

**STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF INSURANCE AND FINANCIAL SERVICES**

Bulletin 2015-16-CF

In the matter of:

**Implementation of the Counselor Certification Program
under the Debt Management Act**

**Issued and Entered
this 10th day of July 2015
by Patrick M. McPharlin
Director**

The Debt Management Act (Act), 1975 PA 148, MCL 451.411 *et seq.*, was amended in part by 2014 PA 362, which became effective March 16, 2015. Pursuant to the amendment, the Act now requires a counselor working with a Michigan consumer to be a "certified counselor." This certification process replaces the previous requirement that counselors take and pass a debt management examination.

The purpose of this bulletin is to provide notice to counselors and debt management licensees that the Department of Insurance and Financial Services (DIFS) interprets the amended statutory language to require all counselors to be or become certified counselors, including those counselors who were already employed at the time the amendment became effective. Each debt management licensee is required to provide DIFS with a report containing certification information for each counselor employed by or acting as an agent of the licensee. DIFS will prescribe the form of this report and will send this information to licensees under separate cover.

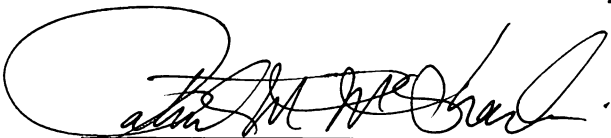
This bulletin also serves to advise industry that the Director will exercise the discretion afforded by the Act to forgo regulatory enforcement action regarding counselor certification during a transition period which will expire on November 30, 2015.

Accordingly, all current counselors must comply with the certification requirement and become certified before December 1, 2015. Beginning December 1, 2015, counselors who are not properly certified, and the debt management licensees that employ these uncertified counselors, will be subject to sanctions as provided for by the Act.

Information regarding Counselor Certification Providers approved by DIFS can be found on the DIFS website at http://www.michigan.gov/difs/0,5269,7-303-22535_23037-349993--,00.html.

Questions regarding this bulletin should be directed to:

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