By Senator Bogdanoff

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A bill to be entitled

An act relating to motor vehicle personal injury protection insurance; amending s. 316.066, F.S.; revising provisions relating to the contents of written reports of motor vehicle crashes; requiring short-form crash reports by a law enforcement officer to be maintained by the officer's agency; authorizing the investigation officer to testify at trial or provide an affidavit concerning the content of the reports; amending s. 400.991, F.S.; requiring that an application for licensure as a mobile clinic include a statement regarding insurance fraud; creating s. 626.9894, F.S.; providing definitions; authorizing the Division of Insurance Fraud to establish a direct-support organization for the purpose of prosecuting, investigating, and preventing motor vehicle insurance fraud; providing requirements for the organization and the organization's contract with the division; providing for a board of directors; authorizing the organization to use the division's property and facilities subject to certain requirements; authorizing contributions from insurers; providing that any moneys received by the organization may be held in a separate depository account in the name of the organization; requiring the division to deposit certain proceeds into the Insurance Regulatory Trust Fund; amending s. 627.4137, F.S.; requiring a claimant's request about insurance coverage to be appropriately served upon the disclosing entity;

amending s. 627.730, F.S.; conforming a cross-reference; amending s. 627.731, F.S.; providing legislative intent with respect to the Florida Motor Vehicle No-Fault Law; amending s. 627.732, F.S.; defining the terms "claimant" and "no-fault law"; amending s. 627.736, F.S.; conforming a cross-reference; requiring certain entities providing medical services to document that they meet required criteria; revising requirements relating to the form that must be submitted by providers; requiring an entity or clinic to file a new form within a specified period after the date of a change of ownership; revising provisions relating to when payment for a benefit is due; providing that an insurer's failure to send certain specification or explanation does not waive any ground for rejecting an invalid claim; authorizing an insurer to define "reasonable proof" in its policy and to request information for its investigation; providing that the time period for paying a claim is tolled during the investigation of a fraudulent insurance act; specifying when benefits are not payable; providing that a claimant that violates certain provisions is not entitled to any payment, regardless of whether a portion of the claim may be legitimate; authorizing an insurer to recover payments and bring a cause of action to recover payments; providing that an insurer may deny any claim based on other evidence of fraud; forbidding a physician, hospital, clinic, or other medical institution that

fails to comply with certain provisions from billing the injured person or the insured; providing that an insurer has a right to conduct reasonable investigations of claims; authorizing an insurer to require a claimant to provide certain records; authorizing an insurer to deny or reduce a claim if a medical provider fails to keep adequate records; providing that an insurer's choice of physician is not limited by the physician's area of practice or licensing chapter; authorizing an insurer to deny benefits if an insured, claimant, or medical provider fails to comply with certain provisions; forbidding the claimant from filing suit unless the claimant complies with the act; revising the insurer's reimbursement limitation; providing that an insurer is not required to pay a claim that the insured did not countersign; requiring the provider to submit the statements or bills on an approved form; requiring the provider to ensure that the insured understands the services being provided; specifying requirements for furnishing the insured with notice of the amount of covered loss; deleting an obsolete provision; requiring the provider to provide copies of the patient log within a certain time if requested by the insurer; providing that failure to maintain a patient log renders the treatment unlawful and noncompensable; revising requirements relating to discovery; authorizing the insurer to conduct a physical review of the treatment location; requiring the insured and

assignee to comply with certain provisions to recover benefits; requiring the provider to produce persons having the most knowledge in specified circumstances; providing that an insurer that requests an examination under oath without a reasonable basis is engaging in an unfair and deceptive trade practice; providing that failure to appear for an examination establishes a rebuttable presumption that such failure was unreasonable; authorizing an insurer to contract with a preferred provider network; authorizing an insurer to provide a premium discount to an insured who selects a preferred provider; authorizing an insurance policy to not pay for nonemergency services performed by a nonpreferred provider in specified circumstances; authorizing an insurer to contract with a health insurer in specified circumstances; revising requirements relating to demand letters in an action for benefits; specifying when a demand letter is defective; requiring a second demand letter under certain circumstances; deleting obsolete provisions; providing that a demand letter may not be used to request the production of claim documents or records from the insurer; amending ss. 324.021, 456.057, 627.7401, and 817.234, F.S.; conforming cross-references; providing an effective date.

