
Common Interest Communities

Code of Virginia
Title 54.1. Professions and Occupations.

Chapter 23.3
Common Interest Communities

Table of Contents

§ 54.1-2345. Definitions.....	1
§ 54.1-2346. License required; certification of employees; renewal; provisional license	2
§ 54.1-2347. Exceptions and exemptions generally	3
§ 54.1-2348. Common Interest Community Board; membership; meetings; quorum	4
§ 54.1-2349. Powers and duties of the Board	5
§ 54.1-2350. Annual report and disclosure packets	6
§ 54.1-2351. General powers and duties of Board concerning associations	7
§ 54.1-2352. Cease and desist orders	8
§ 54.1-2353. Protection of the interests of associations; appointment of receiver for common interest community manager	9
§ 54.1-2354. Variation by agreement	12

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Chapter 23.3
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§ 54.1-2345. Definitions.

As used in this chapter, unless the context requires a different meaning:

“Association” means the same as that term is defined in § 55-528.

“Board” means the Common Interest Community Board.

“Common interest community” means the same as that term is defined in § 55-528; provided that for the purposes of this chapter only, a common interest community shall not include any time-share project registered pursuant to the Virginia Real Estate Time-Share Act (§ 55-360 et seq.) or any additional land that is a part of such registration.

“Common interest community manager” means a person or business entity, including but not limited to a partnership, association, corporation, or limited liability company, who, for compensation or valuable consideration, provides management services to a common interest community.

“Declaration” means the same as that term is defined in § 55-528.

“Governing board” means the governing board of an association, including the executive organ of a condominium unit owners’ association, the executive board of a cooperative proprietary lessees’ association, and the board of directors or other governing body of a property owners’ association.

“Lot” means the same as that term is defined in § 55-528.

“Management services” means (i) acting with the authority of an association in its business, legal, financial, or other transactions with association members and nonmembers; (ii) executing the resolutions and decisions of an association or, with the authority of the association, enforcing the rights of the association secured by statute, contract, covenant; rule, or bylaw; (in) collecting, disbursing, or otherwise exercising dominion or control over money or other property belonging to an association; (iv) preparing budgets, financial statements, or other financial reports for an association; (v) arranging, conducting, or coordinating meetings of an association or the governing body of an association; (vi) negotiating contracts or otherwise coordinating or arranging for services or the purchase of property and goods for or on behalf of an association; or (vii)

2 Common Interest Communities

offering or soliciting to perform any of the aforesaid acts or services on behalf of an association.

§ 54.1-2346. License required; certification of employees; renewal; provisional license.

A. Unless exempted by § 54.1-2347, any person, partnership, corporation, or other entity offering management services to a common interest community on or after January 1, 2009, shall hold a valid license issued in accordance with the provisions of this chapter prior to engaging in such management services.

B. Unless exempted by § 54.1-2347, any person, partnership, corporation, or other entity offering management services to a common interest community without being licensed in accordance with the provisions of this chapter, shall be subject to the provisions of § 54.1-111.

C. On or after July 1, 2011, it shall be a condition of the issuance or renewal of the license of a common interest community manager that all employees of the common interest community manager who have principal responsibility for management services provided to a common interest community or who have supervisory responsibility for employees who participate directly in the provision of management services to a common interest community shall, within two years after employment with the common interest community manager, hold a certificate issued by the Board certifying the person possesses the character and minimum skills to engage properly in the provision of management services to a common interest community or shall be under the direct supervision of a certified employee of such common interest community manager. A common interest community manager shall notify the Board if a certificated employee is discharged or in any way terminates his active status with the common interest community manager.

D. It shall be a condition of the issuance or renewal of the license of a common interest community manager that the common interest community manager shall obtain and maintain a blanket fidelity bond or employee dishonesty insurance policy insuring the common interest community manager against losses resulting from theft or dishonesty committed by the officers, directors, and persons employed by the common interest community manager. Such bond or insurance policy shall include coverage for losses of clients of the common interest community manager resulting from theft or dishonesty committed by the officers, directors, and persons employed by the common interest community manager. Such bond or insurance policy shall provide coverage in an amount equal to the lesser of \$2 million or the highest aggregate amount of the operating and reserve balances of all associations under the control of the common interest community manager during the prior fiscal year. The minimum coverage amount shall be \$10,000.

