

By: Frullo

H.B. No. 1297

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to a specialty certification for insurance agents who have completed certain training regarding self-insured health benefit plans.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

SECTION 1. Chapter 4054, Insurance Code, is amended by adding Subchapter I to read as follows:

SUBCHAPTER I. SPECIALTY CERTIFICATION FOR AGENTS TRAINED REGARDING
SELF-INSURED HEALTH BENEFIT PLANS

Sec. 4054.401. CERTIFICATION PROGRAM. The department shall establish a voluntary specialty certification program for individuals who have completed training in accordance with this subchapter regarding self-insured health benefit plans.

Sec. 4054.402. QUALIFICATIONS. (a) To be eligible to receive a specialty certification under this subchapter, an individual must:

(1) hold a general life, accident, and health license under this chapter;

(2) satisfy the requirements of this subchapter; and

(3) submit evidence of completion of training to the department in the manner prescribed by the commissioner.

(b) To maintain a specialty certification under this subchapter, an individual must continue to hold a general life, accident, and health license under this chapter.

1 Sec. 4054.403. INITIAL TRAINING. (a) To be certified
2 under this subchapter, an individual must first complete training
3 in the law applicable to self-insured health benefit plans.

4 (b) An individual seeking specialty certification under
5 this subchapter must complete a course applicable to self-insured
6 health benefit plans, as prescribed and approved by the
7 commissioner. Except as provided by Subsection (c), an individual
8 is not eligible for the specialty certification unless, on
9 completion of the course, it is certified to the commissioner as
10 required by the department that the individual has:

11 (1) completed the course; and
12 (2) passed an examination testing the individual's
13 knowledge and qualification.

14 (c) An individual seeking specialty certification under
15 this subchapter is not required to complete the course and
16 examination required by Subsection (b) if the individual
17 demonstrates to the department, in the manner prescribed by the
18 department, that the individual holds a designation as:

19 (1) a Registered Health Underwriter (RHU);
20 (2) a Certified Employee Benefit Specialist (CEBS); or
21 (3) a Registered Employee Benefits Consultant (REBC).

22 Sec. 4054.404. RENEWAL. To renew a specialty certification
23 under this subchapter, the individual must complete during the
24 two-year certification period the number of hours of continuing
25 education applicable to self-insured health benefit plans that are
26 required by the commissioner by rule.

27 Sec. 4054.405. SATISFACTION OF CONTINUING EDUCATION

1 REQUIREMENTS. Each hour of education completed in accordance with
2 this subchapter to obtain or renew a specialty certification may be
3 used to satisfy an hour of a continuing education requirement
4 otherwise applicable to the agent under this title.

5 Sec. 4054.406. ADVERTISING. An individual who holds a
6 specialty certification under this subchapter may advertise, in the
7 manner specified by department rule, that the individual is
8 specially trained regarding self-insured health benefit plans.

9 Sec. 4054.407. LIST MAINTAINED BY DEPARTMENT; WEBSITE. The
10 department shall maintain a list of all individuals who hold a
11 specialty certification under this subchapter, together with the
12 business address and phone number of each individual and a general
13 description of the individual's service area. The department shall
14 publish the list on the department website.

15 Sec. 4054.408. RULES. The commissioner, in accordance with
16 Section 36.001, may adopt rules as necessary to administer this
17 subchapter.

18 SECTION 2. Section 4001.002(a-1), Insurance Code, is
19 amended to read as follows:

20 (a-1) Except as otherwise provided by this code, this title
21 applies to each individual who holds a specialty certification
22 under Subchapter H or I, Chapter 4054.

23 SECTION 3. Not later than January 1, 2018, the Texas
24 Department of Insurance may begin issuing specialty certifications
25 under Subchapter I, Chapter 4054, Insurance Code, as added by this
26 Act.

27 SECTION 4. This Act takes effect September 1, 2017.