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

Section 1. Subsection (1) of section 316.066, Florida

Statutes, is amended to read:

316.066 Written reports of crashes.—

(1)(a) A Florida Traffic Crash Report, Long Form, must ~~is required to~~ be completed and submitted to the department within 10 days after ~~completing~~ an investigation is completed by the ~~every~~ law enforcement officer who in the regular course of duty investigates a motor vehicle crash:

1. That resulted in death, ~~or~~ personal injury, or any indication of complaints of pain or discomfort by any of the parties or passengers involved in the crash;~~.~~

2. That involved one or more passengers, other than the drivers of the vehicles, in any of the vehicles involved in the crash;

3.~~2.~~ That involved a violation of s. 316.061(1) or s. 316.193; or~~.~~

4.~~3.~~ In which a vehicle was rendered inoperative to a degree that required a wrecker to remove it from traffic, if such action is appropriate, in the officer's discretion.

(b) In every crash for which a Florida Traffic Crash Report, Long Form, is not required by this section, the law enforcement officer may complete a short-form crash report or provide a short-form crash report to be completed by each party involved in the crash. Short-form crash reports prepared by the law enforcement officer shall be maintained by the officer's agency.

(c) The long-form and the short-form report must include:

1. The date, time, and location of the crash.

2. A description of the vehicles involved.

3. The names and addresses of the parties involved.

4. The names and addresses of all passengers in all vehicles involved in the crash, each clearly identified as being a passenger and the identification of the vehicle in which they were a passenger.

5.~~4.~~ The names and addresses of witnesses.

6.~~5.~~ The name, badge number, and law enforcement agency of the officer investigating the crash.

7.~~6.~~ The names of the insurance companies for the respective parties involved in the crash.

(d)~~(c)~~ Each party to the crash must ~~shall~~ provide the law enforcement officer with proof of insurance, which must ~~to~~ be included in the crash report. If a law enforcement officer submits a report on the accident, proof of insurance must be provided to the officer by each party involved in the crash. Any party who fails to provide the required information commits a noncriminal traffic infraction, punishable as a nonmoving violation as provided in chapter 318, unless the officer determines that due to injuries or other special circumstances such insurance information cannot be provided immediately. If the person provides the law enforcement agency, within 24 hours after the crash, proof of insurance that was valid at the time of the crash, the law enforcement agency may void the citation.

(e)~~(d)~~ The driver of a vehicle that was in any manner involved in a crash resulting in damage to any vehicle or other property in an amount of $500 or more~~,~~ which ~~crash~~ was not investigated by a law enforcement agency, shall, within 10 days after the crash, submit a written report of the crash to the department or traffic records center. The entity receiving the report may require witnesses of the crash ~~crashes~~ to render

reports and may require any driver of a vehicle involved in a crash of which a written report must be made ~~as provided in this section~~ to file supplemental written reports if ~~whenever~~ the original report is deemed insufficient by the receiving entity.

(f) The investigating law enforcement officer may testify at trial or provide a signed affidavit to confirm or supplement the information included on the long-form or short-form report.

~~(e) Short-form crash reports prepared by law enforcement shall be maintained by the law enforcement officer's agency.~~

Section 2. Subsection (6) is added to section 400.991, Florida Statutes, to read:

400.991 License requirements; background screenings; prohibitions.—

(6) All forms that constitute part of the application for licensure or exemption from licensure under this part must contain the following statement:

INSURANCE FRAUD NOTICE.—Submitting a false, misleading, or fraudulent application or other document when applying for licensure as a health care clinic, when seeking an exemption from licensure as a health care clinic, or when demonstrating compliance with part X of chapter 400, Florida Statutes, is a fraudulent insurance act, as defined in s. 626.989, Florida Statutes, subject to investigation by the Division of Insurance Fraud, and is grounds for discipline by the appropriate licensing board of the Florida Department of Health.

Section 3. Section 626.9894, Florida Statutes, is created

to read:

626.9894 Motor vehicle insurance fraud direct-support organization.—

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

(a) "Division" means the Division of Insurance Fraud of the Department of Financial Services.

(b) "Motor vehicle insurance fraud" means any act defined as a "fraudulent insurance act" under s. 626.989, which relates to the coverage of motor vehicle insurance as described in part XI of chapter 627.

(c) "Organization" means the direct-support organization established under this section.

(2) ORGANIZATION ESTABLISHED.—The division may establish a direct-support organization, to be known as the "Fight Auto Fraud Fund," whose sole purpose is to support the prosecution, investigation, and prevention of motor vehicle insurance fraud. The organization shall:

(a) Be a not-for-profit corporation incorporated under chapter 617 and approved by the Department of State.