E. It shall be a condition of the issuance or renewal of the license of a common interest community manager that the common interest community manager certifies to the Board

(i) that the common interest community manager is in good standing and authorized to transact business in Virginia; (ii) that the common interest community manager has established a code of conduct for the officers, directors, and persons employed by the common interest community manager to protect against conflicts of interest; (iii) that the common interest community manager provides all management services pursuant to written contracts with the associations to which such services are provided; (iv) that the common interest community manager has established a system of internal accounting controls to manage the risk of fraud or illegal acts; and (v) that an independent certified public accountant reviews or audits the financial statements of the common interest community manager at least annually in accordance with standards established by the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants or by any successor standard-setting authorities.

F. The Board shall issue a provisional license to any person, partnership, corporation, or other entity offering management services to a common interest community on or before December 31, 2008, who makes application for licensure prior to January 1, 2009. Such provisional license will expire on June 30, 2011, and may not be renewed. This subsection shall not be construed to limit the powers and authority of the Board.

§ 54.1-2347. Exceptions and exemptions generally.

A. The provisions of this chapter shall not be construed to prevent or prohibit:

1. An employee of a duly licensed common interest community manager from providing management services within the scope of the employee's employment by the duly licensed common interest community manager;
2. An employee of an association from providing management services for that association's common interest community;
3. A resident of a common interest community acting without compensation from providing management services for that common interest community;
4. A member of the governing board of an association acting without compensation from providing management services for that association's common interest community;
5. A person acting as a receiver or trustee in bankruptcy in the performance of his duties as such or any person acting under order of any court from providing management services for a common interest community;
6. A duly licensed attorney-at-law from representing an association or a common interest community manager in any business that constitutes the practice of law;
7. A duly licensed certified public accountant from providing bookkeeping or accounting services to an association or a common interest community manager;

4 Common Interest Communities

8. A duly licensed real estate broker or agent from selling, leasing, renting, or managing lots within a common interest community; or

9. An association, exchange agent, exchange company, managing agent, or managing entity of a timeshare project registered pursuant to the Virginia Real Estate Time-Share Act (§ 55-360 et seq.) from providing management services for such time-share project.

B. A licensee of the Board shall comply with the Board's regulations, notwithstanding the fact that the licensee would be otherwise exempt from licensure under subsection A. Nothing in this subsection shall be construed to require a person to be licensed in accordance with this chapter if he would be otherwise exempt from such licensure.

§ 54.1-2348. Common Interest Community Board; membership; meetings; quorum.

There is hereby created the Common Interest Community Board (the Board) as a policy board, within the meaning of § 2.2-2100, in the executive branch of state government. Members of the Board shall be appointed by the Governor and consist of eleven members as follows: three shall be representatives of Virginia common interest community managers, one shall be a Virginia attorney whose practice includes the representation of associations, one shall be a representative of a Virginia certified public accountant whose practice includes providing attest services to associations, one shall be a representative of the Virginia time-share industry, two shall be representatives of developers of Virginia common interest communities, and three shall be Virginia citizens, one of whom serves or who has served on the governing board of an association and two of whom reside in a common interest community. Of the initial appointments, one representative of Virginia common interest community managers and one representative of developers of Virginia common interest communities shall serve terms of two years and one representative of Virginia common interest community managers and one representative of developers of Virginia common interest communities shall serve terms of three years; the Virginia attorney shall serve a term of three years; the Virginia certified public accountant shall serve a term of one year; the Virginia citizen who serves or who has served on the governing board of an association shall serve a term of two years, and the two Virginia citizens who reside in a common interest community shall serve terms of one year. All other initial appointments and all subsequent appointments shall be for terms for four years, except that vacancies may be filled for the remainder of the unexpired term. Each appointment of a representative of a Virginia common interest community manager to the Board may be made from nominations submitted by the Virginia Association of Community Managers, who may nominate no more than three persons for each manager vacancy. In no case shall the Governor be bound to make any appointment from such nominees. No person shall be eligible to serve for more than two successive four-year terms.

The Board shall meet at least four times each year and at other such times as it deems necessary. The Board shall elect from its membership a chairman and a vice-chairman to

serve for a period of one year. A majority of the Board shall constitute a quorum. The Board is vested with the powers and duties necessary to execute the purposes of this chapter.

