



# reliancestandard

LIFE INSURANCE COMPANY

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Home Office: Schaumburg, Illinois • Administrative Office: Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

## CERTIFICATE OF INSURANCE

**POLICYHOLDER:** Central Garden & Pet


**GROUP POLICY NUMBER:** VAR 205031


**POLICY EFFECTIVE DATE:** January 1, 2011, as amended in the Policy through January 1, 2025

Subject to the terms of the Group Policy, we certify that you are insured for the benefits which apply to your class as described on the Schedule of Benefits, provided you are an Insured Person, as defined and your completed Enrollment Card is attached. The Group Policy Number, Policyholder, and Policy Effective Date are listed above.

This Certificate is not a contract of insurance. It contains only the major terms of insurance coverage and payment of benefits under the Policy. It replaces all Certificates that may have been issued to you earlier.

This Certificate is signed by our President and Secretary.

  
Secretary

  
President

## GROUP ACCIDENT CERTIFICATE

This Group Accident Certificate amends the previous Group Accident Certificates and is dated February 19, 2025.



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## SCHEDULE OF BENEFITS

**ELIGIBILITY:** Each active, Full-time Employee, except an employee included in any other class and any person employed on a temporary or seasonal basis.

**WAITING PERIOD:** 1 month of continuous employment. \*

\*With respect to an employee whose part-time status changes to full-time, the time served as a part-time employee will count toward satisfying the completion of the Policy's Waiting Period.

**INDIVIDUAL EFFECTIVE DATE:** The first of the month coinciding with or next following completion of the Waiting Period.

**INDIVIDUAL REINSTATEMENT:** If rehired within 3 months of termination, coverage will be reinstated.

### AMOUNT OF INSURANCE/PRINCIPAL SUM:

INSURED PERSONS:

\$25,000 to \$1,000,000 in increments of \$25,000, subject to ten times Earnings for a Principal Sum over \$150,000.

The Amount of Principal Sum will be: (1) reduced by 35% of the pre-age 65 amount at age 65; (2) further reduced by 35% of the already reduced amount at age 70; (3) further reduced by 35% of the already reduced amount at age 75; (4) further reduced by 25% of the already reduced amount at age 80; (5) further reduced by 25% of the already reduced amount at age 85; (6) further reduced by 25% of the already reduced amount at age 90 and (7) further reduced by 25% of the already reduced amount at age 95.

INSURED DEPENDENTS:

Spouse with no Dependent Child(ren) covered:	60% of your Principal Sum
Spouse with Dependent Child(ren) covered:	50% of your Principal Sum
Each Dependent Child:	10% of your Principal Sum
Each Dependent Child (if no Spouse):	15% of your Principal Sum

**CHANGES IN AMOUNT OF INSURANCE:** Increases and decreases in the Amount of Insurance because of changes in age, class or Earnings (if applicable) are effective on the date of the change.

With respect to increases in the Amount of Insurance, you must be Actively at Work on the date of the change. If you are not Actively at Work when the change should take effect, the change will take effect on the day after you have been Actively at Work for one full day.

Increases and decreases in the Amount of Insurance because of your elections will take effect on the first of the month coinciding with or next following the date we receive the election request.

With respect to increases in the Amount of Insurance, you must be Actively at Work on the date the increase is to take effect. If you are not Actively at Work on the date the increase is to take effect, such increase will take effect on the date you return to work.

**CONTRIBUTIONS:** You are required to contribute toward the cost of your insurance coverage. You are required to contribute toward the cost of the Dependent insurance coverage.

## DEFINITIONS

"Actively at Work" and "Active Work" means you are actually performing on a Full-time basis each and every duty pertaining to your job in the place where and the manner in which the job is normally performed. This includes approved time off for vacation, jury duty and funeral leave, but does not include time off as a result of Injury or illness.

"Dependents" means:

- (1) your legal spouse who is not legally separated or divorced from you; and
- (2) your unmarried child(ren), under 26 years, who is financially dependent on you for support. Adoptive, foster and step-children are considered Dependents if they are in your custody.

Additionally, with respect to an Insured Person whose domestic partnership or civil union is legally recognized under applicable state law or for whom an Affidavit of Domestic Partnership is on file with the Policyholder and is in effect, such Insured Person's:

- (1) domestic partner or civil union partner; and
- (2) child(ren), provided he/she otherwise meets the definition of Dependent,

of such legally recognized domestic partnership or civil union or named on an Affidavit will be considered a "Dependent" of such Insured Person.

When the Insured Person's domestic partner or civil union partner is covered under the Policy, the word "spouse" as it appears in the Policy will be deemed to include "domestic partner" and "civil union partner" unless the context indicates otherwise.

NOTE: An Eligible Person may not have coverage both as an Insured Person and as an Insured Dependent. Only one Insured spouse may cover the eligible children as Insured Dependents. If insurance is in force for an Insured Dependent, any newly eligible Dependents will be automatically covered.

"Earnings", as used in the SCHEDULE OF BENEFITS section, means the basic annual wages received from the Policyholder on the day just before the date of the Injury. Earnings does not include commissions, overtime pay, bonuses, incentive pay or any other special compensation not received as basic wages.

If hourly employees are insured, the number of hours worked during a regularly scheduled work week, not to exceed 40 hours per week, times 52 weeks, will be used to determine annual Earnings.

