A bill to be entitled

An act relating to motor vehicle insurance; amending s. 316.646, F.S.; requiring each person operating a motor vehicle to have in his or her possession proof of property damage liability coverage; conforming a cross-reference to changes made by the act; amending s. 320.02, F.S.; clarifying the requirements concerning insurance and liability coverage for certain motor vehicles registered in this state; amending s. 321.245, F.S., relating to the disposition of certain funds in the Highway Safety Operating Trust Fund; conforming a cross-reference; amending s. 324.022, F.S.; revising provisions requiring the owner or operator of a motor vehicle to maintain property damage liability coverage; specifying the requirements that apply to such a policy; providing definitions; requiring that a nonresident owner or registrant of a motor vehicle maintain property damage liability coverage if the motor vehicle is in the state longer than a specified period; providing an exception for a member of the United States Armed Forces who is on active duty outside the United States; creating s. 324.0221, F.S.; requiring insurers to report to the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles the renewal, cancellation, or nonrenewal of a policy providing personal injury protection coverage or motor vehicle property damage liability coverage; authorizing the department to adopt rules for the reports; providing that failure to report as required is a violation of the

Florida Insurance Code; requiring that an insurer notify the named insured that a cancelled or nonrenewed policy will be reported to the department; requiring that the department suspend the registration and driver's license of an owner or registrant of a motor vehicle who fails to maintain the required liability coverage; providing for the reinstatement of a registration or driver's license upon payment of certain fees; requiring that a person obtain noncancelable coverage following such reinstatement; providing for the deposit and use of reinstatement fees; amending ss. 627.7275 and 627.7295, F.S., relating to motor vehicle insurance policies and contracts; conforming provisions to changes made by the act; reviving and reenacting ss. 627.730, 627.731, 627.732, 627.734, 627.737, 627.739, 627.7401, 627.7403, and 627.7405, F.S., and reviving, reenacting, and amending ss. 627.733 and 627.736, the Florida Motor Vehicle No-Fault Law, notwithstanding the repeal of such law provided in s. 19, chapter 2003-411, Laws of Florida; deleting certain provisions relating to the suspension and reinstatement of a driver's license and registration and notice to the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles; conforming provisions to changes made by the act; providing legislative intent with respect to the reenactment and codification of the Florida Motor Vehicle No-Fault Law, notwithstanding its prior repeal; amending s. 627.736, F.S., as reenacted and amended; revising provisions governing the medical benefits provided as

required personal injury protection benefits; providing medical benefits for services and care ordered or prescribed by a physician or chiropractor or provided by certain persons or entities that meet certain requirements; requiring the Financial services Commission to adopt rules; revising a limitation on the amount of death benefits payable; requiring personal injury protection insurers to reserve benefits for certain providers for a specified period; tolling the time period for the insurer to pay claims from other providers; authorizing an insurer to limit reimbursement for personal injury protection benefits to a specified percentage of a schedule of maximum charges; prohibiting provider from billing or attempting to collect amounts in excess of such limits, except for amounts that are not covered by personal injury protection coverage; deleting provisions specifying allowable amounts for certain tests and services; providing for electronic transmission of certain statements; revising the application of a specified provision concerning attorney's fees; extending the period during which an insurer may pay an overdue claim following receipt of a demand letter without incurring a penalty; providing for penalties to be imposed against certain insurers for failing to pay claims for personal injury protection; authorizing the Department of Legal Affairs to investigate violations and initiate enforcement action; requiring that all claims related to the same health care provider for the same injured person be brought in one act

unless good cause is shown; authorizing notices and communications required or authorized under the Florida Motor Vehicle No-Fault Law to be transmitted electronically under certain conditions; requiring persons subject to the Florida Motor Vehicle No-Fault Law, as revived and amended by this act, to maintain security for personal injury protection beginning on a specified date; providing that personal injury protection policy in effect on or after a specified date are deemed to incorporate the Florida Motor Vehicle No-Fault Law, as revived and amended by this act; requiring that insurers continue to use certain forms and rates until new forms or rates are used as authorized by law; requiring that insurers provide notice of the requirement for personal injury protection coverage or add an endorsement to the policy providing such coverage; requiring specified notice to certain insureds as of a specified date; providing intent concerning application of revived and amended provisions prior to a specified date; providing legislative findings; providing that a person purchasing a motor vehicle insurance policy without personal injury protection coverage is exempt from the requirement for such coverage for a specified period; providing for severability; providing effective dates.

Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

Section 1. Subsections (1) and (3) of section 316.646,

Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

316.646 Security required; proof of security and display thereof; dismissal of cases.--

(1) Any person required by s. 324.022 to maintain property damage liability security, required by s. 324.023 to maintain liability security for bodily injury or death, or ~~any person~~ required by s. 627.733 to maintain personal injury protection security on a motor vehicle shall have in his or her immediate possession at all times while operating such motor vehicle proper proof of maintenance of the required security. Such proof shall be ~~either~~ a uniform proof-of-insurance card in a form prescribed by the department, a valid insurance policy, an insurance policy binder, a certificate of insurance, or such other proof as may be prescribed by the department.

(3) Any person who violates this section commits a nonmoving traffic infraction subject to the penalty provided in chapter 318 and shall be required to furnish proof of security as provided in this section. If any person charged with a violation of this section fails to furnish proof, at or before the scheduled court appearance date, that security was in effect at the time of the violation, the court may immediately suspend the registration and driver's license of such person. Such license and registration may ~~only~~ be reinstated only as provided in s. 324.0221 ~~627.733~~.

Section 2. Paragraphs (a) and (d) of subsection (5) of section 320.02, Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

320.02 Registration required; application for registration; forms.--

(5)(a) Proof that personal injury protection benefits have been purchased when required under s. 627.733, that property damage liability coverage has been purchased as required under s. 324.022, that bodily injury or death coverage has been purchased if required under s. 324.023, and that combined bodily liability insurance and property damage liability insurance have been purchased when required under s. 627.7415 shall be provided in the manner prescribed by law by the applicant at the time of application for registration of any motor vehicle that is subject to such requirements ~~owned as defined in s. 627.732~~. The issuing agent shall refuse to issue registration if such proof of purchase is not provided. Insurers shall furnish uniform proof-of-purchase cards in a form prescribed by the department and shall include the name of the insured's insurance company, the coverage identification number, and the make, year, and vehicle identification number of the vehicle insured. The card shall contain a statement notifying the applicant of the penalty specified in s. 316.646(4). The card or insurance policy, insurance policy binder, or certificate of insurance or a photocopy of any of these; an affidavit containing the name of the insured's insurance company, the insured's policy number, and the make and year of the vehicle insured; or such other proof as may be prescribed by the department shall constitute sufficient proof of purchase. If an affidavit is provided as proof, it shall be in substantially the following form:

Under penalty of perjury, I (Name of insured) do hereby certify that I have (Personal Injury Protection, Property

Damage Liability, and, when required, Bodily Injury Liability) Insurance currently in effect with (Name of insurance company) under (policy number) covering (make, year, and vehicle identification number of vehicle) . (Signature of Insured)

Such affidavit shall include the following warning:

WARNING: GIVING FALSE INFORMATION IN ORDER TO OBTAIN A VEHICLE REGISTRATION CERTIFICATE IS A CRIMINAL OFFENSE UNDER FLORIDA LAW. ANYONE GIVING FALSE INFORMATION ON THIS AFFIDAVIT IS SUBJECT TO PROSECUTION.

When an application is made through a licensed motor vehicle dealer as required in s. 319.23, the original or a photostatic copy of such card, insurance policy, insurance policy binder, or certificate of insurance or the original affidavit from the insured shall be forwarded by the dealer to the tax collector of the county or the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles for processing. By executing the aforesaid affidavit, no licensed motor vehicle dealer will be liable in damages for any inadequacy, insufficiency, or falsification of any statement contained therein. A card shall also indicate the existence of any bodily injury liability insurance voluntarily purchased.

(d) The verifying of proof of personal injury protection insurance, <u>proof of property damage liability insurance,</u> proof of combined bodily liability insurance and property damage liability insurance, or proof of financial responsibility insurance and the issuance or failure to issue the motor vehicle

registration under the provisions of this chapter may not be construed in any court as a warranty of the reliability or accuracy of the evidence of such proof. Neither the department nor any tax collector is liable in damages for any inadequacy, insufficiency, falsification, or unauthorized modification of any item of the proof of personal injury protection insurance, proof of property damage liability insurance, proof of combined bodily liability insurance and property damage liability insurance, or proof of financial responsibility insurance ~~either~~ prior to, during, or subsequent to the verification of the proof. The issuance of a motor vehicle registration does not constitute prima facie evidence or a presumption of insurance coverage.

Section 3. Section 321.245, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

321.245 Disposition of certain funds in the Highway Safety Operating Trust Fund.--The director of the Florida Highway Patrol, after receiving recommendations from the commander of the auxiliary, is authorized to purchase uniforms and equipment for auxiliary law enforcement officers as defined in s. 321.24 from funds described in s. 324.0221(3) ~~627.733(7)~~. The amounts expended under this section shall not exceed $50,000 in any one fiscal year.

Section 4. Section 324.022, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

324.022 Financial responsibility for property damage.--

(1) Every owner or operator of a motor vehicle~~, which motor vehicle is subject to the requirements of ss. 627.730~~

~~627.7405 and~~ required to be registered in this state~~,~~ shall~~, by one of the methods established in s. 324.031 or by having a policy that complies with s. 627.7275,~~ establish and maintain the ability to respond in damages for liability on account of accidents arising out of the use of the motor vehicle in the amount of $10,000 because of damage to, or destruction of, property of others in any one crash. The requirements of this section may be met by one of the methods established in s. 324.031; by self-insuring as authorized by s. 768.28(16); or by maintaining an insurance policy providing coverage for property damage liability in the amount of at least $10,000 because of damage to, or destruction of, property of others in any one accident arising out of the use of the motor vehicle. The requirements of this section may also be met by having a policy which provides coverage in the amount of at least $30,000 for combined property damage liability and bodily injury liability for any one crash arising out of the use of the motor vehicle. The policy, with respect to coverage for property damage liability, must meet the applicable requirements of s. 324.151, subject to the usual policy exclusions that have been approved in policy forms by the Office of Insurance Regulation. No insurer shall have any duty to defend uncovered claims irrespective of their joinder with covered claims.

(2) As used in this section, the term:

(a) "Motor vehicle" means any self-propelled vehicle that has four or more wheels and that is of a type designed and required to be licensed for use on the highways of this state, and any trailer or semitrailer designed for use with such

vehicle. The term does not include:

1. A mobile home.

2. A motor vehicle that is used in mass transit and designed to transport more than five passengers, exclusive of the operator of the motor vehicle, and that is owned by a municipality, transit authority, or political subdivision of the state.

3. A school bus as defined in s. 1006.25.

4. A vehicle providing for-hire transportation that is subject to the provisions of s. 324.031. A taxicab shall maintain security as required under s. 324.032(1).

(b) "Owner" means the person who holds legal title to a motor vehicle or the debtor or lessee who has the right to possession of a motor vehicle that is the subject of a security agreement or lease with an option to purchase.

(3) Each nonresident owner or registrant of a motor vehicle that, whether operated or not, has been physically present within this state for more than 90 days during the preceding 365 days shall maintain security as required by subsection (1) that is in effect continuously throughout the period the motor vehicle remains within this state.

(4) The owner or registrant of a motor vehicle is exempt from the requirements of this section if she or he is a member of the United States Armed Forces and is called to or on active duty outside the United States in an emergency situation. The exemption provided by this subsection applies only as long as the member of the Armed Forces is on such active duty outside the United States and applies only while the vehicle is not

operated by any person. Upon receipt of a written request by the insured to whom the exemption provided in this subsection applies, the insurer shall cancel the coverages and return any unearned premium or suspend the security required by this section. Notwithstanding s. 324.0221(3), the department may not suspend the registration or operator's license of any owner or registrant of a motor vehicle during the time she or he qualifies for an exemption under this subsection. Any owner or registrant of a motor vehicle who qualifies for an exemption under this subsection shall immediately notify the department prior to and at the end of the expiration of the exemption.

Section 5. Section 324.0221, Florida Statutes, is created to read:

324.0221 Reports by insurers to the department; suspension of driver's license and vehicle registrations; reinstatement.--

(1)(a) Each insurer that has issued a policy providing personal injury protection coverage or property damage liability coverage shall report the renewal, cancellation, or nonrenewal thereof to the department within 45 days after the effective date of each renewal, cancellation, or nonrenewal. Upon the issuance of a policy providing personal injury protection coverage or property damage liability coverage to a named insured not previously insured by the insurer during that calendar year, the insurer shall report the issuance of the new policy to the department within 30 days. The report shall be in the form and format and contain any information required by the department and must be provided in a format that is compatible with the data-processing capabilities of the department. The

department may adopt rules regarding the form and documentation required. Failure by an insurer to file proper reports with the department as required by this subsection or rules adopted with respect to the requirements of this subsection constitutes a violation of the Florida Insurance Code. These records shall be used by the department only for enforcement and regulatory purposes, including the generation by the department of data regarding compliance by owners of motor vehicles with the requirements for financial responsibility coverage.

