



Ohio Revised Code

Section 3927.03 Appointment of agent by foreign insurance company - procedure.

Effective: October 29, 2003

Legislation: House Bill NO137 - 125th General Assembly

(A) Any foreign insurance company that transacts any business in this state shall have and maintain an agent, sometimes referred to as the "statutory agent," upon whom any process, notice, or demand required or permitted by law to be served upon a company may be served. The agent may be a natural person residing in this state or may be a corporation holding a license under the laws of this state that is authorized by its articles of incorporation to act as an agent and that maintains a business address in this state. A statutory agent need not be a licensed insurance agent.

(B) The written appointment of an agent shall be in the form the superintendent of insurance prescribes, which may include a consent to service of process. The appointment shall set forth the name and complete address of the agent. The agent shall reside or maintain a business address within this state.

The superintendent shall keep a record of the foreign insurance companies transacting business in this state and the name and address of their respective agents.

(C) If any agent dies, moves out of the state, or resigns, the company immediately shall appoint another agent and file with the superintendent a written appointment as described in division (B) of this section.

(D) If an agent changes the agent's address, the company or agent immediately shall notify the superintendent of the change, and shall set forth the agent's new address, on a form prescribed by the superintendent.

(E) An agent may resign by filing with the superintendent a written notice signed by the agent. The agent shall send a copy of the notice to the company at the current or last known address of the company's principal office prior to the date the notice is filed with the superintendent. The notice shall set forth the company's name, the current or last known address of the company, the name and



address of the agent, the resignation of the agent, and a statement that a copy of the notice has been sent to the company and the date the copy was sent. The agent's authority shall terminate thirty days after the notice is filed with the superintendent.

(F) A company may revoke the appointment of an agent by filing with the superintendent a written appointment of another agent and a statement that the appointment of the former agent is revoked. The authority of the agent whose appointment has been revoked shall terminate thirty days after the notice is filed with the superintendent.

(G) Any process, notice, or demand required or permitted by law to be served upon a company may be served by delivering a copy of the process, notice, or demand to the agent of record at the address appearing in the superintendent's records. If the agent cannot be found, the agent no longer has that address, or the company has failed to maintain an agent as required by this section, the party desiring that the process, notice, or demand be served, or its agent, may file with the superintendent an affidavit stating that one of the foregoing conditions exists and stating the most recent address of the company that the party, after diligent search, has been able to ascertain. Upon the filing of the affidavit, service of process, notice, or demand may be initiated upon the superintendent as the company's agent by delivering two copies of the process, notice, or demand to the superintendent. The superintendent shall give notice to the company at its principal office as shown in the superintendent's records or at the address set forth in the affidavit. The superintendent shall give notice by regular mail with a copy of the process, notice, or demand enclosed. After the superintendent has mailed the appropriate documents, service upon the company is deemed complete.

(H) The superintendent shall keep a record of each process, notice, and demand delivered to the superintendent under this section or any other law of this state that authorizes service upon the superintendent.

(I) This section does not limit or affect the right to serve any process, notice, or demand upon a company in any other manner permitted by law.

(J) A company shall include a fee of five dollars with any change of agent appointment or change of address. This division does not apply to an agent appointment filed with an original application for a



certificate of authority.

(K) If a company fails to appoint or maintain an agent or to notify the superintendent of an agent's change of address, the superintendent shall fine the company not less than twenty-five nor more than two hundred dollars per violation, after the superintendent has provided notice by certified mail and upon the expiration of thirty days from the date of mailing or such further time as the superintendent allows. The superintendent may also charge a company a fifty-dollar fee for each time the superintendent is required to give notice to the company in accordance with division (G) of this section.

(L) The superintendent shall pay all moneys collected by the superintendent in accordance with this section into the state treasury to the credit of the department of insurance operating fund.

(M) Any foreign insurance company transacting business in this state by an agent consents that suit may be brought against it in the county where the property insured was situated, or was insured, or the application for insurance taken.

(N) If a foreign insurance company ceases to do business in this state according to law, the statutory agent last designated by or acting for it is deemed to continue as agent for it, unless a new statutory agent is appointed, for the purpose of serving process, and for commencing actions upon any policy or liability issued or contracted while it transacted business in this state, and service of process upon any such agent, for such causes, is a valid service upon the company.