any inspection performed.

(c) The relationship between an inspector and the public should at a minimum meet the following guidelines.

(1) The inspector should deal with the general public at all times and in all manners in a method that is conducive to the promotion of professionalism, independence and fairness to himself, his business and the inspection industry.

(2) The inspector should attempt to assist the general public in recognizing and understanding the need for inspections, whether the inspector is selected to perform such inspection or not.

(3) The inspector accepts the duty of protecting the public against fraud, misrepresentation or unethical practices in the field of real estate inspections.

(d) The relationship of the inspector with another inspector should at a minimum meet the following guidelines.

(1) The inspector should bind himself to the duty of maintaining fairness and integrity in all dealings with other inspectors and other persons performing real estate inspections.

(2) The inspector should cooperate with other inspectors to insure the continued promotion of the high standards of the real estate inspection profession and pledges himself to the continued pursuit of increasing competence, fairness, education and knowledge necessary to achieve the confidence of the public.

(3) If an inspector has knowledge of a possible violation of the rules of the Texas Real Estate Commission or Texas Occupations Code, Chapter 1102, the inspector should report the possible violation to the Texas Real Estate Commission.

(e) An inspector shall comply with the following requirements.

## §§535.220(e)(1)-.221(c)

(1) An inspector shall not inspect properties under contingent arrangements whereby any compensation or future referrals are dependent on reported findings or on the closing or settlement of a property.

(2) In this section "settlement service" means any service provided in connection with a prospective or actual settlement, and "settlement service provider" includes, but is not limited to, any one or more of the following:

(A) Federally related mortgage loan originator;

(B) Mortgage broker;

(C) Title service provider;

(D) Attorney;

(E) A person who prepares documents, including notarization, delivery, and recordation;

(F) Appraiser;

(G) Inspector;

(H) Settlement agent;

(I) A person who provides mortgage insurance services;

(J) A person who provides services involving hazard, flood, or other casualty insurance or homeowner's warranties;

(K) Real estate agent or broker; and

(L) A person who provides any other services for which a settlement service provider requires a borrower or seller to pay.

(3) An inspector shall not pay or receive a fee or other valuable consideration to or from any other settlement service provider for, but not limited to, the following:

(A) the referral of inspections;

(B) inclusion on a list of inspectors, preferred providers, or similar arrangements; or

(C) inclusion on lists of inspectors contingent on other financial agreements.

(4) An inspector shall not receive a fee or other valuable consideration, directly or indirectly, for referring services that are not settlement services or other products to the inspector's client without the client's consent.

(5) This section does not prohibit an inspector from paying or receiving a fee or other valuable consideration, such as to or from a contractor, for services actually rendered.

(6) An inspector shall not accept

employment to repair, replace, maintain or upgrade systems or components of property covered by the Standards of Practice under this Subchapter on which the inspector has performed an inspection under a real estate contract, lease, or exchange of real property within 12 months of the date of the inspection.

(7) Inspectors shall not disclose inspection results or client information without prior approval from the client. Inspectors, at their discretion, may disclose observed immediate safety hazards to occupants exposed to such hazards when feasible.

(8) This subsection does not prohibit an inspector from:

(A) engaging in legal promotional or educational activities to or with settlement service providers that are not conditioned on the referral of business; or

(B) purchasing advertising and promoting the inspector at market rates from any person in any publication, event or media.

(f) The inspector should make a reasonable attempt to cooperate with other professionals and related tradespersons at all times and in all manners in a method that is conducive to the promotion of professionalism, independence and fairness to himself, his business, and the inspection industry.

### **§535.221. Advertisements.** *[Adopted January 4, 1993; amended December 21, 1993; March 12, 1997 and January 1, 2001]*

(a) For the purposes of this section advertisements include, but are not limited to, inspection reports, business cards, invoices, signs, all electronic media including E-mail and the Internet, purchased telephone directory displays and advertising by newspaper, radio and television.

(b) Advertisements by a person licensed as an inspector must contain the name or assumed business name of the licensee. The advertisements must also contain the license number of the person. If the person is licensed as a real estate inspector or as an apprentice inspector, the advertisements must also contain the following:

(1) the name or assumed name of the person's sponsoring professional inspector; and

(2) a statement indicating that the person is sponsored by that professional inspector.

(c) A licensed professional inspector, real estate inspector or apprentice inspector shall

immediately notify the commission in writing of the licensee's use of an assumed name in the inspection business.

(d) The commission may reprimand or suspend or revoke the license of a person who is found to have engaged in false or misleading advertising or to have failed to comply with provisions of this section.

**§535.222. Standards of Practice.** *[Repealed September 1, 2000.]*

**§535.223. Standard Inspection Reports.** *[Adopted January 1, 1998; amended July 8, 1998; January 1, 1999; January 1, 2001; May 11, 2004; September 1, 2004 and March 19, 2007]*

(a) The Texas Real Estate Commission adopts by reference Property Inspection Report, REI 7A-0, approved by the Texas Real Estate Commission in 1998 and published and available from the Texas Real Estate Commission, P.O. Box 12188, Austin, Texas 78711-2188.

(b) Except as provided by this section, inspections performed for a prospective buyer or prospective seller of one-to-four family residential property must be reported on Form REI 7A-0 ("the form"). Licensed inspectors shall complete the applicable portions of the form and provide the report within a reasonable period of time to the persons for whom the inspection has been performed. If necessary to report the inspection of a part, component or system not contained in the form, or space provided on the form is inadequate for a complete reporting of the inspection, such as when the inspector provides a higher level of inspection performance than that required by the standards of practice adopted by the commission, the inspector may attach additional pages to the form. When providing comments or additional pages to report on items listed on a form, the inspector shall arrange the comments or additional pages to follow the sequence of the items listed in the form adopted by the commission. If a part, component or system contained in the form is present in the property and has not been inspected under the departure provisions of §535.227 of this title (relating to Standards of Practice: General Provisions), the inspector shall make an appropriate notation on the form, clearly indicating the reason the part, component, or system has not been inspected.

(c) Inspectors may reproduce the form adopted by the commission from printed copies obtained from the commission and by computer. With the exception of the changes to the form which are permitted by this section, the inspector shall

reproduce the text of the form verbatim and the spacing, length of blanks, borders, fonts and placement of text on the page must appear to be identical to that used by the commission in the printed version of the form. Inspectors may insert information in the spaces provided for that purpose.

(d) When using form REI 7A-0, the inspector may make the following changes.

(1) The inspector may select the type and size of the fonts, provided the fonts are no smaller than those used in the printed version of the form adopted by the commission.

(2) The inspector may use legal sized (8 1/2" by 14") paper.

(3) The inspector may select the information to be inserted below the caption "Property Inspection Report" and above the text of the form relating to TREC rules; however, the inspector must include the name of the inspector's client, the address or other identification of the inspected property, the date the inspection was performed, and the name and license number of any inspector participating in the inspection. If the person performing the inspection is licensed as an apprentice inspector or real estate inspector, the license number and name of the inspector's sponsor also must be included, and the inspector supervising an apprentice must sign the report.

(4) The inspector may select other information to be inserted in the space on the first page of the report and may allocate additional space on page 2 for that purpose; provided the caption "Additional Information Provided By Inspector" is not deleted.

(5) The inspector may delete inapplicable provisions relating to the optional systems and re-letter the remaining provisions.

(6) The inspector may add footers to each page of the report except the first page and may add headers to each page of the report.

(7) Whether the form is reproduced by computer or is preprinted by the inspector, the inspector may allocate such space for comments as the inspector deems necessary or may attach additional pages of comments to the report.

(8) The inspector may renumber the pages of the form to correspond with any changes made necessary due to adjusting the space for comments or deleting text.

(9) The inspector may list other built-in appliances and additional captions, letters and check boxes for those items.

## §§535.223(d)(10)-.226(c)

(10) The inspector may add numbers or letters in parentheses to the right of the caption for each item and may place the property identification and page number either at the top or bottom of the page.

(e) This section does not apply to inspections performed for a lender or for a person other than the prospective buyer or prospective seller.

(f) This section does not apply to quality control construction inspections of new homes, including phased construction inspections, inspections performed solely to determine compliance with building codes, warranty or underwriting requirements, or inspections required by a municipality and the builder requires use of a different report, and the first page of the report contains a notice either in bold or underlined reading substantially similar to the following: "This report was prepared for a builder or builder's employee in accordance with the builder's requirements. The report is not intended as a substitute for an inspection of the property by an inspector of the buyer's choice. Standard inspections performed by a Texas Real Estate Commission licensee and reported on Texas Real Estate Commission promulgated report forms may contain additional information a buyer should consider in making a decision to purchase." If a report form required for use by the builder or builder's employee does not contain the notice, the inspector may attach the notice to the first page of the report at the time the report is prepared by the inspector. If the inspector attaches the notice, the inspector is not required to use a form adopted by the commission to report the inspection.

(g) This section does not apply to the following:

(1) inspections of remodeling or re-inspections; or

(2) inspections for which federal or state law requires use of a different report.

(h) Failure to comply with this section is grounds for the suspension or revocation of an inspector's license or the imposition of an administrative penalty by the commission.

**§535.224. Practice and Procedure.** *[Adopted January 1, 1992; amended December 21, 1993 and January 1, 2001; August 31, 2004 and December 30, 2007]*

(a) Proceedings shall be conducted in the manner contemplated by §§533.1-533.8, §533.20, §§533.30-533.37 and §533.40 of this title (relating to Practice and Procedure) and with the Texas Government Code, Chapter 2001, et seq.

(b) In addition to the grounds for disciplinary

action provided in Texas Occupations Code, Chapter 1102 (Chapter 1102), a license of an inspector may be suspended or revoked by the commission if the inspector:

(1) fails to make good a check issued to the commission within 30 days after the commission had mailed a request for payment by certified mail to the inspector last known business address as reflected by the commission's records;

(2) fails or refuses on demand to produce a document, book or record in his possession concerning a real estate inspection conducted by him for examination by the commission or its authorized agent;

(3) fails within 10 days to provide information requested by the commission or its authorized agent in the course of an investigation of a complaint;

(4) fails to maintain professional liability insurance coverage or any other insurance that provides coverage for violations of Subchapter G of Chapter 1102 during the period a license is active; or

(5) fails to notify the commission within 10 days of the cancellation or non-renewal of professional liability insurance coverage, or any other insurance that provides coverage for violations of Subchapter G of Chapter 1102.

## **§535.226. Sponsorship of Apprentice Inspectors and Real Estate Inspectors.**

*[Adopted January 1, 1992; amended January 4, 1993; December 21, 1993; September 15, 1994 and January 1, 2001]*

(a) An apprentice inspector may be sponsored by only one licensed professional inspector. A real estate inspector may be sponsored by only one licensed professional inspector.

(b) A change in sponsorship shall be reported to the commission immediately. If the sponsorship has ended because the professional inspector has terminated the sponsorship, the professional inspector shall immediately so notify the apprentice or real estate inspector in writing. If the sponsorship has ended because the apprentice inspector or real estate inspector has left the sponsorship, the apprentice inspector or real estate inspector shall immediately so notify the professional inspector in writing.

(c) An apprentice inspector or real estate inspector who is on active status may act for the new sponsoring professional inspector once the written notice has been placed in the mail to the commission along with the fee for reporting any change of address. If the apprentice or real estate inspector is on inactive status, the return



to active status shall be subject to the requirements of §535.215 of this title (relating to Inactive Inspector Status).

(d) Written inspection reports must be signed by the apprentice inspector who performed the inspection and by the real estate inspector or professional inspector who directly supervised the inspection.

(e) A licensed professional inspector is responsible for the conduct of a licensed apprentice inspector sponsored by the professional inspector. At a minimum, a licensed professional inspector shall provide direct supervision of the apprentice inspector by the following means:

(1) accompanying the apprentice inspector during the performance of all inspections performed by the apprentice or arranging for a real estate inspector to accompany the apprentice; and

(2) reviewing any written inspection report prepared by the apprentice inspector for compliance with the provisions of the standards of practice adopted by the commission.

(f) A licensed professional inspector is responsible for the conduct of a licensed real estate inspector sponsored by the professional inspector. A licensed professional inspector shall provide indirect supervision in a manner which protects the public when dealing with the real estate inspector and any licensed apprentice inspectors directly supervised by the real estate inspector. At a minimum a professional inspector shall provide indirect supervision of the real estate inspector by doing the following:

(1) communicating with the real estate inspector on a regular basis about the inspections being performed by the real estate inspector and

(2) reviewing on a regular basis written inspection reports prepared by the real estate inspector for compliance with the provisions of the standards of practice adopted by the commission.

**§535.227. Standards of Practice: General Provisions.** *[Adopted September 1, 2000; amended August 31, 2004]*

(a) Definition of terms. The following words have the following meanings, unless the context clearly indicates otherwise.

