

§ 58-33-17. Limited license for rental car companies.

(a) As used in this section:

- (1) "Limited licensee" means a person authorized to sell certain coverages relating to the rental of motor vehicles pursuant to the provisions of this section and Article 28 of Chapter 66 of the General Statutes.
- (2) "Rental agreement" means any written agreement setting forth the terms and conditions governing the use of a vehicle provided by the rental car company.
- (3) "Rental car company" means any person in the business of providing vehicles to the public.
- (4) "Renter" means any person obtaining the use of a vehicle from a rental car company under the terms of a rental agreement.
- (5) "Vehicle" means a motor vehicle of the private passenger type including passenger vans and minivans that are primarily intended for the transport of persons.

(b) The Commissioner may issue to a rental car company, or to a franchisee of a rental car company, that has complied with the requirements of this section, a limited license authorizing the licensee, known as a "limited licensee" for the purpose of this Article, to act as agent, with reference to the kinds of insurance specified in this section, of any insurer authorized to write such kinds of insurance in this State.

(c) The prerequisites for issuance of a limited license under this section are the filing with the Commissioner of the following:

- (1) A written application, signed by an officer of the applicant, for the limited license in such form or forms, and supplements thereto, and containing such information, as the Commissioner may prescribe; and
- (2) A certificate by the insurer that is to be named in such limited license, stating that it has satisfied itself that the named applicant is trustworthy and competent to act as its agent for this limited purpose and that the insurer will appoint such applicant to act as the agent in reference to the doing of such kind or kinds of insurance as are permitted by this section, if the limited license applied for is issued by the Commissioner. Such certificate shall be subscribed by an officer or managing agent of such insurer and affirmed as true under the penalties of perjury.

(d) In the event that any provision of this section is violated by a limited licensee, the Commissioner may:

- (1) Revoke or suspend a limited license issued under this section in accordance with the provisions of G.S. 58-33-46; or
- (2) After notice and hearing, impose such other penalties, including suspending the transaction of insurance at specific rental locations where violations of this Article have occurred, as the Commissioner deems to be necessary or convenient to carry out the purposes of this section.

(e) The rental car company or franchisee licensed pursuant to subsection (b) of this section may act as agent for an authorized insurer only in connection with the rental of vehicles and only with respect to the following kinds of insurance:

- (1) Excess liability insurance that provides coverage to the rental car company or franchisee and renters and other authorized drivers of rental vehicles, in excess of the standard liability limits provided by the rental car company in its rental agreement, for liability arising from the negligent operation of the rental vehicle;

- (2) Accident and health insurance that provides coverage to renters and other vehicle occupants for accidental death or dismemberment and for medical expenses resulting from an accident that occurs during the rental period;
 - (3) Personal effects insurance that provides coverage to renters and other vehicle occupants for the loss of, or damage to, personal effects that occurs during the rental period; or
 - (4) Any other coverage that the Commissioner may approve as meaningful and appropriate in connection with the rental of vehicles.
- (f) No insurance may be issued pursuant to this section unless:
- (1) The rental period of the rental agreement does not exceed 30 consecutive days; and
 - (2) At every rental car location where rental car agreements are executed, brochures or other written materials are readily available to the prospective renter that:
 - a. Summarize, clearly and correctly, the material terms of insurance coverage, including the identity of the insurer, offered to renters;
 - b. Disclose that these policies offered by the rental car company may provide a duplication of coverage already provided by a renter's personal automobile insurance policy, homeowner's insurance policy, personal liability insurance policy, or other source of coverage;
 - c. State that the purchase by the renter of the kinds of insurance specified in this section is not required in order to rent a vehicle;
 - d. Describe the process for filing a claim in the event the renter elects to purchase coverage and in the event of a claim; and
 - e. Contain any additional information on the price, benefits, exclusions, conditions or other limitations of such policies as the Commissioner may by regulation prescribe; and
 - (3) Evidence of coverage is provided to every renter who elects to purchase such coverage.

(g) Any limited license issued under this section shall also authorize any salaried employee of the licensee who, pursuant to subsection (h) of this section, is trained to act individually on behalf, and under the supervision, of the licensee with respect to the kinds of insurance specified in this section.

(h) Each rental car company or franchisee licensed pursuant to this section shall conduct a training program which shall be submitted to the commissioner for approval prior to use and which shall meet the following minimum standards:

- (1) Each trainee shall receive basic instruction about the kinds of insurance specified in this section offered for purchase by prospective renters of rental vehicles;
- (2) Each trainee shall be instructed to acknowledge to a prospective renter of a rental vehicle that purchase of any such insurance specified in this section is not required in order for the renter to rent a vehicle; and
- (3) Each trainee shall be instructed to acknowledge to a prospective renter of a rental vehicle that the renter may have insurance policies that already provide the coverage being offered by the rental car company pursuant to this section.

(i) Limited licensees acting pursuant to and under the authority of this section shall comply with all applicable provisions of this Article, except that notwithstanding any other provision of this Article, or any rule adopted by the Commissioner, a limited licensee pursuant to this section shall not be required to treat premiums collected from renters purchasing such insurance when renting vehicles as funds received in a fiduciary capacity, provided that:

- (1) The insurer represented by the limited licensee has consented in writing, signed by the insurer's officer, that premiums need not be segregated from funds received by the rental car company on account of vehicle rental; and
 - (2) The charges for insurance coverage are itemized but not billed to the renter separately from the charges for rental vehicles.
- (j) No limited licensee under this section shall advertise, represent, or otherwise hold itself or any of its employees themselves out as licensed insurance producers. (1991, c. 139, s. 1; 2001-203, s. 4; 2022-46, s. 13(a).)