(b) Be organized and operated to conduct programs and activities; to raise funds; to request and receive grants, gifts, and bequests of money; to acquire, receive, hold, invest, and administer, in its own name, securities, funds, objects of value, or other property, real or personal; and to make grants and expenditures to or for the direct or indirect benefit of the division, state attorneys' offices, the statewide prosecutor, the Agency for Health Care Administration, and the Department of Health to the extent that such grants and expenditures are to be used exclusively to advance the purpose of prosecuting,

investigating, or preventing motor vehicle insurance fraud. Grants and expenditures may include the cost of salaries or benefits of dedicated motor vehicle insurance fraud investigators, prosecutors, or support personnel if such grants and expenditures do not interfere with prosecutorial independence or otherwise create conflicts of interest which threaten the success of prosecutions.

(c) Be determined by the division to operate in a manner that promotes the goals of laws relating to motor vehicle insurance fraud, that is in the best interest of the state, and that is in accordance with the adopted goals and mission of the division.

(d) Use all of its grants and expenditures solely for the purpose of preventing and decreasing motor vehicle insurance fraud, and not for the purpose of lobbying as defined in s. 11.045.

(e) Be subject to an annual financial audit in accordance with s. 215.981.

(3) CONTRACT.—The organization shall operate under written contract with the division. The contract must provide for:

(a) Approval of the articles of incorporation and bylaws of the organization by the division.

(b) Submission of an annual budget for the approval of the division.

(c) Certification by the division that the direct-support organization is complying with the terms of the contract and in a manner consistent with the goals and purposes of the department and in the best interest of the state. Such certification must be made annually and reported in the official

minutes of a meeting of the organization.

(d) Allocation of funds to address motor vehicle insurance fraud.

(e) Reversion of moneys and property held in trust by the organization for motor vehicle insurance fraud prosecution, investigation, and prevention to the division if the organization is no longer approved to operate for the department or if the organization ceases to exist, or to the state if the division ceases to exist.

(f) Specific criteria to be used by the organization's board of directors to evaluate the effectiveness of funding used to combat motor vehicle insurance fraud.

(g) The fiscal year of the organization, which begins July 1 of each year and ends June 30 of the following year.

(h) Disclosure of the material provisions of the contract, and distinguishing between the department and the organization to donors of gifts, contributions, or bequests, including providing such disclosure on all promotional and fundraising publications.

(4) BOARD OF DIRECTORS.—The board of directors of the organization shall consist of the following seven members:

(a) The Chief Financial Officer, or designee, who shall serve as chair.

(b) Two state attorneys appointed by the Attorney General.

(c) Two representatives of motor vehicle insurers appointed by the Chief Financial Officer.

(d) Two representatives of local law enforcement agencies, one of whom shall be appointed by the Chief Financial Officer, and one of whom shall be appointed by the Attorney General.

The officer who appointed a member of the board may remove that member for cause. The term of office of an appointed member may not exceed 4 years and expires at the same time as the term of the officer who appointed him or her or at such earlier time as the person ceases to be qualified.

(5) USE OF PROPERTY.—The department may authorize, without charge, appropriate use of fixed property and facilities of the division by the organization, subject to this subsection.

(a) The department may prescribe any condition with which the organization must comply in order to use the division's property or facilities.

(b) The department may not authorize the use of the division's property or facilities if the organization does not provide equal membership and employment opportunities to all persons regardless of race, religion, sex, age, or national origin.

(c) The department shall adopt rules prescribing the procedures by which the organization is governed and any conditions with which the organization must comply to use the division's property or facilities.

(6) CONTRIBUTIONS.—Any contributions made by an insurer to the organization shall be allowed as appropriate business expenses for all regulatory purposes.

(7) DEPOSITORY.—Any moneys received by the organization may be held in a separate depository account in the name of the organization and subject to the provisions of the contract with the division.

(8) DIVISION'S RECEIPT OF PROCEEDS.—If the division

receives proceeds from the organization, those proceeds shall be deposited into the Insurance Regulatory Trust Fund.

Section 4. Subsection (3) is added to section 627.4137, Florida Statutes, to read:

627.4137 Disclosure of certain information required.—

(3) Any request made to a self-insured corporation pursuant to this section shall be sent by certified mail to the registered agent of the disclosing entity.

