

Chapter 184

(Senate Bill 134)

AN ACT concerning

State Real Estate Commission – Sunset Extension and Program Evaluation

FOR the purpose of continuing the State Real Estate Commission in accordance with the provisions of the Maryland Program Evaluation Act (sunset law) by extending to a certain date the termination provisions relating to certain statutory and regulatory authority of the Commission; requiring the Commission to include certain information in its annual report to the Secretary of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation; increasing the amount that a person may recover for each claim against the Real Estate Guaranty Fund; increasing the maximum amount of a certain claim made against the Fund for which the Commission may issue a certain order to pay or deny the claim; requiring the licensee to submit certain notice of the change, certain documentation, and a certain fee to the Commission if the address of the affiliated brokerage of a licensed associate real estate broker or a licensed real estate salesperson changes; increasing a certain fee for collection of a dishonored check; requiring the Commission to submit a certain report on or before a certain date; and generally relating to the State Real Estate Commission.

BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,
Article – Business Occupations and Professions
Section 17–210, 17–404(b), 17–407(d)(1)(i), 17–520, 17–521(a), and 17–702
Annotated Code of Maryland
(2010 Replacement Volume and 2011 Supplement)

BY repealing and reenacting, without amendments,
Article – State Government
Section 8–403(a)
Annotated Code of Maryland
(2009 Replacement Volume and 2011 Supplement)

BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,
Article – State Government
Section 8–403(b)(60)
Annotated Code of Maryland
(2009 Replacement Volume and 2011 Supplement)

SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND, That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

Article – Business Occupations and Professions

17–210.

The Commission shall submit to the Secretary an annual report of the activities of the Commission that includes:

- (1) a statement of the total receipts from license fees;
- (2) a statement of the total expenditures of the Commission;
- (3) the number of real estate broker licenses, associate real estate broker licenses, and real estate salesperson licenses issued in each county;
- (4) the number of hearings held;
- (5) the number of complaints received;
- (6) the number of investigations made;
- (7) the number of applications for licenses denied;
- (8) the total number of licenses suspended or revoked;
- (9) the number of cases resolved within the schedule adopted under § 17–208(b) of this subtitle; [and]

(10) THE NUMBER OF GUARANTY FUND AWARDS MADE THAT REACH THE STATUTORY CAP AT THE TIME THE AWARD IS MADE, THE CORRESPONDING AMOUNTS CLAIMED BY THE COMPLAINANT IN EACH CASE, AND THE AMOUNT OF DAMAGES THAT WOULD HAVE BEEN REIMBURSABLE TO THE COMPLAINANT IF THE STATUTORY CAP DID NOT EXIST; AND

[(10)] (11) any other information that reflects the work of the Commission.

17–404.

(b) The amount recovered for any claim against the Guaranty Fund may not exceed **[\$25,000] \$50,000** for each claim.

17–407.

(d) (1) (i) If a claimant's total claim arising from the conduct of one licensee does not exceed [\$3,000.] \$5,000, the Commission may issue a proposed order to either pay the claim in whole or in part or to deny the claim.

17-520.

(a) Within the time set by the Commission, a real estate broker shall submit to the Commission:

- (1) written notice of any change in the address of the principal office of the broker on the form that the Commission provides;
- (2) the license certificate and pocket card of the broker; and
- (3) a fee for issuance of a new license certificate and pocket card of \$5.

(b) On receipt of the notice, fee, license certificate, and pocket card, the Commission shall issue a new license certificate and pocket card to the real estate broker for the unexpired period of the broker's license.

(c) Within the time set by the Commission, a real estate broker shall submit to the Commission:

- (1) written notice of any change in the address of a branch office of the broker on the form that the Commission provides;
- (2) the branch office certificate; and
- (3) a fee for the issuance of a new branch office certificate of \$5.

(d) On receipt of the notice, fee, and branch office certificate, the Commission shall issue a new branch office certificate to the real estate broker for the unexpired period of the branch office certificate.

(e) If a real estate broker changes the address of the principal office or a branch office of the broker and fails to submit the required notice, the license of the broker shall be suspended automatically until the broker submits the required notice.

(F) IF THE ADDRESS OF THE AFFILIATED BROKERAGE OF A LICENSED ASSOCIATE REAL ESTATE BROKER OR A LICENSED REAL ESTATE SALESPERSON CHANGES, WITHIN THE TIME SET BY THE COMMISSION, THE LICENSEE SHALL SUBMIT TO THE COMMISSION:

(1) WRITTEN OR ELECTRONIC NOTICE OF ANY CHANGE IN THE ADDRESS OF THE BROKERAGE;

(2) THE LICENSE CERTIFICATE AND POCKET CARD OF THE LICENSEE; AND

(3) A FEE FOR THE ISSUANCE OF A NEW LICENSE CERTIFICATE AND POCKET CARD OF \$5.

17-521.

(a) If a person tenders a check to the Commission in payment of a fee and the check is dishonored, the person shall pay to the Commission an additional fee for cost of collection of [~~\$25~~] **\$35** for each dishonored check.

17-702.

Subject to the evaluation and reestablishment provisions of the Maryland Program Evaluation Act, this title and all regulations adopted under this title shall terminate and be of no effect after July 1, [2012] **2022**.

Article – State Government

8-403.

(a) On or before December 15 of the 2nd year before the evaluation date of a governmental activity or unit, the Legislative Policy Committee, based on a preliminary evaluation, may waive as unnecessary the evaluation required under this section.

(b) Except as otherwise provided in subsection (a) of this section, on or before the evaluation date for the following governmental activities or units, an evaluation shall be made of the following governmental activities or units and the statutes and regulations that relate to the governmental activities or units:

(60) Real Estate Commission, State (§ 17-201 of the Business Occupations and Professions Article: July 1, [2011] **2021**);

SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That, on or before October 1, 2013, the State Real Estate Commission shall report to the Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee and the House Economic Matters Committee, in accordance with § 2-1246 of the State Government Article, on:

(1) the implementation of recommendations of the Department of Legislative Services contained in the sunset evaluation report dated October 2010;

(2) any types of consumer claims that are not currently eligible for restitution from the Real Estate Guaranty Fund, established under § 17-402 of the

Business Occupations and Professions Article, that the Commission believes should be reimbursable under statute;

(3) if the Commission concludes that there is no need to expand the types of claims eligible for restitution, whether the Commission recommends reducing, suspending, or eliminating the Real Estate Guaranty Fund assessment; and

(4) the Commission's fiscal situation, including information on licensing trends and operating expenses.

SECTION 3. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect July 1, 2012.

Approved by the Governor, May 2, 2012.