

LEGISLATIVE BILL 742

Approved by the Governor April 5, 2010

Introduced by McCoy, 39; Pirsch, 4.

FOR AN ACT relating to government; to provide requirements for settled claims and settlement agreements; to provide that settled claims and settlement agreements are public records; and to define terms.

Be it enacted by the people of the State of Nebraska,

Section 1. (1) A public entity or public agency providing coverage to a public entity, public official, or public employee shall maintain a public written or electronic record of all settled claims. The record for all such claims settled in the amount of fifty thousand dollars or more, or one percent of the total annual budget of the public entity, whichever is less, shall include a written executed settlement agreement. The settlement agreement shall contain a brief description of the claim, the party or parties released under the settlement, and the amount of the financial compensation, if any, paid by or to the public entity or on its behalf.

(2) Any claim or settlement agreement involving a public entity shall be a public record but, to the extent permitted by sections 84-712.04 and 84-712.05 and as otherwise provided by statute, specific portions of the claim or settlement agreement may be withheld from the public. A private insurance company or public agency providing coverage to the public entity shall, without delay, provide to the public entity a copy of any claim or settlement agreement to be maintained as a public record.

(3) Except for settlement agreements involving the state, any state agency, or any employee of the state or pursuant to claims filed under the State Tort Claims Act, any settlement agreement with an amount of financial consideration of fifty thousand dollars or more, or one percent of the total annual budget of the public entity, whichever is less, shall be included as an agenda item at the next meeting of a public agency providing coverage to a public entity and as an agenda item on the next regularly scheduled public meeting of the public body for informational purposes or for approval if required.

(4) For purposes of this section, a confidentiality or nondisclosure clause or provision contained in or relating to a settlement agreement shall neither cause nor permit a settlement agreement or the claim or any other public record to be withheld from the public. Nothing in this section shall require a public official or public employee or any party to the settlement agreement to comment on the settlement agreement.

(5) For purposes of this section:

(a) Confidentiality or nondisclosure clause or provision means any covenant or stipulation adopted by parties to a settlement agreement that designates the settlement agreement, the claim, or any other public record as confidential, or in any other way restricts public access to information concerning the settlement agreement or claim;

(b) Public body means public body as defined in subdivision (1) of section 84-1409;

(c) Public entity means a public entity listed in subdivision (1) of section 84-712.01; and

(d) Settlement agreement means any contractual agreement to settle or resolve a claim involving a public entity or on behalf of the public entity, a public official, or a public employee by (i) the public entity, (ii) a private insurance company, or (iii) a public agency providing coverage.

(6) This section does not apply to claims made in connection with insured or self-insured health insurance contracts.