Section 5. Section 627.730, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

627.730 Florida Motor Vehicle No-Fault Law.—Sections 627.730-627.7407 ~~627.730-627.7405~~ may be cited and known as the "Florida Motor Vehicle No-Fault Law."

Section 6. Section 627.731, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

627.731 Purpose; legislative intent.—The purpose of the no-fault law ~~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.

(1) The Legislature intends to balance the insured's interest in prompt payment of valid claims for insurance benefits under the no-fault law with the public's interest in reducing fraud, abuse, and overuse of the no-fault system. To that end, the Legislature intends that the investigation and prevention of fraudulent insurance acts in this state be

enhanced, that additional sanctions for such acts be imposed, and that the no-fault law be revised to remove incentives for fraudulent insurance acts. The Legislature intends that the no-fault law be construed according to the plain language of the statutory provisions, which are designed to meet these goals.

(2) The Legislature finds that:

(a) Automobile insurance fraud remains a major problem for state consumers and insurers. According to the National Insurance Crime Bureau, in recent years this state has been among those states that have the highest number of fraudulent and questionable claims.

(b) The current regulatory process for health care clinics under part X of chapter 400, which was originally enacted to reduce automobile insurance fraud, is not adequately preventing fraudulent insurance acts with respect to licensure exemptions and compliance with that part.

(3) The Legislature intends that:

(a) The provisions, schedules, and procedures authorized under the no-fault law be implemented by the insurers offering policies pursuant to the no-fault law. These provisions, schedules, and procedures have full force and effect regardless of their express inclusion in an insurance policy, and an insurer is not required to amend its policy to implement and apply such provisions, schedules, or procedures.

(b) Insurers properly investigate claims, and as such, be allowed to obtain examinations under oath and sworn statements from any claimant seeking no-fault insurance benefits, and to request mental and physical examinations of persons seeking personal injury protection coverage or benefits.

(c) Any false, misleading, or otherwise fraudulent activity associated with a claim render the entire claim invalid. An insurer must be able to raise fraud as a defense to a claim for no-fault insurance benefits irrespective of any prior adjudication of guilt or determination of fraud by the Department of Financial Services.

(d) Insurers toll the payment or denial of a claim, with respect to any portion of a claim for which the insurer has a reasonable belief that a fraudulent insurance act, as defined in s. 626.989, has been committed.

(e) Insurers discover the names of all passengers involved in an automobile accident before paying claims or benefits pursuant to an insurance policy governed by the no-fault law. A rebuttable presumption must be established that a person was not involved in the event giving rise to the claim if that person's name does not appear on the police report.

(f) The insured's interest in obtaining competent counsel must be balanced with the public's interest in preventing a no-fault system that encourages litigation by allowing for exorbitant attorney's fees. Courts should limit attorney fee awards so as to eliminate the incentive for attorneys to manufacture unnecessary litigation.

Section 7. Section 627.732, Florida Statutes, is reordered and amended to read:

627.732 Definitions.—As used in the no-fault law ~~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; or ~~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 may not ~~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.

(9) ~~(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.

(10) ~~(3)~~ "Motor vehicle" means a ~~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 that ~~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 that ~~which~~ is not a private passenger motor vehicle.

The term ~~"motor vehicle"~~ does not include a mobile home or any motor vehicle that ~~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 that ~~which~~ is owned by a municipality, a transit authority, or a political subdivision of the state.

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

(12) "No-fault law" means the Florida Motor Vehicle No-Fault Law codifed at ss. 627.730-627.7407.

(13)~~(5)~~ "Owner" means a person who holds the legal title to a motor vehicle; or, if ~~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 is ~~shall be~~ deemed the owner for the purposes of the no-fault law ~~ss. 627.730-627.7405~~.

(15)~~(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.

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

(3) "Claimant" means the person, organization, or entity seeking benefits, including all assignees.

(5) ~~(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.

(6) ~~(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 that are ~~must be~~ an integral, even if incidental, part of a covered physician's service.

(7) ~~(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.

(8) ~~(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.

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

(14) ~~(13)~~ "Properly completed" means providing truthful,

substantially complete, and substantially accurate responses ~~as~~ to all material elements of ~~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.

(17)~~(14)~~ "Upcoding" means submitting ~~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.

(16)~~(15)~~ "Unbundling" means submitting ~~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 than the ~~in~~ amount that ~~than~~ would be paid using one billing code.