"Eligible Person" means a person who meets the Eligibility requirements of the Policy.

"Full-time" means working for the Policyholder for a minimum of 30 hours during your regularly scheduled work week.

"Insured Person" means a person who meets the Eligibility requirements of the Policy and is enrolled for this insurance, and whose insurance under the Policy is in effect.

"Insured Dependent" means a "Dependent", as defined, whose insurance under the Policy is in effect.

"Insured" means either an Insured Person or an Insured Dependent unless the context indicates otherwise.

"Injury" means accidental bodily injury to an Insured which is caused directly and independently of all other causes by accidental means and which occurs while the Insured's coverage under the Policy is in force.

"Policyholder", shall also include an associated or affiliated company, when referring to premium payments; Active Work; Full-time work; or Earnings.

"We", "us", and "our" means Reliance Standard Life Insurance Company.

"You", "your", and "yours" means the Insured Person.

## GENERAL PROVISIONS

**CHANGES:** No agent has authority to change or waive any part of the Policy. To be valid, any change or waiver must be in writing, signed by a President, Vice President or Secretary and attached to the Policy.

**INCONTESTABILITY:** Any statements made by the Policyholder, any Insured Person, or any Insured Dependent, or on behalf of any Insured Person or any Insured Dependent to persuade us to provide coverage, will be deemed a representation, not a warranty. This provision limits our use of these statements in contesting the amount of insurance for which an Insured is covered. The following rules apply to each statement:

(1) No statement will be used in a contest unless:

- (a) it is in a written form signed by you or any Insured Dependent, or on your behalf or any Insured Dependent's behalf; and
- (b) a copy of such written instrument is or has been furnished to you or any Insured Dependent, or your or any Insured Dependent's beneficiary or legal representative.

(2) If the statement relates to your or any Insured Dependent's insurability, it will not be used to contest the validity of insurance which has been in force, before the contest, for at least two years during your or any Insured Dependent's lifetime.

**ASSIGNMENT:** Ownership of any benefit provided under the Policy may be transferred by assignment. An irrevocable beneficiary must give written consent to assign this insurance. Written request for assignment must be made in duplicate at our Administrative Offices. Once recorded by us, an assignment will take effect on the date it was signed. We are not liable for any action we take before the assignment is recorded.

**CLERICAL ERROR:** Clerical errors in connection with the Policy or delays in keeping records for the Policy, whether by the Policyholder, us or the Plan Administrator:

- (1) will not terminate insurance that would otherwise have been effective; and
- (2) will not continue insurance that would otherwise have ceased or should not have been in effect.

If appropriate, a fair adjustment of premium will be made to correct a clerical error.

**MISSTATEMENT OF AGE:** If an Insured's age has been misstated, benefits will be those that apply to his correct age.

**NOT IN LIEU OF WORKER'S COMPENSATION:** The Policy is not a Worker's Compensation Policy. It does not provide Worker's Compensation benefits.

**PRONOUNS:** All pronouns include either gender unless the context indicates otherwise.

## INDIVIDUAL ELIGIBILITY, EFFECTIVE DATE AND TERMINATION

**WAITING PERIOD:** A person who is continuously employed on a Full-time basis with the Policyholder for the period specified on the Schedule of Benefits has satisfied the Waiting Period.

**EFFECTIVE DATE OF INDIVIDUAL INSURANCE:** You must apply in writing for the insurance to go into effect. You will become insured on the later of:

- (1) the Individual Effective Date as shown on the Schedule of Benefits; or
- (2) on the first day of the month coincident with or next following the date you apply.

If you are not Actively At Work on the day your insurance is to go into effect, your insurance will go into effect on the day you return to Active Work for one full day.

Changes in your amount of insurance are effective as shown on the Schedule of Benefits.

**TERMINATION OF INDIVIDUAL INSURANCE:** Your coverage will terminate on the first of the following to occur:

- (1) the date the Policy terminates; or
- (2) the date you cease to be in a class eligible for this insurance; or
- (3) the end of the period for which premium has been paid for your coverage.

Any loss which occurs prior to the termination of this insurance coverage will not be affected.

**CONTINUATION OF INDIVIDUAL INSURANCE:** Your coverage may be continued, by payment of premium, beyond the date you cease to be eligible for this insurance, but not longer than:

- (1) 12 months, if you cease to be eligible due to illness or Injury; or
- (2) 1 month, if you cease to be eligible due to temporary lay-off or approved leave of absence.

**INDIVIDUAL REINSTATEMENT:** If your coverage is terminated, it may be reinstated if you are:

- (1) on an approved leave of absence; or
- (2) on temporary lay-off; or
- (3) rehired after employment has been terminated.

You must return to Active Work with the Policyholder within the period of time shown on the Schedule of Benefits (INDIVIDUAL REINSTATEMENT). You must also be a member of a class eligible for this insurance.

You will not be required to fulfill the eligibility requirements of the Policy again. If you return after an approved leave of absence or temporary lay-off, the insurance will go into effect on the date you return to Active Work. If you return after being rehired, the insurance will go into effect on the first of the month following the day you return to Active Work.

