

Life Insurers Respond to COVID-19 for Consumers and Communities

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The life insurance industry came to be from the idea that no one should be on their own in hard times. Today, ACLI member companies are delivering financial protection and security for individuals, families, workers, and employers large and small in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic.

In addition to supporting their policyholders, life insurers are keeping company employees safe, having made rapid response adjustments to remote workforces, expanded e-signature technology, and alternative underwriting. Along with meeting guarantees for consumers, the life insurance industry also has gone above and beyond with initiatives to meet tremendous, urgent needs in communities nationwide.

Life insurers appreciate that the regulatory community has reacted quickly, as well, with valuable accommodations for consumers, while also doing so with remote workforces. Life insurers will continue to work with government officials and take additional actions to respond to the coronavirus crisis both for the economic recovery of individual households as well as the U.S. economy. The impact of today's global pandemic will be felt for a long time. Life insurers remain committed to providing security, stability and opportunity in effective and innovative ways to help meet the needs of consumers and society going forward.

Industry responses to COVID-19 for consumers and communities are summarized below.

For Consumers

Deemed essential businesses by all states with stay-at-home orders, life insurers are working with state officials who have declared a state of emergency so that policyholders can make premium payments later and keep coverage now. Among the possible grace period accommodations available for policyholders who are impacted adversely by COVID-19 and request them are:

- Allowing premium payments up to a total of 90 days from the premium due date so that the policy is not canceled or lapsed
- Allowing reasonable repayment options for unpaid premiums
- Waiving any late premium payment fees or penalties
- Providing reasonable flexibility to policyholders or their beneficiaries regarding proof of claim
- Providing policyholders the ability to make premium payments, report a claim or otherwise communicate with the policyholders' insurer or producer electronically, or if in person, by maintaining safe social distancing standards.

The CARES Act enacted in March expanded access to retirement funds for those impacted by COVID-19, illness or financially. The law allows penalty-free withdrawals from defined contribution plans and makes practical changes to required minimum distribution rules. Life insurance companies are taking additional actions to assist policyholders, including:

- Temporarily waiving fees on coronavirus-related retirement account withdrawals.
- Not charging plan sponsors for amending their plans to implement the CARES Act.
- Forming dedicated teams to provide education and other support to plan participant.
- Providing guidance and webinars to help customers and financial professionals navigate the CARES Act.

Life insurers, as large investors in the economy, are making accommodations under current accounting and RBC guidance to defer required payments under their investment agreements, such as delaying required mortgage payments for commercial and farm mortgages.

Small businesses account for nearly half of private-sector employment, and nearly one-third of small business owners have life insurance policies with cash values they can use for liquidity needs.

For Communities Nationwide

As quickly as COVID-19 emerged, life insurers stepped up to help communities respond. The result is an extraordinary show of support for government officials and non-profits, with companies listening to needs, organizing action and showing compassion. Here are examples of how the life insurance industry is meeting the moment.

Mass Mutual

Mass Mutual launched HealthBridge to offer \$3 billion in free life insurance coverage to eligible frontline healthcare workers battling COVID-19 in Massachusetts and Connecticut. It donated \$1.5 million in support for COVID-19 response funds in Massachusetts and donated masks and protection equipment to first responders and hospitals.

Northwestern Mutual

Northwestern Mutual Foundation is donating more than \$1.5 million to support nonprofit partners nationwide. \$1 million will go to Feeding America for efforts nationwide and an additional \$50,000 to Feeding America in the Milwaukee community. The company is also making additional donations to regional relief groups and expediting its \$250,000 grant to the Red Cross Disaster Recovery program.

New York Life

The New York Life Foundation is contributing \$25 million to help launch the Brave of Heart Fund, which will provide support to families of healthcare workers and volunteers nationwide – including those who lose their lives to COVID-19. The Foundation will also match dollar-for-dollar the first \$25 million in individual donations. It has already pledged more than \$5 million to support local and national nonprofits in coronavirus-related efforts.