(1) Chapter 1102 - Texas Occupations Code, Chapter 1102.

(2) Functioning - Performing in an expected or required manner; carrying out the design

purpose or intended operation of a part, system, component, member.

(3) Inaccessible - Not having access without the use of special tools, equipment, or instruments, or removing doors, walls, stored items or similar obstructions, or by causing damage to a structure, finish or component, equipment or system, or by virtue of inadequate clearance, walkways, passageways, or hazardous condition.

(4) In Need of Repair - Does not adequately function or perform.

(5) Inspect - To look at and examine accessible items, parts, systems or components without, except as required by the rules of the Texas Real Estate Commission, laboratory, scientific or engineering evaluation or testing, destructive tests or the dismantling or removal of parts, members or components.

(6) Inspector - A person licensed as a professional inspector, a person licensed as an apprentice inspector or a person licensed as a real estate inspector.

(7) Performance - The act of carrying out, completing, executing or achievement of an operation, design or function in a manner consistent with the intent of the manufacturer, designer or accepted industry practice.

(8) Report - A written or oral communication of the inspector's opinions, observations, determinations, and findings in an inspection.

(9) Standards of Practice - §535.227 of this title (relating to Standards of Practice: General Provisions), §535.228 of this title (relating to Standards of Practice: Inspection Guidelines for Structural Systems), §535.229 of this title (relating to Standards of Practice: Inspection Guidelines for Mechanical Systems: Appliances, Cooling Systems, Heating Systems, Ducts, Vents and Flues, and Plumbing Systems), §535.230 of this title (relating to Standards of Practice: Inspection Guidelines for Electrical Systems) and §535.231 of this title (relating to Standards of Practice: Optional Systems).

(b) Scope.

(1) The standards of practice are the minimum levels of inspection practice required of inspectors for the accessible parts, components, and systems typically found in improvements to real property, excluding detached structures, decks, docks and fences. The inspector may provide a higher level of inspection performance than required by the standards of practice and may inspect parts, components, and systems in addition to those described by the standards of practice.

## §535.227(b)(2)-(228

(2) The inspector shall:

(A) inspect items, parts, systems, components and conditions which are present and visible at the time of the inspection, but the inspector is not required to determine or estimate the remaining life expectancy or future performance of any inspected item, part, system or component;

(B) operate mechanical and electrical equipment, systems, and appliances during an inspection in normal modes and operating range at the time of the inspection;

(C) report which of the parts, components, and systems present in the property have or have not been inspected;

(D) report as in need of repair inspected parts, components or systems that are not functioning or that the standards of practice require the inspector to report as in need of repair;

(E) address all of the parts, components, and systems contained in the standards of practice in the property being inspected.

(F) complete the standard inspection report form under §535.223 of this title (relating to Standard Inspection Reports) if that section applies;

(G) identify in any written report the inspector who performed the inspection by name and license number;

(H) comply with any other law or license requirement necessary to perform inspections or services other than what is required by the standards of practice, such as an air-conditioning and refrigeration contractor license which may be required for the inspector to make a direct in-line connection to a refrigerant system, or a structural pest control license which may be required to perform a wood-destroying-insect inspection;

(3) In the event of a conflict between a specific provision and a general provision in the standards of practice, the specific provision controls. The standards of practice do not apply to the following:

(A) parts, components or systems other than those specifically described;

(B) conditions other than those specifically described, such as environmental conditions, presence of toxic or hazardous wastes or substances, presence of termites or other wood-destroying insects or organisms, compliance with codes, ordinances, statutes or restrictions or the efficiency, quality, durability of any item inspected;

(C) any part, component or system the inspector excludes under the departure provision in this section; and

(D) any determination of insurability or warrantability of any part, component or system.

(c) Departure Provision.

(1) An inspector shall exclude from the inspection any part, component or system which the inspector is not competent or qualified to inspect.

(2) An inspector may exclude any part, component or system required for inspection by the standards of practice which is inaccessible, cannot be inspected due to circumstances beyond the control of the inspector, or the inspector's client has agreed is not to be inspected.

(3) This departure provision does not prohibit an inspector from specializing nor require the inspector to specifically exclude other parts, components or systems not ordinarily considered a part of the inspector's specialty. However, the inspector shall comply with the standards of practice for the items being inspected.

(4) If an inspector excludes any part, component or system listed in the standards of practice, other than one which the client has agreed is not to be inspected, the inspector shall:

(A) advise the client at the earliest practicable time that the specific part, component or system will not be included in the inspection; and

(B) state in any written inspection report that the excluded part, component or system was not inspected.

(d) Enforcement. Failure to comply with §535.227 of this title (relating to Standards of Practice: General Provisions), §535.228 of this title (relating to Standards of Practice: Inspection Guidelines for Structural Systems), §535.229 of this title (relating to Standards of Practice: Inspection Guidelines for Mechanical Systems: Appliances, Cooling Systems, Heating Systems, Ducts, Vents and Flues, and Plumbing Systems), §535.230 of this title (relating to Standards of Practice: Inspection Guidelines for Electrical Systems) and §535.231 of this title (relating to Standards of Practice: Optional Systems) is a ground for disciplinary action as prescribed by Chapter 1102 and §535.224 of this title (relating to Proceedings before the Committee).

**§535.228. Standards of Practice: Inspection Guidelines for Structural Systems.** [Adopted

September 1, 2000]

(a) Foundations. The inspector shall:

(1) report the type of foundation (for example, slab-on-grade or pier and beam);

(2) inspect the foundation, related structural components and/or slab surfaces;

(3) inspect the crawl space area to determine the general condition of foundation components and report the method used to observe the crawl space if the inspector did not enter the crawl space because the space was inaccessible, hazardous conditions were present, or access or visibility was limited;

(4) render a written opinion as to the performance of the foundation;

(5) report general indications of foundation movement that are present and visible, such as sheetrock cracks, brick cracks, out-of-square door frames or floor slopes;

(6) report as in need of repair any post tensioned cable ends that are not protected;

(7) report as in need of repair a crawl space that does not appear to be adequately ventilated;

(8) report as in need of repair conditions or symptoms that may indicate the possibility of water penetration that are present and visible, such as improper grading around foundation walls or plumbing leaks; and

(9) report as in need of repair conditions that are present and visible and may be adversely affecting foundation performance, such as erosion or water ponding.

(b) Specific limitations for foundations. The inspector is not required to enter a crawl space or any areas where headroom is less than 18 inches and the width of the access opening is less than two feet, or where the inspector reasonably determines conditions or materials are hazardous to health or safety of the inspector.

(c) Interior walls, doors, ceilings and floors. The inspector shall:

(1) report as in need of repair deficiencies of the surfaces of walls, ceilings and floors as related to structural performance or water penetration that are present and visible;

(2) report as in need of repair accessible doors that do not operate properly, excluding locks and latches;

(3) report as in need of repair deficiencies in steps, stairways, balconies and railings,

(4) report as in need of repair spacings between intermediate balusters, spindles, or rails for steps, stairways, balconies, and railings that permit passage of an object greater than four inches in diameter; and

(5) report as in need of repair the absence of safety glass in hazardous locations.

(d) Specific limitations for Interior walls, doors, ceilings and floors. The inspector is not required to do the following:

(1) determine the condition of floor, wall or ceiling coverings unless such conditions affect structural performance or indicate water penetration;

(2) report obvious damage to floor, wall or ceiling coverings;

(3) determine the condition of paints, stains and other surface coatings; or

(4) determine condition of cabinets.

(e) Exterior walls and doors, windows and door glazing. The inspector shall:

(1) report as in need of repair present and visible deficiencies of exterior walls that are related to structural performance and water penetration;

(2) report as in need of repair deficiencies in the condition and operation of exterior doors and garage doors, including door locks and latches when present;

(3) report as in need of repair damaged glazing in windows and exterior doors;

(4) report as in need of repair any insulated windows that are obviously fogged or display other evidence of broken seals;

(5) report as in need of repair the absence of safety glass in hazardous locations;

(6) report as in need of repair missing or damaged window and door screens;

(7) report as in need of repair in homes having burglar bars the absence of functional keyless burglar bars in appropriate locations;

(8) report as in need of repair inoperable windows at burglar bar locations of sleeping rooms or egress areas and any inoperable windows at other randomly sampled accessible burglar bar locations; and

(9) report as in need of repair spacings between intermediate balusters, spindles and rails that permit passage of an object greater than four inches in diameter.

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(f) Specific limitations for exterior walls and doors, windows and door glazing. The inspector is not required to do the following:

(1) report the condition or presence of storm windows or doors, awnings, shutters or security devices or systems;

(2) determine the condition of paints stains or other surface coatings; or

(3) determine the presence of, or extent or type of, insulation or vapor barriers in exterior walls.

(g) Fireplace and chimney. The inspector shall:

(1) report as in need of repair deficiencies in the visible components and structure of the chimney and fireplace;

(2) inspect the interior of the firebox and the visible flue area, and report as in need of repair built up creosote in visible areas of the firebox and flue (the inspector is not required to determine the adequacy of the draft or perform a chimney smoke test);

(3) report as in need of repair a damper that does not operate;

(4) report as in need of repair the absence of non-combustible hearth extension;

(5) report as in need of repair deficiencies in the lintel, hearth and material surrounding the fireplace, including clearances from combustible materials;

(6) report as in need of repair the absence of firestopping at the attic penetration of the chimney flue, where accessible;

(7) report as in need of repair any gas log lighter valves that do not function or leak gas;

(8) report as in need of repair any circulating fan that does not operate, if present;

(9) report as in need of repair deficiencies in combustion air vent, if present; and

(10) report as in need of repair deficiencies in chimney coping or crown, caps or spark arrestor (inspected from ground level at a minimum).

(h) Roof, roof structure and attic. The inspector shall:

(1) report the type of roof covering and report as in need of repair:

(A) a roof covering that is not appropriate for the slope of the roof;

(B) fasteners that are not present or that

are not appropriate, (where it can be reasonably determined); and

(C) roof jacks, flashing and counter flashing that are not present or not properly installed.

(2) inspect the general condition of, and report evidence of previous repairs to, flashing, skylights and other roof penetrations;

(3) report as in need of repair inadequate attic space ventilation;

(4) report as in need of repair deficiencies in the roof covering, structure and sheathing;

(5) report any visible evidence of moisture penetration;

(6) report as in need of repair the lack of or inappropriate installation of components such as purlins, struts, collar ties or rafter ties, where necessary;

(7) report as in need of repair excessive deflections or depressions in the roof's surface relating to the performance of the framing and the roof deck;

(8) enter and inspect attic space(s) except when inadequate access or hazardous conditions exist as reasonably determined by the inspector and report the method used to inspect the attic if the inspector did not enter the attic;

(9) report the method used to inspect the roof if the inspection is performed from other than roof level;

(10) inspect for the presence, and report the approximate depth of, insulation where visible; and

(11) report as in need of repair deficiencies in visible installed gutter and downspout systems.

(i) Specific limitations for roof, roof structure and attic. The inspector is not required to do the following:

(1) determine the remaining life expectancy of the roof covering; or

(2) inspect the roof from the roof level if the inspector reasonably determines that the inspector cannot safely reach or stay on the roof, or that damage to the roof or roof covering may result from walking on the roof.

(j) Porches and decks. The inspector shall:

(1) report as in need of repair structural deficiencies in porches, decks, steps, balconies and carports as to visible footings, joists, deckings, railings and attachment points, where applicable; and

(2) report as in need of repair (except for decks which are not higher than 30 inches as measured from the adjacent grade) spacings between intermediate balusters, spindles or rails that permit passage of an object greater than four inches in diameter.

(k) Specific limitations for porches and decks. The inspector is not required to inspect detached structures or waterfront structures and equipment, such as docks or piers.

**§535.229. Standards of Practice: Inspection Guidelines for Mechanical Systems: Appliances, Cooling Systems, Heating Systems, Ducts, Vents and Flues, and Plumbing Systems.** *[Adopted September 1, 2000]*

(a) Dishwasher. The inspector shall:

(1) report as in need of repair any deficiencies in the door gasket, control knobs and interior parts, including the dish tray, rollers, spray arms and the soap dispenser;

(2) report as in need of repair any interior signs of rust;

(3) report as in need of repair a door spring that does not operate properly;

(4) report as in need of repair deficiencies in the discharge hose or piping or the lack of back flow prevention;

(5) report as in need of repair units that are not securely mounted;

(6) report as in need of repair any water leaks;

(7) inspect the unit's operation in normal mode with the soap dispenser closed; and

(8) report as in need of repair spray arms that do not turn, soap dispensers that do not open or drying elements that do not operate.

(b) Food waste disposer. The inspector shall:

(1) report as in need of repair any deficiencies in the splash guard, grinding components, wiring and exterior;

(2) report as in need of repair a unit that is not securely mounted; and

(3) inspect the operation of the unit and report as in need of repair any unusual noise or vibration level and any signs of water leaks.