## DEPENDENT INSURANCE

**ELIGIBILITY:** You are eligible to enroll your eligible Dependents on the date you become an Insured Person.

**EFFECTIVE DATE OF DEPENDENT INSURANCE:** You may insure your Dependents by making written application. In this case, your Dependent insurance will take effect on the first day of the month coincident with or next following the later of:

- (1) the date you first become eligible for Dependent insurance if application is made on or before that date; or
- (2) the date the dependent meets the definition of Dependent, if application is made on or before that date; or
- (3) the date of enrollment.

After this insurance is in force for one Dependent, application is not required for added Dependents.

**TERMINATION OF DEPENDENT INSURANCE:** The insurance for an Insured Dependent will terminate on the first of the following dates:

- (1) the date this Section terminates;
- (2) the end of the period for which premium for Dependent insurance has been paid;
- (3) the date your insurance terminates; or
- (4) the date the dependent is no longer a Dependent as defined. However, coverage for an Insured Dependent child which would otherwise cease when such child attains the maximum age, will not cease while your insurance coverage remains in force if:
  - (a) the child is unable to provide self-support due to mental retardation or physical handicap; and
  - (b) he is chiefly dependent on you for support; and
  - (c) proof of the above conditions is received by us within 120 days after the date this insurance coverage would otherwise end.

We may ask from time to time if the Insured Dependent child remains a disabled and dependent person. This request may be made within 31 days of the time such Insured Dependent attains the maximum age, and later as required. After the 2 year period that follows such Dependent's attainment of the maximum age, this request may not be made more often than once a year. If we do not ask, insurance coverage for such Insured Dependent child will continue as long as:

- (a) your coverage remains in effect;
- (b) the Insured Dependent child remains in the same condition; and
- (c) the proper premium is paid.

Proof of the Insured Dependent child's status as a disabled and dependent person must be furnished to us within 31 days of the inquiry. If it is not, we may stop the insurance of such Insured Dependent when he attains the maximum age, or later.

Any loss which occurs prior to the termination of this insurance coverage will not be affected.

**NEWLYWED PROVISION:** If you marry and had not previously elected Dependent coverage, your new spouse shall automatically become an Insured Dependent.

Such spouse shall be an Insured Dependent for 31 days. He shall then cease to be an Insured Dependent unless:

- (1) you request, in writing and within such 31 day period, continuation of such Dependent coverage; and
- (2) the additional premium is paid for such coverage.

In the event your new spouse suffers a covered loss during the 31 day period during which you may request coverage, and written election has not been made (or, if made, has not been received and processed by the Policyholder), we will pay benefits based upon the minimum principal sum available for that spouse.

**DOMESTIC PARTNER/CIVIL UNION PROVISION:** With respect to an Insured Person who had not previously elected Dependent coverage, his/her domestic partner/civil union partner shall automatically become an Insured Dependent spouse at the time the Insured Person's civil union or domestic partnership is legally recognized under applicable state law or as of the date such Insured's Affidavit of Domestic Partnership is placed on file with the Policyholder.

Such domestic partner/civil union partner shall be an Insured Dependent spouse for 31 days. He/she shall then cease to be an Insured Dependent spouse unless:

- (1) the Insured Person requests, in writing and within such 31 day period, continuation of such Dependent spouse coverage; and
- (2) the additional premium is paid for such coverage.

In the event that the Insured Person's new domestic partner/civil union partner suffers a covered loss during the 31 day period during which he may request coverage, and written election has not been made (or, if made, has not been received and processed by the Policyholder), we will pay benefits based upon the minimum principal sum available for that domestic partner/civil union partner.

**NEWBORN CHILDREN:** If a child is born to you, and you had not elected Dependent coverage, such child shall be an Insured Dependent from the moment of birth.

The newborn child shall be an Insured Dependent for 31 days. He shall then cease to be an Insured Dependent unless:

- (1) you request, in writing and within such 31 day period, continuation of such Dependent coverage; and
- (2) the additional premium is paid for such coverage.

The above coverage will also be extended to newly adoptive, foster or step children, as of the date they become financially dependent on you for support, provided they otherwise meet the definition of Dependent.

The above coverage will also be extended to any children of a civil union or domestic partnership legally recognized under applicable state law or named on an Insured Person's Affidavit of Domestic Partnership as of the date such Affidavit is placed on file with the Policyholder, provided they otherwise meet the definition of a Dependent child.

## CONVERSION PRIVILEGE

You can use this privilege when your Accidental Death and Dismemberment insurance coverage is no longer in force for any reason, except termination of the group Policy. Insured Dependents can use this Conversion Privilege if they cease to be eligible for any reason other than termination of the group Policy. Written application for the converted policy must be made within 31 days after coverage ends. The first premium must also be paid within that time. The issuance of the converted policy is subject to the following conditions:

- (1) the converted policy will take effect on the date of the termination of this insurance, or on the date of application for the converted policy, whichever is later;
- (2) proof of health will not be required; and
- (3) the premium will be applicable to the class of risk to which the Insured belongs, at his attained age, and to the form and amount of insurance provided.

The converted policy's Principal Sum will be the lower of:

- (1) the Amount of Principal Sum applicable to the Insured under the Policy; or
- (2) \$250,000.

The converted policy may provide that it will be renewable on any anniversary with our consent, subject to a maximum age limit.

The converted policy may exclude any condition or hazard which applied to the Insured at the time coverage terminated. Benefits will not be paid under the converted policy for a claim originating under the Policy.