Section 8. Subsections (1) and (4) of section 627.736, Florida Statutes, are amended, subsections (5) through (16) of that section are redesignated as subsections (6) through (17), respectively, a new subsection (5) is added to that section, present subsection (5), paragraph (b) of present subsection (6), paragraph (b) of present subsection (7), and present subsections (8), (9), and (10) of that section are 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 must ~~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)(g) ~~(4)(e)~~, 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, charged pursuant to subsection (6), for medically necessary medical, surgical, X-ray, dental, and rehabilitative services, including prosthetic devices, and for 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 part III of chapter 401 which ~~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 such ~~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 part X of chapter 400 which ~~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.

If any services under this paragraph are provided by an entity or clinic described in subparagraph 3., subparagraph 4., or subparagraph 5., the entity or clinic must provide the insurer at the initial submission of the claim with a form adopted by the Department of Financial Services which documents that the entity or clinic meets applicable criteria for such entity or clinic and includes a sworn statement or affidavit to that effect. Any change in ownership requires the filing of a new form within 10 days after the date of the change in ownership. ~~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.~~

(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 must ~~shall~~ be paid at least ~~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 insurers may not ~~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. An ~~Any~~ insurer writing motor vehicle liability insurance in this state who fails to comply with such availability requirement as a general business practice violates ~~shall be deemed to have violated~~ part IX of chapter 626, and such violation constitutes ~~shall constitute~~ an unfair method of competition or an unfair or deceptive act or practice involving the business of insurance. An~~; and any such~~ insurer committing such violation is ~~shall be~~ subject to the penalties afforded in such part, as well as those that are ~~which may be~~ afforded elsewhere in the insurance code.

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

the no-fault law are ~~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 are ~~shall be~~ due and payable as loss accrues~~,~~ upon the receipt of reasonable proof of such loss and the amount of expenses and loss incurred which are covered by the policy issued under the no-fault law ~~ss. 627.730-627.7405~~. If ~~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, the benefits are ~~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 the no-fault law ~~ss. 627.730-627.7405~~.

(b) Personal injury protection insurance benefits paid pursuant to this section are ~~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.

(c) If ~~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 does ~~shall~~ not limit the introduction of evidence at trial.~~; and~~ The insurer must ~~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. An insurer's failure to send an itemized specification or explanation of benefits does not waive any ground for rejecting an invalid claim.

(d) A ~~However, notwithstanding the fact that written notice has been furnished to the insurer, Any~~ payment is ~~shall~~ not ~~be deemed~~ overdue if ~~when~~ the insurer has reasonable proof ~~to establish~~ that the insurer is not responsible for ~~the~~ payment. An insurer may define "reasonable proof" in its policy and may request information that will aid it in its investigation of a claim. An insurer may obtain evidence and assert any ground for adjustment or rejection of a ~~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 that is ~~was~~ unrelated, ~~was~~ not medically necessary, ~~or was~~ unreasonable, or submitted ~~that the amount of~~

~~the charge was in excess of that permitted under, or~~ in violation of~~,~~ subsection (6) ~~(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 (b), or after the filing of a lawsuit. The 30-day period for payment is tolled while the insurer investigates a fraudulent insurance act, as defined in s. 626.989, with respect to any portion of a claim for which the insurer has a reasonable belief that a fraudulent insurance act has been committed. The insurer must notify the claimant in writing that it is investigating a fraudulent insurance act within 30 days after the date it has a reasonable belief that such act has been committed. The insurer must pay or deny the claim, in full or in part, within 120 days after the date the written notice of the fact of a covered loss and of the amount of the loss was provided to the insurer.

(e) ~~(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 such ~~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 are ~~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.

(f) ~~(d)~~ 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 is ~~shall be~~ due at the time payment of the overdue claim is made.

(g) ~~(e)~~ 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. if~~, 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 the no-fault law ~~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 if~~, provided~~ the injured person is not ~~himself or herself~~:

a. The owner of a motor vehicle with respect to which security is required under the no-fault law ~~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.

(h)~~(f)~~ If two or more insurers are liable to pay personal injury protection benefits for the same injury to any one person, the maximum payable is ~~shall be~~ as specified in subsection (1), and any insurer paying the benefits is ~~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.

(i)~~(g)~~ 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.