(c) Range exhaust vent. The inspector shall:

(1) report as in need of repair any deficiencies in the filter, vent pipe, light and

switches;

(2) inspect the operation of the blower and report as in need of repair any unusual sounds or vibration levels, or if the blower does not operate at all speeds;

(3) report as in need of repair a vent pipe that does not terminate outside the structure when the unit is not of recirculating type or configuration.

(4) report as in need of repair a vent pipe that is of inadequate material; and

(5) report as in need of repair the absence of a range exhaust vent.

(d) Electric or gas ranges. The inspector shall:

(1) report as in need of repair broken or missing knobs, elements, drip pans or other parts, inadequate clearance from combustible material, or the absence of an anti-tip device;

(2) report as in need of repair signal lights and elements or burners that do not operate at low and high settings;

(3) report as in need of repair improper materials that are used for the gas branch line and the connection to the appliance; and

(4) report as in need of repair the absence of a gas shut-off valve, or valve that is not properly located, is inaccessible, or leaks.

(e) Electric or gas ovens. The inspector shall:

(1) report as in need of repair any broken or missing knobs, handles, glass panels, door hinges, lights or light covers or other parts, or inadequate clearance from combustible material;

(2) report as in need of repair deficiencies in the door gasket, tightness of closure and operation of the latch;

(3) report as in need of repair an oven that is not securely mounted;

(4) report as in need of repair heating elements and thermostat sensing elements that are not properly supported;

(5) report as in need of repair deficiencies in the operation of the heating elements or the lighting, operation and condition of the flame;

(6) report as in need of repair deficiencies in the operation of the clock and timer, thermostat and door springs; and

(7) report as in need of repair any inaccuracy of the thermostat more than a 25 degree range plus or minus of a 350 degree setting, as measured by a thermometer.

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(f) Microwave oven. The inspector shall:

(1) report as in need of repair any broken or missing knobs, handles, glass panels, or other parts, or a unit that is not securely mounted;

(2) report as in need of repair any deficiencies in the door and seal (the inspector is not required to test for radiation);

(3) report as in need of repair an oven that does not operate by heating a container of water or with other test equipment, as reasonably determined by the inspector; and

(4) report as in need of repair a light that does not operate.

(g) Trash compactor. The inspector shall:

(1) inspect the overall condition of the unit;

(2) report as in need of repair a unit that does not operate or operates with unusual noise or vibration levels; and

(3) report as in need of repair a unit that is not securely mounted in place.

(h) Other built-in appliances. The inspector shall report as in need of repair any deficiencies in condition or operation of other built-in appliances not listed in this section.

(i) Bathroom exhaust vents and electric heaters. The inspector shall operate the unit, and report as in need of repair unusual sounds, speed and vibration levels or, when possible, vent pipes that do not terminate outside the structure.

(j) Whole house vacuum system. The inspector shall:

(1) inspect the condition of the main unit;

(2) report as in need of repair a unit that does not operate; and

(3) inspect the system from all accessible outlets throughout the house.

(k) Water heaters. The inspector shall:

(1) report the energy source;

(2) inspect the unit and report as in need of repair fittings that leak or are corroded;

(3) report as in need of repair temperature and pressure relief valve piping that lacks gravity drainage, is improperly sized (no smaller than the outlet fittings), has deficiencies in material, or lacks a correct termination;

(4) report as in need of repair a temperature and pressure relief valve that does not operate

when the valve is of an operable type and operation will not cause damage to persons or property as reasonably determined by the inspector (for example, it would be reasonable not to operate the valve if there is improper or undetermined termination of the drain pipe, a corroded or damaged valve, improper installation of valve or drain pipe, the drain pipe is of inappropriate material or there is no water supply cut-off valve at the unit);

(5) report as in need of repair any broken or missing parts, covers or controls;

(6) report as in need of repair deficiencies in the burner, flame and burner compartment, the operation of heating elements and the condition of wiring;

(7) report as in need of repair deficiencies in materials used for the gas branch line and the connection to the appliance, the absence of a gas shut-off valve, or a valve that is not properly located, is inaccessible, or leaks;

(8) if applicable, report as in need of repair deficiencies in the vent pipe, draft diverter, draft hood and their condition, draft, proximity to combustibles and vent termination point, observing for adequate combustion and draft air;

(9) report as in need of repair the lack of a safety pan and drain (including the termination of the drain line) when applicable;

(10) report as in need of repair an unsafe location or installation; and

(11) inspect garage units or units which are located in rooms or enclosures opening into a garage and report as in need of repair the following:

(A) a lack of protection for physical damage to the unit; and

(B) burners, burner ignition devices or heating elements, switches or thermostats that are not a minimum of 18 inches above the lowest garage floor elevation.

(l) Doorbell and chimes. The inspector shall:

(1) inspect the condition of the unit and report as in need of repair a unit that does not operate; and

(2) report as in need of repair any deficiencies in visible and accessible parts.

(m) Attic power vents. The inspector shall:

(1) report as in need of repair deficiencies in the operation and installation of the unit, including the wiring and mounting of the

thermostat control, if so equipped and accessible; and

(2) report as in need of repair unusual sounds or speed and vibration levels.

(n) Garage door operator. The inspector shall:

(1) report as in need of repair deficiencies in the installation, condition and operation of the garage door operator;

(2) operate the door both manually and by an installed automatic door control;

(3) report as in need of repair a door that does not automatically reverse during closing cycle, any installed electronic sensors that are not operable or not installed at the proper heights above the garage floor; and

(4) report as in need of repair door locks or side ropes that have not been removed or disabled.

(o) Hydrotherapy or whirlpool equipment. The inspector shall:

(1) report as in need of repair a unit that does not operate, leaks, or is inaccessible;

(2) report as in need of repair a unit that lacks a ground fault circuit interrupter or has an interrupter that does not operate;

(3) report as in need of repair switches that are not in a safe location or do not operate;

(4) report evidence of leaks under the tub if the access cover is available and accessible, reporting when the cover is absent or inaccessible (the inspector is not required to determine the adequacy of self-draining features of the circulation system); and

(5) report as in need of repair deficiencies in the ports, valves, grates and covers.

(p) Specific limitations for appliances. The inspector is not required to do the following:

(1) operate or determine the condition of other auxiliary components of inspected items; or

(2) inspect self-cleaning functions.

(q) Cooling systems other than evaporative coolers. The inspector shall:

(1) report the type of system and energy sources;

(2) operate the system using normal control devices except when the outdoor temperature is less than 60 degrees Fahrenheit;

(3) inspect for proper performance; such as by observing the temperature difference between the supply air and the return air or noticeable vibration of the blower fan and report as in need of repair any deficiencies;

(4) report as in need of repair the lack of, or deficiencies in drainage of, condensate drain line and secondary drain line when applicable, including pipes made of inadequate material;

(5) report as in need of repair a primary drain pipe that terminates in a sewer vent, if the termination is visible;

(6) report as in need of repair a safety pan that is not appropriately sized for the evaporator coil or free of water or debris;

(7) report as in need of repair a return chase and plenum that are not free of improper and hazardous conditions, such as gas pipes, sewer vents, refrigerant piping or electrical wiring.

(8) report as in need of repair the lack of insulation on refrigerant pipes and the primary condensate drain pipe;

(9) report as in need of repair a condensing unit that does not have adequate clearances, or air circulation, or that has deficiencies in the condition of fins, location, levelness and elevation above ground surfaces; and

(10) report as in need of repair conductor sizing and over-current protective devices that are not appropriately sized for the unit.

(r) Evaporative coolers. The inspector shall:

(1) operate the motor and report as one or two speed;

(2) observe the electrical pigtail connection at the motor;

(3) inspect the power source in the unit;

(4) report as in need of repair a pump that does not function or deficiencies in the spider tubes, tube clips and bleeder system;

(5) report as in need of repair deficiencies in the water supply line and float bracket;

(6) report as in need of repair the absence of a minimum one-inch air gap between water discharge at float and water level;

(7) report as in need of repair deficiencies in the fan (blower) and squirrel cage or rust build-up, deterioration or corrosion;

(8) report as in need of repair deficiencies in the fan belt and pulleys;

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(9) report as in need of repair deficiencies in the housing side panels, the water trays, the exterior housing and the roof frame;

(10) report as in need of repair deficiencies in the roof jack or other mounting point and the location of the seasonal damper at the unit; and

(11) report as in need of repair deficiencies in the interior registers and the supply duct.

(s) Specific limitations for cooling systems. The inspector is not required to do the following:

(1) inspect for the pressure of the system coolant or determine the presence of leaks;

(2) program digital-type thermostats or controls; or

(3) operate setback features on thermostats or controls.

(t) Heating systems. The inspector shall:

(1) report the type of heating system and its energy sources;

(2) report as in need of repair a system that does not operate properly using normal control devices;

(3) report as in need of repair deficiencies in the controls and accessible operating components of the system;

(4) in gas units, inspect the burner, and report as in need of repair deficiencies in the burner compartment, type, condition, draft and termination of the vent pipe, or proximity to combustibles; the lack of combustion and draft air or inappropriate location, or the lack of forced air in the burner compartment (full evaluation of the integrity of a heat exchanger requires dismantling of the furnace and is beyond the scope of a visual inspection);

(5) report as in need of repair gas units that display flame impingement, uplifting flame, improper flame color or excessive scale buildup;

(6) report as in need of repair gas units that use improper materials for the gas branch line and the connection to the appliance;

(7) report as in need of repair in gas units deficiencies in materials used for the gas branch line and the connection to the appliance, the absence of a gas shut-off valve, or a valve that is not properly located, is inaccessible, or leaks; and

(8) report as in need of repair elements in electric furnaces that do not operate;

(9) report as in need of repair a return chase or plenum that are not free of improper and

hazardous conditions, such as gas pipes, sewer vents, refrigerant piping or electrical wiring; and

(10) report if the inspector deemed the furnace to be inaccessible.

(u) Specific limitations for heating systems. The inspector is not required to do the following:

(1) inspect accessories such as humidifiers, air purifiers, motorized dampers, heat reclaimers, electronic air filters or wood-burning stoves;

(2) determine the efficiency or adequacy of a system;

(3) program digital-type thermostats or controls; or

(4) operate radiant heaters, steam heat systems or unvented gas-fired heating appliances.

(v) Ducts, vents (including dryer vents) and flues. The inspector shall:

(1) report as in need of repair deficiencies such as damaged ducting or insulation, improper material or improper routing of ducts where visible and accessible;

(2) report as in need of repair the absence of air flow at all accessible supply registers in the habitable areas of the structure;

(3) report as in need of repair deficiencies in accessible duct fans and filters;

(4) report as in need of repair deficiencies in installation, such as gas piping, sewer vents, electrical wiring or junction boxes in the plenum, returns or chases or improper sealing, where visible;

(5) report as in need of repair deficiencies in the flue system components;

(6) report as in need of repair a flue or vent pipe that does not properly terminate; and

(7) report as in need of repair deficiencies in materials used for the venting systems.

(w) Specific limitations for ducts and vents. The inspector is not required to do the following:

(1) determine the efficiency, adequacy or capacity of the systems;

(2) determine the uniformity of the supply of conditioned air to the various parts of the structure;

(3) determine the types of materials contained in insulation, wrapping of pipes, ducts, jackets, boilers and wiring;



(4) operate venting systems unless ambient temperatures or other circumstances, in the reasonable opinion of the inspector, are conducive to safe operation without damage to the equipment; or

(5) operate a unit outside its normal operating range as reasonably determined by the inspector.

(x) Plumbing systems. The inspector shall:

(1) inspect and report as in need of repair deficiencies in the type and condition of all accessible and visible water supply and wastewater and vent pipes;

(2) inspect and report as in need of repair deficiencies in the operation of all fixtures and faucets where the flow end of the faucet is not connected to an appliance;

(3) report as in need of repair the lack of back-flow devices, anti-siphon devices or systems or air gaps when applicable;

(4) report as in need of repair incompatible materials in connecting devices between differing metals in the supply system, where visible;

(5) report as in need of repair deficiencies in water supply by viewing functional flow in two fixtures operated simultaneously;

(6) report as in need of repair deficiencies in functional drainage at accessible plumbing fixtures;

(7) report as in need of repair deficiencies in installation and identification of hot and cold faucets;

(8) report as in need of repair mechanical drainstops that are missing or do not operate if installed on sinks, lavatories and tubs;

(9) report as in need of repair commodes that have cracks in the ceramic material, are improperly mounted on the floor, leak or have tank components which do not operate;

(10) report as in need of repair accessible supply and drain pipes that leak;

(11) report as in need of repair the lack of a visible vent pipe system to the exterior of the structure or improper routing or termination of the vent system;

(12) report as in need of repair a shower enclosure that leaks; and

(13) report as in need of repair any exterior faucet attached or immediately adjacent to the structure that does not operate properly.