(b) With respect to an insurance policy providing personal injury protection coverage or property damage liability coverage, each insurer shall notify the named insured, or the first-named insured in the case of a commercial fleet policy, in writing that any cancellation or nonrenewal of the policy will be reported by the insurer to the department. The notice must also inform the named insured that failure to maintain personal injury protection coverage and property damage liability coverage on a motor vehicle when required by law may result in the loss of registration and driving privileges in this state and inform the named insured of the amount of the reinstatement fees required by this section. This notice is for informational purposes only, and an insurer is not civilly liable for failing to provide this notice.

(2) The department shall suspend, after due notice and an opportunity to be heard, the registration and driver's license of any owner or registrant of a motor vehicle with respect to which security is required under ss. 324.022 and 627.733 upon:

(a) The department's records showing that the owner or

registrant of such motor vehicle did not have in full force and effect when required security that complies with the requirements of ss. 324.022 and 627.733; or

(b) Notification by the insurer to the department, in a form approved by the department, of cancellation or termination of the required security.

(3) An operator or owner whose driver's license or registration has been suspended under this section or s. 316.646 may effect its reinstatement upon compliance with the requirements of this section and upon payment to the department of a nonrefundable reinstatement fee of $150 for the first reinstatement. The reinstatement fee is $250 for the second reinstatement and $500 for each subsequent reinstatement during the 3 years following the first reinstatement. A person reinstating her or his insurance under this subsection must also secure noncancelable coverage as described in ss. 324.021(8), 324.023, and 627.7275(2) and present to the appropriate person proof that the coverage is in force on a form adopted by the department, and such proof shall be maintained for 2 years. If the person does not have a second reinstatement within 3 years after her or his initial reinstatement, the reinstatement fee is $150 for the first reinstatement after that 3-year period. If a person's license and registration are suspended under this section or s. 316.646, only one reinstatement fee must be paid to reinstate the license and the registration. All fees shall be collected by the department at the time of reinstatement. The department shall issue proper receipts for such fees and shall promptly deposit those fees in the Highway Safety Operating

Trust Fund. One-third of the fees collected under this subsection shall be distributed from the Highway Safety Operating Trust Fund to the local governmental entity or state agency that employed the law enforcement officer seizing the license plate pursuant to s. 324.201. The funds may be used by the local governmental entity or state agency for any authorized purpose.

Section 6. Section 627.7275, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

627.7275 Motor vehicle liability.--

(1) A motor vehicle insurance policy providing personal injury protection as set forth in s. 627.736 may not be delivered or issued for delivery in this state with respect to any specifically insured or identified motor vehicle registered or principally garaged in this state unless the policy also provides coverage for property damage liability as required by s. 324.022 ~~in the amount of at least $10,000 because of damage to, or destruction of, property of others in any one accident arising out of the use of the motor vehicle or unless the policy provides coverage in the amount of at least $30,000 for combined property damage liability and bodily injury liability in any one accident arising out of the use of the motor vehicle. The policy, as to coverage of property damage liability, must meet the applicable requirements of s. 324.151, subject to the usual policy exclusions that have been approved in policy forms by the office~~.

(2)(a) Insurers writing motor vehicle insurance in this state shall make available, subject to the insurers' usual

underwriting restrictions:

1. Coverage under policies as described in subsection (1) to any applicant for private passenger motor vehicle insurance coverage who is seeking the coverage in order to reinstate the applicant's driving privileges in this state when the driving privileges were revoked or suspended pursuant to s. 316.646 or s. 324.0221 ~~627.733~~ due to the failure of the applicant to maintain required security.

2. Coverage under policies as described in subsection (1), which also provides liability coverage for bodily injury, death, and property damage arising out of the ownership, maintenance, or use of the motor vehicle in an amount not less than the limits described in s. 324.021(7) and conforms to the requirements of s. 324.151, to any applicant for private passenger motor vehicle insurance coverage who is seeking the coverage in order to reinstate the applicant's driving privileges in this state after such privileges were revoked or suspended under s. 316.193 or s. 322.26(2) for driving under the influence.

(b) The policies described in paragraph (a) shall be issued for a period of at least 6 months and as to the minimum coverages required under this section shall not be cancelable by the insured for any reason or by the insurer after a period not to exceed 30 days during which the insurer must complete underwriting of the policy. After the insurer has completed underwriting the policy within the 30-day period, the insurer shall notify the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles that the policy is in full force and effect and the policy shall

not be cancelable for the remainder of the policy period. A premium shall be collected and coverage shall be in effect for the 30-day period during which the insurer is completing the underwriting of the policy whether or not the person's driver license, motor vehicle tag, and motor vehicle registration are in effect. Once the noncancelable provisions of the policy become effective, the coverage or risk shall not be changed during the policy period and the premium shall be nonrefundable. If, during the pendency of the 2-year proof of insurance period required under s. 324.0221 ~~627.733(7)~~ or during the 3-year proof of financial responsibility required under s. 324.131, whichever is applicable, the insured obtains additional coverage or coverage for an additional risk or changes territories, the insured must obtain a new 6-month noncancelable policy in accordance with the provisions of this section. However, if the insured must obtain a new 6-month policy and obtains the policy from the same insurer, the policyholder shall receive credit on the new policy for any premium paid on the previously issued policy.

(c) This subsection controls to the extent of any conflict with any other section.

(d) An insurer issuing a policy subject to this section may cancel the policy if, during the policy term, the named insured or any other operator, who resides in the same household or customarily operates an automobile insured under the policy, has his or her driver's license suspended or revoked.

(e) Nothing in this subsection requires an insurer to offer a policy of insurance to an applicant if such offer would

be inconsistent with the insurer's underwriting guidelines and procedures.

Section 7. Paragraph (a) of subsection (1) of section 627.7295, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

627.7295 Motor vehicle insurance contracts.--

(1) As used in this section, the term:

(a) "Policy" means a motor vehicle insurance policy that provides personal injury protection coverage, ~~and~~ property damage liability coverage, or both.

Section 8. Notwithstanding the repeal of the Florida Motor Vehicle No-Fault Law, which occurred on October 1, 2007, section 627.730, Florida Statutes, is revived and reenacted to read:

627.730 Florida Motor Vehicle No-Fault Law.--Sections 627.730-627.7405 may be cited and known as the "Florida Motor Vehicle No-Fault Law."

Section 9. Notwithstanding the repeal of the Florida Motor Vehicle No-Fault Law, which occurred on October 1, 2007, section 627.731, Florida Statutes, is revived and reenacted to read:

627.731 Purpose.--The purpose of ss. 627.730-627.7405 is to provide for medical, surgical, funeral, and disability insurance benefits without regard to fault, and to require motor vehicle insurance securing such benefits, for motor vehicles required to be registered in this state and, with respect to motor vehicle accidents, a limitation on the right to claim damages for pain, suffering, mental anguish, and inconvenience.

Section 10. Notwithstanding the repeal of the Florida Motor Vehicle No-Fault Law, which occurred on October 1, 2007, section 627.732, Florida Statutes, is revived and reenacted to

read:

627.732 Definitions.--As used in ss. 627.730-627.7405, the term:

(1) "Broker" means any person not possessing a license under chapter 395, chapter 400, chapter 429, chapter 458, chapter 459, chapter 460, chapter 461, or chapter 641 who charges or receives compensation for any use of medical equipment and is not the 100-percent owner or the 100-percent lessee of such equipment. For purposes of this section, such owner or lessee may be an individual, a corporation, a partnership, or any other entity and any of its 100-percent-owned affiliates and subsidiaries. For purposes of this subsection, the term "lessee" means a long-term lessee under a capital or operating lease, but does not include a part-time lessee. The term "broker" does not include a hospital or physician management company whose medical equipment is ancillary to the practices managed, a debt collection agency, or an entity that has contracted with the insurer to obtain a discounted rate for such services; nor does the term include a management company that has contracted to provide general management services for a licensed physician or health care facility and whose compensation is not materially affected by the usage or frequency of usage of medical equipment or an entity that is 100-percent owned by one or more hospitals or physicians. The term "broker" does not include a person or entity that certifies, upon request of an insurer, that:

(a) It is a clinic licensed under ss. 400.990-400.995;

(b) It is a 100-percent owner of medical equipment; and

(c) The owner's only part-time lease of medical equipment for personal injury protection patients is on a temporary basis not to exceed 30 days in a 12-month period, and such lease is solely for the purposes of necessary repair or maintenance of the 100-percent-owned medical equipment or pending the arrival and installation of the newly purchased or a replacement for the 100-percent-owned medical equipment, or for patients for whom, because of physical size or claustrophobia, it is determined by the medical director or clinical director to be medically necessary that the test be performed in medical equipment that is open-style. The leased medical equipment cannot be used by patients who are not patients of the registered clinic for medical treatment of services. Any person or entity making a false certification under this subsection commits insurance fraud as defined in s. 817.234. However, the 30-day period provided in this paragraph may be extended for an additional 60 days as applicable to magnetic resonance imaging equipment if the owner certifies that the extension otherwise complies with this paragraph.

(2) "Medically necessary" refers to a medical service or supply that a prudent physician would provide for the purpose of preventing, diagnosing, or treating an illness, injury, disease, or symptom in a manner that is:

(a) In accordance with generally accepted standards of medical practice;

(b) Clinically appropriate in terms of type, frequency, extent, site, and duration; and

(c) Not primarily for the convenience of the patient,

physician, or other health care provider.

(3) "Motor vehicle" means any self-propelled vehicle with four or more wheels which is of a type both designed and required to be licensed for use on the highways of this state and any trailer or semitrailer designed for use with such vehicle and includes:

(a) A "private passenger motor vehicle," which is any motor vehicle which is a sedan, station wagon, or jeep-type vehicle and, if not used primarily for occupational, professional, or business purposes, a motor vehicle of the pickup, panel, van, camper, or motor home type.

(b) A "commercial motor vehicle," which is any motor vehicle which is not a private passenger motor vehicle.

The term "motor vehicle" does not include a mobile home or any motor vehicle which is used in mass transit, other than public school transportation, and designed to transport more than five passengers exclusive of the operator of the motor vehicle and which is owned by a municipality, a transit authority, or a political subdivision of the state.

(4) "Named insured" means a person, usually the owner of a vehicle, identified in a policy by name as the insured under the policy.

(5) "Owner" means a person who holds the legal title to a motor vehicle; or, in the event a motor vehicle is the subject of a security agreement or lease with an option to purchase with the debtor or lessee having the right to possession, then the debtor or lessee shall be deemed the owner for the purposes of

ss. 627.730-627.7405.

(6) "Relative residing in the same household" means a relative of any degree by blood or by marriage who usually makes her or his home in the same family unit, whether or not temporarily living elsewhere.

(7) "Certify" means to swear or attest to being true or represented in writing.

(8) "Immediate personal supervision," as it relates to the performance of medical services by nonphysicians not in a hospital, means that an individual licensed to perform the medical service or provide the medical supplies must be present within the confines of the physical structure where the medical services are performed or where the medical supplies are provided such that the licensed individual can respond immediately to any emergencies if needed.

(9) "Incident," with respect to services considered as incident to a physician's professional service, for a physician licensed under chapter 458, chapter 459, chapter 460, or chapter 461, if not furnished in a hospital, means such services must be an integral, even if incidental, part of a covered physician's service.

(10) "Knowingly" means that a person, with respect to information, has actual knowledge of the information; acts in deliberate ignorance of the truth or falsity of the information; or acts in reckless disregard of the information, and proof of specific intent to defraud is not required.

(11) "Lawful" or "lawfully" means in substantial compliance with all relevant applicable criminal, civil, and

administrative requirements of state and federal law related to the provision of medical services or treatment.

(12) "Hospital" means a facility that, at the time services or treatment were rendered, was licensed under chapter 395.

(13) "Properly completed" means providing truthful, substantially complete, and substantially accurate responses as to all material elements to each applicable request for information or statement by a means that may lawfully be provided and that complies with this section, or as agreed by the parties.

(14) "Upcoding" means an action that submits a billing code that would result in payment greater in amount than would be paid using a billing code that accurately describes the services performed. The term does not include an otherwise lawful bill by a magnetic resonance imaging facility, which globally combines both technical and professional components, if the amount of the global bill is not more than the components if billed separately; however, payment of such a bill constitutes payment in full for all components of such service.

(15) "Unbundling" means an action that submits a billing code that is properly billed under one billing code, but that has been separated into two or more billing codes, and would result in payment greater in amount than would be paid using one billing code.

Section 11. Notwithstanding the repeal of the Florida Motor Vehicle No-Fault Law, which occurred on October 1, 2007, section 627.733, Florida Statutes, is revived, reenacted, and

amended to read:

627.733 Required security.--

(1)(a) Every owner or registrant of a motor vehicle, other than a motor vehicle used as a school bus as defined in s. 1006.25 or limousine, required to be registered and licensed in this state shall maintain security as required by subsection (3) in effect continuously throughout the registration or licensing period.

(b) Every owner or registrant of a motor vehicle used as a taxicab shall not be governed by paragraph (1)(a) but shall maintain security as required under s. 324.032(1), and s. 627.737 shall not apply to any motor vehicle used as a taxicab.