§ 54.1-2349. Powers and duties of the Board.

A. The Board shall administer and enforce the provisions of this chapter. In addition to the provisions of § 54.1-201, the Board shall:

1. Promulgate regulations necessary to carry out the requirements of this chapter in accordance with the provisions of the Administrative Process Act (§ 2.2-4000 et seq.) to include but not be limited to the prescription of fees, procedures, and qualifications for the issuance and renewal of common interest community manager licenses. The Board shall annually assess each common interest community manager an amount equal to the lesser of (i) \$1,000 or such other amount as the Board may establish by regulation or (ii) five hundredths of one percent (0.05%) of the gross receipts from common interest community management during the preceding calendar year. For the purposes of clause (ii), no minimum payment shall be less than \$10.00. The annual payment shall be remitted to the State Treasurer and shall be placed to the credit of the Common Interest Community Management Fund established pursuant to § 55-259.

2. Establish criteria for the licensure of common interest community managers to ensure the appropriate training and educational credentials for the provision of management services to common interest communities. Such criteria may include experiential requirements and shall include designation as an Accredited Association Management Company by the Community Associations Institute. As an additional alternative to such designation, the Board shall have authority, by regulation, to include one of the following: (i) successful completion of another Board-approved training program and certifying examination, or (ii) successful completion of a Virginia testing program to determine the quality of the training and educational credentials for and competence of common interest community managers;

3. Establish criteria for the certification of the employees of common interest community managers who have principal responsibility for management services provided to a common interest community or who have supervisory responsibility for employees who participate directly in the provision of management services to a common interest community to ensure the person possesses the character and minimum skills to engage properly in the provision of management services to a common interest community. Such criteria shall include designation as a Certified Manager of Community Associations by the National Board of Certification for Community Association Managers, designation as an Association Management Specialist by the Community Associations Institute, or designation as a Professional Community Association Manager by the Community Associations Institute. As an additional alternative to such designations, the Board shall have authority, by regulation, to include one of the following: (i) successful completion of another Board-approved training program and certifying examination, or (ii)

6 Common Interest Communities

successful completion of a Virginia testing program to determine the quality of the training and educational credentials for and competence of the employees of common interest community managers who participate directly in the provision of management services to a common interest community. The fee paid to the Board for the issuance of such certificate shall be paid to the Common Interest Community Management Information Fund established pursuant to § 55-529;

4. Approve the criteria for accredited common interest community manager training programs;

5. Approve accredited common interest community manager training programs;

6. Establish, by regulation, standards of conduct for common interest community managers and for employees of common interest community managers certified in accordance with the provisions of this chapter; and

7. Establish, by regulation, an education-based certification program for persons who are involved in the business or activity of providing management services to common interest communities. The Board shall have the authority to approve training courses and instructors in furtherance of the provisions of this chapter.

B. The Board shall have the sole responsibility for the administration of this chapter and for the promulgation of regulations to carry out the requirements thereof. The Board shall also be responsible for the enforcement of this chapter, provided that the Real Estate Board shall have the sole responsibility for the enforcement of this chapter with respect to a real estate broker, real estate salesperson, or real estate brokerage firm licensed in accordance with Chapter 21 (§ 54.1-2100 et seq.) who is also licensed as a common interest community manager.

C. The Board is authorized to obtain criminal history record information from any state or federal law enforcement agency relating to an applicant for licensure or certification. Any information so obtained is for the exclusive use of the Board and shall not be released to any other person or agency except in furtherance of the investigation of the applicant or with the authorization of the applicant or upon court order.

§ 54.1-2350. Annual report and disclosure packets.

In addition to the provisions of § 54.1-2349, the Board shall:

1. Administer the provisions of Chapter 29 (§ 55-528 et seq.) of Title 55;

2. Develop and disseminate an association annual report form for use in accordance with §§ 55-79.93: 1, 55-504.1, and 55-516.1; and

3. Develop and disseminate a one-page form to accompany association disclosure packets required pursuant to § 55-509.5, which form shall summarize the unique characteristics of property owners' associations generally and shall make known to prospective purchasers the unusual and material circumstances affecting a lot owner in a property owners' association, including but not limited to the obligation of a lot owner to pay regular annual or special assessments to the association, the penalty for failure or refusal to pay such assessments, the purposes for which such assessments may be used, and the importance the declaration of restrictive covenants and other governing documents play in association living.