(y) Specific limitations for plumbing systems. The inspector is not required to do the following:

(1) operate any main, branch or shut-off valves;

(2) inspect any system that has been shut down or otherwise secured;

(3) inspect any components that are not visible or accessible;

(4) inspect any exterior plumbing components such as water mains, private sewer systems, water wells, sprinkler systems or swimming pools;

(5) inspect fire sprinkler systems;

(6) inspect or operate drain pumps or waste ejector pumps;

(7) inspect the quality or the volume of well water;

(8) determine the potability of any water supply;

(9) inspect water-conditioning equipment, such as softeners or filter systems;

(10) inspect solar water heating systems;

(11) determine the effectiveness of anti-siphon devices on appropriate fixtures or systems;

(12) operate free-standing appliances;

(13) inspect private water supply systems, swimming pools, or pressure tanks;

(14) inspect the gas supply system for leaks; or

(15) inspect for sewer clean-outs.

**§535.230. Standards of Practice: Inspection Guidelines for Electrical Systems.** *[Adopted September 1, 2000]*

(a) Service entrance and panels. The inspector shall:

(1) inspect service entrance cables and report as in need of repair deficiencies in the integrity of insulation, drip loop, separation of conductors at weatherheads and clearances;

(2) report as in need of repair a drop, weatherhead or mast that is not securely fastened;

(3) report as in need of repair the lack of a grounding electrode conductor in the service where visible, or the lack of secure connection to the grounding electrode or grounding system;

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(4) report as in need of repair accessible main or subpanels that are not secured to the structure or appropriate for their location (weather-tight if exposed to weather, appropriate clearances and accessibility), do not have inside covers (dead fronts) in place, do not have conductors protected from the edges of metal panel boxes, do not have trip ties installed on labeled 240 volt circuits, do not have proper fasteners or do not have knockouts filled;

(5) inspect and report as in need of repair deficiencies in the type and condition of the wiring in the panels, in the compatibility of overcurrent protectors for the size of conductor being used and in sizing of listed equipment of overcurrent protection and conductors, when power requirements for listed equipment are readily available and breakers are labeled;

(6) report as in need of repair a panel that is installed in a hazardous location, such as a clothes closet;

(7) report as in need of repair the absence of appropriate connections, such as copper/aluminum approved devices, pig-tailed connections or crimp connections; and the absence of anti-oxidants on aluminum conductor terminations; and

(8) report as in need of repair the lack of main disconnect(s).

(b) Specific limitations for service entrance and panels. The inspector is not required to do the following:

(1) determine service capacity amperage or voltage or the capacity of the electrical system relative to present or future use;

(2) determine the insurability of the property;

(3) conduct voltage drop calculations; or

(4) determine the accuracy of breaker labeling.

(c) Branch circuits, connected devices and fixtures. The inspector shall:

(1) report the type of branch circuit wiring;

(2) inspect all accessible receptacles and report as in need of repair a receptacle in which:

(A) power is not present;

(B) polarity is incorrect;

(C) the unit is not grounded, if applicable;

(D) there is evidence of arcing or excessive heat;

(E) the unit is not secured to the wall;

(G) ground fault circuit interrupter devices are not properly installed as set forth by the current edition of the National Electric Code, publication 70A of the National Fire Protection Association, or do not operate properly as shown by use of a separate testing device;

(3) operate all accessible wall and appliance switches and report as in need of repair a switch that:

(A) does not operate or is damaged;

(B) displays evidence of arcing or excessive heat; or

(C) is not fastened securely with cover in place.

(4) inspect installed fixtures including lighting devices and ceiling fans;

(5) report as in need of repair an inoperable or missing fixture;

(6) report as in need of repair deficiencies in exposed wiring, wiring terminations, junctions and junction boxes;

(7) report as in need of repair deficiencies or absences of conduit in appropriate locations or conduit that is not terminated securely;

(8) report as in need of repair appliances and electrical gutters that do not have proper bonding;

(9) report as in need of repair subpanels that are not properly bonded and grounded;

(10) report as in need of repair the lack of disconnects in appropriate locations;

(11) inspect (if branch circuit aluminum wiring is discovered in the main or subpanels) a random sampling of accessible receptacles and switches and report as in need of repair the absence of appropriate connections, such as copper/aluminum approved devices, pig-tailed connections or crimp connections;

(12) report as in need of repair the improper use of extension cords; and

(13) report as in need of repair the absence of, or deficiencies in, the installation and operation of smoke or fire detectors not connected to a central alarm system.

### **§535.231. Standards of Practice: Optional Systems.** *[Adopted September 1, 2000]*

(a) Scope. This section covers other systems and attachments that an inspector may inspect. The inspector may need special knowledge or tools to perform these inspections. It is the

responsibility of the inspector to be properly informed and know current and safe procedures for inspecting the items described in this section. The inspector shall determine and provide a report of the condition of the equipment, systems, parts or components by visual observation and operation in normal modes and operating range noted at the date and time of the inspection. If an inspector agrees to inspect a component described in this section, §535.227 of this title (relating to Standards of Inspection: General Provisions) applies to the inspection.

(b) Inspection guidelines for gas lines. The inspector shall:

(1) inspect and report as in need of repair deficiencies in the condition and type of all accessible and visible gas piping; and

(2) test gas lines by using a local or an industry-accepted procedure.

(c) Specific limitations for gas lines. The inspector is not required to inspect sacrificial anode bonding or for its existence.

(d) Inspection guidelines for outbuildings. The inspector shall:

(1) inspect the building and report as in need of repair water penetration or deficiencies in structural performance; and

(2) report as in need of repair deficiencies in electrical, plumbing, heating, ventilation or air-conditioning systems that the standards of practice would require the inspector to report for the principal structure.

(e) Inspection guidelines for outdoor cooking equipment. The inspector shall:

(1) report the energy source and operate the unit;

(2) report as in need of repair deficiencies in operation, control knobs, handles, burner bars, grills, box, rotisserie (if present) and heat diffusion material;

(3) report as in need of repair a unit or pedestal that is not stable;

(4) report as in need of repair gas units that use improper materials for the gas branch line and the connection to the appliance; and

(5) report as in need of repair a gas unit that has no shut-off valve, an inaccessible valve or a valve that leaks;

(f) Inspection guidelines for lawn and garden sprinkler system. The inspector shall:

(1) operate all zones or stations on the

system manually;

(2) report as in need of repair deficiencies in water flow or pressure at the circuit heads;

(3) report as in need of repair surface water leaks, the absence or improper installation of anti-siphon valves and backflow preventers or the absence of shut-off valves;

(4) inspect and report as in need of repair deficiencies in the condition and mounting of the control box and visible wiring; and

(5) report as in need of repair deficiencies in the operation of each zone and associated valves, spray head patterns and areas of non-coverage within the zone.

(g) Specific limitations for lawn and garden sprinkler system. The inspector is not required to inspect the automatic function of the timer or control box, the rain sensor or the effectiveness and sizing of anti-siphon valves or backflow preventers.

(h) Inspection guidelines for private water wells. The inspector shall:

(1) operate at least two fixtures simultaneously;

(2) report the type of pump and type of storage equipment;

(3) report as in need of repair deficiencies in water pressure and flow and operation of pressure switches;

(4) inspect and report as in need of repair deficiencies in the condition of visible and accessible equipment and components;

(5) report as in need of repair wiring that is improper or lacks circuit protection;

(6) report as in need of repair deficiencies in the well head, including improper site drainage;

(7) recommend, or arrange to have performed, a coliform analysis; and

(8) report the proximity of any known septic system.

(i) Specific limitations for private water wells. The inspector is not required to do the following:

(1) open, uncover or remove the pump, heads, screens, lines or other component parts of the system;

(2) determine water quality or potability or the reliability of the water supply or source; or

(3) locate or verify underground water leaks.

**§§535.231(j)-.231(m)(5)**

(j) Inspection guidelines for individual private sewage systems (septic systems). The inspector shall:

(1) report as in need of repair deficiencies in accessible or visible components of the system at the time of the inspection;

(2) operate plumbing fixtures and report as in need of repair deficiencies in functional flow;

(3) walk over the area of tanks and fields or beds and report as in need of repair any visual or olfactory evidence of effluent seepage or flow at the surface of the ground;

(4) report as in need of repair areas of inadequate site drainage around or adjacent to the system;

(5) report the proximity of any known water wells; underground cisterns; water supply lines; streams, ponds and lakes; sharp slopes or breaks; easement lines; property lines; soil absorption systems; swimming pools or sprinkler systems.

(6) inspect the operation of the system;

(7) report the lack of visible access to tanks;

(8) report the type of the system, if possible, and the location of the drainfield; and

(9) report as in need of repair aerators or dosing pumps that do not operate or equipment that is improperly wired.

(k) Specific limitations for individual private sewage systems (septic systems). The inspector is not required to do the following:

(1) excavate or uncover the system or its components to determine the size, adequacy or efficiency of the system; or

(2) determine the type of construction used unless readily known without excavation or destructive examination.

(l) Inspection guidelines for swimming pools and equipment (spas and hot tubs). The inspector shall:

(1) report the type of pool construction;

(2) report as in need of repair deficiencies in pool surfaces,

(3) report as in need of repair deficiencies in tiles, copings and decks;

(4) report as in need of repair deficiencies in slides, steps, diving boards and other equipment;

(5) report as in need of repair deficiencies in

drains, skimmers and valves;

(6) report as in need of repair pool lights that are missing, do not function or lack ground fault circuit interrupter protection;

(7) report as in need of repair pump motors, controls, and sweeps that do not function or lack proper wiring and circuit protection;

(8) when inspecting a heater, report as in need of repair deficiencies that the standards of practice would require the inspector to report for a heating system;

(9) report as in need of repair gas heaters that use improper materials for the branch line and the connection to the appliance;

(10) report as in need of repair a gas unit that has no shut-off valve, an inaccessible valve or a valve that leaks;

(11) report as in need of repair a pump motor, blower or other electrical equipment, if visible, that lacks external grounding;

(12) report as in need of repair above-ground water leaks or deficiencies in the filter tank or pressure gauge; and

(13) report as in need of repair the absence of, or deficiencies in, fences, gates or enclosures.

(m) Specific limitations for swimming pools and equipment (spas and hot tubs). The inspector is not required to the following:

(1) dismantle or otherwise open any components or lines;

(2) uncover or excavate any lines or otherwise concealed components of the system or determine the presence of sub-surface leaks;

(3) fill the pool, spa or hot tub with water;

(4) determine the presence of sub-surface water tables; or

(5) inspect ancillary equipment such as computer controls, covers, chlorinators or other chemical dispensers, or water ionization devices or conditioners other than required by this section.

**S. Residential Rental Locators**

**§535.300. Advertising by Residential Rental Locators.** *[Adopted April 1, 1996; Amended October 1, 1996; May 27, 1998 and August 31, 2004; Ref: §1101.002(6)]*

(a) This section is intended to establish standards relating to permissible forms of advertising by a person licensed as a real estate broker or salesperson and functioning as a residential rental locator ("locator"). For the purposes of this section, the term "residential rental locator" shall have the meaning provided by Texas Occupations Code, Chapter 1101 (the Act), §1101.002(6). For the purposes of this section, the term "advertisement" includes, but is not limited to advertising in printed form, signs, or advertising using radio, television or personal computers.

(b) If a locator advertises more than one apartment unit in the same advertisement and lists amenities or features generally without providing the features or amenities available at a specific rent for a specific unit, the advertisement must include a statement having a meaning substantially equivalent to one of the following.

(1) "All units do not have the advertised features or amenities."

(2) "The rent is \$\_\_\_\_\_ or more, depending on the features of the unit."

(3) "The rent quoted is the minimum for a unit which may not have all the features advertised."

(c) Advertisements in a printed publication shall be deemed to be in compliance with the requirements of subsection (b) of this section if the publication in which an advertisement appears contains this notice at the beginning of the section in which the advertisement appears: Notice. Residential rental locators are required to be licensed by the Texas Real Estate Commission (P. O. Box 12188, Austin, Texas 78711-2188 1-800-250-8732 or 512-465-3960). Locators may advertise apartment units in general terms, and all units may not have the same features. The amount of rent quoted in an advertisement may be the starting rent for a basic unit or for a unit which does not have all advertised features.

(d) An advertisement by a locator of an apartment unit by general terms is misleading unless at the time the advertisement is placed at least one unit meeting the description of the unit contained in the advertisement is available through the locator at the lowest rent stated in the advertisement within either a time stated in the advertisement or within 30 days after the advertisement is submitted for publication if no

time is stated. Prior to offering a unit for rent or lease, the locator also must also obtain the consent of the unit's owner or of the owner's authorized agent.

(e) Advertising by locators must also comply with the provisions of the Act, §1101.652(b)(23) and §535.154 of this title (relating to Misleading Advertising).

