

Frequently Asked Questions For Individual Life Death Claims



1. Is a certified death certificate required?

We require a certified death certificate for all claims at our discretion and 100% of the time if the death benefit is greater than \$500,000. The certified death certificate is the official legal record of death and cannot be easily duplicated; therefore, it acts as a deterrent to fraud. A photo-copy of the death certificate is acceptable for claims with death benefits payable of \$500,000 or less.

2. Why does the insurance company need the death certificate that includes manner and cause of death?

Cause and manner of death are required to rule out the death by homicide. If the death is the result of a homicide, we need to verify the beneficiary did not cause the insured's death. State laws prohibit beneficiaries who kill the insured from benefiting from their crime; i.e., the beneficiary of a policy who is proven to have murdered the insured under that policy cannot receive the associated death benefit proceeds. Some policies also have suicide exclusions within a set period of time or other policy exclusions, so cause and manner of death is relevant for those claims as well. For policies with accidental death benefits, the manner and cause of death may be required.

3. Will the life insurance be paid if the cause of death is the result of a suicide?

Many policies pay for any cause of death. However, some policies provide if the death is the result of a suicide, benefits are not payable if the death occurs during the first or second year the insured or dependent is covered for life insurance. Please refer to the policy provisions to determine the specifics of the policy in question.

Midwestern United Life Insurance Company
ReliaStar Life Insurance Company,
ReliaStar Life Insurance Company of New York,
Security Life of Denver Insurance Company,
Members of the Voya® family of companies
Venerable Insurance and Annuity Company
(the "Company")

ReliaStar Life Insurance Company ("ReliaStar") administers and is solely responsible for the life insurance policies and contracts that it issues, and it also provides administrative services in relation to certain life insurance policies issued by Venerable Insurance and Annuity Company ("Venerable"). ReliaStar and Venerable are not otherwise affiliated. All contractual obligations under each life insurance policy or annuity contract remain the sole responsibility of the issuing insurance company.

4. What are the requirements when a beneficiary is a minor?

Life Insurance benefits cannot be paid directly to a minor beneficiary. How payment is made depends on the death benefit amount payable to a minor and in what state the minor resides. Some states allow benefits to be paid under the Uniform Gifts to Minors Act or the Uniform Transfers to Minors Act if the death benefit amount payable to the minor is less than a specified dollar amount. The amount payable is state-specific. If the amount payable is greater than allowed under that state's Uniform Gifts to Minors Act or Uniform Transfers to Minors Act, the person having care and custody of the child will need to obtain an Order Appointing Guardian/Conservator of the estate of the minor and Certified Letters of Guardianship/Conservatorship for the estate of the minor. These are court-issued documents and legal representation is usually required to obtain them.

If the custodian of the minor beneficiary does not obtain the appropriate appointment as guardian/conservator (as appropriate to their state) of the estate of the minor within the escheatment time frame dictated by the state, the Company must escheat the unpaid death benefit to the state's Unclaimed Property division for the benefit of the minor. The minor may then claim those funds from the state once they attain age of majority in the appropriate jurisdiction. Alternatively, the custodian of the minor may claim those funds from the state's Unclaimed Property division, though most states also require the custodian to obtain court appointment as guardian/conservator of the estate of the minor prior to claiming the funds.

5. What is required if the Estate is named as the beneficiary?

In addition to the other required documents, some states allow benefits to be paid under a Small Estate Affidavit if the death benefit amount payable is less than a specified amount. This amount is state specific. If the amount payable is greater than allowed under the Small Estate Affidavit requirements of the appropriate jurisdiction, we require a Certified Copy of the Letters of Administration for the Estate of the insured. This is a court-issued document and legal representation may be required to obtain it.

6. What is required if a Trust is named as the beneficiary?

In addition to the other required documents, the trustee of the Trust must complete the Trust Verification form. For more detailed information, please refer to the Trust Verification form available at voya.com (select Contact & Services > Claims Center > Claim Forms Library).

7. Are life insurance benefits taxable to the beneficiary?

Life insurance death benefit proceeds are generally not taxable. We do not report life insurance benefits paid to U.S. citizens. However, any interest paid on death benefit proceeds are taxable and are reported to the IRS. Death benefit proceeds payable under an annuity contract may be taxable, in whole or in part, depending on its tax qualification status and/or any gain over and above its cost basis. We do report taxable annuity death benefit proceeds paid directly to beneficiaries. Consult a tax, investment or other financial advisor regarding potential tax liability.

8. Does the insurance company accept funeral home assignments?

Generally, yes. The applicable state's statutes must allow it. The funeral home assignment must: comply with all state statutory requirements; be submitted with the life insurance claim or be recorded to the policy file prior to the claim (in which case, it must be signed by the policy owner); indicate the amount assigned; and be signed by the named beneficiary (if received with the claims documentation).

9. What is the Voya Personal Transition Account?

The Voya Personal Transition Account acts like a checking account. If the death benefit proceeds are to be paid in a lump sum of \$5,000 or more and if allowed by the applicable state's statutes, the proceeds may be paid to a Voya Personal Transition Account for the benefit of the beneficiary. For more detailed information, please refer to the Voya Personal Transition Account Supplemental Contract available at financiallifeline.voya.com.

Other payment options are available. See claim form for other options.

10. What happens if the insured person is divorced at the time of death and the insured's former spouse is named as the beneficiary?

It depends on the applicable state statutes; some states automatically revoke the beneficiary designation of a former spouse at the time of divorce, in the absence of court-mandated and/or voluntary actions on the part of the owner. Any questions should be directed to our Life Claims Department. Copies of the divorce decree and/or property settlement may be required to determine the ex-spouse's eligibility for death benefit proceeds.

11. How long will it take to process the life insurance claim?

Our goal is to process the life insurance claim within 10 days from the date we receive all the completed proofs to pay the life insurance claim. Additional time needs to be allowed for the mailing of the payment. You will be notified by mail within 30 days if additional review is required.

12. Will you provide a Form 712?

Form 712 reports the value of life insurance policies for estate tax purposes. One will be provided upon request and will be prepared at the time we make the life insurance payment.

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This is a summary only. A complete description of benefits, limitations, exclusions and termination of coverage is provided in the policy and riders. All coverage is subject to the terms and conditions of the policy. If there is any discrepancy between this document and the policy documents, the policy documents will govern. To keep coverage in force, premiums are payable up to the date of coverage termination. Life Insurance is underwritten by ReliaStar Life Insurance Company (Minneapolis, MN), ReliaStar Life Insurance Company of New York (Woodbury, NY), Security Life of Denver Insurance Company, Midwestern United Life Insurance Company, members of the Voya[®] family of companies, and Venerable Insurance and Annuity Company. 711505