The Insured may convert to any individual Accidental Death and Dismemberment policy we offer in the state where he lives.

## BENEFICIARY AND FACILITY OF PAYMENT

**BENEFICIARY:** If you die, any death benefit payable and any other accrued benefits will be paid to the beneficiary named in records maintained by the Policyholder. A beneficiary designation will be effective as of the date you signed it. Any payment made by us before receiving the designation shall fully discharge us to the extent of that payment.

You will be the beneficiary of any benefit payable at the death of an Insured Dependent, unless another beneficiary has been named and placed on file as required.

You can change the beneficiary by telling us in writing on our form. The consent of a revocable beneficiary is not needed. The change will take effect only when it is received and approved by us or an authorized Plan Administrator. We cannot attest to the validity of such a change.

If an Insured's beneficiary dies at the same time as the Insured, or within 15 days after his death but before we receive written proof of the Insured's death, payment will be made as if the Insured survived the beneficiary, unless noted otherwise in another provision of this Certificate.

If you have not named a beneficiary, or an Insured's named beneficiary is not surviving at the Insured's death, any benefits due shall be paid to the first of the following classes to survive the Insured:

- (1) the Insured's legal spouse, legally recognized civil union/domestic partner or domestic partner named on an Affidavit of Domestic Partnership;
- (2) the Insured's surviving children (including legally adopted children), in equal shares;
- (3) the Insured's surviving parents, in equal shares;
- (4) the Insured's surviving siblings, in equal shares; or, if none of the above,
- (5) the Insured's estate.

**FACILITY OF PAYMENT:** If a beneficiary, in our opinion, cannot give a valid release (and no guardian has been appointed), we may pay the benefit to the person who has custody or is the main support of the beneficiary. Payment to a minor shall not exceed \$1,000.

If the Insured has not named a beneficiary or the beneficiary is not surviving at the Insured's death, we may pay up to \$2,500 of the benefit to the person(s) who, in our opinion, has incurred expenses in connection with the Insured's last illness, death or burial. Payment may also be made to the executor or administrator of the Insured's estate, or to any relative of the Insured by blood or marriage.

The balance of the benefit, if any, will be held by us, until an individual or representative:

- (1) is validly named; or
- (2) is appointed to receive the proceeds; and
- (3) can give valid release to us.

We will not be liable for any payment we have made in good faith.

## CLAIMS PROVISIONS

**NOTICE OF CLAIM:** Written notice must be given to us within 31 days after the Loss occurs, or as soon as reasonably possible. The notice should be sent to us at our Administrative Offices or to our authorized agent. The notice should include the Insured's name and the Policy Number.

**CLAIM FORMS:** When we receive written notice of a claim, we will send claim forms to the claimant within 15 days. If we do not, the claimant will satisfy the requirements of written proof of loss by sending us written proof as shown below. The proof must describe the occurrence, extent and nature of the loss.

**PROOF OF LOSS:** For any covered Loss, written proof must be sent to us within 90 days. If it is not reasonably possible to give proof within 90 days, the claim is not affected if the proof is sent as soon as reasonably possible. In any event, proof must be given within 1 year, unless the claimant is legally incapable of doing so.

**TIME PAYMENT OF CLAIMS:** When we receive written proof of loss, we will pay any benefits due. Benefits that provide for periodic payment will be paid accordingly.

**PAYMENT OF CLAIMS:** If you die, we will pay any death benefit and any other accrued benefits in accordance with the Beneficiary and Facility of Payment provisions. All other benefits will be paid to you.

**PHYSICAL EXAMINATION AND AUTOPSY:** We have the right to have a doctor of our choice examine the Insured as often as we think necessary. This section applies while a claim is pending or while we are paying benefits. We also have the right to make an autopsy in case of death, unless the law forbids it. We will pay for the cost of both the examination and the autopsy.

**LEGAL ACTION:** No lawsuit or action in equity can be brought to recover on the Policy:

- (1) before 60 days following the date written proof of loss was furnished to us; or
- (2) after 3 years following the date written proof of loss is required (6 years in South Carolina and 5 years in Kansas).

## SETTLEMENT OPTIONS

You may elect a single sum payment or a different way in which the beneficiary will receive payment of the Principal Sum. If other than a single sum payment is desired, you must provide a written request to us, for our approval, at our Administrative Office. If the option covers less than the full amount due, we must be advised of what part is to be under an option. Amounts under \$2,000 or option payments of less than \$20 each are not allowed.

If no instructions for a settlement option are in effect at the death of an Insured, the beneficiary may make the election, with our consent.

If a beneficiary dies while receiving payments under one of these options and there is no contingent beneficiary, the balance will be paid in one sum to the beneficiary's estate, unless otherwise agreed to in the instructions for settlement.

Requests for settlement options other than the 3 set out in the Policy may be made. A mutual agreement must be reached between the individual entitled to elect and us.

**OPTION A - FIXED TIME PAYMENT OPTION:** Equal monthly payments will be made for any period chosen, up to 30 years. The amount of each payment depends on the amount applied, the period selected and the payment rates we are using when the first payment is due. The rate of any monthly payment will not be less than shown in the table below. We reserve the right to change the minimum monthly payment. These changes will apply only to requests for settlement elected after the change.