(f) Failure to comply with this section is grounds for the commission to reprimand a licensee, to suspend or revoke a license, or to impose an administrative penalty in accordance with the Act, §1101.757.



## T. Easement or Right-of-Way Agents

**§535.400. Registration of Easement or Right-of-Way Agents.** *[Adopted November 30, 1997; amended August 18, 1998; January 1, 2001; December 24, 2001 and August 31, 2004; Ref §1101.501]*

(a) The Texas Real Estate Commission adopts by reference the following forms approved by the Texas Real Estate Commission in 2000. These forms are published by and available from the Texas Real Estate Commission, P. O. Box 12188, Austin, Texas 78711-2188.

(1) ERW 1-2, Application For Easement Or Right-of-Way Agent Registration For An Individual; and

(2) ERW 2-2, Application For Easement Or Right-of-Way Agent Registration For A Business.

(b) An individual desiring to be registered by the commission as an easement or right-of-way agent must file form ERW 1-2 with the commission. If the applicant is a business, the applicant must file form ERW 2-2. All applicants must submit the applicable fees set forth in The Real Estate License Act, Texas Occupations Code, Chapter 1101, (the Act). The commission will not accept an application which has been submitted without the correct filing fees or which has been submitted in pencil. A person also may apply for registration by accessing the commission's Internet web site, entering the required information on the application form and paying the appropriate fee in accordance with the instructions provided at the site by the commission. If the person is an individual, the person must provide the commission with the person's photograph and signature prior to issuance of a registration certificate. The person may provide the photograph and signature prior to the submission of an electronic application. If the applicant does not complete the application process as required by this subsection, the commission shall terminate the application.

(c) After the commission has accepted an application for filing, the commission shall process the application and promptly issue a certificate of registration, request any information required to complete the registration, or advise the applicant that the application has been terminated or disapproved, as the case may be.

(d) The commission shall assign a registration number to each registrant and shall provide each registrant with a certificate of registration. Each registration issued by the commission is valid until the last day of the month one year from the

day the registration was issued. Each registrant shall display the certificate of registration issued by the commission in a prominent location in the registrant's place of business, as required by the Act, §1101.507. If the registrant maintains more than one place of business, the registrant shall display either the certificate or a copy of the certificate in each place of business.

(e) The commission may terminate an application with written notice to the applicant for failure to submit information or documentation within 60 days after the commission makes written request for the information or documentation.

(f) The commission may disapprove an application for registration with written notice to the applicant if the applicant has been convicted of a criminal offense which is grounds for disapproval of an application under §541.1 of this title (relating to Criminal Offense Guidelines) or the applicant has engaged in conduct prohibited by the Act. Provided a timely written request for a hearing is made by the applicant in accordance with the Act, §1101.364, an applicant whose application for registration has been disapproved is entitled to a hearing. The hearing on the application will be conducted in accordance with the provisions of the Act, §1101.364, and Chapter 533 of this title (relating to Practice and Procedure).

**§535.401. Required Notices.** *[Adopted November 30, 1997; Ref §9A]*

(a) The Texas Real Estate Commission adopts by reference the following forms approved by the Texas Real Estate Commission. These forms are published by and available from the Texas Real Estate Commission, P. O. Box 12188, Austin, Texas 78711-2188.

(1) Form ERW 3-0, Registrant's Office Notice; and

(2) Form ERW 4-0, Notice Regarding Easements and Rights-of-Way.

(b) Each registrant shall display form ERW 3-0 in a prominent location in each place of business the registrant maintains.

(c) Each registrant shall, before a party in a transaction other than the party the registrant represents is obligated to sell, buy, lease, or transfer a right-of-way or easement, provide to the party a copy of form ERW 4-0 completed by the registrant.

## §§535.402-.403(e)

### **§535.402. Complaints, Disciplinary Action and Appeals.** *[Adopted November 30, 1997; amended August 31, 2004; Ref §1101.505]*

(a) The investigation of complaints and disciplinary action by the commission against registrants will be conducted in accordance with the Act and §535.141 of this title (relating to Initiation of Investigation). In addition to the grounds for revoking or suspending a registration listed in the Act, the commission may revoke or suspend the registration of a registrant on the following grounds:

(1) procuring or attempting to procure a registration by fraud, misrepresentation or deceit, or by making a material misstatement of fact in an application;

(2) failing or refusing on demand to produce a document, book, or record in the registrant's possession concerning an easement or right-of-way transaction involving the registrant for examination by the commission or its authorized agent; and

(3) failing within 10 days to provide information requested by the commission or its authorized agent in course of an investigation of a complaint.

(b) Appeals from disciplinary orders against a registrant will be governed by the Act, §1101.658 and by Chapter 533 of this title (relating to Practice and Procedure).

### **§535.403. Renewal of Registration.** *[Adopted August 18, 1998; amended January 1, 2001; October 4, 2001; May 19, 2003 and August 31, 2004; Ref §1101.504]*

(a) The commission shall establish a time period for renewal of each registration, which shall end with the expiration date of the current registration. Each registrant has the responsibility to apply for renewal of a registration by making proper application as specified by this section. Applications must be made on the current renewal application form approved by the commission accompanied by an annual fee of \$83. Failure to receive a registration renewal application form from the commission does not relieve a registrant of the obligation to obtain the appropriate form and to apply for renewal to maintain registration. A registrant also may renew an unexpired registration by accessing the commission's Internet web site, entering the required information on the renewal application form and paying the appropriate fee in accordance with the instructions provided at the site by the commission. Failure to provide information requested by the commission in connection with a renewal application is grounds for disciplinary

action under the Act, §1101.653. A registrant who fails timely to pay a renewal fee must apply for and receive a new registration in order to act as an easement or right-of-way agent.

(b) The Texas Real Estate Commission adopts by reference Renewal Application Form ERW 5-2, approved by the commission in 2003. This form is published by and available from the Texas Real Estate Commission, P.O. Box 12188, Austin, Texas 78711-2188.

(c) The commission shall advise each registrant of the time period for filing a renewal application and paying the renewal fee by mailing a renewal application form to the registrant's last known permanent mailing address as shown in the commission's computerized records at least three months before expiration of the current registration. Each registrant shall furnish a permanent mailing address to the commission and report a change in permanent mailing address within 10 days after the change occurs. If a registrant fails to provide a permanent mailing address, the last known mailing address for the registrant will be deemed to be the registrant's permanent mailing address. The commission shall have no obligation to so notify a business entity such as a corporation, limited liability company or partnership, that has failed to designate an officer, manager or partner who meets the requirements of Section 1101.502 of the Act. The commission may not renew a registration issued to a business entity unless the entity has designated an officer, manager or partner who meets the requirements of the Act.

(d) An application for renewal will be deemed to have been timely filed if it shows a postmark on or before the expiration date of the registration. When the last day of the renewal period falls on a non-business day, renewal applications also will be deemed to have been timely filed if received or postmarked no later than the first business day following the last day of the renewal period. "Non-business" days are Saturday, Sunday and any other day upon which the commission offices are closed due to a state holiday designated in the General Appropriations Act or by other law.

(e) Renewals by registrants who are on active duty in the United States armed forces or who are subject to the provisions of the Texas Education Code, §57.491, concerning certain student loans also will be governed by §535.92 of this title (Relating to Miscellaneous Provisions Concerning License Renewals).



## CHAPTER 537 PROFESSIONAL AGREEMENT AND STANDARD CONTRACTS (Ref: §1101.155)

## Professional Agreements

**§537.1. Statement of Principles by the State Bar of Texas and the Texas Real Estate Commission.** *[Repealed January 3, 1983]*

**§537.2. Special Advisory Committee on Standardized Forms.** *[Repealed October 20, 1983]*

**§537.11. Use of Standard Contract Forms.** *[Adopted March 3, 1976; amended April 5, 1979; October 23, 1983; February 27, 1985; May 16, 1985; May 15, 1986; October 5, 1990; September 1, 1992; February 1, 1994; September 1, 1994; March 1, 1995; January 3, 1996; September 1, 1998; March 1, 1999; September 1, 1999; January 1, 2000; April 20, 2000; September 1, 2000; April 1, 2001; February 1, 2002; April 1, 2003; April 1, 2004; September 1, 2004; May 1, 2006 and December 27, 2006]*

(a) When negotiating contracts binding the sale, exchange, option, lease or rental of any interest in real property, a real estate licensee shall use only those contract forms promulgated by the Texas Real Estate Commission for that kind of transaction with the following exceptions:

(1) transactions in which the licensee is functioning solely as a principal, not as an agent;

(2) transactions in which an agency of the United States government requires a different form to be used;

(3) transactions for which a contract form has been prepared by the property owner or prepared by an attorney and required by the property owner;

(4) transactions for which no standard contract form has been promulgated by the Texas Real Estate Commission, and the licensee uses a form prepared by an attorney at law licensed by this state and approved by the attorney for the particular kind of transactions involved or prepared by the Texas Real Estate Broker-Lawyer Committee and made available for trial use by licensees with the consent of the Texas Real Estate Commission.

(b) A licensee may not practice law, offer, give nor attempt to give advice, directly or indirectly; the licensee may not act as a public conveyancer nor give advice or opinions as to the legal effect of any contracts or other such instruments which may affect the title to real estate; the licensee may not give opinions concerning the status or validity of title to real estate; and the licensee may not attempt to prevent nor in any manner whatsoever discourage any principal to a real estate transaction from employing a lawyer.

However, nothing herein shall be deemed to limit the licensee's fiduciary obligation to disclose to the licensee's principals all pertinent facts which are within the knowledge of the licensee, including such facts which might affect the status of or title to real estate.

(c) A licensee may not undertake to draw or prepare documents fixing and defining the legal rights of the principals to a transaction. In negotiating real estate transactions, the licensee may fill in forms for such transactions, using exclusively forms which have been approved and promulgated by the Texas Real Estate Commission or such forms as are otherwise permitted by these rules. When filling in such a form, the licensee may only fill in the blanks provided and may not add to or strike matter from such form, except that licensees shall add factual statements and business details desired by the principals and shall strike only such matter as is desired by the principals and as is necessary to conform the instrument to the intent of the parties. A licensee may not add to a promulgated earnest money contract form factual statements or business details for which a contract addendum, lease or other form has been promulgated by the commission for mandatory use. Nothing herein shall be deemed to prevent the licensee from explaining to the principals the meaning of the factual statements and business details contained in the said instrument so long as the licensee does not offer or give legal advice. It is not the practice of law as defined in this Act for a real estate licensee to complete a contract form which is either promulgated by the Texas Real Estate Commission or prepared by the Texas Real Estate Broker-Lawyer Committee and made available for trial use by licensees with the consent of the Texas Real Estate Commission. Contract forms prepared by the Texas Real Estate Broker-Lawyer Committee for trial use may be used on a voluntary basis after being approved by the commission. Contract forms prepared by the Texas Real Estate Broker-Lawyer Committee and approved by the commission to replace previously promulgated forms may be used by licensees on a voluntary basis prior to the effective date of rules requiring use of the replacement forms.

(d) Where it appears that, prior to the execution of any such instrument, there are unusual matters involved in the transaction which should be resolved by legal counsel before the instrument is executed or that the instrument is to be acknowledged and filed for record, the licensee shall advise the principals that each should consult a lawyer of the principal's choice before executing same.

## §§537.11(e)-.22

(e) A licensee may not employ, directly or indirectly, a lawyer nor pay for the services of a lawyer to represent any principal to a real estate transaction in which the licensee is acting as an agent. The licensee may employ and pay for the services of a lawyer to represent only the licensee in a real estate transaction, including preparation of the contract, agreement, or other legal instruments to be executed by the principals to the transactions.

(f) A licensee shall advise the principals that the instrument they are about to execute is binding on them.

(g) Forms approved or promulgated by the commission may be reproduced only from the following sources:

(1) numbered copies obtained from the commission, whether in a printed format or electronically reproduced from the files available on the commission's Internet site;

(2) printed copies made from copies obtained from the commission;

(3) legible photocopies made from such copies; or

(4) computer-driven printers following these guidelines.

(A) The computer file or program containing the form text must not allow the end-user direct access to the text of the form and may only permit the user to insert language in blanks in the forms or to strike through language at the direction of the parties to the contract.

(B) Typefaces or fonts must appear to be identical to those used by the commission in printed copies of the particular form.

(C) The text and number of pages must be identical to that used by the commission in printed copies of the particular form.

(D) The spacing, length of blanks, borders and placement of text on the page must appear to be identical to that used by the commission in printed copies of the form.

(E) The name and address of the person or firm responsible for developing the software program must be legibly printed below the border at the bottom of each page in no less than six point type and in no larger than 10 point type.

(h) Forms approved or promulgated by the commission must be reproduced on the same size of paper used by the commission with the following changes or additions only.