§ 54.1-2351. General powers and duties of Board concerning associations.

A. The Board may adopt, amend, and repeal rules and regulations and issue orders consistent with and in furtherance of the objectives of this chapter, but the Board may not intervene in the internal activities of an association except to the extent necessary to prevent or cure violations of this chapter or of the chapter pursuant to which the association is created. The Board may prescribe forms and procedures for submitting information to the Board.

B. If it appears that any governing board has engaged, is engaging, or is about to engage in any act or practice in violation of this chapter, Chapter 4.2 (§ 55-79.39 et seq.), 21 (§ 55-360 et seq.), or 24 (§ 55-424 et seq.) of Title 55, or any of the Board's regulations or orders, the Board without prior administrative proceedings may bring suit in the appropriate court to enjoin that act or practice or for other appropriate relief. The Board is not required to post a bond or prove that no adequate remedy at law exists.

C. The Board may intervene in any action or suit involving a violation by a declarant or a developer of a time-share project of this chapter, Chapter 4.2 (§ 55-79.39 et seq.), 21 (§ 55-360 et seq.), or 24 (§ 55-424 et seq.) of Title 55, or any of the Board's regulations or orders.

D. The Board may accept grants-in-aid from any governmental source and may contract with agencies charged with similar functions in this or other jurisdictions in furtherance of the objectives of this chapter.

E. The Board may cooperate with agencies performing similar functions in this and other jurisdictions to develop uniform filing procedures and forms, uniform disclosure standards, and uniform administrative practices, and may develop information that may be useful in the discharge of the Board's duties.

F. In issuing any cease and desist order the Board shall state the basis for the adverse determination and the underlying facts.

G. Without limiting the remedies that may be obtained under this chapter, the Board, without compliance with the Administrative Process Act (§ 2.2-4000 et seq.), shall have

8 Common Interest Communities

the authority to enforce the provisions of this section and may institute proceedings in equity to enjoin any person, partnership, corporation, or any other entity violating this chapter, Chapter 4.2 (§ 55-79.39 et seq.), 21 (§ 55-360 et seq.), or 24 (§ 55-424 et seq.) of Title 55, or any of the Board's regulations or orders. Such proceedings shall be brought in the name of the Commonwealth by the Board in the circuit court or general district court of the city or county in which the unlawful act occurred or in which the defendant resides.

H The Board may assess a monetary penalty to be paid to the Common Interest Community Management Information Fund of not more than \$1,000 per violation against any governing board that violates any provision of this section. In determining the amount of the penalty, the Board shall consider the degree and extent of harm caused by the violation. No monetary penalty may be assessed under this section unless the governing board has been given notice and an opportunity to be heard pursuant to the Administrative Process Act (§ 2.2-4000 et seq.). The penalty may be sued for and recovered in the name of the Commonwealth.

§ 54.1-2352. Cease and desist orders.

A. The Board may issue an order requiring the governing board of the association to cease and desist from the unlawful practice and to take such affirmative action as in the judgment of the Board will carry out the purposes of this chapter, if the Board determines after notice and hearing that the governing board of an association has:

1. Violated any statute or regulation governing the association regulated pursuant to this chapter, including engaging in any act or practice in violation of this chapter, Chapter 4.2 (§ 55-79.39 et seq.), 21 (§ 55-360 et seq.), 24 (§ 55-424 et seq.), or 26 (§ 55-508 et seq.) of Title 55, or any of the Board's regulations or orders;
2. Failed to register as an association or to file an annual report as required by statute or regulation;
3. Materially misrepresented facts in an application for registration or an annual report; or
4. Willfully refused to furnish the Board information or records required or requested pursuant to statute or regulation.

B. If the Board makes a finding of fact in writing that the public interest will be irreparably harmed by delay in issuing an order, it may issue a temporary cease and desist order. Prior to issuing the temporary cease and desist order, the Board shall give notice of the proposal to issue a temporary cease and desist order to the person. Every temporary cease and desist order shall include in its terms a provision that upon request a hearing will be held promptly to determine whether or not it becomes permanent.