(2) Every nonresident owner or registrant of a motor vehicle which, whether operated or not, has been physically present within this state for more than 90 days during the preceding 365 days shall thereafter maintain security as defined by subsection (3) in effect continuously throughout the period such motor vehicle remains within this state.

(3) Such security shall be provided:

(a) By an insurance policy delivered or issued for delivery in this state by an authorized or eligible motor vehicle liability insurer which provides the benefits and exemptions contained in ss. 627.730-627.7405. Any policy of insurance represented or sold as providing the security required hereunder shall be deemed to provide insurance for the payment of the required benefits; or

(b) By any other method authorized by s. 324.031(2), (3), or (4) and approved by the Department of Highway Safety and

Motor Vehicles as affording security equivalent to that afforded by a policy of insurance or by self-insuring as authorized by s. 768.28(16). The person filing such security shall have all of the obligations and rights of an insurer under ss. 627.730-627.7405.

(4) An owner of a motor vehicle with respect to which security is required by this section who fails to have such security in effect at the time of an accident shall have no immunity from tort liability, but shall be personally liable for the payment of benefits under s. 627.736. With respect to such benefits, such an owner shall have all of the rights and obligations of an insurer under ss. 627.730-627.7405.

(5) In addition to other persons who are not required to provide required security as required under this section and s. 324.022, the owner or registrant of a motor vehicle is exempt from such requirements if she or he is a member of the United States Armed Forces and is called to or on active duty outside the United States in an emergency situation. The exemption provided by this subsection applies only as long as the member of the armed forces is on such active duty outside the United States and applies only while the vehicle covered by the security required by this section and s. 324.022 is not operated by any person. Upon receipt of a written request by the insured to whom the exemption provided in this subsection applies, the insurer shall cancel the coverages and return any unearned premium or suspend the security required by this section and s. 324.022. Notwithstanding s. 324.0221(2) ~~subsection (6)~~, the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles may not suspend

the registration or operator's license of any owner or registrant of a motor vehicle during the time she or he qualifies for an exemption under this subsection. Any owner or registrant of a motor vehicle who qualifies for an exemption under this subsection shall immediately notify the department prior to and at the end of the expiration of the exemption.

~~(6) The Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles shall suspend, after due notice and an opportunity to be heard, the registration and driver's license of any owner or registrant of a motor vehicle with respect to which security is required under this section and s. 324.022:~~

~~(a) Upon its records showing that the owner or registrant of such motor vehicle did not have in full force and effect when required security complying with the terms of this section; or~~

~~(b) Upon notification by the insurer to the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles, in a form approved by the department, of cancellation or termination of the required security.~~

~~(7) Any operator or owner whose driver's license or registration has been suspended pursuant to this section or s. 316.646 may effect its reinstatement upon compliance with the requirements of this section and upon payment to the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles of a nonrefundable reinstatement fee of $150 for the first reinstatement. Such reinstatement fee shall be $250 for the second reinstatement and $500 for each subsequent reinstatement during the 3 years following the first reinstatement. Any person reinstating her or his insurance under this subsection must also secure~~

~~noncancelable coverage as described in ss. 324.021(8), 324.023, and 627.7275(2) and present to the appropriate person proof that the coverage is in force on a form promulgated by the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles, such proof to be maintained for 2 years. If the person does not have a second reinstatement within 3 years after her or his initial reinstatement, the reinstatement fee shall be $150 for the first reinstatement after that 3-year period. In the event that a person's license and registration are suspended pursuant to this section or s. 316.646, only one reinstatement fee shall be paid to reinstate the license and the registration. All fees shall be collected by the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles at the time of reinstatement. The Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles shall issue proper receipts for such fees and shall promptly deposit those fees in the Highway Safety Operating Trust Fund. One-third of the fee collected under this subsection shall be distributed from the Highway Safety Operating Trust Fund to the local government entity or state agency which employed the law enforcement officer who seizes a license plate pursuant to s. 324.201. Such funds may be used by the local government entity or state agency for any authorized purpose.~~

Section 12. Notwithstanding the repeal of the Florida Motor Vehicle No-Fault Law, which occurred on October 1, 2007, section 627.734, Florida Statutes, is revived and reenacted to read:

627.734 Proof of security; security requirements; penalties.--

(1) The provisions of chapter 324 which pertain to the method of giving and maintaining proof of financial responsibility and which govern and define a motor vehicle liability policy shall apply to filing and maintaining proof of security required by ss. 627.730-627.7405.

(2) Any person who:

(a) Gives information required in a report or otherwise as provided for in ss. 627.730-627.7405, knowing or having reason to believe that such information is false;

(b) Forges or, without authority, signs any evidence of proof of security; or

(c) Files, or offers for filing, any such evidence of proof, knowing or having reason to believe that it is forged or signed without authority,

is guilty of a misdemeanor of the first degree, punishable as provided in s. 775.082 or s. 775.083.

Section 13. Notwithstanding the repeal of the Florida Motor Vehicle No-Fault Law, which occurred on October 1, 2007, section 627.736, Florida Statutes, is revived, reenacted, and amended to read:

627.736 Required personal injury protection benefits; exclusions; priority; claims.--

(1) REQUIRED BENEFITS.--Every insurance policy complying with the security requirements of s. 627.733 shall provide personal injury protection to the named insured, relatives residing in the same household, persons operating the insured motor vehicle, passengers in such motor vehicle, and other

persons struck by such motor vehicle and suffering bodily injury while not an occupant of a self-propelled vehicle, subject to the provisions of subsection (2) and paragraph (4)(d), to a limit of $10,000 for loss sustained by any such person as a result of bodily injury, sickness, disease, or death arising out of the ownership, maintenance, or use of a motor vehicle as follows:

(a) Medical benefits.--Eighty percent of all reasonable expenses for medically necessary medical, surgical, X-ray, dental, and rehabilitative services, including prosthetic devices, and medically necessary ambulance, hospital, and nursing services. Such benefits shall also include necessary remedial treatment and services recognized and permitted under the laws of the state for an injured person who relies upon spiritual means through prayer alone for healing, in accordance with his or her religious beliefs; however, this sentence does not affect the determination of what other services or procedures are medically necessary.

(b) Disability benefits.--Sixty percent of any loss of gross income and loss of earning capacity per individual from inability to work proximately caused by the injury sustained by the injured person, plus all expenses reasonably incurred in obtaining from others ordinary and necessary services in lieu of those that, but for the injury, the injured person would have performed without income for the benefit of his or her household. All disability benefits payable under this provision shall be paid not less than every 2 weeks.

(c) Death benefits.--Death benefits of $5,000 per

individual. The insurer may pay such benefits to the executor or administrator of the deceased, to any of the deceased's relatives by blood or legal adoption or connection by marriage, or to any person appearing to the insurer to be equitably entitled thereto.

Only insurers writing motor vehicle liability insurance in this state may provide the required benefits of this section, and no such insurer shall require the purchase of any other motor vehicle coverage other than the purchase of property damage liability coverage as required by s. 627.7275 as a condition for providing such required benefits. Insurers may not require that property damage liability insurance in an amount greater than $10,000 be purchased in conjunction with personal injury protection. Such insurers shall make benefits and required property damage liability insurance coverage available through normal marketing channels. Any insurer writing motor vehicle liability insurance in this state who fails to comply with such availability requirement as a general business practice shall be deemed to have violated part IX of chapter 626, and such violation shall constitute an unfair method of competition or an unfair or deceptive act or practice involving the business of insurance; and any such insurer committing such violation shall be subject to the penalties afforded in such part, as well as those which may be afforded elsewhere in the insurance code.

(2) AUTHORIZED EXCLUSIONS.--Any insurer may exclude benefits:

(a) For injury sustained by the named insured and

relatives residing in the same household while occupying another motor vehicle owned by the named insured and not insured under the policy or for injury sustained by any person operating the insured motor vehicle without the express or implied consent of the insured.

(b) To any injured person, if such person's conduct contributed to his or her injury under any of the following circumstances:

1. Causing injury to himself or herself intentionally; or

2. Being injured while committing a felony.

Whenever an insured is charged with conduct as set forth in subparagraph 2., the 30-day payment provision of paragraph (4)(b) shall be held in abeyance, and the insurer shall withhold payment of any personal injury protection benefits pending the outcome of the case at the trial level. If the charge is nolle prossed or dismissed or the insured is acquitted, the 30-day payment provision shall run from the date the insurer is notified of such action.

(3) INSURED'S RIGHTS TO RECOVERY OF SPECIAL DAMAGES IN TORT CLAIMS.--No insurer shall have a lien on any recovery in tort by judgment, settlement, or otherwise for personal injury protection benefits, whether suit has been filed or settlement has been reached without suit. An injured party who is entitled to bring suit under the provisions of ss. 627.730-627.7405, or his or her legal representative, shall have no right to recover any damages for which personal injury protection benefits are paid or payable. The plaintiff may prove all of his or her

special damages notwithstanding this limitation, but if special damages are introduced in evidence, the trier of facts, whether judge or jury, shall not award damages for personal injury protection benefits paid or payable. In all cases in which a jury is required to fix damages, the court shall instruct the jury that the plaintiff shall not recover such special damages for personal injury protection benefits paid or payable.

(4) BENEFITS; WHEN DUE.--Benefits due from an insurer under ss. 627.730-627.7405 shall be primary, except that benefits received under any workers' compensation law shall be credited against the benefits provided by subsection (1) and shall be due and payable as loss accrues, upon receipt of reasonable proof of such loss and the amount of expenses and loss incurred which are covered by the policy issued under ss. 627.730-627.7405. When the Agency for Health Care Administration provides, pays, or becomes liable for medical assistance under the Medicaid program related to injury, sickness, disease, or death arising out of the ownership, maintenance, or use of a motor vehicle, benefits under ss. 627.730-627.7405 shall be subject to the provisions of the Medicaid program.

(a) An insurer may require written notice to be given as soon as practicable after an accident involving a motor vehicle with respect to which the policy affords the security required by ss. 627.730-627.7405.

(b) Personal injury protection insurance benefits paid pursuant to this section shall be overdue if not paid within 30 days after the insurer is furnished written notice of the fact of a covered loss and of the amount of same. If such written

notice is not furnished to the insurer as to the entire claim, any partial amount supported by written notice is overdue if not paid within 30 days after such written notice is furnished to the insurer. Any part or all of the remainder of the claim that is subsequently supported by written notice is overdue if not paid within 30 days after such written notice is furnished to the insurer. When an insurer pays only a portion of a claim or rejects a claim, the insurer shall provide at the time of the partial payment or rejection an itemized specification of each item that the insurer had reduced, omitted, or declined to pay and any information that the insurer desires the claimant to consider related to the medical necessity of the denied treatment or to explain the reasonableness of the reduced charge, provided that this shall not limit the introduction of evidence at trial; and the insurer shall include the name and address of the person to whom the claimant should respond and a claim number to be referenced in future correspondence. However, notwithstanding the fact that written notice has been furnished to the insurer, any payment shall not be deemed overdue when the insurer has reasonable proof to establish that the insurer is not responsible for the payment. For the purpose of calculating the extent to which any benefits are overdue, payment shall be treated as being made on the date a draft or other valid instrument which is equivalent to payment was placed in the United States mail in a properly addressed, postpaid envelope or, if not so posted, on the date of delivery. This paragraph does not preclude or limit the ability of the insurer to assert that the claim was unrelated, was not medically necessary, or

was unreasonable or that the amount of the charge was in excess of that permitted under, or in violation of, subsection (5). Such assertion by the insurer may be made at any time, including after payment of the claim or after the 30-day time period for payment set forth in this paragraph.

(c) All overdue payments shall bear simple interest at the rate established under s. 55.03 or the rate established in the insurance contract, whichever is greater, for the year in which the payment became overdue, calculated from the date the insurer was furnished with written notice of the amount of covered loss. Interest shall be due at the time payment of the overdue claim is made.

(d) The insurer of the owner of a motor vehicle shall pay personal injury protection benefits for:

1. Accidental bodily injury sustained in this state by the owner while occupying a motor vehicle, or while not an occupant of a self-propelled vehicle if the injury is caused by physical contact with a motor vehicle.

2. Accidental bodily injury sustained outside this state, but within the United States of America or its territories or possessions or Canada, by the owner while occupying the owner's motor vehicle.

3. Accidental bodily injury sustained by a relative of the owner residing in the same household, under the circumstances described in subparagraph 1. or subparagraph 2., provided the relative at the time of the accident is domiciled in the owner's household and is not himself or herself the owner of a motor vehicle with respect to which security is required under ss.

627.730-627.7405.

4. Accidental bodily injury sustained in this state by any other person while occupying the owner's motor vehicle or, if a resident of this state, while not an occupant of a self-propelled vehicle, if the injury is caused by physical contact with such motor vehicle, provided the injured person is not himself or herself:

a. The owner of a motor vehicle with respect to which security is required under ss. 627.730-627.7405; or

b. Entitled to personal injury benefits from the insurer of the owner or owners of such a motor vehicle.

(e) If two or more insurers are liable to pay personal injury protection benefits for the same injury to any one person, the maximum payable shall be as specified in subsection (1), and any insurer paying the benefits shall be entitled to recover from each of the other insurers an equitable pro rata share of the benefits paid and expenses incurred in processing the claim.