(j)~~(h)~~ Benefits are ~~shall~~ not ~~be~~ due or payable to or on the behalf of an insured, claimant, medical provider, or

attorney who: ~~person if that person has~~

1. Submits a false or misleading statement, document, record, or bill;

2. Submits false or misleading information; or

3. Has otherwise committed or attempted to commit a fraudulent insurance act as defined in s. 626.989.

A claimant that violates this paragraph is not entitled to any personal injury protection benefits or payment for any bills and services, regardless of whether a portion of the claim may be legitimate.

(k) Notwithstanding any remedies afforded by law, the insurer may recover from a claimant that has violated paragraph (j) any sums previously paid to the claimant and may bring any available common law and statutory causes of action. An insured, claimant, medical provider, or attorney has committed, by a material act or omission, ~~any~~ insurance fraud relating to personal injury protection coverage under his or her policy or a claim for attorney's fees~~,~~ 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 voids ~~shall void~~ all coverage arising from the claim and all claims for attorney's fees ~~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 or attorney's fees paid before ~~prior to~~ the discovery of the ~~insured person's insurance~~ fraud is ~~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. This paragraph does not preclude or limit an insurer's right to deny a claim based on other evidence of fraud or affect an insurer's right to plead and prove a claim or defense of fraud under common law. If a physician, hospital, clinic, or other medical institution violates paragraph (j), the injured party is not liable for, and the physician, hospital, clinic, or other medical institution may not bill the insured for, charges that are unpaid because of failure to comply with paragraph (j). Any agreement requiring the injured person or insured to pay for such charges is unenforceable.

(5) INSURER INVESTIGATIONS.—An insurer has the right and duty to conduct a reasonable investigation of a claim. In the course of the insurer's investigation of a claim:

(a) The insurer may require the insured, claimant, or medical provider to provide copies of the treatment and examination records so that the insurer can provide such records to a physician for a records review. A records review need not be based on a physical examination and may be obtained at any time, including after reduction or denial of the claim. The 30-day period for payment under paragraph (4)(b) is tolled from the date the insurer sends its request for treatment records to the date that the insurer receives the treatment records. The claim may be denied or reduced if the medical provider fails to keep adequate records such that the insurer is unable to obtain a records review.

(b) An insurer's choice of physician is not limited by the

physician's area of practice or licensing chapter.

(c) An insurer may deny benefits if the insured, claimant, or medical provider fails to comply with this subsection.

(d) An insurer may deny benefits if the insured, claimant, or medical provider fails to cooperate in the insurer's investigation.

(e) An insurer may deny benefits if the insured, claimant, or medical provider commits a fraud or material misrepresentation.

(f) The claimant may not file suit unless and until it complies with this subsection.

(6)~~(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 may not exceed ~~be in excess of~~ the amount the person or institution customarily charges for like services or supplies. When determining ~~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.

1.~~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~~(9)~~ 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 allowable amount under the participating

physicians schedule of Medicare Part B. However, if such services, supplies, or care is 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 is provided. Services, supplies, or care that is not reimbursable under Medicare or workers' compensation is not required to be reimbursed by the insurer.

2.~~3.~~ For purposes of subparagraph 1. ~~2.~~, the applicable fee schedule or payment limitation under Medicare is the fee schedule or payment limitation in effect on January 1 of the year in which ~~at the time~~ the services, supplies, or care was rendered and for the area in which such services were rendered, notwithstanding any subsequent changes made to such fee schedule or payment limitation, except that it may not be less than the allowable amount under the participating physicians schedule of Medicare Part B for 2007 for medical services, supplies, and care subject to Medicare Part B.

3.~~4.~~ Subparagraph 1. ~~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 1. ~~2.~~ must reimburse a provider who lawfully provided care or treatment under the scope of his or her license~~,~~ regardless of whether such provider is ~~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.

4.~~5.~~ If an insurer limits payment as authorized by subparagraph 1. ~~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 paragraphs (c), ~~paragraph~~ (d), and (e);

e. If the insured has not countersigned the billing forms and patient logs. As used in this sub-subparagraph, the term "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;

f.~~e.~~ For any treatment or service that is upcoded, or that is unbundled if ~~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 if~~, provided that~~ before doing so, the insurer contacts ~~must contact~~ the health care provider and discusses ~~discuss~~ the reasons for the insurer's change and the health care provider's reason for the coding, or makes ~~make~~ a reasonable good faith effort to do so, as documented in the insurer's file; and

g.~~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. 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 must ~~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 may ~~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 may ~~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.

1.~~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.

2.~~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 is ~~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 Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services ~~Health Care Finance Administration~~.