(1) The business name or logo of a broker, organization or printer may appear at the top of a form outside the border.

(2) The broker's name may be inserted in any blank provided for that purpose.

**§537.12. Standard Contract Form TREC No. 1-1.** *[Repealed August 1, 1985.]*

**§537.13. Standard Contract Form TREC No. 2-4.** *[Repealed January 1, 1998.]*

**§537.14. Standard Contract Form TREC No. 3-0.** *[Repealed August 1, 1985.]*

**§537.15. Standard Contract Form TREC No. 4-0.** *[Repealed August 1, 1985.]*

**§537.16. Standard Contract Form TREC No. 5-0.** *[Repealed August 1, 1985.]*

**§537.17. Standard Contract Form TREC No. 6-0.** *[Repealed August 1, 1985.]*

**§537.20. Standard Contract Form TREC No. 9-6.** *[Adopted November 1, 1982; amended August 1, 1985; February 1, 1994; January 1, 1998; January 1, 2000; April 20, 2000; April 1, 2003; May 1, 2006. and December 27, 2006]* The Texas Real Estate Commission adopts by reference standard contract form TREC No. 9-6 approved by the Texas Real Estate Commission in 2006 for use in the sale of unimproved property where intended use is for one to four family residences. This document is published by and available from the Texas Real Estate Commission, P.O. Box 12188, Austin, Texas 78711-2188, [www.state.tx.us](http://www.state.tx.us).

**§537.21. Standard Contract Form TREC No. 10-5.** *[Adopted November 1, 1982; amended December 1, 1987; September 1, 1994; September 1, 1999; January 1, 2000; February 1, 2002; December 27, 2006 and July 1, 2007]* The Texas Real Estate Commission adopts by reference standard contract form TREC No. 10-5 approved by the Texas Real Estate Commission in 2007 for use as an addendum concerning sale of other property by a buyer to be attached to promulgated forms of contracts. This document is published by and available from the Texas Real Estate Commission, P.O. Box 12188, Austin, Texas 78711-2188, [www.state.tx.us](http://www.state.tx.us).

**§537.22. Standard Contract Form TREC No. 11-6.** *[Adopted November 11, 1982; amended December 1, 1987; September 1, 1994; and*

*September 1, 1998; February 1, 2002; April 1, 2004 December 27, 2006 and July 1, 2007.]* The Texas Real Estate Commission adopts by reference standard contract form TREC No.11-6 approved by the Texas Real Estate Commission in 2007 for use as an addendum to be attached to promulgated forms of contracts which are second or "back-up" contracts. This document is published by and available from the Texas Real Estate Commission, P.O. Box 12188, Austin, Texas 78711-2188, [www.state.tx.us](http://www.state.tx.us).

**§537.23. Standard Contract Form TREC No. 12-2.** *[Adopted November 1, 1982; amended September 1, 1992; December 27, 2006 and July 1, 2007]* The The Texas Real Estate Commission adopts by reference standard contract form TREC No. 12-2 approved by the Texas Real Estate Commission in 2007 for use as an addendum to be attached to promulgated forms of contracts where there is a Veterans Administration release of liability or restoration entitlement. This document is published by and available from the Texas Real Estate Commission, P.O. Box 12188, Austin, Texas 78711-2188, [www.state.tx.us](http://www.state.tx.us).

**§537.24. Standard Contract Form TREC No. 13-1.** *[Repealed September 1, 2000.]*

**§537.25. Standard Contract Form TREC No. 14-0.** *[Repealed September 1, 1994.]*

**§537.26. Standard Contract Form TREC No. 15-4.** *[Adopted November 1, 1982; amended August 1, 1985; September 1, 1994; March 1, 1999 and December 27, 2006]* The Texas Real Estate Commission adopts by reference standard contract form TREC No. 15-4 approved by the Texas Real Estate Commission in 2006 for use as a residential lease when a seller temporarily occupies property after closing. This document is published by and available from the Texas Real Estate Commission, P.O. Box 12188, Austin, Texas 78711, [www.state.tx.us](http://www.state.tx.us).

**§537.27. Standard Contract Form TREC No. 16-4.** *[Adopted November 1, 1982; amended August 1, 1985; September 1, 1994; March 1, 1999 and December 27, 2006]* The Texas Real Estate Commission adopts by reference standard contract form TREC No. 16-4 approved by the Texas Real Estate Commission in 2006 for use as a residential lease when a buyer temporarily occupies property prior to closing. This document is published by and available from the Texas Real Estate Commission, P.O. Box 12188, Austin, Texas 78711, [www.state.tx.us](http://www.state.tx.us).

**§537.28. Standard Contract Form TREC No. 20-7.** *[Adopted August 1, 1985; amended September 1, 1992; February 1, 1994; January 1, 1998; January 1, 2000; April 20, 2000; February 1, 2002; April 1, 2003; May 1, 2006 and December 27, 2006]* The Texas Real Estate Commission adopts by reference standard contract form TREC No. 20-7 approved by the Texas Real Estate Commission in 2006 for use in the resale of residential real estate. This document is published by and available from the Texas Real Estate Commission, P.O. Box 12188, Austin, Texas 78711-2188, [www.state.tx.us](http://www.state.tx.us).

**§537.29. Standard Contract Form TREC No. 21-4.** *[Repealed February 1, 2002]*

**§537.30. Standard Contract Form TREC No. 23-7.** *[Adopted December 1, 1987; amended February 1, 1994; January 1, 1998; January 1, 2000; April 20, 2000; September 1, 2000; April 1, 2003; May 1, 2006; December 27, 2006 and December 30, 2007.]* The Texas Real Estate Commission adopts by reference standard contract form TREC No. 23-7 approved by the Texas Real Estate Commission in 2008 for use in the sale of a new home where construction is incomplete. This document is published by and available from the Texas Real Estate Commission, P.O. Box 12188, Austin, Texas 78711-2188, [www.trec.state.tx.us](http://www.trec.state.tx.us).

**§537.31. Standard Contract Form TREC No. 24-7.** *[Adopted December 1, 1987; amended February 1, 1994; January 1, 1998; January 1, 2000; April 20, 2000; September 1, 2000; April 1, 2003; May 1, 2006; December 27, 2006 and December 30, 2007.]* The Texas Real Estate Commission adopts by reference standard contract form TREC No. 24-7 approved by the Texas Real Estate Commission in 2008 for use in the sale of a new home where construction is completed. This document is published by and available from the Texas Real Estate Commission, P.O. Box 12188, Austin, Texas 78711-2188, [www.trec.state.tx.us](http://www.trec.state.tx.us).

**§537.32. Standard Contract Form TREC No. 25-5.** *[Adopted December 1, 1987; amended February 1, 1994; January 1, 1998; January 1, 2000; April 20, 2000; April 1, 2003; May 1, 2006 and December 27, 2006]* The Texas Real Estate Commission adopts by reference standard contract form TREC No. 25-5 approved by the Texas Real Estate Commission in 2006 for use in the sale of a farm or ranch. This document is published by and available from the Texas Real Estate Commission, P.O. Box 12188, Austin, Texas 78711-2188, [www.state.tx.us](http://www.state.tx.us).

**§§537.33-.44**

**§537.33. Standard Contract Form TREC No. 26-4.** *[Adopted December 1, 1987; amended September 1, 1992; February 1, 1994; April 1, 2001; February 1, 2002 and December 27, 2006]* The Texas Real Estate Commission adopts by reference standard contract form TREC No. 26-5 approved by the Texas Real Estate Commission in 2006 for use as an addendum concerning seller financing. This document is published by and available from the Texas Real Estate Commission, P.O. Box 12188, Austin, Texas 78711-2188, [www.state.tx.us](http://www.state.tx.us).

**§537.34. Standard Contract Form TREC No. 27-0.** *[Repealed January 1, 1998]*

**§537.35. Standard Contract Form TREC No. 28-1.** *[Adopted February 1, 1994; amended December 27, 2006 and July 1, 2007]* The Texas Real Estate Commission adopts by reference standard contract form TREC No. 28-1 approved by the Texas Real Estate Commission in 2007 for use as an addendum to be attached to promulgated forms of contracts where reports are to be obtained relating to environmental assessments, threatened or endangered species, or wetlands. This document is published by and available from the Texas Real Estate Commission, P.O. Box 12188, Austin, Texas 78711-2188, [www.state.tx.us](http://www.state.tx.us).

**§537.36. Standard Contract Form TREC No. 29-1.** *[Repealed April 1, 2003]*

**§537.37. Standard Contract Form TREC No. 30-6.** *[Adopted September 1, 1994; amended January 1, 1998; January 1, 2000; April 20, 2000; February 1, 2002; April 1, 2003; May 1, 2006 and December 27, 2006]* The Texas Real Estate Commission adopts by reference standard contract form TREC No. 30-6 approved by the Texas Real Estate Commission in 2006 for use in the resale of a residential condominium unit. This document is published by and available from the Texas Real Estate Commission, P.O. Box 12188, Austin, Texas 78711-2188, [www.state.tx.us](http://www.state.tx.us).

**§537.38. Standard Contract Form TREC No. 31-2.** *[Repealed February 1, 2002]*

**§537.39. Standard Contract Form TREC No. 32-1.** *[Adopted September 1, 1994; amended December 27, 2006 and July 1, 2007]* The Texas Real Estate Commission adopts by reference standard contract form TREC No. 32-1 approved by the Texas Real Estate Commission in 2007 for use as a condominium resale certificate. This document is published by and available from the

Texas Real Estate Commission, P.O. Box 12188, Austin, Texas 78711-2188, [www.state.tx.us](http://www.state.tx.us).

**§537.40. Standard Contract Form TREC No. 33-1.** *[Adopted March 1, 1995; amended December 27, 2006 and July 1, 2007]* The Texas Real Estate Commission adopts by reference standard contract form TREC No. 33-1 approved by the Texas Real Estate Commission in 2007 for use as an addendum to be added to promulgated forms of contracts in the sale of property adjoining and sharing a common boundary with the tidally influenced submerged lands of the state. This document is published by and available from the Texas Real Estate Commission, P.O. Box 12188, Austin, Texas 78711-2188, [www.state.tx.us](http://www.state.tx.us).

**§537.41. Standard Contract Form TREC No. 34-3.** *[Adopted March 1, 1995; amended February 1, 2002; December 27, 2006; July 1, 2007 and December 30, 2007]* The Texas Real Estate Commission adopts by reference standard contract form, TREC No. 34-3 approved by the Texas Real Estate Commission in 2008 for use as an addendum to be added to promulgated forms of contracts in the sale of property located seaward of the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway. This document is published by and available from the Texas Real Estate Commission, P.O. Box 12188, Austin, Texas 78711-2188, [www.trec.state.tx.us](http://www.trec.state.tx.us).

**§537.42. Standard Contract Form TREC No. 35-2.** *[Repealed April 1, 2003]*

**§537.43. Standard Contract Form TREC No. 36-4.** *[Adopted January 3, 1996; amended September 1, 1999; January 1, 2000; April 1, 2003; April 1, 2004; May 1, 2006 and December 27, 2006]* The Texas Real Estate Commission adopts by reference standard contract form TREC No. 36-4 approved by the Texas Real Estate Commission in 2006 for use as an addendum to be added to promulgated forms in the sale of property subject to mandatory membership in an owners' association. This document is published by and available from the Texas Real Estate Commission, P.O. Box 12188, Austin, Texas 78711-2188, [www.state.tx.us](http://www.state.tx.us).

**§537.44. Standard Contract Form TREC No. 37-2.** *[Adopted January 3, 1996; amended September 1, 1999; January 1, 2000; May 1, 2006 and December 27, 2006]* The Texas Real Estate Commission adopts by reference standard contract form TREC No. 37-2 approved by the Texas Real Estate Commission in 2006 for use as a resale certificate when the property is subject to mandatory membership in an owners'

association. This document is published by and available from the Texas Real Estate Commission, P.O. Box 12188, Austin, Texas 78711-2188, [www.state.tx.us](http://www.state.tx.us).

**§537.45. Standard Contract Form TREC No.38-1.** *[Adopted September 1, 1998; amended February 1, 2002 and December 27, 2006]* The Texas Real Estate Commission adopts by reference standard contract form TREC No.38-1 approved by the Texas Real Estate Commission in 2002 for use as a notice of termination of contract. This document is published by and available from the Texas Real Estate Commission, P.O. Box 12188, Austin, Texas 78711-2188, [www.state.tx.us](http://www.state.tx.us).

**§537.46. Standard Contract Form TREC No. 39-6.** *[Adopted September 1, 1998; amended September 1, 1999; January 1, 2000; April 1, 2001; February 1, 2002; April 1, 2003 and September 1, 2004; May 1, 2006 and December 27, 2006]* The Texas Real Estate Commission adopts by reference standard contract form TREC No. 39-6 approved by the Texas Real Estate Commission in 2006 for use as an amendment to promulgated forms of contracts. This document is published by and available from the Texas Real Estate Commission, P.O. Box 12188, Austin, Texas 78711-2188, [www.state.tx.us](http://www.state.tx.us).