Nationwide

The Nationwide Foundation will provide \$5 million in national and community response grants to assist non-profits, including \$1 million each to Red Cross, United Way, and Feeding America. \$2 million in grants will be distributed to assist communities in responding to COVID-19. In addition, medical supplies are being sent to hospitals in Ohio and Iowa.

MetLife

MetLife is offering free housing at the InterContinental Times Square Hotel in New York City for nurses, doctors and other medical workers. MetLife Foundation is pledging \$25 million to the global response to COVID-19. Grants will support communities impacted by the pandemic in all regions where MetLife operates, and will address both short- and longer-term relief efforts.

Principal

Principal Financial and the Principal Foundation launched respective community-based COVID-19 relief efforts to directly assist those experiencing financial hardship due to the pandemic by providing meals, family activity kits, and direct payments to those impacted in more than 30 locations around the world. Together with previous support Principal announced for its customers, the efforts are expected to total more than \$25 million.

USAA

USAA is offering special payment accommodations for policyholders impacted by COVID-19. In addition, USAA donated \$2.1 million directed to local nonprofits in USAA communities including in San Antonio, Phoenix, Tampa, Colorado Springs, Dallas/Fort Worth, and southeastern Virginia; and committed \$2.3 million to military-focused and national nonprofits to support America's response to the pandemic.

Prudential

Prudential donated 153,000 face masks, committed \$1.5 million to local business and communities at home and abroad and waived rent for small businesses.

Aflac

Aflac addressed its employees' COVID-19 concerns by increasing capacity for telecommuting, adding additional paid leave for affected employees, and waiving copays for employees and dependents. The company contributed \$5 million towards ventilators, personal protective equipment and essential medical items to health workers responding to COVID-19.

Thrivent

Together with Thrivent's matching gift campaign, more than 45,000 Thrivent members along with their friends, family and neighbors generated \$12.5 million of much-needed financial support for over 17,000 for non-profits organizations and churches around the country.

Protective Life

Protective Life remains committed to supporting employees' wellbeing – expanding work from home, providing digital tools to support the transition and launching a new COVID-19 Paid Leave Policy to provide financial stability during this period of uncertainty.

Pacific Life

Pacific Life Foundation set aside \$1.7 million for COVID-19 response and local nonprofits in Orange County, California, Omaha, Nebraska, and Lynchburg, Virginia, and \$600,000 has been distributed to support food banks and United Way response funds in those communities.

SCOR

SCOR called on life (re)insurers to lead by spreading knowledge and education to slow the COVID-19 spread. Before certain government restrictions were implemented, SCOR changed its global work arrangements to allow employees to telework.

Allianz Life

Allianz Life is supporting its employees in many ways including by adjusting its leave policies and providing matching funds for causes employees choose.

Chubb

Chubb pledged it would not conduct any layoffs of employees while in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic. Chubb will purchase \$1 million in gift cards from small business clients, which will be donated to healthcare workers and first responders on the front lines of the COVID-19 pandemic. The Chubb Charitable Foundation committed \$10 million globally for those providing emergency services and for financially vulnerable members of communities impacted by COVID-19.

Trustmark

Recognizing the shortage of personal protective equipment for medical workers serving on the frontlines of the COVID-19 pandemic, Trustmark donated masks to Northwestern Memorial Hospital in Chicago.

Boston Mutual Life

As the impacts of COVID-19 evolve, Boston Mutual Life remains committed to providing peace of mind and acting in the best interests of its employees and those it serves. Its initiatives include an employee-led effort to make masks for organizations in need, supporting local businesses, and a donation to the #MACovid19Relief Fund to extend assistance to communities in this time of need.

Securian

Securian donated nearly 30,000 N95 masks, provided rent abatement to tenants and donated more than \$550,000 to Minnesota groups.

Voya

Voya is crediting back fees for hardship distributions and loan initiations to participants in their defined contribution plans. It is also offering free educational guidance to help consumers navigate financial challenges.

State Farm

State Farm is donating masks & supplies to hospitals and millions of dollars to COVID-19 relief efforts including \$1 million to the Illinois COVID-19 Response Fund.

Assurity

Assurity donated more than 2,000 masks and respirators to local health facilities.

