

**WAC 284-07-214 Internal audit function requirements.** (1) An insurer is exempt from the requirements of this section if:

(a) The insurer has annual direct written and unaffiliated assumed premium, including international direct and assumed premium but excluding premiums reinsured with the Federal Crop Insurance Corporation and Federal Flood Insurance Program, less than five hundred million dollars; and

(b) If the insurer is a member of a group of insurers, the group has annual direct written and unaffiliated assumed premium including direct and assumed premium, but excluding premiums reinsured with the Federal Crop Insurance Corporation and Federal Flood Insurance Program, less than one billion dollars.

(2) An insurer or group of insurers exempt from the requirements of this section is encouraged, but not required, to conduct a review of the insurer business type, sources of capital, and other risk factors to determine whether an internal audit function is warranted. The potential benefits of an internal audit function should be assessed and compared against the estimated costs.

(3) The insurer or group of insurers must establish an internal audit function providing independent, objective and reasonable assurance to the audit committee and insurer management regarding the insurer's governance, risk management and internal controls. This assurance must be provided by performing general and specific audits, reviews and tests and by employing other techniques deemed necessary to protect assets, evaluate control effectiveness and efficiency, and evaluate compliance with policies and regulations.

(4) In order to ensure that internal auditors remain objective, the internal audit function must be organizationally independent. Specifically, the internal audit function will not defer ultimate judgment on audit matters to others, and must appoint an individual to head the internal audit function who will have direct and unrestricted access to the board of directors. Organizational independence does not preclude dual-reporting relationships.

(5) The head of the internal audit function must report to the audit committee regularly, but no less than annually, on the periodic audit plan, factors that may adversely impact the internal audit function's independence or effectiveness, material findings from completed audits and the appropriateness of corrective actions implemented by management as a result of audit findings.

(6) If an insurer is a member of an insurance holding company system or included in a group of insurers, the insurer may satisfy the internal audit function requirement set forth in this section at the ultimate controlling parent level, an intermediate holding company level or the individual legal entity level.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 48.02.060, 48.44.050, and 48.46.200. WSR 20-01-008, § 284-07-214, filed 12/5/19, effective 1/5/20.]