§ 54.1-2353. Protection of the interests of associations; appointment of receiver for common interest community manager.

A. A common interest community manager owes a fiduciary duty to the associations to which it provides management services with respect to the manager's handling the funds or the records of each association. All funds deposited with the common interest community manager shall be handled in a fiduciary capacity and shall be kept in a separate fiduciary trust account or accounts in an FDIC-insured financial institution separate from the assets of the common interest community manager. The funds shall be the property of the association and shall be segregated for each depository in the records of the common interest community manager in a manner that permits the funds to be identified on an association basis. All records having administrative or fiscal value to the association that a common interest community manager holds, maintains, compiles, or generates on behalf of a common interest community are the property of the association. A common interest community manager may retain and dispose of association records in accordance with a policy contained in the contract between the common interest community manager and the association. Within a reasonable time after a written request for any such records, the common interest community manager shall provide copies of the requested records to the association at the association's expense. The common interest community manager shall return all association records that it retains and any originals of legal instruments or official documents that are in the possession of the common interest community manager to the association within a reasonable time after termination of the contract for management services without additional cost to the association. Records maintained in electronic format may be returned in such format.

B. If the Board has reasonable cause to believe that a common interest community manager is unable to properly discharge its fiduciary responsibilities to an association to which it provides management services, the Board may submit an ex parte petition to the circuit court of the city or county wherein the common interest community manager maintains an office or is doing business for the issuance of an order authorizing the immediate inspection by and production to representatives of the petitioner of any records, documents, and physical or other evidence belonging to the subject common interest community manager. The court may issue such order without notice to the common interest community manager if the petition, supported by affidavit of the petitioner and such other evidence as the court may require, shows reasonable cause to believe that such action is required to prevent immediate loss of property of one or more of the associations to which the subject common interest community manager provides management services. The court may also temporarily enjoin further activity by the common interest community manager and take such further action as shall be necessary to conserve, protect, and disburse the funds involved, including the appointment of a receiver. The papers filed with the court pursuant to this subsection shall be placed under seal.

C. If the Board has reasonable cause to believe that a common interest community manager is unable to properly discharge its fiduciary responsibilities to an association to which it provides management services, the Board may file a petition with the circuit court of the county or city wherein the subject common interest community manager maintains an office or is doing business. The petition may seek the following relief (i) an injunction prohibiting the withdrawal of any bank deposits or the disposition of any other assets belonging to or subject to the control of the subject common interest community manager; and (ii) the appointment of a receiver for all or part of the funds or property of the subject common interest community manager. The subject common interest community manager shall be given notice of the time and place of the hearing on the petition and an opportunity to offer evidence. The court, in its discretion, may require a receiver appointed pursuant to this section to post bond, with or without surety. The papers filed with the court under this subsection shall be placed under seal until such time as the court grants an injunction or appoints a receiver. The court may issue an injunction, appoint a receiver, or provide such other relief as the court may consider proper if after a hearing, the court finds that such relief is necessary or appropriate to prevent loss of property of one or more of the associations to which the subject common interest community manager provides management services.

D. In any proceeding under subsection C, any person or entity known to the Board to be indebted to or having in his possession property, real or personal, belonging to or subject to the control of the subject common interest community manager's business and which property the Board reasonably believes may become part of the receivership assets, shall be served with a copy of the petition and notice of the time and place of the hearing.

E. The court shall describe the powers and duties of the receiver in its appointing order, which may be amended from time to time. The receiver shall, unless otherwise ordered by the court in the appointing order, (i) prepare and file with the Board a list of all associations managed by the subject common interest community manager; (ii) notify in writing all of the associations to which the subject common interest community manager provides management services of the appointment, and take whatever action the receiver deems appropriate to protect the interests of the associations until such time as the associations have had an opportunity to obtain a successor common interest community manager; (iii) facilitate the transfer of records and information to such successor common interest community manager; (iv) identify and take control of all bank accounts, including without limitation trust and operating accounts, over which the subject common interest community manager had signatory authority in connection with its management business; (v) prepare and submit an accounting of receipts and disbursements and account balances of all funds under the receiver's control for submission to the court within four months of the appointment and annually thereafter until the receivership is terminated by the court; (vi) attempt to collect any accounts receivable related to the subject common interest community manager's business; (vii) identify and attempt to recover any assets wrongfully diverted from the subject common interest community manager's business, or assets acquired with funds wrongfully diverted from the subject common interest community manager's business; (viii) terminate the subject common interest community

manager's business; (ix) reduce to cash all of the assets of the subject common interest community manager; (x) determine the nature and amount of all claims of creditors of the subject common interest community manager, including associations to which the subject common interest community manager provided management services; and (xi) prepare and file with the court a report of such assets and claims proposing a plan for the distribution of funds in the receivership to such creditors in accordance with the provisions of subsection F.