**Option A Table**  
**Minimum Monthly Payment Rates for each \$1,000 Applied**

<u>Years</u>	<u>Monthly Payment</u>	<u>Years</u>	<u>Monthly Payment</u>	<u>Years</u>	<u>Monthly Payment</u>	<u>Years</u>	<u>Monthly Payment</u>	<u>Years</u>	<u>Monthly Payment</u>
1	\$84.47	7	\$13.16	13	\$7.71	19	\$5.73	25	\$4.71
2	42.86	8	11.68	14	7.26	20	5.51	26	4.59
3	28.99	9	10.53	15	6.87	21	5.32	27	4.47
4	22.06	10	9.61	16	6.53	22	5.15	28	4.37
5	17.91	11	8.86	17	6.23	23	4.99	29	4.27
6	15.14	12	8.24	18	5.96	24	4.84	30	4.18

**OPTION B - FIXED AMOUNT PAYMENT OPTION:** Each payment will be for an agreed fixed amount. The amount of each payment will not be less than \$20 for each \$2000 applied. Interest will be credited and added each month on the unpaid balance. This interest will be at a rate set by us, but not less than the equivalent of 3% per year. Payments continue until the amount we hold runs out. The last payment will be for the balance only.

**OPTION C - INTEREST PAYMENT OPTION:** We will hold any amount applied under this section. Interest on the unpaid balance will be paid each month at a rate set by us. This rate will not be less than the equivalent of 3% per year.

**ACCIDENTAL DEATH AND DISMEMBERMENT BENEFIT**

**DESCRIPTION OF COVERAGE**

**LOSS OF LIFE, LIMB, SIGHT, SPEECH OR HEARING:** If, due to Injury, an Insured suffers any one of the following specific Losses within 365 days from the date of the accident we will pay the Benefit Amount listed below. However, if more than one listed loss results from any one accident, we will only pay the one largest applicable benefit as listed below.

**LOSS**

**BENEFIT AMOUNT:**

Loss of Life .....	the Insured's Principal Sum
Loss of Two or More Members .....	the Insured's Principal Sum
Loss of Speech and Hearing .....	the Insured's Principal Sum
Loss of One Member .....	1/2 of the Insured's Principal Sum
Loss of Speech or Hearing .....	1/2 of the Insured's Principal Sum
Loss of Thumb and Index Finger of the Same Hand .....	1/4 of the Insured's Principal Sum

**DEFINITIONS:**

"Member(s)" means: hand, foot or eye.

"Loss(es)" must result directly and independently from Injury, with no other contributing cause. As used in this benefit with respect to:

- (1) a hand or foot, Loss means the complete severance through or above the wrist or ankle joints;
- (2) an eye, Loss means the total and irrecoverable loss of sight;
- (3) speech, Loss means the total and irrecoverable loss of the function;
- (4) hearing, Loss means the total and irrecoverable loss of the hearing in both ears;
- (5) a thumb and index finger, Loss means the complete severance through or above the metacarpophalangeal joint.

## **COVERAGE FOR MEMBERS OF RESERVE-NATIONAL GUARD**

**DESCRIPTION OF COVERAGE:** We will pay plan benefits for a loss due to Injury of any Insured which is sustained while such Insured is a member of an organized Reserve Corps or National Guard Unit and is:

- (1) attending any regularly scheduled or routine training of less than 60 days, or is enroute to or from such training;
- (2) attending a Service School no matter how long it is, or is enroute to or from that school;
- (3) taking part in any authorized inactive duty training; or
- (4) taking part as a unit member in a parade or exhibition authorized by official orders.

No benefit is payable for any loss that occurs during active duty.

### **DEFINITION:**

"Service School" means one operated by or on behalf of the United States of America or Canada.

## **COVERAGE OF EXPOSURE AND DISAPPEARANCE**

### **DESCRIPTION OF COVERAGE**

**EXPOSURE:** Any loss that is due to exposure will be covered as if it were due to Injury, provided such loss results directly and independently of all other causes from accidental exposure to the elements which occurs while the Insured's coverage under the Policy is in force.

**DISAPPEARANCE:** We will presume an Insured suffered loss of life due to an Injury, if:

- (1) while covered under the Policy, such Insured is riding in a conveyance that is involved in an accident, not excluded from coverage;
- (2) the conveyance is wrecked, sinks or disappears as a result of such accident; and
- (3) the Insured's body is not found within 1 year of the accident.

## EDUCATION BENEFIT

**DESCRIPTION OF COVERAGE:** We will pay the additional benefit stated below if:

- (1) at your death due to Injury, Loss of Life benefits are payable hereunder; and
- (2) coverage for your Insured Dependents is in force on the date of the Injury.

**BENEFITS:** Benefits will be paid as follows:

- (1) We will pay 5% of your Principal Sum, subject to a minimum of \$1,000 and a maximum of \$5,000 annually, for each of your insured Dependent children who is:
  - (a) enrolled as a full-time student in any Institute of Higher Learning beyond the 12th grade level on the date of your accident; or
  - (b) in the 12th grade on the date of your accident and subsequently enrolls as a full-time student in an Institute of Higher Learning within 1 year of the date of your death;provided the child remains so enrolled for the school year. Benefits will be paid for up to 4 consecutive years of enrollment.
- (2) We will pay the actual tuition expense incurred by your Insured Dependent spouse, up to \$3,000 annually, if:
  - (a) such spouse attends an Institute of Higher Learning for the purpose of obtaining a source of support and maintenance; and
  - (b) the tuition expense is incurred within 30 months after the date of your death.