(f) It is a violation of the insurance code for an insurer to fail to timely provide benefits as required by this section with such frequency as to constitute a general business practice.

(g) Benefits shall not be due or payable to or on the behalf of an insured person if that person has committed, by a material act or omission, any insurance fraud relating to personal injury protection coverage under his or her policy, if the fraud is admitted to in a sworn statement by the insured or if it is established in a court of competent jurisdiction. Any

insurance fraud shall void all coverage arising from the claim related to such fraud under the personal injury protection coverage of the insured person who committed the fraud, irrespective of whether a portion of the insured person's claim may be legitimate, and any benefits paid prior to the discovery of the insured person's insurance fraud shall be recoverable by the insurer from the person who committed insurance fraud in their entirety. The prevailing party is entitled to its costs and attorney's fees in any action in which it prevails in an insurer's action to enforce its right of recovery under this paragraph.

(5) CHARGES FOR TREATMENT OF INJURED PERSONS.--

(a) Any physician, hospital, clinic, or other person or institution lawfully rendering treatment to an injured person for a bodily injury covered by personal injury protection insurance may charge the insurer and injured party only a reasonable amount pursuant to this section for the services and supplies rendered, and the insurer providing such coverage may pay for such charges directly to such person or institution lawfully rendering such treatment, if the insured receiving such treatment or his or her guardian has countersigned the properly completed invoice, bill, or claim form approved by the office upon which such charges are to be paid for as having actually been rendered, to the best knowledge of the insured or his or her guardian. In no event, however, may such a charge be in excess of the amount the person or institution customarily charges for like services or supplies. With respect to a determination of whether a charge for a particular service,

treatment, or otherwise is reasonable, consideration may be given to evidence of usual and customary charges and payments accepted by the provider involved in the dispute, and reimbursement levels in the community and various federal and state medical fee schedules applicable to automobile and other insurance coverages, and other information relevant to the reasonableness of the reimbursement for the service, treatment, or supply.

(b)1. An insurer or insured is not required to pay a claim or charges:

a. Made by a broker or by a person making a claim on behalf of a broker;

b. For any service or treatment that was not lawful at the time rendered;

c. To any person who knowingly submits a false or misleading statement relating to the claim or charges;

d. With respect to a bill or statement that does not substantially meet the applicable requirements of paragraph (d);

e. For any treatment or service that is upcoded, or that is unbundled when such treatment or services should be bundled, in accordance with paragraph (d). To facilitate prompt payment of lawful services, an insurer may change codes that it determines to have been improperly or incorrectly upcoded or unbundled, and may make payment based on the changed codes, without affecting the right of the provider to dispute the change by the insurer, provided that before doing so, the insurer must contact the health care provider and discuss the reasons for the insurer's change and the health care provider's

reason for the coding, or make a reasonable good faith effort to do so, as documented in the insurer's file; and

f. For medical services or treatment billed by a physician and not provided in a hospital unless such services are rendered by the physician or are incident to his or her professional services and are included on the physician's bill, including documentation verifying that the physician is responsible for the medical services that were rendered and billed.

2. Charges for medically necessary cephalic thermograms, peripheral thermograms, spinal ultrasounds, extremity ultrasounds, video fluoroscopy, and surface electromyography shall not exceed the maximum reimbursement allowance for such procedures as set forth in the applicable fee schedule or other payment methodology established pursuant to s. 440.13.

3. Allowable amounts that may be charged to a personal injury protection insurance insurer and insured for medically necessary nerve conduction testing when done in conjunction with a needle electromyography procedure and both are performed and billed solely by a physician licensed under chapter 458, chapter 459, chapter 460, or chapter 461 who is also certified by the American Board of Electrodiagnostic Medicine or by a board recognized by the American Board of Medical Specialties or the American Osteopathic Association or who holds diplomate status with the American Chiropractic Neurology Board or its predecessors shall not exceed 200 percent of the allowable amount under the participating physician fee schedule of Medicare Part B for year 2001, for the area in which the treatment was rendered, adjusted annually on August 1 to reflect

the prior calendar year's changes in the annual Medical Care Item of the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers in the South Region as determined by the Bureau of Labor Statistics of the United States Department of Labor.

4. Allowable amounts that may be charged to a personal injury protection insurance insurer and insured for medically necessary nerve conduction testing that does not meet the requirements of subparagraph 3. shall not exceed the applicable fee schedule or other payment methodology established pursuant to s. 440.13.

5. Allowable amounts that may be charged to a personal injury protection insurance insurer and insured for magnetic resonance imaging services shall not exceed 175 percent of the allowable amount under the participating physician fee schedule of Medicare Part B for year 2001, for the area in which the treatment was rendered, adjusted annually on August 1 to reflect the prior calendar year's changes in the annual Medical Care Item of the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers in the South Region as determined by the Bureau of Labor Statistics of the United States Department of Labor for the 12-month period ending June 30 of that year, except that allowable amounts that may be charged to a personal injury protection insurance insurer and insured for magnetic resonance imaging services provided in facilities accredited by the Accreditation Association for Ambulatory Health Care, the American College of Radiology, or the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations shall not exceed 200 percent of the allowable amount under the participating physician fee schedule of

Medicare Part B for year 2001, for the area in which the treatment was rendered, adjusted annually on August 1 to reflect the prior calendar year's changes in the annual Medical Care Item of the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers in the South Region as determined by the Bureau of Labor Statistics of the United States Department of Labor for the 12-month period ending June 30 of that year. This paragraph does not apply to charges for magnetic resonance imaging services and nerve conduction testing for inpatients and emergency services and care as defined in chapter 395 rendered by facilities licensed under chapter 395.

6. The Department of Health, in consultation with the appropriate professional licensing boards, shall adopt, by rule, a list of diagnostic tests deemed not to be medically necessary for use in the treatment of persons sustaining bodily injury covered by personal injury protection benefits under this section. The initial list shall be adopted by January 1, 2004, and shall be revised from time to time as determined by the Department of Health, in consultation with the respective professional licensing boards. Inclusion of a test on the list of invalid diagnostic tests shall be based on lack of demonstrated medical value and a level of general acceptance by the relevant provider community and shall not be dependent for results entirely upon subjective patient response. Notwithstanding its inclusion on a fee schedule in this subsection, an insurer or insured is not required to pay any charges or reimburse claims for any invalid diagnostic test as determined by the Department of Health.

(c)1. With respect to any treatment or service, other than medical services billed by a hospital or other provider for emergency services as defined in s. 395.002 or inpatient services rendered at a hospital-owned facility, the statement of charges must be furnished to the insurer by the provider and may not include, and the insurer is not required to pay, charges for treatment or services rendered more than 35 days before the postmark date of the statement, except for past due amounts previously billed on a timely basis under this paragraph, and except that, if the provider submits to the insurer a notice of initiation of treatment within 21 days after its first examination or treatment of the claimant, the statement may include charges for treatment or services rendered up to, but not more than, 75 days before the postmark date of the statement. The injured party is not liable for, and the provider shall not bill the injured party for, charges that are unpaid because of the provider's failure to comply with this paragraph. Any agreement requiring the injured person or insured to pay for such charges is unenforceable.

2. If, however, the insured fails to furnish the provider with the correct name and address of the insured's personal injury protection insurer, the provider has 35 days from the date the provider obtains the correct information to furnish the insurer with a statement of the charges. The insurer is not required to pay for such charges unless the provider includes with the statement documentary evidence that was provided by the insured during the 35-day period demonstrating that the provider reasonably relied on erroneous information from the insured and

either:

a. A denial letter from the incorrect insurer; or

b. Proof of mailing, which may include an affidavit under penalty of perjury, reflecting timely mailing to the incorrect address or insurer.

3. For emergency services and care as defined in s. 395.002 rendered in a hospital emergency department or for transport and treatment rendered by an ambulance provider licensed pursuant to part III of chapter 401, the provider is not required to furnish the statement of charges within the time periods established by this paragraph; and the insurer shall not be considered to have been furnished with notice of the amount of covered loss for purposes of paragraph (4)(b) until it receives a statement complying with paragraph (d), or copy thereof, which specifically identifies the place of service to be a hospital emergency department or an ambulance in accordance with billing standards recognized by the Health Care Finance Administration.

4. Each notice of insured's rights under s. 627.7401 must include the following statement in type no smaller than 12 points:

BILLING REQUIREMENTS.--Florida Statutes provide that with respect to any treatment or services, other than certain hospital and emergency services, the statement of charges furnished to the insurer by the provider may not include, and the insurer and the injured party are not required to pay, charges for treatment or services rendered more than 35 days

before the postmark date of the statement, except for past due amounts previously billed on a timely basis, and except that, if the provider submits to the insurer a notice of initiation of treatment within 21 days after its first examination or treatment of the claimant, the statement may include charges for treatment or services rendered up to, but not more than, 75 days before the postmark date of the statement.

(d) All statements and bills for medical services rendered by any physician, hospital, clinic, or other person or institution shall be submitted to the insurer on a properly completed Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) 1500 form, UB 92 forms, or any other standard form approved by the office or adopted by the commission for purposes of this paragraph. All billings for such services rendered by providers shall, to the extent applicable, follow the Physicians' Current Procedural Terminology (CPT) or Healthcare Correct Procedural Coding System (HCPCS), or ICD-9 in effect for the year in which services are rendered and comply with the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) 1500 form instructions and the American Medical Association Current Procedural Terminology (CPT) Editorial Panel and Healthcare Correct Procedural Coding System (HCPCS). All providers other than hospitals shall include on the applicable claim form the professional license number of the provider in the line or space provided for "Signature of Physician or Supplier, Including Degrees or Credentials." In determining compliance with applicable CPT and HCPCS coding, guidance shall be provided by the Physicians' Current Procedural Terminology (CPT) or the Healthcare Correct Procedural Coding

System (HCPCS) in effect for the year in which services were rendered, the Office of the Inspector General (OIG), Physicians Compliance Guidelines, and other authoritative treatises designated by rule by the Agency for Health Care Administration. No statement of medical services may include charges for medical services of a person or entity that performed such services without possessing the valid licenses required to perform such services. For purposes of paragraph (4)(b), an insurer shall not be considered to have been furnished with notice of the amount of covered loss or medical bills due unless the statements or bills comply with this paragraph, and unless the statements or bills are properly completed in their entirety as to all material provisions, with all relevant information being provided therein.

(e)1. At the initial treatment or service provided, each physician, other licensed professional, clinic, or other medical institution providing medical services upon which a claim for personal injury protection benefits is based shall require an insured person, or his or her guardian, to execute a disclosure and acknowledgment form, which reflects at a minimum that:

a. The insured, or his or her guardian, must countersign the form attesting to the fact that the services set forth therein were actually rendered;

b. The insured, or his or her guardian, has both the right and affirmative duty to confirm that the services were actually rendered;

c. The insured, or his or her guardian, was not solicited by any person to seek any services from the medical provider;

d. That the physician, other licensed professional, clinic, or other medical institution rendering services for which payment is being claimed explained the services to the insured or his or her guardian; and

e. If the insured notifies the insurer in writing of a billing error, the insured may be entitled to a certain percentage of a reduction in the amounts paid by the insured's motor vehicle insurer.

2. The physician, other licensed professional, clinic, or other medical institution rendering services for which payment is being claimed has the affirmative duty to explain the services rendered to the insured, or his or her guardian, so that the insured, or his or her guardian, countersigns the form with informed consent.

3. Countersignature by the insured, or his or her guardian, is not required for the reading of diagnostic tests or other services that are of such a nature that they are not required to be performed in the presence of the insured.

4. The licensed medical professional rendering treatment for which payment is being claimed must sign, by his or her own hand, the form complying with this paragraph.

5. The original completed disclosure and acknowledgment form shall be furnished to the insurer pursuant to paragraph (4)(b) and may not be electronically furnished.

6. This disclosure and acknowledgment form is not required for services billed by a provider for emergency services as defined in s. 395.002, for emergency services and care as defined in s. 395.002 rendered in a hospital emergency

department, or for transport and treatment rendered by an ambulance provider licensed pursuant to part III of chapter 401.

7. The Financial Services Commission shall adopt, by rule, a standard disclosure and acknowledgment form that shall be used to fulfill the requirements of this paragraph, effective 90 days after such form is adopted and becomes final. The commission shall adopt a proposed rule by October 1, 2003. Until the rule is final, the provider may use a form of its own which otherwise complies with the requirements of this paragraph.

8. As used in this paragraph, "countersigned" means a second or verifying signature, as on a previously signed document, and is not satisfied by the statement "signature on file" or any similar statement.

9. The requirements of this paragraph apply only with respect to the initial treatment or service of the insured by a provider. For subsequent treatments or service, the provider must maintain a patient log signed by the patient, in chronological order by date of service, that is consistent with the services being rendered to the patient as claimed. The requirements of this subparagraph for maintaining a patient log signed by the patient may be met by a hospital that maintains medical records as required by s. 395.3025 and applicable rules and makes such records available to the insurer upon request.