Transamerica

The Transamerica Foundation contributed \$500,000 to Direct Relief, which coordinates with U.S. organizations to provide masks, gloves, gowns, and other protective gear to healthcare organizations to support COVID-19 relief efforts. Also, Transamerica is waiving COVID-19-impacted withdrawal fees within retirement plans as part of a new initiative to help its retirement plan customers.

Brighthouse Financial

Brighthouse Financial will donate \$500,000 to local food banks and other organizations to support those affected by COVID-19.

Equitable

Equitable Foundation is committing \$1 million to various COVID-19 relief programs including numerous food banks as well as the new Keep Kids Learning program which enables teachers to help facilitate remote learning.

Farm Bureau Insurance of Michigan

Farm Bureau Insurance of Michigan partnered with the Agent Charitable Fund and Michigan Farm Bureau to provide 1 million meals to MI families during the COVID-19 pandemic. All donations were matched up to \$50,000.

John Hancock

John Hancock is supporting the City of Boston and the #BostonResiliencyFund during the COVID-19 outbreak.

Ameritas

Ameritas is a strategic partner for the Lincoln Community Foundation COVID-19 Response Fund which serves as a bridge to raise funds and connect nonprofits with grants.

Knights of Columbus

Knights of Columbus is committing \$1 million for food banks nationwide. Knights of Columbus also is supporting U.S. Catholic dioceses with \$100 million in low-interest financing to help them weather the COVID-19 economic impact.

Lincoln Financial

Lincoln Financial group donated \$1 million to local food providers to support its community.

Modern Woodmen of America

To help meet immediate needs in member communities impacted by COVID19, Modern Woodmen introduced a relief program giving its chapters and youth service clubs access to up to \$2.5 million for direct monetary donations to local organizations.

National Life Group

The National Life Group Foundation has approved grants of \$100,000 each to community foundations in Vermont and Texas as an initial investment to support COVID-19 relief.

One America

One America converted the cafeteria at its Indianapolis headquarters into a meal-prep kitchen to help feed low-income seniors and families affected by COVID-19.

Primerica

Primerica Foundation donated \$175,000 to COVID-19 relief efforts through grants to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Foundation, Red Cross, Community Foundation of Northeast Georgia, and United Way of Greater Atlanta.

Royal Neighbors of America

Royal Neighbors is contributing almost \$100,000 in funding to support volunteer projects at nearly 170 active chapters in U.S. communities impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Security Life

Security Mutual led efforts to ensure \$50,000 in donations to fight cancer were distributed in advance from sponsors for a benefit concert that was postponed until October due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The SockOutCancer campaign has distributed more than \$500,000 to two Binghamton, New York- area hospitals during the past 2½ years.

Swiss Re

The Swiss Re Group pledged to donate CHF (Swiss francs) 5 million to support the needs of people and communities affected by the COVID-19 pandemic around the world. Swiss Re Foundation will contribute CHF 1 million each to the International Committee of the Red Cross and to Doctors Without Borders. It will also donate CHF 3 million to other Swiss Re Foundation partners for relief efforts.

Symetra

Symetra's Care and Feeding program is partnering with locally owned restaurants to make and deliver 10,000 meals to homeless shelters & hospitals.

The Standard

Responding to the COVID-19 pandemic, The Standard Charitable Foundation is contributing \$250,000 to the Oregon Community Recovery Fund and \$25,000 to other non-profits.

TIAA

TIAA's employees raised funds to donate thousands of protective masks and supplies to medical staff on the front-line of the COVID-19 pandemic. TIAA also delivered more than 6,500 lbs. of food to the Food Bank for New York City, and it donated 3,740 hand sanitizers to Stony Brook Medicine.

UNUM

Unum issued special emergency pay for employees who cannot work due to COVID-19 complications and provided two-thirds of its employees with a \$250 assistance benefit to purchase preferred equipment. It also made more than \$220,000 in financial contributions and in-kind donations to community partners providing access to health and critical care, equitable access to learning, and alleviating food insecurity.

Western & Southern

Western & Southern CEO Jack Barrett joined RESTART, a task force formed to guide the Cincinnati business community's work in response to COVID-19.