**DEFINITION:**

"Institute of Higher Learning" includes but is not limited to: any university; college; trade school; or professional school.

## **DAY CARE BENEFIT**

**DESCRIPTION OF COVERAGE:** We will pay the additional benefit shown below if:

- (1) at your, or your Insured Dependent spouse's, death due to Injury, Loss of Life benefits are payable hereunder;
- (2) you, or your Insured Dependent spouse, has at least one Dependent child, born or unborn and in any event under 14 years of age on the date of the Injury; and
- (3) such child is in day care within 12 months from the date of death.

**BENEFITS:** Benefits will be paid as follows:

- (1) We will pay an additional monthly benefit equal to actual Day Care charges incurred up to 3% of your or your Insured Dependent spouse's Principal Sum, not to exceed \$2,000 in any one calendar year for each Insured Dependent child who is under 14 years of age.
- (2) The benefit with respect to each child will terminate on the earlier of:
  - (a) the date he turns 14 years of age; or
  - (b) the end of a period of 4 consecutive years from the death of you or your Insured Dependent spouse.

A prorated benefit will be payable for partial months.

## **SEAT BELT AND AIR BAG BENEFIT**

**DESCRIPTION OF COVERAGE:** We will pay a sum equal to 10% of the Insured's Principal Sum if:

- (1) the Insured dies as the result of a bodily Injury sustained while riding in or operating a Four-Wheel Vehicle;
- (2) a police report establishes that the Insured was properly strapped in a Seat Belt at the time;
- (3) Loss of Life benefits are payable for the Insured's death hereunder.

We will pay an additional 5% if the Insured is driving in or riding in a Four-Wheel Vehicle which is equipped with a factory-installed Supplemental Restraint System. The Insured must be positioned in a seat which is designed to be protected by an air bag and must be properly strapped in the Seat Belt when the air bag inflates. In addition to the above requirements, the police report must establish that the air bag inflated properly upon impact.

The total maximum benefit payable is \$25,000.

No benefit will be paid for any loss sustained:

- (1) while driving or riding in any Four-Wheel Vehicle used: in a race; in a speed or endurance test; or for acrobatic or stunt driving; or
- (2) if the Insured is not wearing a Seat Belt for any reason; or
- (3) while the Insured is sharing a Seat Belt; or
- (4) due to a defect in the Supplemental Restraint System's diagnostic system.

If the police report does not clearly establish that the Insured was or was not wearing a Seat Belt at the time of the accident causing the Insured's death, we will pay a sum equal to \$1,000 in lieu of the benefit described above.

### **DEFINITIONS:**

"Seat Belt" means an unaltered Seat Belt or lap and shoulder restraint and includes a government approved child restraint device when used in accordance with manufacturer's directions. In the case of small children the restraint must:

- (1) meet the standards of the National Safety Council; and
- (2) must be properly secured and utilized in accordance with applicable State law and the recommendations of its manufacturer for children of like age and weight.

An air bag is not considered a Seat Belt.

"Supplemental Restraint System" means an air bag which inflates for added protection to the head and chest areas.

"Four-Wheel Vehicle" means a vehicle listed below provided it is: duly licensed for passenger use; and designated primarily for use on public streets and highways:

- (1) a private passenger automobile; or
- (2) a station wagon; or
- (3) a van, jeep, or truck-type vehicle which has a manufacturer's rated load capacity of 2,000 pounds or less; or
- (4) a self-propelled motor home.

## COMA BENEFIT

**DESCRIPTION OF COVERAGE:** We will pay the benefit shown below if, as the result of an Injury, an Insured lapses into a Coma which lasts for more than 30 days. In order for this benefit to be payable the Coma does not need to be continuous, as long as recurrences are not due to an unrelated cause.

### DEFINITION:

"Coma" means a state of profound unconsciousness, from which one cannot be aroused, which results from Injury. The Insured must be:

- (1) confined in a hospital or other medical facility; and
- (2) diagnosed as being in a Coma by a licensed physician.

**BENEFIT:** We will pay a monthly benefit equal to 5% of the Insured's Principal Sum. The monthly benefits will start on the 31st day of the Coma. Benefits will continue until:

- (1) the Coma ends;
- (2) the Insured dies; or
- (3) the end of a period of 20 consecutive months;

whichever is the first to occur.

A prorated benefit will be payable for partial months.

The Insured is only eligible for one Coma benefit for each eligible accident.

**TOTAL LOSS OF USE BENEFIT**

**DESCRIPTION OF COVERAGE:** We will pay the benefit shown below if, due to Injury, an Insured suffers a Total Loss of Use that is listed below, provided:

- (1) the Insured suffers such Total Loss of Use within 1 year of the Injury;
- (2) the Total Loss of Use continues for a period of 12 consecutive months after the onset;
- (3) it is shown by proper medical authority at the end of these 12 months that the Total Loss of Use has been continuous and will be permanent; and
- (4) no benefit is payable for such loss under the Accidental Death and Dismemberment Benefit of this Certificate.