(f) Upon written notification by any person, an insurer shall investigate any claim of improper billing by a physician or other medical provider. The insurer shall determine if the insured was properly billed for only those services and treatments that the insured actually received. If the insurer

determines that the insured has been improperly billed, the insurer shall notify the insured, the person making the written notification and the provider of its findings and shall reduce the amount of payment to the provider by the amount determined to be improperly billed. If a reduction is made due to such written notification by any person, the insurer shall pay to the person 20 percent of the amount of the reduction, up to $500. If the provider is arrested due to the improper billing, then the insurer shall pay to the person 40 percent of the amount of the reduction, up to $500.

(g) An insurer may not systematically downcode with the intent to deny reimbursement otherwise due. Such action constitutes a material misrepresentation under s. 626.9541(1)(i)2.

(6) DISCOVERY OF FACTS ABOUT AN INJURED PERSON; DISPUTES.--

(a) Every employer shall, if a request is made by an insurer providing personal injury protection benefits under ss. 627.730-627.7405 against whom a claim has been made, furnish forthwith, in a form approved by the office, a sworn statement of the earnings, since the time of the bodily injury and for a reasonable period before the injury, of the person upon whose injury the claim is based.

(b) Every physician, hospital, clinic, or other medical institution providing, before or after bodily injury upon which a claim for personal injury protection insurance benefits is based, any products, services, or accommodations in relation to that or any other injury, or in relation to a condition claimed

to be connected with that or any other injury, shall, if requested to do so by the insurer against whom the claim has been made, furnish forthwith a written report of the history, condition, treatment, dates, and costs of such treatment of the injured person and why the items identified by the insurer were reasonable in amount and medically necessary, together with a sworn statement that the treatment or services rendered were reasonable and necessary with respect to the bodily injury sustained and identifying which portion of the expenses for such treatment or services was incurred as a result of such bodily injury, and produce forthwith, and permit the inspection and copying of, his or her or its records regarding such history, condition, treatment, dates, and costs of treatment; provided that this shall not limit the introduction of evidence at trial. Such sworn statement shall read as follows: "Under penalty of perjury, I declare that I have read the foregoing, and the facts alleged are true, to the best of my knowledge and belief." No cause of action for violation of the physician-patient privilege or invasion of the right of privacy shall be permitted against any physician, hospital, clinic, or other medical institution complying with the provisions of this section. The person requesting such records and such sworn statement shall pay all reasonable costs connected therewith. If an insurer makes a written request for documentation or information under this paragraph within 30 days after having received notice of the amount of a covered loss under paragraph (4)(a), the amount or the partial amount which is the subject of the insurer's inquiry shall become overdue if the insurer does not pay in accordance

with paragraph (4)(b) or within 10 days after the insurer's receipt of the requested documentation or information, whichever occurs later. For purposes of this paragraph, the term "receipt" includes, but is not limited to, inspection and copying pursuant to this paragraph. Any insurer that requests documentation or information pertaining to reasonableness of charges or medical necessity under this paragraph without a reasonable basis for such requests as a general business practice is engaging in an unfair trade practice under the insurance code.

(c) In the event of any dispute regarding an insurer's right to discovery of facts under this section, the insurer may petition a court of competent jurisdiction to enter an order permitting such discovery. The order may be made only on motion for good cause shown and upon notice to all persons having an interest, and it shall specify the time, place, manner, conditions, and scope of the discovery. Such court may, in order to protect against annoyance, embarrassment, or oppression, as justice requires, enter an order refusing discovery or specifying conditions of discovery and may order payments of costs and expenses of the proceeding, including reasonable fees for the appearance of attorneys at the proceedings, as justice requires.

(d) The injured person shall be furnished, upon request, a copy of all information obtained by the insurer under the provisions of this section, and shall pay a reasonable charge, if required by the insurer.

(e) Notice to an insurer of the existence of a claim shall not be unreasonably withheld by an insured.

(7) MENTAL AND PHYSICAL EXAMINATION OF INJURED PERSON; REPORTS.--

(a) Whenever the mental or physical condition of an injured person covered by personal injury protection is material to any claim that has been or may be made for past or future personal injury protection insurance benefits, such person shall, upon the request of an insurer, submit to mental or physical examination by a physician or physicians. The costs of any examinations requested by an insurer shall be borne entirely by the insurer. Such examination shall be conducted within the municipality where the insured is receiving treatment, or in a location reasonably accessible to the insured, which, for purposes of this paragraph, means any location within the municipality in which the insured resides, or any location within 10 miles by road of the insured's residence, provided such location is within the county in which the insured resides. If the examination is to be conducted in a location reasonably accessible to the insured, and if there is no qualified physician to conduct the examination in a location reasonably accessible to the insured, then such examination shall be conducted in an area of the closest proximity to the insured's residence. Personal protection insurers are authorized to include reasonable provisions in personal injury protection insurance policies for mental and physical examination of those claiming personal injury protection insurance benefits. An insurer may not withdraw payment of a treating physician without the consent of the injured person covered by the personal injury protection, unless the insurer first obtains a valid report by a

Florida physician licensed under the same chapter as the treating physician whose treatment authorization is sought to be withdrawn, stating that treatment was not reasonable, related, or necessary. A valid report is one that is prepared and signed by the physician examining the injured person or reviewing the treatment records of the injured person and is factually supported by the examination and treatment records if reviewed and that has not been modified by anyone other than the physician. The physician preparing the report must be in active practice, unless the physician is physically disabled. Active practice means that during the 3 years immediately preceding the date of the physical examination or review of the treatment records the physician must have devoted professional time to the active clinical practice of evaluation, diagnosis, or treatment of medical conditions or to the instruction of students in an accredited health professional school or accredited residency program or a clinical research program that is affiliated with an accredited health professional school or teaching hospital or accredited residency program. The physician preparing a report at the request of an insurer and physicians rendering expert opinions on behalf of persons claiming medical benefits for personal injury protection, or on behalf of an insured through an attorney or another entity, shall maintain, for at least 3 years, copies of all examination reports as medical records and shall maintain, for at least 3 years, records of all payments for the examinations and reports. Neither an insurer nor any person acting at the direction of or on behalf of an insurer may materially change an opinion in a report prepared under this

paragraph or direct the physician preparing the report to change such opinion. The denial of a payment as the result of such a changed opinion constitutes a material misrepresentation under s. 626.9541(1)(i)2.; however, this provision does not preclude the insurer from calling to the attention of the physician errors of fact in the report based upon information in the claim file.

(b) If requested by the person examined, a party causing an examination to be made shall deliver to him or her a copy of every written report concerning the examination rendered by an examining physician, at least one of which reports must set out the examining physician's findings and conclusions in detail. After such request and delivery, the party causing the examination to be made is entitled, upon request, to receive from the person examined every written report available to him or her or his or her representative concerning any examination, previously or thereafter made, of the same mental or physical condition. By requesting and obtaining a report of the examination so ordered, or by taking the deposition of the examiner, the person examined waives any privilege he or she may have, in relation to the claim for benefits, regarding the testimony of every other person who has examined, or may thereafter examine, him or her in respect to the same mental or physical condition. If a person unreasonably refuses to submit to an examination, the personal injury protection carrier is no longer liable for subsequent personal injury protection benefits.

(8) APPLICABILITY OF PROVISION REGULATING ATTORNEY'S

FEES.--With respect to any dispute under the provisions of ss. 627.730-627.7405 between the insured and the insurer, or between an assignee of an insured's rights and the insurer, the provisions of s. 627.428 shall apply, except as provided in subsection (10) ~~(11)~~.

~~(9)(a) Each insurer which has issued a policy providing personal injury protection benefits shall report the renewal, cancellation, or nonrenewal thereof to the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles within 45 days from the effective date of the renewal, cancellation, or nonrenewal. Upon the issuance of a policy providing personal injury protection benefits to a named insured not previously insured by the insurer thereof during that calendar year, the insurer shall report the issuance of the new policy to the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles within 30 days. The report shall be in such form and format and contain such information as may be required by the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles which shall include a format compatible with the data processing capabilities of said department, and the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles is authorized to adopt rules necessary with respect thereto. Failure by an insurer to file proper reports with the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles as required by this subsection or rules adopted with respect to the requirements of this subsection constitutes a violation of the Florida Insurance Code. Reports of cancellations and policy renewals and reports of the issuance of new policies received by the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles are confidential and exempt from the provisions of s. 119.07(1).~~

~~These records are to be used for enforcement and regulatory purposes only, including the generation by the department of data regarding compliance by owners of motor vehicles with financial responsibility coverage requirements. In addition, the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles shall release, upon a written request by a person involved in a motor vehicle accident, by the person's attorney, or by a representative of the person's motor vehicle insurer, the name of the insurance company and the policy number for the policy covering the vehicle named by the requesting party. The written request must include a copy of the appropriate accident form as provided in s. 316.065, s. 316.066, or s. 316.068.~~

~~(b) Every insurer with respect to each insurance policy providing personal injury protection benefits shall notify the named insured or in the case of a commercial fleet policy, the first named insured in writing that any cancellation or nonrenewal of the policy will be reported by the insurer to the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles. The notice shall also inform the named insured that failure to maintain personal injury protection and property damage liability insurance on a motor vehicle when required by law may result in the loss of registration and driving privileges in this state, and the notice shall inform the named insured of the amount of the reinstatement fees required by s. 627.733(7). This notice is for informational purposes only, and no civil liability shall attach to an insurer due to failure to provide this notice.~~

(9)~~(10)~~ An insurer may negotiate and enter into contracts with licensed health care providers for the benefits described

in this section, referred to in this section as "preferred providers," which shall include health care providers licensed under chapters 458, 459, 460, 461, and 463. The insurer may provide an option to an insured to use a preferred provider at the time of purchase of the policy for personal injury protection benefits, if the requirements of this subsection are met. If the insured elects to use a provider who is not a preferred provider, whether the insured purchased a preferred provider policy or a nonpreferred provider policy, the medical benefits provided by the insurer shall be as required by this section. If the insured elects to use a provider who is a preferred provider, the insurer may pay medical benefits in excess of the benefits required by this section and may waive or lower the amount of any deductible that applies to such medical benefits. If the insurer offers a preferred provider policy to a policyholder or applicant, it must also offer a nonpreferred provider policy. The insurer shall provide each policyholder with a current roster of preferred providers in the county in which the insured resides at the time of purchase of such policy, and shall make such list available for public inspection during regular business hours at the principal office of the insurer within the state.

(10)~~(11)~~ DEMAND LETTER.--

(a) As a condition precedent to filing any action for benefits under this section, the insurer must be provided with written notice of an intent to initiate litigation. Such notice may not be sent until the claim is overdue, including any additional time the insurer has to pay the claim pursuant to

paragraph (4)(b).

(b) The notice required shall state that it is a "demand letter under s. 627.736(10)~~(11)~~" and shall state with specificity:

1. The name of the insured upon which such benefits are being sought, including a copy of the assignment giving rights to the claimant if the claimant is not the insured.

2. The claim number or policy number upon which such claim was originally submitted to the insurer.

3. To the extent applicable, the name of any medical provider who rendered to an insured the treatment, services, accommodations, or supplies that form the basis of such claim; and an itemized statement specifying each exact amount, the date of treatment, service, or accommodation, and the type of benefit claimed to be due. A completed form satisfying the requirements of paragraph (5)(d) or the lost-wage statement previously submitted may be used as the itemized statement. To the extent that the demand involves an insurer's withdrawal of payment under paragraph (7)(a) for future treatment not yet rendered, the claimant shall attach a copy of the insurer's notice withdrawing such payment and an itemized statement of the type, frequency, and duration of future treatment claimed to be reasonable and medically necessary.

(c) Each notice required by this subsection must be delivered to the insurer by United States certified or registered mail, return receipt requested. Such postal costs shall be reimbursed by the insurer if so requested by the claimant in the notice, when the insurer pays the claim. Such

notice must be sent to the person and address specified by the insurer for the purposes of receiving notices under this subsection. Each licensed insurer, whether domestic, foreign, or alien, shall file with the office designation of the name and address of the person to whom notices pursuant to this subsection shall be sent which the office shall make available on its Internet website. The name and address on file with the office pursuant to s. 624.422 shall be deemed the authorized representative to accept notice pursuant to this subsection in the event no other designation has been made.

(d) If, within 15 days after receipt of notice by the insurer, the overdue claim specified in the notice is paid by the insurer together with applicable interest and a penalty of 10 percent of the overdue amount paid by the insurer, subject to a maximum penalty of $250, no action may be brought against the insurer. If the demand involves an insurer's withdrawal of payment under paragraph (7)(a) for future treatment not yet rendered, no action may be brought against the insurer if, within 15 days after its receipt of the notice, the insurer mails to the person filing the notice a written statement of the insurer's agreement to pay for such treatment in accordance with the notice and to pay a penalty of 10 percent, subject to a maximum penalty of $250, when it pays for such future treatment in accordance with the requirements of this section. To the extent the insurer determines not to pay any amount demanded, the penalty shall not be payable in any subsequent action. For purposes of this subsection, payment or the insurer's agreement shall be treated as being made on the date a draft or other

valid instrument that is equivalent to payment, or the insurer's written statement of agreement, is placed in the United States mail in a properly addressed, postpaid envelope, or if not so posted, on the date of delivery. The insurer shall not be obligated to pay any attorney's fees if the insurer pays the claim or mails its agreement to pay for future treatment within the time prescribed by this subsection.