**§537.47. Standard Contract Form TREC No. 40-3.** *[Adopted February 1, 2002; amended April 1, 2004; May 1, 2006; December 27, 2006 and December 30, 2007.]* The Texas Real Estate Commission adopts by The Texas Real Estate Commission adopts by reference standard contract form, TREC No. 40-3 approved by the Texas Real Estate Commission in 2008 for use as an addendum to be added to promulgated forms of contracts when there is a condition for third party financing. This document is published by and available from the Texas Real Estate Commission, P.O. Box 12188, Austin, Texas 78711-2188, [www.trec.state.tx.us](http://www.trec.state.tx.us).

**§537.48. Standard Contract Form TREC No. 41-1.** *[Adopted February 1, 2002; amended December 27, 2006 and July 1, 2007]* The Texas Real Estate Commission adopts by reference standard contract form TREC No. 41-1 approved by the Texas Real Estate Commission in 2007 for use as an addendum to be added to promulgated forms of contracts when there is an assumption of a loan. This document is published by and available from the Texas Real Estate Commission, P.O. Box 12188, Austin, Texas 78711-2188, [www.state.tx.us](http://www.state.tx.us).

**§535.49. Standard Contract form TREC No. 42-0.** *[Adopted April 1, 2004; amended December 27, 2006]* The Texas Real Estate Commission adopts by reference standard contract form TREC No. 42-0 approved by the Texas Real Estate Commission in 2004 for use as a notice that buyer cannot obtain financing pursuant to the Third Party Financing Condition Addendum. This document is published by and available from the Texas Real Estate Commission, P.O. Box 12188, Austin, Texas 78711-2188, [www.state.tx.us](http://www.state.tx.us).

**§537.50. Standard Contract Form TREC No. 43-0.** *[Adopted December 30, 2007.]* The Texas Real Estate Commission adopts by reference standard contract form TREC No. 43-0 approved by the Texas Real Estate Commission in 2008 for use as an addendum to be added to promulgated forms of contracts when there is a condition requiring notices under §5.016, §420.001 and §420.002, Texas Property Code. This document is published by and available from the Texas Real Estate Commission, P.O. Box 12188, Austin, Texas 78711-2188, [www.trec.state.tx.us](http://www.trec.state.tx.us).



## CHAPTER 539 PROVISIONS OF THE RESIDENTIAL SERVICE COMPANY ACT

**D. Definitions**

**§539.31. Residential Service Contract.** *[Adopted February 11, 1980; amended September 7, 2005]* A contract or agreement whereby a person, for a fee, undertakes to indemnify against or reimburse the costs of maintenance, repair, or replacement of the structural components, appliances, or electrical, plumbing, heating, cooling, or air-conditioning systems of residential property is not a "residential service contract" within the meaning of Texas Occupations Code, Chapter 1303, §1303.002(5).

**F. Authorized Personnel**

**§539.51. Employee Defined.** *[Adopted October 7, 1982; amended November 30, 1990; October 5, 1998 and September 7, 2005]* For the purposes of Texas Occupations Code, Chapter 1303, §1303.004, "employee" means any person other than a licensed real estate salesperson, real estate broker, mobile home dealer, or insurance agent authorized by a licensed service company to sell, offer to sell, arrange or solicit the sale of, or receive applications for residential service contracts subject to the following conditions.

(1) The residential service company must have the right to direct and control the employee's performance.

(2) The residential service company must accept responsibility for representations made by the employee within the scope of the employee's employment.

**G. Application for License**

**§539.61. Application and Licensing.** *[Adopted February 11, 1980; amended July 18, 1994; Ref: Chapter 1303, Texas Occupations Code]*

(a) The Texas Real Estate Commission adopts by reference Application Form RSC 1-1 approved by the commission in 1994. This document is published by and available from the Texas Real Estate Commission, P.O. Box 12188, Austin, Texas 78711-2188.

(b) The commission shall assign a license number to each residential service company licensed by the commission.

**H. Miscellaneous Forms**

**§539.71. Miscellaneous Forms.** *[Adopted May 14, 2001; amended May 24, 2006; Chapter 1303, Texas Occupations Code]* The Texas Real Estate Commission adopts by reference the following forms approved by the commission. These forms are published and available from the Texas Real Estate Commission, P. O. Box 12188, Austin, Texas 78711-2188, www.trec.state.tx.us.

(1) Residential Service Company Bond, Form RSC 2-3; and

(2) Application to Approve Evidence of Coverage/Schedule of Charges, Form RSC 3-1.

**I. Funded Reserves**

**§539.81. Funded Reserves.** *[Adopted August 19, 1991; amended July 18, 1994 and September 7, 2005]*

(a) Each residential service company licensed by the commission shall maintain funded reserves in the amount required by the Residential Service Company Act (Act), Texas Occupations Code Chapter 1303, Subchapter D. Accounts containing funded reserves must be identified as such and may not be encumbered or commingled with funds which are not reserves. Separate funded reserves are required for service contracts written in Texas unless the company's combined funded reserves meet the minimum reserve requirements of the Act, Subchapter D, calculated on the basis of all outstanding contracts. Each company shall maintain a level of liquidity equal to or greater than the amount of its funded reserve. Funded reserves may be maintained in the following liquid assets only:

(1) in cash or savings deposits, time deposits, certificates of deposit, NOW accounts or money market accounts in solvent banks, savings and loan associations and credit unions and branches thereof, organized under the laws of the United States of America or its states; or

(2) in investment grade notes, bonds, bills or other evidences of indebtedness or obligations of the United States of America or of a state or unit of local government or in a money market mutual fund which invests in the securities listed in this paragraph. For the purposes of this section, the term "investment grade" shall mean a security rated BBB and above by a nationally recognized securities rating organization such as Standard & Poor's.

(b) The commission may suspend or revoke the license of a residential service company for failure to comply with this section.

**§539.91)-.231**

**J. Annual Report**

**§539.91. Annual Report Form RSC 6-1.** *[Adopted March 11, 1981; amended February 19, 1990 and May 14, 2001; Ref: §10(b), Art. 6573b]* The Texas Real Estate Commission adopts by reference the Annual Report Form RSC 6-2 approved by the commission in 2001. This document is published by and available from the Texas Real Estate Commission, P. O. Box 12188, Austin, Texas 78711-2188.

**M. Examinations**

**§539.121. Examinations.** *[Adopted September 15, 1994; Amended September 7, 2005; Ref: Chapter 1303, Texas Occupations Code]* The commission shall examine the affairs of each licensed residential service company as the commission deems necessary, but no less than once every three years. A company's failure to provide access to the commission to the books and records of the company is a violation of Texas Occupations Code, Chapter 1303, §1303.053, and may subject the company to the penalties provided in Chapter 1303.

**N. Semiannual Report**

**§539.137. Semiannual Report.** *[Adopted July 20, 1981; amended February 19, 1990; July 18, 1994 and March 9, 1995; Ref: Chapter 1303, Texas Occupations Code]*

(a) The Texas Real Estate Commission adopts by reference Semi-annual Report Form RSC 7-2 approved by the commission in 1994. This document is published by and available from the Texas Real Estate Commission, P. O. Box 12188, Austin, Texas 78711-2188.

(b) Each residential service company shall file a semiannual report no later than August 15 of each year for the preceding months of January through June and shall file a semiannual report no later than February 15 of each year for the preceding months of July through December.

**O. Administrative Penalties**

**§539.140. Schedule of Administrative Penalties.** *[Adopted December 30, 2007.]*

(a) The administrative penalties set forth in this section take into consideration all of the criteria listed in §1303.355(c) of the Texas Occupations Code.

(b) An administrative penalty range of \$100 - \$1,500 per violation per day may be assessed for violations of the following sections of the

Texas Occupations and Administrative Codes:

- (1) 22 TAC §539.137(b);
- (2) §1303.202(a);
- (3) §1303.202(b);
- (4) §1303.052; and
- (5) §1303.352(a)(1).

(c) An administrative penalty range of \$500 - \$5,000 per violation per day may be assessed for the following violations of the Texas Occupations and Administrative Codes:

- (1) §1303.101;
- (2) §1303.151;
- (3) 22 TAC §539.81;
- (4) §1303.153;
- (5) §1303.352(a)(2);
- (6) §1303.352(a)(3); and
- (7) §1303.352(a)(6).

(d) The commission may assess an additional administrative penalty of up to two times that assessed under subsections (b) and (c) of this section if the residential service company has a history of previous violations.

**X. Fees**

**§539.231. Fees.** *[Adopted February 11, 1980; amended July 18, 1994 and May 14, 2001; Ref: Chapter 1303, Texas Occupations Code]* The commission shall charge and collect the following fees:

- (1) a fee of \$3,500 for filing an application for a license;
- (2) a fee of \$3,500 for filing an annual report;
- (3) a fee of \$250 for filing an evidence of coverage; and
- (4) a fee of \$250 for filing a schedule of charges.



CHAPTER 541 RULES RELATING TO THE PROVISIONS  
OF TEXAS OCCUPATIONS CODE, CHAPTER 53

§541

**§541.1. Criminal Offense Guidelines.**  
*[Adopted May 19, 1982; amended November 6, 1990; December 8, 1992; February 23, 1998; May 4, 1999 and January 1, 2004; Ref: Art. 6252-13c]*

(a) For the purposes of the Occupations Code, Chapter 53, the Texas Real Estate Commission considers the following felonies or misdemeanors to be criminal offenses which may be directly related to the duties and responsibilities of the occupation of real estate broker, real estate salesperson, easement or right-of-way agent, professional inspector, real estate inspector or apprentice inspector for the reason that the commission of the following criminal offenses tends to demonstrate inability to represent the interest of another with honesty, trustworthiness and integrity:

(1) offenses involving fraud or misrepresentation;

(2) offenses against real or personal property belonging to another, if committed knowingly or intentionally;

(3) offenses against public administration;

(4) offenses involving the sale or other disposition of real or personal property belonging to another without authorization of law;

(5) offenses involving moral turpitude;

(6) offenses of attempting or conspiring to commit any of the foregoing offenses.

(b) In determining whether a criminal offense is directly related to an occupation, the commission shall consider and make appropriate findings of fact in a contested case upon the following factors:

(1) the nature and seriousness of the crime;

(2) the relationship of the crime to the purposes for requiring a license to engage in the occupation;

(3) the extent to which a license might offer an opportunity to engage in further criminal activity of the same type as that in which the person previously had been involved; and

(4) the relationship of the crime to the ability, capacity, or fitness required to perform the duties and discharge the responsibilities of the licensed occupation.

(c) In addition to the factors that may be considered under Subsection (b) of this section, the commission, in determining the present fitness of a person who has been convicted of a

crime, shall consider the following evidence:

(1) the extent and nature of the person's past criminal activity;

(2) the age of the person at the time of the commission of the crime;

(3) the amount of time that has elapsed since the person's last criminal activity;

(4) the conduct and work activity of the person prior to and following the criminal activity;

(5) evidence of the person's rehabilitation or rehabilitative effort while incarcerated or following release; and

(6) other evidence of the person's present fitness, including letters of recommendation from: prosecution, law enforcement, and correctional officers who prosecuted, arrested, or had custodial responsibility for the person; the sheriff and chief of police in the community where the person resides; and any other persons in contact with the convicted person.

(d) It shall be the responsibility of the applicant to the extent possible to secure and provide to the commission the recommendations of the prosecution, law enforcement, and correctional authorities; the applicant shall also furnish proof in such form as may be required by the commission that he or she has maintained a record of steady employment and has supported his or her dependents and has otherwise maintained a record of good conduct and has paid all outstanding court costs, supervision fees, fines, and restitution as may have been ordered in all criminal cases in which he or she has been convicted.



**CHAPTER 542 RULES RELATING TO THE PROVISIONS OF HOUSE BILL 5**

*(Ref: House Bill 5, 69th Legislature, 1987)*

**§542.1. Notices to Applicants; Processing Times; Appeals.** *[Repealed May 14, 2001]*



**CHAPTER 543 RULES RELATING TO THE PROVISIONS OF THE TEXAS TIMESHARE ACT**  
*(Ref: Chapter 221, Property Code)*

**§543.1. Registration.** *[Adopted December 27, 1985; amended May 15, 2001 and January 15, 2006]*

(a) A developer who wishes to register a timeshare plan shall submit an application for registration using forms approved by the commission. The commission may not accept for filing an application submitted without a completed application form and the appropriate filing fee.

(b) If the commission determines that an application for registration of a timeshare plan satisfies all requirements for registration, the commission shall promptly register the timeshare plan. The commission shall notify the applicant in writing that the timeshare plan has been registered, specifying the anniversary date of the registration and shall assign a registration number to the timeshare plan.