**BENEFITS:** Only one benefit (the larger) will be paid for more than one Total Loss of Use resulting from any one accident.

<b>For Total Loss of Use of:</b>	<b>Benefit Amount:</b>
Both Arms and Both Legs .....	the Insured's Principal Sum
Both Arms .....	2/3 of the Insured's Principal Sum
Both Legs .....	2/3 of the Insured's Principal Sum
One Arm and One Leg .....	2/3 of the Insured's Principal Sum
Both Arms and One Leg or Both Legs and One Arm .....	3/4 of the Insured's Principal Sum
One Arm or One Leg .....	1/2 of the Insured's Principal Sum

In no event will the total of all benefits paid for any one Insured for any one accident, under this benefit, the Accidental Death and Dismemberment Benefit and the Coma Benefit, exceed that Insured's Principal Sum.

**DEFINITION:**

"Total Loss of Use" means loss of the ability to function because of:

- (1) incurable paralysis; or
- (2) stiffening.

In addition, "Total Loss of Use" must affect the entire arm or leg from the shoulder or hip, including the hand or foot attached to it.

## FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE OF ABSENCE EXTENSION

We will allow your coverage, and that of any Insured Dependents, to continue for up to twelve (12) weeks in a twelve (12) month period, if you are eligible for, and the Policyholder has approved, a Family and Medical Leave of Absence under the terms of the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993, or the California Family Rights Act of 1992, as amended, for any of the following reasons:

- (1) To provide care after the birth of a son or daughter; or
- (2) To provide care for a son or daughter upon legal adoption; or
- (3) To provide care after the placement of a foster child in your home; or
- (4) To provide care to a spouse, son, daughter, or parent due to serious illness; or
- (5) To take care of: (a) your own serious health condition under the terms of the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993; or (b) your own serious health condition except for pregnancy, childbirth or related medical conditions, under the terms of the California Family Rights Act of 1992, as amended.

We will also allow your coverage to continue, if you are eligible for and the Policyholder has approved a leave of absence in accordance with the terms of the pregnancy disability laws under California's Fair Employment and Housing Act, as amended, under the following circumstances:

- (1) To take care of your own health due to normal pregnancy, childbirth or medical condition related to such normal pregnancy for a period not to exceed six (6) weeks; or
- (2) To take care of your own serious health condition when disabled due to pregnancy, childbirth or related medical condition related not to exceed four (4) months; or

You will not qualify for the Family and Medical Leave of Absence Extension unless we have received proof from the Policyholder, in a form satisfactory to us, that you have been granted a leave under the terms of the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993, the California Family Rights Act of 1992, as amended or the Fair Employment and Housing Act, as amended. Such proof: (1) must outline the terms of your leave; and (2) give the date the leave is to begin; and (3) the date it is expected to end; and (4) must be received by us within thirty-one (31) days after a claim for benefits has been filed with us.

If you are granted a Family and Medical Leave of Absence, the following applies to you:

- (1) While you are on an approved Family and Medical Leave of Absence, the required premium must be paid according to the terms specified in the Policy to keep the insurance in force.
- (2) Coverage will terminate for you and any Insured Dependents if you do not return to work as scheduled according to the terms of your agreement with the Policyholder; however, you are eligible to convert your coverage under the Conversion Privilege. In no case will coverage be extended under this benefit beyond twelve (12) weeks in a twelve (12) month period. Insurance will not be terminated for an Insured who becomes Totally Disabled during the period of the leave and who is eligible for benefits according to the terms of the Policy.
- (3) This extension is not available if you convert your coverage under the Conversion Privilege.
- (4) While you are on an approved Family and Medical Leave of Absence, you will be considered Actively At Work in all instances unless such leave is due to your own illness, injury or disability. Changes such as revisions to coverage because of age, class or salary changes will apply during the leave except that increases in amount of insurance, whether automatic or subject to election, are not effective if you are not Actively at Work until such time as you return to Active Work for one full day.

All other terms and conditions of the Policy will remain in force while you are on an approved Family and Medical Leave of Absence.

## **MILITARY SERVICES LEAVE OF ABSENCE COVERAGE**

We will allow your coverage, and that of any Insured Dependents to continue for up to twelve (12) weeks in a twelve (12) month period, if you enter the military service of the United States. While you are on Military Services Leave of Absence, the required premium must be paid according to the terms specified in the Policy to keep the insurance in force. Changes such as revisions to coverage because of age, class or salary changes will apply during the leave except that increases in amount of insurance, whether automatic or subject to election, are not effective until you have returned to work from a Military Services Leave of Absence for one full day. All other terms and conditions of the Policy will remain in force during the continued period. Your continued coverage, and that of any Insured Dependents will cease on the earliest of the following dates:

- (1) the date the Policy terminates;
- (2) the end of the period for which premium has been paid for your coverage; or
- (3) twelve (12) weeks from the date your continued coverage began.

The Policy, however, does not cover any loss which occurs on active duty in the military service if such loss is caused by or arises out of such military service, including but not limited to war or act of war (whether declared or undeclared) and is also subject to any other exclusions listed in the Exclusions provision.

