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291 (4) The department shall adopt by rule a property insurance
292 mediation program to be administered by the department or its
293 designee. The department may also adopt special rules which are
294 applicable in cases of an emergency within the state. The rules
295 shall be modeled after practices and procedures set forth in
296 mediation rules of procedure adopted by the Supreme Court. The
297 rules shall provide for:

298 (b) Qualifications, denial of application, suspension,
299 revocation, and other penalties for ~~of~~ mediators as provided in
300 s. 627.745 and ~~in~~ the Florida Rules for ~~of~~ Certified and Court-
301 Appointed Court Appointed Mediators, and ~~for such other~~
302 ~~individuals as are qualified by education, training, or~~
303 ~~experience as the department determines to be appropriate.~~

304 Section 7. Section 627.70151, Florida Statutes, is created
305 to read:

306 627.70151 Appraisal; conflicts of interest.—An insurer that
307 offers residential coverage as defined in s. 627.4025, or a
308 policyholder that uses an appraisal clause in a property
309 insurance contract to establish a process for using an impartial
310 umpire to estimate or evaluate the amount of loss, may challenge
311 an umpire's impartiality and disqualify the proposed umpire only
312 if:

313 (1) A familial relationship within the third degree exists
314 between the umpire and a party or a representative of a party;

315 (2) The umpire has previously represented a party or a
316 representative of a party in a professional capacity in the same
317 or a substantially related matter;

318 (3) The umpire has represented another person in a
319 professional capacity on the same or a substantially related

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320 matter that includes the claim or the same property, and the
321 other person's interests are materially adverse to the interests
322 of a party; or

323 (4) The umpire has worked as an employer or employee of a
324 party within the preceding 5 years.

325 Section 8. Paragraph (c) of subsection (2) of section
326 627.706, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

327 627.706 Sinkhole insurance; catastrophic ground cover
328 collapse; definitions.—

329 (2) As used in ss. 627.706–627.7074, and as used in
330 connection with any policy providing coverage for a catastrophic
331 ground cover collapse or for sinkhole losses, the term:

332 (c) "Neutral evaluator" means a professional engineer or a
333 professional geologist who has completed a course of study in
334 alternative dispute resolution designed or approved by the
335 department for use in the neutral evaluation process, ~~and~~ and who is
336 determined by the department to be fair and impartial, and who
337 is not otherwise ineligible for certification under s. 627.7074.

338 Section 9. Subsections (7) and (18) of section 627.7074,
339 Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

340 627.7074 Alternative procedure for resolution of disputed
341 sinkhole insurance claims.—

342 (7) Upon receipt of a request for neutral evaluation, the
343 department shall provide the parties a list of certified neutral
344 evaluators. The department shall allow the parties to submit
345 requests to disqualify evaluators on the list for cause.

346 (a) The department shall disqualify neutral evaluators for
347 cause based only on any of the following grounds:

348 1. A familial relationship within the third degree exists