(e) The applicable statute of limitation for an action under this section shall be tolled for a period of 15 business days by the mailing of the notice required by this subsection.

(f) Any insurer making a general business practice of not paying valid claims until receipt of the notice required by this subsection is engaging in an unfair trade practice under the insurance code.

(11)~~(12)~~ CIVIL ACTION FOR INSURANCE FRAUD.--An insurer shall have a cause of action against any person convicted of, or who, regardless of adjudication of guilt, pleads guilty or nolo contendere to insurance fraud under s. 817.234, patient brokering under s. 817.505, or kickbacks under s. 456.054, associated with a claim for personal injury protection benefits in accordance with this section. An insurer prevailing in an action brought under this subsection may recover compensatory, consequential, and punitive damages subject to the requirements and limitations of part II of chapter 768, and attorney's fees and costs incurred in litigating a cause of action against any person convicted of, or who, regardless of adjudication of guilt, pleads guilty or nolo contendere to insurance fraud under s. 817.234, patient brokering under s. 817.505, or kickbacks

under s. 456.054, associated with a claim for personal injury protection benefits in accordance with this section.

(12) ~~(13)~~ MINIMUM BENEFIT COVERAGE.--If the Financial Services Commission determines that the cost savings under personal injury protection insurance benefits paid by insurers have been realized due to the provisions of this act, prior legislative reforms, or other factors, the commission may increase the minimum $10,000 benefit coverage requirement. In establishing the amount of such increase, the commission must determine that the additional premium for such coverage is approximately equal to the premium cost savings that have been realized for the personal injury protection coverage with limits of $10,000.

(13) ~~(14)~~ FRAUD ADVISORY NOTICE.--Upon receiving notice of a claim under this section, an insurer shall provide a notice to the insured or to a person for whom a claim for reimbursement for diagnosis or treatment of injuries has been filed, advising that:

(a) Pursuant to s. 626.9892, the Department of Financial Services may pay rewards of up to $25,000 to persons providing information leading to the arrest and conviction of persons committing crimes investigated by the Division of Insurance Fraud arising from violations of s. 440.105, s. 624.15, s. 626.9541, s. 626.989, or s. 817.234.

(b) Solicitation of a person injured in a motor vehicle crash for purposes of filing personal injury protection or tort claims could be a violation of s. 817.234, s. 817.505, or the rules regulating The Florida Bar and should be immediately

reported to the Division of Insurance Fraud if such conduct has taken place.

Section 14. Notwithstanding the repeal of the Florida Motor Vehicle No-Fault Law, which occurred on October 1, 2007, section 627.737, Florida Statutes, is revived and reenacted to read:

627.737 Tort exemption; limitation on right to damages; punitive damages.--

(1) Every owner, registrant, operator, or occupant of a motor vehicle with respect to which security has been provided as required by ss. 627.730-627.7405, and every person or organization legally responsible for her or his acts or omissions, is hereby exempted from tort liability for damages because of bodily injury, sickness, or disease arising out of the ownership, operation, maintenance, or use of such motor vehicle in this state to the extent that the benefits described in s. 627.736(1) are payable for such injury, or would be payable but for any exclusion authorized by ss. 627.730-627.7405, under any insurance policy or other method of security complying with the requirements of s. 627.733, or by an owner personally liable under s. 627.733 for the payment of such benefits, unless a person is entitled to maintain an action for pain, suffering, mental anguish, and inconvenience for such injury under the provisions of subsection (2).

(2) In any action of tort brought against the owner, registrant, operator, or occupant of a motor vehicle with respect to which security has been provided as required by ss. 627.730-627.7405, or against any person or organization legally

responsible for her or his acts or omissions, a plaintiff may recover damages in tort for pain, suffering, mental anguish, and inconvenience because of bodily injury, sickness, or disease arising out of the ownership, maintenance, operation, or use of such motor vehicle only in the event that the injury or disease consists in whole or in part of:

(a) Significant and permanent loss of an important bodily function.

(b) Permanent injury within a reasonable degree of medical probability, other than scarring or disfigurement.

(c) Significant and permanent scarring or disfigurement.

(d) Death.

(3) When a defendant, in a proceeding brought pursuant to ss. 627.730-627.7405, questions whether the plaintiff has met the requirements of subsection (2), then the defendant may file an appropriate motion with the court, and the court shall, on a one-time basis only, 30 days before the date set for the trial or the pretrial hearing, whichever is first, by examining the pleadings and the evidence before it, ascertain whether the plaintiff will be able to submit some evidence that the plaintiff will meet the requirements of subsection (2). If the court finds that the plaintiff will not be able to submit such evidence, then the court shall dismiss the plaintiff's claim without prejudice.

(4) In any action brought against an automobile liability insurer for damages in excess of its policy limits, no claim for punitive damages shall be allowed.

Section 15. Notwithstanding the repeal of the Florida

Motor Vehicle No-Fault Law, which occurred on October 1, 2007, section 627.739, Florida Statutes, is revived and reenacted to read:

627.739 Personal injury protection; optional limitations; deductibles.--

(1) The named insured may elect a deductible or modified coverage or combination thereof to apply to the named insured alone or to the named insured and dependent relatives residing in the same household, but may not elect a deductible or modified coverage to apply to any other person covered under the policy.

(2) Insurers shall offer to each applicant and to each policyholder, upon the renewal of an existing policy, deductibles, in amounts of $250, $500, and $1,000. The deductible amount must be applied to 100 percent of the expenses and losses described in s. 627.736. After the deductible is met, each insured is eligible to receive up to $10,000 in total benefits described in s. 627.736(1). However, this subsection shall not be applied to reduce the amount of any benefits received in accordance with s. 627.736(1)(c).

(3) Insurers shall offer coverage wherein, at the election of the named insured, the benefits for loss of gross income and loss of earning capacity described in s. 627.736(1)(b) shall be excluded.

(4) The named insured shall not be prevented from electing a deductible under subsection (2) and modified coverage under subsection (3). Each election made by the named insured under this section shall result in an appropriate reduction of premium

associated with that election.

(5) All such offers shall be made in clear and unambiguous language at the time the initial application is taken and prior to each annual renewal and shall indicate that a premium reduction will result from each election. At the option of the insurer, the requirements of the preceding sentence are met by using forms of notice approved by the office, or by providing the following notice in 10-point type in the insurer's application for initial issuance of a policy of motor vehicle insurance and the insurer's annual notice of renewal premium: For personal injury protection insurance, the named insured may elect a deductible and to exclude coverage for loss of gross income and loss of earning capacity ("lost wages"). These elections apply to the named insured alone, or to the named insured and all dependent resident relatives. A premium reduction will result from these elections. The named insured is hereby advised not to elect the lost wage exclusion if the named insured or dependent resident relatives are employed, since lost wages will not be payable in the event of an accident.

Section 16. Notwithstanding the repeal of the Florida Motor Vehicle No-Fault Law, which occurred on October 1, 2007, section 627.7401, Florida Statutes, is revived and reenacted to read:

627.7401 Notification of insured's rights.--

(1) The commission, by rule, shall adopt a form for the notification of insureds of their right to receive personal injury protection benefits under the Florida Motor Vehicle No-Fault Law. Such notice shall include:

(a) A description of the benefits provided by personal injury protection, including, but not limited to, the specific types of services for which medical benefits are paid, disability benefits, death benefits, significant exclusions from and limitations on personal injury protection benefits, when payments are due, how benefits are coordinated with other insurance benefits that the insured may have, penalties and interest that may be imposed on insurers for failure to make timely payments of benefits, and rights of parties regarding disputes as to benefits.

(b) An advisory informing insureds that:

1. Pursuant to s. 626.9892, the Department of Financial Services may pay rewards of up to $25,000 to persons providing information leading to the arrest and conviction of persons committing crimes investigated by the Division of Insurance Fraud arising from violations of s. 440.105, s. 624.15, s. 626.9541, s. 626.989, or s. 817.234.

2. Pursuant to s. 627.736(5)(e)1., if the insured notifies the insurer of a billing error, the insured may be entitled to a certain percentage of a reduction in the amount paid by the insured's motor vehicle insurer.

(c) A notice that solicitation of a person injured in a motor vehicle crash for purposes of filing personal injury protection or tort claims could be a violation of s. 817.234, s 817.505, or the rules regulating The Florida Bar and should be immediately reported to the Division of Insurance Fraud if such conduct has taken place.

(2) Each insurer issuing a policy in this state providing

personal injury protection benefits must mail or deliver the notice as specified in subsection (1) to an insured within 21 days after receiving from the insured notice of an automobile accident or claim involving personal injury to an insured who is covered under the policy. The office may allow an insurer additional time to provide the notice specified in subsection (1) not to exceed 30 days, upon a showing by the insurer that an emergency justifies an extension of time.

(3) The notice required by this section does not alter or modify the terms of the insurance contract or other requirements of this act.

Section 17. Notwithstanding the repeal of the Florida Motor Vehicle No-Fault Law, which occurred on October 1, 2007, section 627.7403, Florida Statutes, is revived and reenacted to read:

627.7403 Mandatory joinder of derivative claim.--In any action brought pursuant to the provisions of s. 627.737 claiming personal injuries, all claims arising out of the plaintiff's injuries, including all derivative claims, shall be brought together, unless good cause is shown why such claims should be brought separately.

Section 18. Notwithstanding the repeal of the Florida Motor Vehicle No-Fault Law, which occurred on October 1, 2007, section 627.7405, Florida Statutes, is revived and reenacted to read:

627.7405 Insurers' right of reimbursement.--Notwithstanding any other provisions of ss. 627.730-627.7405, any insurer providing personal injury

protection benefits on a private passenger motor vehicle shall have, to the extent of any personal injury protection benefits paid to any person as a benefit arising out of such private passenger motor vehicle insurance, a right of reimbursement against the owner or the insurer of the owner of a commercial motor vehicle, if the benefits paid result from such person having been an occupant of the commercial motor vehicle or having been struck by the commercial motor vehicle while not an occupant of any self-propelled vehicle.

Section 19. This act revives and reenacts, with amendments, the Florida Motor Vehicle No-Fault Law, which expired by operation of law on October 1, 2007. This act is intended to be remedial and curative in nature and to minimize confusion concerning the changes made by this act to ss. 627.730-627.7405, Florida Statutes. Therefore, the Florida Motor Vehicle No-Fault Law shall continue to be codified as ss. 627.730-627.7405, Florida Statutes, notwithstanding the repeal of those sections contained in s. 19, chapter 2003-411, Laws of Florida.

Section 20. Subsections (1) and (4), paragraphs (a), (b), and (c) of subsection (5), subsection (8), and paragraphs (d) and (e) of subsection (10) of section 627.736, Florida Statutes, as reenacted and amended by this act, are amended, subsections (11), (12), and (13) of that section, as reenacted and amended by this act, are renumbered as subsections (12), (13), and (14), respectively, and a new subsection (11) and subsections (15) and (16) are added to that section, to read:

627.736 Required personal injury protection benefits;

exclusions; priority; claims.--

(1) REQUIRED BENEFITS.--Every insurance policy complying with the security requirements of s. 627.733 shall provide personal injury protection to the named insured, relatives residing in the same household, persons operating the insured motor vehicle, passengers in such motor vehicle, and other persons struck by such motor vehicle and suffering bodily injury while not an occupant of a self-propelled vehicle, subject to the provisions of subsection (2) and paragraph (4)(e)~~(d)~~, to a limit of $10,000 for loss sustained by any such person as a result of bodily injury, sickness, disease, or death arising out of the ownership, maintenance, or use of a motor vehicle as follows:

(a) Medical benefits.--Eighty percent of all reasonable expenses for medically necessary medical, surgical, X-ray, dental, and rehabilitative services, including prosthetic devices, and medically necessary ambulance, hospital, and nursing services. However, the medical benefits shall provide reimbursement only for such services and care that are lawfully provided, supervised, ordered, or prescribed by a physician licensed under chapter 458 or chapter 459, a dentist licensed under chapter 466, or a chiropractic physician licensed under chapter 460 or that are provided by any of the following persons or entities:

1. A hospital or ambulatory surgical center licensed under chapter 395.

2. A person or entity licensed under ss. 401.2101-401.45 that provides emergency transportation and treatment.

3. An entity wholly owned by one or more physicians licensed under chapter 458 or chapter 459, chiropractic physicians licensed under chapter 460, or dentists licensed under chapter 466 or by such practitioner or practitioners and the spouse, parent, child, or sibling of that practitioner or those practitioners.

4. An entity wholly owned, directly or indirectly, by a hospital or hospitals.

5. A health care clinic licensed under ss. 400.990-400.995 that is:

a. Accredited by the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations, the American Osteopathic Association, the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities, or the Accreditation Association for Ambulatory Health Care, Inc.; or

b. A health care clinic that:

(I) Has a medical director licensed under chapter 458, chapter 459, or chapter 460;

(II) Has been continuously licensed for more than 3 years or is a publicly traded corporation that issues securities traded on an exchange registered with the United States Securities and Exchange Commission as a national securities exchange; and

(III) Provides at least four of the following medical specialties:

(A) General medicine.

(B) Radiography.

(C) Orthopedic medicine.

(D) Physical medicine.

(E) Physical therapy.