3.~~4.~~ Each notice of the 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 first billing cycle 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 must ~~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. A ~~No~~ statement of medical services may not 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 is ~~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 are submitted on an approved form, follow the foregoing coding requirements, and contain the professional license number of the provider. The remaining portions of the statements and bills must be ~~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. The services shall be described and listed on the disclosure and acknowledgement form in words readable by the insured. If the insured cannot read, the provider should verify, under penalty of perjury, that the services listed on the form were verbally explained to the insured before the insured signs the form. Listing CPT codes or other coding on the disclosure and acknowledgment form does not satisfy this requirement;

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. 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. An insurer is not considered to have been furnished with notice of the amount of a covered loss or medical bills unless the original completed disclosure and acknowledgment form is ~~shall be~~ furnished to the insurer pursuant to paragraph (4)(b) and sub-subparagraph 1.e. The disclosure and acknowledgement form may not be electronically furnished. A disclosure and acknowledgement form that does not meet the minimum requirements of sub-subparagraph 1.a. does not provide an insurer with notice of the amount of a covered loss or medical bills due.

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 to ~~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, the term "countersigned" or "countersignature" 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, which describes the treatment rendered in a language readable by the insured ~~that is consistent with the services being rendered to the patient as claimed~~. Listing CPT codes or other coding on the patient log does not satisfy this requirement. The provider must provide copies of the patient log to the insurer within 30 days after receiving a written request from the insurer. Failure to maintain a patient log renders the treatment unlawful and noncompensable. 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.

(7) ~~(6)~~ DISCOVERY OF FACTS ABOUT AN INJURED PERSON; DISPUTES.—

(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, permit the insurer or the insurer's representative to conduct an onsite physical review and examination of the treatment location, treatment apparatuses, diagnostic devices, and any other medical equipment used for the services rendered within 10 days after the insurer's request, and 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 if~~; provided that~~ this does ~~shall~~ not limit the introduction of evidence at trial. Such sworn statement must ~~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." A ~~No~~ cause of action for violation of the physician-patient privilege or invasion of the right of privacy may not be brought ~~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 that ~~which~~ is the subject of the insurer's inquiry is ~~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. An ~~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. If an insured seeking to recover benefits pursuant to the no-fault law assigns the contractual right to those benefits or payment to any person or entity, the assignee must comply with the terms of the policy, and both the insured and the assignee are obligated to cooperate under the policy, including, but not limited to, submitting to examinations under oath. Compliance with this paragraph is a condition precedent to recovery of benefits pursuant to the no-fault law. If an insurer requests an examination under oath of a medical provider, the provider must produce the persons having the most knowledge of the issues identified by the insurer in the request for examination. All claimants must produce and provide for inspection all documents requested by the insurer which are reasonably obtainable by the claimants. Examinations under oath may be recorded by audio, video, court reporter, or any combination thereof. An insurer that, as a general practice, requests examinations under oath without a reasonable basis is engaging in an unfair and deceptive trade practice.

(8) ~~(7)~~ MENTAL AND PHYSICAL EXAMINATION OF INJURED PERSON; REPORTS.—

(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 incurred after the date of the first request for examination. Failure to appear for an examination raises a rebuttable presumption that such failure was unreasonable. Submission to an examination is a condition precedent to the recovery of benefits.

(9)~~(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 under the no-fault law, 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 (11) and (16) ~~(10) and (15)~~.

(10)~~(9)~~ PREFERRED PROVIDERS.—An insurer may negotiate and enter into contracts with preferred ~~licensed health care~~ providers for the benefits described in this section, ~~referred to in this section as "preferred providers,"~~ which include ~~shall include~~ health care providers licensed under chapter ~~chapters~~ 458, chapter 459, chapter 460, chapter 461, or chapter ~~and~~ 463.

(a) 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. However, if the insurer offers a preferred provider option, it must also offer a nonpreferred provider policy. ~~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.~~

(b) If the insured elects the ~~to use a provider who is a~~ preferred provider option, 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. As an alternative, or in addition to such benefits, waiver, or reduction, the insurer may provide an actuarially appropriate premium discount as specified in an approved rate filing to an insured who selects the preferred provider option. If the preferred provider option provides a premium discount, the policy may provide that charges for nonemergency services provided within this state are payable only if performed by members of the preferred provider network unless there is no member of the preferred provider network located within 15 miles of the insured's place of residence whose scope of practice includes the required services. ~~If the insurer offers a preferred provider policy to a policyholder or applicant, it must also offer a nonpreferred provider policy.~~

(c) The insurer shall provide each insured ~~policyholder~~ with a current roster of preferred providers in the county in which the insured resides at the time of purchasing ~~purchase of~~

such policy, and ~~shall~~ make such list available for public inspection during regular business hours at the insurer's principal office ~~of the insurer~~ within the state. The insurer may contract with a health insurer for the right to use an existing preferred provider network to implement the preferred provider option. Any other arrangement is subject to the approval of the Office of Insurance Regulation.