F. Upon the court's approval of the receiver's report referenced in subsection E, at a hearing after such notice as the court may require to creditors, the receiver shall distribute the assets of the common interest community manager and funds in the receivership first to clients whose funds were or ought to have been held in a fiduciary capacity by the subject common interest community manager, then to the receiver for fees, costs, and expenses awarded pursuant to subsection G, and thereafter to the creditors of the subject common interest community manager, and then to the subject common interest community manager or its successors in interest.

G. A receiver appointed pursuant to this section shall be entitled, upon proper application to the court in which the appointment was made, to recover an award of reasonable fees, costs, and expenses. If there are not sufficient non fiduciary funds to pay the award, then the shortfall shall be paid by the Common Interest Community Management Information Fund as a cost of administering the Fund pursuant to § 55-530, to the extent that the said Fund has funds available. The Fund shall have a claim against the subject common interest community manager for the amount paid.

H. The court may determine whether any assets under the receiver's control should be returned to the subject common interest community manager.

I. If the Board shall find that any common interest community manager is insolvent, that its merger into another common interest community manager is desirable for the protection of the associations to which such common interest community manager provides management services, and that an emergency exists, and, if the board of directors of such insolvent common interest community manager shall approve a plan of merger of such common interest community manager into another common interest community manager, compliance with the requirements of § 13.1-718 shall be dispensed with as to such insolvent common interest community manager and the approval by the Board of such plan of merger shall be the equivalent of approval by the holders of more than two-thirds of the outstanding shares of such insolvent common interest community manager for all purposes of Article 12 (§ 13.1-715.1 et seq.) of Chapter 9 of Title 13.1. If the Board finds that a common interest community manager is insolvent, that the acquisition of its assets by another common interest community manager is in the best interests of the associations to which such common interest community manager provides management services, and that an emergency exists, it may, with the consent of the boards of directors of both common interest community managers as to the terms and conditions of such transfer, including the assumption of all or certain liabilities, enter an

order transferring some or all of the assets of such insolvent common interest community manager to such other common interest community manager, and no compliance with the provisions of §§ 13.1-723 and 13.1-724 shall be required, nor shall §§ 13.1-730 through 13.1-741 be applicable to such transfer. In the case either of such a merger or of such a sale of assets, the Board shall provide that prompt notice of its finding of insolvency and of the merger or sale of assets be sent to the stockholders of record of the insolvent common interest community manager for the purpose of providing such shareholders an opportunity to challenge the finding that the common interest community manager is insolvent. The relevant books and records of such insolvent common interest community manager shall remain intact and be made available to such shareholders for a period of 30 days after such notice is sent. The Board's finding of insolvency shall become final if a hearing before the Board is not requested by any such shareholder within such 30-day period. If, after such hearing, the Board finds that such common interest community manager was solvent, it shall rescind its order entered pursuant to this subsection and the merger or transfer of assets shall be rescinded. But if, after such hearing, the Board finds that such common interest community manager was insolvent, its order shall be final.

J. The provisions of this chapter are declared to be remedial. The purpose of this chapter is to protect the interests of associations adversely affected by common interest community managers who have breached their fiduciary duty. The provisions of this chapter shall be liberally administered in order to protect those interests and thereby the public's interest in the quality of management services provided by Virginia common interest community managers.

§ 54.1-2354. Variation by agreement.

Except as expressly provided in this chapter, provisions of this chapter may not be varied by agreement, and rights conferred by this chapter may not be waived. All management agreements entered into by common interest community managers shall comply with the terms of this chapter and the provisions of Chapter 4.2 (§ 55-79.39 et seq.), 21 (§ 55-360 et seq.), 24 (§ 55-424 et seq.), or 26 (§ 55-508 et seq.) of Title 55, as applicable.