(F) Physical rehabilitation.

(G) Prescribing or dispensing outpatient prescription medication.

(H) Laboratory services.

The Financial Services Commission shall adopt by rule the form that must be used by an insurer and a health care provider specified in subparagraph 3., subparagraph 4., or subparagraph 5. to document that the health care provider meets the criteria of this paragraph, which rule must include a requirement for a sworn statement or affidavit ~~Such benefits shall also include necessary remedial treatment and services recognized and permitted under the laws of the state for an injured person who relies upon spiritual means through prayer alone for healing, in accordance with his or her religious beliefs; however, this sentence does not affect the determination of what other services or procedures are medically necessary~~.

(b) Disability benefits.--Sixty percent of any loss of gross income and loss of earning capacity per individual from inability to work proximately caused by the injury sustained by the injured person, plus all expenses reasonably incurred in obtaining from others ordinary and necessary services in lieu of those that, but for the injury, the injured person would have performed without income for the benefit of his or her household. All disability benefits payable under this provision shall be paid not less than every 2 weeks.

(c) Death benefits.--Death benefits equal to the lesser of $5,000 or the remainder of unused personal injury protection benefits per individual. The insurer may pay such benefits to the executor or administrator of the deceased, to any of the deceased's relatives by blood or legal adoption or connection by marriage, or to any person appearing to the insurer to be equitably entitled thereto.

Only insurers writing motor vehicle liability insurance in this state may provide the required benefits of this section, and no such insurer shall require the purchase of any other motor vehicle coverage other than the purchase of property damage liability coverage as required by s. 627.7275 as a condition for providing such required benefits. Insurers may not require that property damage liability insurance in an amount greater than $10,000 be purchased in conjunction with personal injury protection. Such insurers shall make benefits and required property damage liability insurance coverage available through normal marketing channels. Any insurer writing motor vehicle liability insurance in this state who fails to comply with such availability requirement as a general business practice shall be deemed to have violated part IX of chapter 626, and such violation shall constitute an unfair method of competition or an unfair or deceptive act or practice involving the business of insurance; and any such insurer committing such violation shall be subject to the penalties afforded in such part, as well as those which may be afforded elsewhere in the insurance code.

(4) BENEFITS; WHEN DUE.--Benefits due from an insurer

under ss. 627.730-627.7405 shall be primary, except that benefits received under any workers' compensation law shall be credited against the benefits provided by subsection (1) and shall be due and payable as loss accrues, upon receipt of reasonable proof of such loss and the amount of expenses and loss incurred which are covered by the policy issued under ss. 627.730-627.7405. When the Agency for Health Care Administration provides, pays, or becomes liable for medical assistance under the Medicaid program related to injury, sickness, disease, or death arising out of the ownership, maintenance, or use of a motor vehicle, benefits under ss. 627.730-627.7405 shall be subject to the provisions of the Medicaid program.

(a) An insurer may require written notice to be given as soon as practicable after an accident involving a motor vehicle with respect to which the policy affords the security required by ss. 627.730-627.7405.

(b) Personal injury protection insurance benefits paid pursuant to this section shall be overdue if not paid within 30 days after the insurer is furnished written notice of the fact of a covered loss and of the amount of same. If such written notice is not furnished to the insurer as to the entire claim, any partial amount supported by written notice is overdue if not paid within 30 days after such written notice is furnished to the insurer. Any part or all of the remainder of the claim that is subsequently supported by written notice is overdue if not paid within 30 days after such written notice is furnished to the insurer. When an insurer pays only a portion of a claim or rejects a claim, the insurer shall provide at the time of the

partial payment or rejection an itemized specification of each item that the insurer had reduced, omitted, or declined to pay and any information that the insurer desires the claimant to consider related to the medical necessity of the denied treatment or to explain the reasonableness of the reduced charge, provided that this shall not limit the introduction of evidence at trial; and the insurer shall include the name and address of the person to whom the claimant should respond and a claim number to be referenced in future correspondence. However, notwithstanding the fact that written notice has been furnished to the insurer, any payment shall not be deemed overdue when the insurer has reasonable proof to establish that the insurer is not responsible for the payment. For the purpose of calculating the extent to which any benefits are overdue, payment shall be treated as being made on the date a draft or other valid instrument which is equivalent to payment was placed in the United States mail in a properly addressed, postpaid envelope or, if not so posted, on the date of delivery. This paragraph does not preclude or limit the ability of the insurer to assert that the claim was unrelated, was not medically necessary, or was unreasonable or that the amount of the charge was in excess of that permitted under, or in violation of, subsection (5). Such assertion by the insurer may be made at any time, including after payment of the claim or after the 30-day time period for payment set forth in this paragraph.

(c) Upon receiving notice of an accident that is potentially covered by personal injury protection benefits, the insurer must reserve $5,000 of personal injury protection

benefits for payment to physicians licensed under chapter 458 or chapter 459 or dentists licensed under chapter 466 who provide emergency services and care, as defined in s. 395.002(9), or who provide hospital inpatient care. The amount required to be held in reserve may be used only to pay claims from such physicians or dentists until 30 days after the date the insurer receives notice of the accident. After the 30-day period, any amount of the reserve for which the insurer has not received notice of a claim from a physician or dentist who provided emergency services and care or who provided hospital inpatient care may then be used by the insurer to pay other claims. The time periods specified in paragraph (b) for required payment of personal injury protection benefits shall be tolled for the period of time that an insurer is required by this paragraph to hold payment of a claim that is not from a physician or dentist who provided emergency services and care or who provided hospital inpatient care to the extent that the personal injury protection benefits not held in reserve are insufficient to pay the claim. This paragraph does not require an insurer to establish a claim reserve for insurance accounting purposes.

(d) ~~(c)~~ All overdue payments shall bear simple interest at the rate established under s. 55.03 or the rate established in the insurance contract, whichever is greater, for the year in which the payment became overdue, calculated from the date the insurer was furnished with written notice of the amount of covered loss. Interest shall be due at the time payment of the overdue claim is made.

(e) ~~(d)~~ The insurer of the owner of a motor vehicle shall

pay personal injury protection benefits for:

1. Accidental bodily injury sustained in this state by the owner while occupying a motor vehicle, or while not an occupant of a self-propelled vehicle if the injury is caused by physical contact with a motor vehicle.

2. Accidental bodily injury sustained outside this state, but within the United States of America or its territories or possessions or Canada, by the owner while occupying the owner's motor vehicle.

3. Accidental bodily injury sustained by a relative of the owner residing in the same household, under the circumstances described in subparagraph 1. or subparagraph 2., provided the relative at the time of the accident is domiciled in the owner's household and is not himself or herself the owner of a motor vehicle with respect to which security is required under ss. 627.730-627.7405.

4. Accidental bodily injury sustained in this state by any other person while occupying the owner's motor vehicle or, if a resident of this state, while not an occupant of a self-propelled vehicle, if the injury is caused by physical contact with such motor vehicle, provided the injured person is not himself or herself:

a. The owner of a motor vehicle with respect to which security is required under ss. 627.730-627.7405; or

b. Entitled to personal injury benefits from the insurer of the owner or owners of such a motor vehicle.

(f) ~~(e)~~ If two or more insurers are liable to pay personal injury protection benefits for the same injury to any one

person, the maximum payable shall be as specified in subsection (1), and any insurer paying the benefits shall be entitled to recover from each of the other insurers an equitable pro rata share of the benefits paid and expenses incurred in processing the claim.

(g) ~~(f)~~ It is a violation of the insurance code for an insurer to fail to timely provide benefits as required by this section with such frequency as to constitute a general business practice.

(h) ~~(g)~~ Benefits shall not be due or payable to or on the behalf of an insured person if that person has committed, by a material act or omission, any insurance fraud relating to personal injury protection coverage under his or her policy, if the fraud is admitted to in a sworn statement by the insured or if it is established in a court of competent jurisdiction. Any insurance fraud shall void all coverage arising from the claim related to such fraud under the personal injury protection coverage of the insured person who committed the fraud, irrespective of whether a portion of the insured person's claim may be legitimate, and any benefits paid prior to the discovery of the insured person's insurance fraud shall be recoverable by the insurer from the person who committed insurance fraud in their entirety. The prevailing party is entitled to its costs and attorney's fees in any action in which it prevails in an insurer's action to enforce its right of recovery under this paragraph.

(5) CHARGES FOR TREATMENT OF INJURED PERSONS.--

(a) 1. Any physician, hospital, clinic, or other person or

institution lawfully rendering treatment to an injured person for a bodily injury covered by personal injury protection insurance may charge the insurer and injured party only a reasonable amount pursuant to this section for the services and supplies rendered, and the insurer providing such coverage may pay for such charges directly to such person or institution lawfully rendering such treatment, if the insured receiving such treatment or his or her guardian has countersigned the properly completed invoice, bill, or claim form approved by the office upon which such charges are to be paid for as having actually been rendered, to the best knowledge of the insured or his or her guardian. In no event, however, may such a charge be in excess of the amount the person or institution customarily charges for like services or supplies. With respect to a determination of whether a charge for a particular service, treatment, or otherwise is reasonable, consideration may be given to evidence of usual and customary charges and payments accepted by the provider involved in the dispute, and reimbursement levels in the community and various federal and state medical fee schedules applicable to automobile and other insurance coverages, and other information relevant to the reasonableness of the reimbursement for the service, treatment, or supply.

2. The insurer may limit reimbursement to 80 percent of the following schedule of maximum charges:

a. For emergency transport and treatment by providers licensed under chapter 401, 200 percent of Medicare.

b. For emergency services and care provided by a hospital

licensed under chapter 395, 75 percent of the hospital's usual and customary charges.

c. For emergency services and care as defined by s.395.002(10) provided in a facility licensed under chapter 395 rendered by a physician or dentist, and related hospital inpatient services rendered by a physician or dentist, the usual and customary charges in the community.

d. For hospital inpatient services, other than emergency services and care, 200 percent of the Medicare Part A prospective payment applicable to the specific hospital providing the inpatient services.

e. For hospital outpatient services, other than emergency services and care, 200 percent of the Medicare Part A Ambulatory Payment Classification for the specific hospital providing the outpatient services.

f. For all other medical services, supplies, and care, 200 percent of the applicable Medicare Part B fee schedule. However, if such services, supplies, or care are not reimbursable under Medicare Part B, the insurer may limit reimbursement to 80 percent of the maximum reimbursable allowance under workers' compensation, as determined under s. 440.13 and rules adopted thereunder which are in effect at the time such services, supplies, or care are provided. Services, supplies, or care that are not reimbursable under Medicare or workers' compensation are not required to be reimbursed by the insurer.

3. For purposes of subparagraph 2., the applicable fee schedule or payment limitation under Medicare is the fee schedule or payment limitation in effect at the time the

services, supplies, or care were rendered and for the area in which such services were rendered, except that it may not be less than the applicable 2007 Medicare Part B fee schedule for medical services, supplies, and care subject to Medicare Part B.

4. Subparagraph 2. does not allow the insurer to apply any limitation on the number of treatments or other utilization limits that apply under Medicare or workers' compensation. An insurer that applies the allowable payment limitations of subparagraph 2. must reimburse a provider who lawfully provided care or treatment under the scope of his or her license, regardless of whether such provider would be entitled to reimbursement under Medicare due to restrictions or limitations on the types or discipline of health care providers who may be reimbursed for particular procedures or procedure codes.

5. If an insurer limits payment as authorized by subparagraph 2., the person providing such services, supplies, or care may not bill or attempt to collect from the insured any amount in excess of such limits, except for amounts that are not covered by the insured's personal injury protection coverage due to the coinsurance amount or maximum policy limits.

(b)1. An insurer or insured is not required to pay a claim or charges:

a. Made by a broker or by a person making a claim on behalf of a broker;

b. For any service or treatment that was not lawful at the time rendered;

c. To any person who knowingly submits a false or misleading statement relating to the claim or charges;

d. With respect to a bill or statement that does not substantially meet the applicable requirements of paragraph (d);

e. For any treatment or service that is upcoded, or that is unbundled when such treatment or services should be bundled, in accordance with paragraph (d). To facilitate prompt payment of lawful services, an insurer may change codes that it determines to have been improperly or incorrectly upcoded or unbundled, and may make payment based on the changed codes, without affecting the right of the provider to dispute the change by the insurer, provided that before doing so, the insurer must contact the health care provider and discuss the reasons for the insurer's change and the health care provider's reason for the coding, or make a reasonable good faith effort to do so, as documented in the insurer's file; and

f. For medical services or treatment billed by a physician and not provided in a hospital unless such services are rendered by the physician or are incident to his or her professional services and are included on the physician's bill, including documentation verifying that the physician is responsible for the medical services that were rendered and billed.