(11)~~(10)~~ DEMAND LETTER.—

(a) As a condition precedent to filing any action for benefits under this section, the claimant filing suit must provide 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). A premature demand letter is defective and cannot be cured unless the court first abates the action or the claimant first voluntarily dismisses the action.

(b) The ~~notice~~ required notice must ~~shall~~ state that it is a "demand letter under s. 627.736~~(10)~~" 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 (6) ~~(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 must ~~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 if ~~in the event~~ no other designation has been made.

(d) If, within 30 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 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 is ~~shall~~ not ~~be~~ payable in any subsequent action. For purposes of this subsection, payment or the insurer's agreement is ~~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 not 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 business days by the mailing of the notice required by this subsection.

(f) A demand letter that does not meet the minimum requirements set forth in this subsection or that is sent during the pendency of the lawsuit is defective. A defective demand letter cannot be cured unless the court first abates the action or the claimant first voluntarily dismisses the action. If the

insurer pays the benefits during abatement or dismissal, the insurer is not liable for attorney's fees.

(g) ~~(f)~~ An ~~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.

(h) If the insurer pays in response to a demand letter and the claimant disputes the amount paid, the claimant must send a second demand letter by certified or registered mail stating the exact amount that the claimant believes the insurer owes and why the claimant believes the amount paid is incorrect. The insurer has an additional 10 days after receipt of the second letter to issue any additional payment that is owed. The purpose of this provision is to avoid unnecessary litigation over miscalculated payments.

(i) Demand letters may not be used to request the production of claim documents or other records from the insurer.

Section 9. Subsection (1) of section 324.021, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

324.021 Definitions; minimum insurance required.—The following words and phrases when used in this chapter shall, for the purpose of this chapter, have the meanings respectively ascribed to them in this section, except in those instances where the context clearly indicates a different meaning:

(1) MOTOR VEHICLE.—Every self-propelled vehicle that ~~which~~ is designed and required to be licensed for use upon a highway, including trailers and semitrailers designed for use with such vehicles, except traction engines, road rollers, farm tractors, power shovels, and well drillers, and every vehicle that ~~which~~

is propelled by electric power obtained from overhead wires but not operated upon rails, but not including any bicycle or moped. However, the term does ~~"motor vehicle" shall~~ not include a ~~any~~ motor vehicle as defined in s. 627.732~~(3)~~ if ~~when~~ the owner of such vehicle has complied with the no-fault law ~~requirements of ss. 627.730-627.7405, inclusive~~, unless the provisions of s. 324.051 apply; and, in such case, the applicable proof of insurance provisions of s. 320.02 apply.

Section 10. Paragraph (k) of subsection (2) of section 456.057, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

456.057 Ownership and control of patient records; report or copies of records to be furnished.—

(2) As used in this section, the terms "records owner," "health care practitioner," and "health care practitioner's employer" do not include any of the following persons or entities; furthermore, the following persons or entities are not authorized to acquire or own medical records, but are authorized under the confidentiality and disclosure requirements of this section to maintain those documents required by the part or chapter under which they are licensed or regulated:

(k) Persons or entities practicing under s. 627.736(8) ~~627.736(7)~~.

Section 11. Paragraph (b) of subsection (1) of section 627.7401, Florida Statutes, is amended 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:

(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(6)(e)1. ~~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.

Section 12. Paragraph (c) of subsection (7) of section 817.234, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

817.234 False and fraudulent insurance claims.—

(7)

(c) An insurer, or any person acting at the direction of or on behalf of an insurer, may not change an opinion in a mental or physical report prepared under s. 627.736(8) ~~627.736(7)~~ or direct the physician preparing the report to change such opinion; 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. Any person who violates this paragraph commits a felony of the third degree, punishable as provided in s. 775.082, s. 775.083, or s. 775.084.

Section 13. This act shall take effect July 1, 2011.