

(dot).INSURANCE for Domain Names?

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Common "top level" domains, or extensions, include .COM, .NET, and .ORG. A new top level domain ".INSURANCE" is now available and accepting applications to register domain names with the .INSURANCE extension. The rules governing .INSURANCE domains are controlled by fTLD, a consortium of banks, and insurance companies. fTLD also operates the .BANK extension, which successfully launched in 2015, registering over 40% of U.S. banks. fTLD's goals are to enhance trust and security for .INSURANCE sites by creating a trusted, protected, more secure, and easily identifiable space on the Internet for the insurance community. To this end, each approved applicant agrees to comply with a series of website security controls that are not required by the operators of other commercial domains. For instance, a .INSURANCE site must include enhanced authentication controls, inclusion of trusted protocols, and meet NIST data encryption requirements.

Who can Apply?

Ownership of a .INSURANCE domain name is restricted to entities that are:

Insurance companies regulated by governmental authorities or licensed agents/brokers regulated by governmental authorities. Registrants can also be associations whose members are insurance companies or insurance agents and service providers that are principally owned by, or predominantly supporting, these regulated entities.

Each applicant will be screened to verify that the applicant is a legitimate member of the insurance community, including verification of status through the local and national governmental regulators.

Acceptable Domain Names

Domain names must correspond to a trademark, trade name or service mark of the applicant, but the trademark/trade name is not required to be registered after the Sunrise Period. Additionally, a selected domain name must not be likely to deceive or cause material detriment to a significant portion of the insurance and/or financial services communities, its customers, or Internet users.

Timing of the Application

A. Sunrise Period

The initial registration period opened on May 9, 2016, and will close on June 8, 2016, (the "Sunrise Period"), and is limited to applicants having registered federal or national trademarks, where the domain name sought must be the registered trademark.

B. General Insurance Public Registration

The general insurance public registration period opens June 15, 2016.

The Application Process

The applicant provides certain information to the selected registrar, including the governmental regulatory authority and the regulatory ID number, the domain name sought, and internal applicant contacts. Symantec Corporation, as the agent of fTLD, will verify the status of the applicant. The process can take several months to complete, and costs vary depending on the registrar selected.

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National Law Review, Volume VI, Number 139

Source URL: <https://natlawreview.com/article/dotinsurance-domain-names>