~~2. Charges for medically necessary cephalic thermograms, peripheral thermograms, spinal ultrasounds, extremity ultrasounds, video fluoroscopy, and surface electromyography shall not exceed the maximum reimbursement allowance for such procedures as set forth in the applicable fee schedule or other payment methodology established pursuant to s. 440.13.~~

~~3. Allowable amounts that may be charged to a personal injury protection insurance insurer and insured for medically~~

~~necessary nerve conduction testing when done in conjunction with a needle electromyography procedure and both are performed and billed solely by a physician licensed under chapter 458, chapter 459, chapter 460, or chapter 461 who is also certified by the American Board of Electrodiagnostic Medicine or by a board recognized by the American Board of Medical Specialties or the American Osteopathic Association or who holds diplomate status with the American Chiropractic Neurology Board or its predecessors shall not exceed 200 percent of the allowable amount under the participating physician fee schedule of Medicare Part B for year 2001, for the area in which the treatment was rendered, adjusted annually on August 1 to reflect the prior calendar year's changes in the annual Medical Care Item of the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers in the South Region as determined by the Bureau of Labor Statistics of the United States Department of Labor.~~

~~4. Allowable amounts that may be charged to a personal injury protection insurance insurer and insured for medically necessary nerve conduction testing that does not meet the requirements of subparagraph 3. shall not exceed the applicable fee schedule or other payment methodology established pursuant to s. 440.13.~~

~~5. Allowable amounts that may be charged to a personal injury protection insurance insurer and insured for magnetic resonance imaging services shall not exceed 175 percent of the allowable amount under the participating physician fee schedule of Medicare Part B for year 2001, for the area in which the treatment was rendered, adjusted annually on August 1 to reflect~~

~~the prior calendar year's changes in the annual Medical Care Item of the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers in the South Region as determined by the Bureau of Labor Statistics of the United States Department of Labor for the 12 month period ending June 30 of that year, except that allowable amounts that may be charged to a personal injury protection insurance insurer and insured for magnetic resonance imaging services provided in facilities accredited by the Accreditation Association for Ambulatory Health Care, the American College of Radiology, or the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations shall not exceed 200 percent of the allowable amount under the participating physician fee schedule of Medicare Part B for year 2001, for the area in which the treatment was rendered, adjusted annually on August 1 to reflect the prior calendar year's changes in the annual Medical Care Item of the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers in the South Region as determined by the Bureau of Labor Statistics of the United States Department of Labor for the 12 month period ending June 30 of that year. This paragraph does not apply to charges for magnetic resonance imaging services and nerve conduction testing for inpatients and emergency services and care as defined in chapter 395 rendered by facilities licensed under chapter 395.~~

2.~~6.~~ The Department of Health, in consultation with the appropriate professional licensing boards, shall adopt, by rule, a list of diagnostic tests deemed not to be medically necessary for use in the treatment of persons sustaining bodily injury covered by personal injury protection benefits under this

section. The initial list shall be adopted by January 1, 2004, and shall be revised from time to time as determined by the Department of Health, in consultation with the respective professional licensing boards. Inclusion of a test on the list of invalid diagnostic tests shall be based on lack of demonstrated medical value and a level of general acceptance by the relevant provider community and shall not be dependent for results entirely upon subjective patient response. Notwithstanding its inclusion on a fee schedule in this subsection, an insurer or insured is not required to pay any charges or reimburse claims for any invalid diagnostic test as determined by the Department of Health.

(c)1. With respect to any treatment or service, other than medical services billed by a hospital or other provider for emergency services as defined in s. 395.002 or inpatient services rendered at a hospital-owned facility, the statement of charges must be furnished to the insurer by the provider and may not include, and the insurer is not required to pay, charges for treatment or services rendered more than 35 days before the postmark date or electronic transmission date of the statement, except for past due amounts previously billed on a timely basis under this paragraph, and except that, if the provider submits to the insurer a notice of initiation of treatment within 21 days after its first examination or treatment of the claimant, the statement may include charges for treatment or services rendered up to, but not more than, 75 days before the postmark date of the statement. The injured party is not liable for, and the provider shall not bill the injured party for, charges that

are unpaid because of the provider's failure to comply with this paragraph. Any agreement requiring the injured person or insured to pay for such charges is unenforceable.

2. If, however, the insured fails to furnish the provider with the correct name and address of the insured's personal injury protection insurer, the provider has 35 days from the date the provider obtains the correct information to furnish the insurer with a statement of the charges. The insurer is not required to pay for such charges unless the provider includes with the statement documentary evidence that was provided by the insured during the 35-day period demonstrating that the provider reasonably relied on erroneous information from the insured and either:

a. A denial letter from the incorrect insurer; or

b. Proof of mailing, which may include an affidavit under penalty of perjury, reflecting timely mailing to the incorrect address or insurer.

3. For emergency services and care as defined in s. 395.002 rendered in a hospital emergency department or for transport and treatment rendered by an ambulance provider licensed pursuant to part III of chapter 401, the provider is not required to furnish the statement of charges within the time periods established by this paragraph; and the insurer shall not be considered to have been furnished with notice of the amount of covered loss for purposes of paragraph (4)(b) until it receives a statement complying with paragraph (d), or copy thereof, which specifically identifies the place of service to be a hospital emergency department or an ambulance in accordance

with billing standards recognized by the Health Care Finance Administration.

4. Each notice of insured's rights under s. 627.7401 must include the following statement in type no smaller than 12 points:

BILLING REQUIREMENTS.--Florida Statutes provide that with respect to any treatment or services, other than certain hospital and emergency services, the statement of charges furnished to the insurer by the provider may not include, and the insurer and the injured party are not required to pay, charges for treatment or services rendered more than 35 days before the postmark date of the statement, except for past due amounts previously billed on a timely basis, and except that, if the provider submits to the insurer a notice of initiation of treatment within 21 days after its first examination or treatment of the claimant, the statement may include charges for treatment or services rendered up to, but not more than, 75 days before the postmark date of the statement.

(8) APPLICABILITY OF PROVISION REGULATING ATTORNEY'S FEES.--With respect to any dispute under the provisions of ss. 627.730-627.7405 between the insured and the insurer, or between an assignee of an insured's rights and the insurer, the provisions of s. 627.428 shall apply, except as provided in subsections ~~subsection~~ (10) and (15).

(10) DEMAND LETTER.--

(d) If, within 30 ~~15~~ days after receipt of notice by the insurer, the overdue claim specified in the notice is paid by

the insurer together with applicable interest and a penalty of 10 percent of the overdue amount paid by the insurer, subject to a maximum penalty of $250, no action may be brought against the insurer. If the demand involves an insurer's withdrawal of payment under paragraph (7)(a) for future treatment not yet rendered, no action may be brought against the insurer if, within 30 ~~15~~ days after its receipt of the notice, the insurer mails to the person filing the notice a written statement of the insurer's agreement to pay for such treatment in accordance with the notice and to pay a penalty of 10 percent, subject to a maximum penalty of $250, when it pays for such future treatment in accordance with the requirements of this section. To the extent the insurer determines not to pay any amount demanded, the penalty shall not be payable in any subsequent action. For purposes of this subsection, payment or the insurer's agreement shall be treated as being made on the date a draft or other valid instrument that is equivalent to payment, or the insurer's written statement of agreement, is placed in the United States mail in a properly addressed, postpaid envelope, or if not so posted, on the date of delivery. The insurer is ~~shall~~ not ~~be~~ obligated to pay any attorney's fees if the insurer pays the claim or mails its agreement to pay for future treatment within the time prescribed by this subsection.

(e) The applicable statute of limitation for an action under this section shall be tolled for a period of 30 ~~15~~ business days by the mailing of the notice required by this subsection.

(11) FAILURE TO PAY VALID CLAIMS; UNFAIR OR DECEPTIVE

PRACTICE.--

(a) If an insurer fails to pay valid claims for personal injury protection with such frequency so as to indicate a general business practice, the insurer is engaging in a prohibited unfair or deceptive practice that is subject to the penalties provided in s. 626.9521 and the office has the powers and duties specified in ss. 626.9561-626.9601 with respect thereto.

(b) Notwithstanding s. 501.212, the Department of Legal Affairs may investigate and initiate actions for a violation of this subsection, including, but not limited to, the powers and duties specified in part II of chapter 501.

(15) ALL CLAIMS BROUGHT IN A SINGLE ACTION.--In any civil action to recover personal injury protection benefits brought by a claimant pursuant to this section against an insurer, all claims related to the same health care provider for the same injured person shall be brought in one action, unless good cause is shown why such claims should be brought separately. If the court determines that a civil action is filed for a claim that should have been brought in a prior civil action, the court may not award attorney's fees to the claimant.

(16) SECURE ELECTRONIC DATA TRANSFER.--If all parties mutually and expressly agree, a notice, documentation, transmission, or communication of any kind required or authorized under ss. 627.730-627.7405 may be transmitted electronically if it is transmitted by secure electronic data transfer that is consistent with state and federal privacy and security laws.

Section 21. Application of the Florida Motor Vehicle No-Fault Law.--

(1) Any person subject to the requirements of ss. 627.730-627.7405, Florida Statutes, the Florida Motor Vehicle No-Fault Law, as revived and amended by this act, must maintain security for personal injury protection as required by the Florida Motor Vehicle No-Fault Law, as revived and amended by this act, beginning on January 1, 2008.

(2) Any personal injury protection policy in effect on or after January 1, 2008, shall be deemed to incorporate the provisions of the Florida Motor Vehicle No-Fault Law, as revived and amended by this act.

(3) An insurer shall continue to use the personal injury protection forms and rates that were in effect on September 30, 2007, until new forms or rates are used as authorized by law.

(4) Each motor vehicle insurer shall provide personal injury protection coverage to each of its motor vehicle insureds who is subject to subsection (1) beginning on January 1, 2008. With respect to a person who does not have a personal injury protection policy in effect on such date, the initial endorsement shall not be considered a new policy and shall be issued for a period that terminates on the same date as the person's other motor vehicle insurance coverage. Except as modified by the insured, the deductibles and exclusions that applied to the insured's previous personal injury protection coverage with that insurer shall apply to the new personal injury protection coverage. The insurer is not required to provide the coverage if the insured does not pay the required

premium by January 1, 2008, or such later date that the insurer may allow.

(5) No later than November 15, 2007, each motor vehicle insurer shall provide notice of the provisions of this section to each motor vehicle insured who is subject to subsection (1). The notice is not subject to approval by the Office of Insurance Regulation. The notice must clearly inform the policyholder:

(a) That beginning on January 1, 2008, Florida law requires the policyholder to maintain personal injury protection ("PIP") insurance coverage and that this insurance pays covered medical expenses for injuries sustained in a motor vehicle crash by the policyholder, passengers, and relatives residing in the policyholder's household.

(b) That if the policyholder does not maintain personal injury protection coverage, the State of Florida may suspend the policyholder's driver's license and vehicle registration.

(c) That if the policyholder already has personal injury protection coverage, that coverage will be amended effective January 1, 2008, to incorporate legally required changes without any additional premium and that the policyholder is not required to take any further action.

(d) That, if the policyholder does not currently have personal injury protection coverage, the current motor vehicle policy will be amended to incorporate the required personal injury protection coverage effective January 1, 2008.

(e) The additional premium that is due, if any, and the date that it is due, which may be no earlier than January 1, 2008.

(f) That if the policyholder has any questions, the name and phone number of whom they should contact.

(6) This section does not apply the Florida Motor Vehicle No-Fault law, as revived an amended by this act, prior to January 1, 2008. However, for lawsuits for injuries arising out of an auto accident that occurs between the effective date of this act and December 31, 2007, inclusive, the limitation on lawsuits and tort immunity provided in s. 627.737, Florida Statutes, shall apply if, and only if, the plaintiff and the defendant are insured for personal injury protection coverage that meets the requirements of Florida Motor Vehicle No-Fault Law that was in effect on September 30, 2007.

(7) The Legislature finds that in order to protect the public health, safety, and welfare, it is necessary to revise or endorse policies in effect on January 1, 2008, to add personal injury protection coverage as required by this section, and to provide a uniform date for motor vehicle owners to obtain or continue such coverage and for insurance policies to provide such coverage. In order to avoid revising in-force policies, enforcement would depend on policyholders electing to add such coverage, or providing a nonuniform date for coverage to be mandatory as policies renew which results in unequal treatment under the law, or delaying the effective date for at least 1 year to provide a uniform date after all policies have renewed, any of which options would result in a much greater number of uninsured vehicles, an inability of accident victims to obtain medical care, a greater level of uncompensated medical care, higher costs to other public and private health care systems,

and greater numbers of persons being subject to penalties for noncompliance.

(8) The Legislature recognizes that the Florida Motor Vehicle No-Fault Law was repealed on October 1, 2007, and that vehicle owners are not required to maintain personal injury protection coverage on or after that date until January 1, 2008. Notwithstanding any other law, an insurer is not required to report the issuance, cancellation, or nonrenewal of personal injury protection coverage occurring between October 1, 2007, and December 31, 2007, inclusive, to the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles. Any law requiring personal injury protection coverage or providing sanctions for failure to maintain or demonstrate proof of such coverage does not apply during this time period. However, this subsection does not relieve a motor vehicle owner from responsibility for maintaining property damage liability coverage as required by law and does not relieve an insurer from reporting the issuance, cancellation, or nonrenewal of property damage liability coverage as required by law.

Section 22. If any provision of this act or its application to any person or circumstance is held invalid, the invalidity does not affect other provisions or applications of the act which can be given effect without the invalid provision or application, and to this end the provisions of this act are declared severable.

Section 23. This act shall take effect upon becoming a law, except that sections 8 through 20 of this act shall take effect January 1, 2008.