(c) If the commission determines that an application for registration of a timeshare plan fails to satisfy any requirement for registration, the commission shall promptly notify the applicant of any deficiency in writing. The commission may require an applicant to revise and resubmit written documents filed with the application or to provide additional information if the commission determines that the application is incomplete or inaccurate. Upon submission by an applicant of a response sufficient in the opinion of the commission to cure any deficiency in the application, the commission shall promptly register the timeshare plan and provide the applicant with the written notice required by these rules. An application will be terminated and the commission shall take no further action if the applicant fails to submit a response to the commission within 90 days after the commission mails a request to the applicant for curative action.

**§543.2. Amendments.** *[Adopted December 30, 1985; amended May 14, 2001; January 15, 2006 and June 8, 2008]*

(a) A person who wishes to amend the registration of a timeshare plan shall submit an application to amend the registration using forms approved by the commission. A developer may file an application to amend a registration prior to the occurrence of the change. The commission may not accept for filing an application submitted without a completed application form and the appropriate filing fee.

(b) For the purposes of Section 221.023 and Section 221.032, subsections (b)(26), (c)(9) and

(d)(32) of the Texas Timeshare Act, a developer shall file amendments to the registration reporting to the commission any material or materially adverse change in any document contained in a registration.

(c) "Material" includes, but is not limited to:

- (1) a change of developer;
- (2) a change of exchange company or association with an additional exchange company;
- (3) an increase in assessments of 15% or more;
- (4) any substantial change in the accommodations that are part of the timeshare plan;
- (5) an increase or decrease in the number of timeshare interests in the timeshare plan registered by the commission;
- (6) a change of escrow agent or type of escrow or other financial assurance;
- (7) if applicable, an increase of more than 20% in an original alternative assurance as defined by Section 221.063(a) of the Texas Timeshare Act;
- (8) a change to a substantive provision of the escrow agreement between the escrow agent and the developer;
- (9) a change of management company; or
- (10) a change to a substantive provision of the management agreement.

(d) "Materially adverse" means any material change to the timeshare plan that substantially reduces the benefits or increases the costs to purchasers.

(e) Material or materially adverse does not include the correction of any typographical or other nonsubstantive changes.

(f) If the commission determines that a registration, if amended in the manner indicated in an application to amend a registration, would continue to satisfy all requirements for registration, the commission shall promptly notify the applicant in writing that the registration has been amended, specifying the effective date of the amendment.

(g) If the commission determines that a registration, if amended in the manner indicated

#### §§543.2(g)-.4(i)

in an application to amend a registration, would fail to satisfy a requirement for registration, the commission shall promptly notify the applicant of any deficiency. The commission may require the applicant to revise and resubmit written documents filed with the application or to provide additional information if the commission determines that the application or written material filed with the application is incomplete or inaccurate. Upon submission by an applicant of a response sufficient in the opinion of the commission to cure any deficiency in the application, the commission shall promptly notify the applicant that the registration has been amended, specifying the effective date of the amendment.

#### §543.3. Fees. *[Adopted December 30, 1985; amended May 14, 2001; January 15, 2006 and August 28, 2006]*

(a) An applicant for registration of a timeshare plan or an applicant for abbreviated registration of a timeshare plan shall pay a filing fee of \$2.00 for each 7 days of annual use availability in each accommodation that is a part of the timeshare plan, provided, however, that the commission shall charge and collect a minimum filing fee of \$500.00 and that no registration filing fee shall exceed \$3,500.00.

(b) An applicant for amendment of the registration of a timeshare plan shall pay a minimum filing fee of \$100.00, provided, however, that the filing fee for an amendment that increases the number of timeshare interests to be sold from the number that existed or were proposed for sale in the original registration shall be \$2.00 for each 7 days of annual use availability in each timeshare unit that is being added to the timeshare plan and that no filing fee shall exceed \$2,000.00.

(c) An applicant for pre-sale authorization shall pay a filing fee of \$100.00 in addition to the filing fee due under subsection (a) of this section.

(d) A filing fee is not refundable once an application is accepted for filing by the commission.

(e) A developer of a registered timeshare plan shall pay a fee of \$100 to renew a registration.

(f) To reinstate an expired registration of the timeshare plan, a developer shall pay, in addition to the fee of \$100 to renew a timeshare plan, an additional fee of \$25 for each month the registration has been expired.

#### §543.4. Forms. *[Adopted December 27, 1985; amended October 2, 1986, February 19, 1990; February 11, 1994; May 14, 2001; January 15,*

*2006; August 28, 2006 and June 8, 2008]*

(a) The Texas Real Estate Commission adopts by reference revised Application to Register a Timeshare Plan, Form TSR 1-4, approved by the commission in 2005. This document is published by and available from the Texas Real Estate Commission, P.O. Box 12188, Austin, Texas 78711-2188, [www.trec.state.tx.us](http://www.trec.state.tx.us).

(b) The Texas Real Estate Commission adopts by reference revised Application to Amend a Timeshare Registration, Form TSR 2-4, approved by the commission in 2005. This form is published by and available from the Texas Real Estate Commission, P.O. Box 12188, Austin, Texas 78711-2188, [www.trec.state.tx.us](http://www.trec.state.tx.us).

(c) The Texas Real Estate Commission adopts by reference Application for Abbreviated Registration of a Timeshare Plan, Form TSR 3- 2, approved by the commission in 2008. This document is published by and available from the Texas Real Estate Commission, P.O. Box 12188, Austin, Texas 78711-2188, [www.trec.state.tx.us](http://www.trec.state.tx.us).

(d) The Texas Real Estate Commission adopts by reference Application for Pre-sale Authorization, Form TSR 4-0, approved by the commission in 2005. This document is published by and available from the Texas Real Estate Commission, P.O. Box 12188, Austin, Texas 78711-2188, [www.trec.state.tx.us](http://www.trec.state.tx.us).

(e) The Texas Real Estate Commission adopts by reference Escrow Surety Bond, Form TSR 5-0, approved by the commission in 2005. This document is published by and available from the Texas Real Estate Commission, P.O. Box 12188, Austin, Texas 78711-2188, [www.trec.state.tx.us](http://www.trec.state.tx.us).

(f) The Texas Real Estate Commission adopts by Construction Surety Bond, Form TSR 6-0 approved by the commission in 2005. This document is published by and available from the Texas Real Estate Commission, P.O. Box 12188, Austin, Texas 78711-2188, [www.trec.state.tx.us](http://www.trec.state.tx.us).

(g) The Texas Real Estate Commission adopts by reference Consent to Service of Process, Form TSR 7-0 approved by the commission in 2005. This document is published by and available from the Texas Real Estate Commission, P.O. Box 12188, Austin, Texas 78711-2188, [www.trec.state.tx.us](http://www.trec.state.tx.us) .

(h) The Texas Real Estate Commission adopts by reference Application to Renew the Registration of a Timeshare Plan, Form TSR 8-0, approved by the Commission in 2006. This document is published by and available from the Texas Real Estate Commission, P.O. Box 12188, Austin, TX 78711-2188, [www.trec.state.tx.us](http://www.trec.state.tx.us).

(i) Applicants may reproduce the forms adopted by the commission from printed copies

and by computer. With the exception of the changes to the forms which are permitted by this section, the applicant shall reproduce the text of the forms verbatim and the spacing, length of blanks, fonts and placement of text on the page must appear to be substantially similar to that used by the commission in the printed version of the form.

(j) When using the forms, the applicant must comply with the following:

(1) The applicant may select the type and size of the fonts, provided the fonts are no smaller than those used in the printed version of the form adopted by the commission.

(2) The forms must be printed on letter sized ("8 1/2 by 11") paper.

(3) Whether a form is reproduced by computer or is preprinted by the applicant, the applicant may allocate such space for narrative responses where noted as the applicant deems necessary or may attach additional pages containing narrative responses to the application.

(4) The applicant may renumber the pages of a form to correspond with any changes made necessary due to adjusting the space for narrative responses.

(5) The applicant may not alter the text of a promulgated application form.

**§543.5. Violations.** *[Adopted December 25, 1985; amended May 14, 2001 and January 15, 2006]*

((a) It is a material violation of the Texas Timeshare Act (the Act) for a person to engage in any of the acts described in Section 221.071 (a) of the Act.

(b) It is a material violation of the Act for a developer to represent to a potential purchaser of a timeshare interest by advertising or any other means that a timeshare plan has been approved by the State of Texas or the Texas Real Estate Commission or to represent that the State of Texas or the Texas Real Estate Commission has passed upon the merits of a timeshare plan. It is not a material violation of the Act for a registrant to represent that a timeshare plan has been registered if the registrant discloses at the same time and in the same manner that the State of Texas and the Texas Real Estate Commission have not approved the timeshare plan or passed upon the merits of the timeshare plan.

(c) It is a material violation of the Act for a developer to fail to file an application to amend a registration within 30 days of the occurrence of a material or materially adverse change in any

document contained in the registration or to fail to submit a response together with any related material in a good faith effort to cure a deficient application to amend a registration within 90 days after the commission has mailed to the applicant a request for curative action.

(d) It is a material violation of the Act for a person to procure or attempt to procure a registration or amendment to a registration by fraud, misrepresentation or deceit or by making a material misstatement of fact in an application filed with the commission.

(e) It is a material violation of the Act for a person to disregard or violate a rule of the commission.

(f) It is a material violation of the Act for a developer to fail to make good a check issued to the commission within 30 days after the commission has mailed a request for payment by certified mail to the developer's last known permanent mailing address as reflected by the commission's records.

(g) It is a material violation of the Act for a developer to fail within 10 working days to provide information or documents requested by the commission or a commission representative in the course of the investigation of a complaint.

**§543.6. Complaints and Disciplinary Proceedings.** *[Adopted December 25, 1985; amended May 14, 2001 and January 15, 2006]*

(a) Complaints regarding registered timeshare plans shall be in writing and signed by the person filing the complaint.

(b) The commission shall not investigate a complaint submitted more than four years after the date of the transaction that is the subject of the complaint.

(c) Disciplinary proceedings, including appeals, shall be conducted in accordance with the provisions of Section 221.024 of the Texas Timeshare Act, Chapter 533 of this title and the Administrative Procedure Act, Chapter 2001, Government Code.

**§543.7. Contract Requirements.** *[Adopted January 15, 2006]*

(a) For purposes of Section 221.043(a) of the Texas Timeshare Act, "conspicuous manner" means that:

(1) The type of the upper and lower case letters used shall be two point sizes larger than the largest non-conspicuous type, exclusive of heading, on the page on which it appears but in at least 10-point type; or

## **§§543.7(a)(2)-.12**

(2) Where the use of 10-point type would be impractical or impossible, a different style of type or print may be used, so long as the print remains conspicuous under the circumstances.

(b) For purposes of §543.7(a) of this chapter, any conspicuous type utilized shall be separated on all sides from other type and print and may be utilized only where required by the Texas Timeshare Act or authorized by the commission.

**§543.8. Disclosure Requirement.** *[Adopted January 15, 2006]* A developer may provide the disclosures required by Section 221.032 and Section 221.033 of the Texas Timeshare Act in an alternate format with the written agreement of the purchaser, provided the developer obtains a signed receipt evidencing that consent from the purchaser.

**§543.9. Exemptions.** *[Adopted January 15, 2006]* For purposes of Section 221.034(b) of the Texas Timeshare Act, the term "developer" shall include any entity in which the developer, or any affiliate of the developer, has at least a 25% interest.

**§543.10. Escrow Requirements.** *[Adopted January 15, 2006; amended June 8, 2008.]*

(a) For purposes of Section 221.063(a) of the Texas Timeshare Act, the alternative financial assurance from another state or jurisdiction must be for the same timeshare plan as the timeshare plan being registered or registration being amended.

(b) A timeshare developer shall, within 10 days of the change, provide the commission with written notice of any increase or decrease in the original surety bond as provided for in Section 221.063(a) of the Texas Timeshare Act.

**§543.11. Maintenance of Registration.** *[Adopted January 15, 2006]* A developer shall give the commission written notice of a change of the developer's permanent mail address within 10 days of the occurrence of the change.

**§543.12 Renewal of Registration.** *[Adopted August 28, 2006]*

(a) If a timeshare plan was registered prior to January 15, 2006, the registration expires on the last day of the month 24 months after its last anniversary date prior to January 15, 2006. For timeshare plans registered on or after January 15, 2006, the registration expires on the last day of the month 24 months after the date the plan was registered.

(b) A developer of a timeshare plan may renew

the registration for a 2-year period by completing an Application to Renew the Registration of a Timeshare Plan, Form TSR 8-0, and paying the appropriate filing fee.

(c) Three months prior to the expiration of a registration, the commission shall mail a renewal application form to the developer's last known permanent mail address as shown in the commission's computerized records.