## EXCLUSIONS

The Policy does not cover any loss:

- (1) to which sickness, disease, or myocardial infarction, including medical or surgical treatment thereof, is a contributing factor; or
- (2) caused by suicide, or intentionally self-inflicted injuries; or
- (3) caused by or resulting from war or any act of war, declared or undeclared; or
- (4) caused by an accident that occurs while in the armed forces of any country, except as shown under the Reserve-National Guard Benefit (any premium paid to us for any period not covered by the Policy while the Insured is in such service will be returned pro rata); or
- (5) caused by or resulting from riding in, getting into or out of any aircraft, unless:
  - (a) the Insured is a passenger (not a pilot or crew member) in a tested and approved civilian aircraft being operated as passenger transport in compliance with the then current rules of the authority having jurisdiction over its operation; and
  - (b) the aircraft is not owned, leased or operated by or on behalf of the Policyholder, the Insured, or any other employer of the Insured, unless a specific written agreement has been obtained from us; or
- (6) sustained during the Insured's commission or attempted commission of an assault or felony; or
- (7) to which the Insured's acute or chronic alcoholic intoxication is a contributing factor; or
- (8) to which the Insured's voluntary consumption of an illegal or controlled substance or a non-prescribed narcotic or drug is a contributing factor.

## **SUMMARY PLAN DESCRIPTION**



The following section entitled Summary Plan Description was prepared by Reliance Standard Life Insurance Company at the request of and on behalf of the Plan Sponsor. Reliance Standard Life Insurance Company assumes no responsibility for the accuracy or sufficiency of the information in this section.

### SUMMARY PLAN DESCRIPTION

The following information and the description of benefits provided in this booklet constitute the Summary Plan Description.

PLAN NAME: Voluntary Group Accidental Death and Dismemberment Insurance

PLAN SPONSOR: Central Garden & Pet  
1340 Treal Blvd  
Suite 600  
Walnut Creek, CA 94597  
(925) 948-3625

SPONSOR'S EMPLOYER IDENTIFICATION NUMBER: 68-0275553

PLAN NUMBER: 520

TYPE OF PLAN: Death and Dismemberment Benefit Plan

PLAN BENEFITS: Fully Insured - Voluntary Group Accidental Death and Dismemberment Insurance Benefits

TYPE OF ADMINISTRATION: The plan is administered in accordance with the terms of the Group Policy issued by the Reliance Standard Life Insurance Company, 1700 Market Street, Suite 1200, Philadelphia, PA 19103-3938.

PLAN ADMINISTRATOR: The Plan Sponsor named above.

AGENT FOR SERVICE OF LEGAL PROCESS: The Plan Sponsor named above.

PLAN YEAR: The plan's fiscal records are kept on a plan year basis beginning January 1st.

PLAN COSTS: The cost of the benefits provided under the plan are paid for by the employee.

QUALIFIED MEDICAL CHILD SUPPORT ORDER (QMCSO) DETERMINATIONS: A plan participant or beneficiary can obtain, without charge, a copy of the Plan's procedures governing Qualified Medical Child Support Order (QMCSO) determinations from the Plan Administrator named above.

AMENDMENT AND TERMINATION: The Plan Sponsor reserves the right, at any time, to amend or terminate the Plan or amend or eliminate benefits under the Plan for any reason.

**CLAIM PROCEDURES FOR CLAIMS FILED WITH  
RELIANCE STANDARD LIFE INSURANCE COMPANY  
ON OR AFTER APRIL 1, 2018**

**CLAIMS FOR BENEFITS**

Claims may be submitted by mailing the completed form along with any requested information to:

Reliance Standard Life Insurance Company  
Claims Department  
P.O. Box 8330  
Philadelphia, PA 19101-8330

Claim forms are available from your benefits representative or may be requested by writing to the above address or by calling 1-800-644-1103.

In the event of any *Adverse Benefit Determination* (defined below), the claimant (or their authorized representative) may appeal that *Adverse Benefit Determination* in accordance with the following procedures. This opportunity to appeal exists without regard to the applicability of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 as amended ("ERISA"), 29 U.S.C. 1001 *et seq.*

**TIMING OF NOTIFICATION OF BENEFIT DETERMINATION**

Non-Disability Benefit Claims

If a non-disability claim is wholly or partially denied, the claimant shall be notified of the Adverse Benefit Determination within a reasonable period of time, but not later than 90 days after our receipt of the claim, unless it is determined that special circumstances require an extension of time for processing the claim. If it is determined that an extension of time for processing is required, written notice of the extension shall be furnished to the claimant prior to the termination of the initial 90-day period. In no event shall such extension exceed a period of 90 days from the end of such initial period. The extension notice shall indicate the special circumstances requiring an extension of time and the date by which the benefit determination is expected to be rendered.

Calculating time periods. The period of time within which a benefit determination is required to be made shall begin at the time a claim is filed, without regard to whether all the information necessary to make a benefit determination accompanies the filing.

Disability Benefit Claims

In the case of a claim for disability benefits, the claimant shall be notified of the Adverse Benefit Determination within a reasonable period of time, but not later than 45 days after our receipt of the claim. This period may be extended for up to 30 days, provided that it is determined that such an extension is necessary due to matters beyond our control and that notification is provided to the claimant, prior to the expiration of the initial 45-day period, of the circumstances requiring the extension of time and the date by which a decision is expected to be rendered. If, prior to the end of the first 30-day extension period, it is determined that, due to matters beyond our control, a decision cannot be rendered within that extension period, the period for making the determination may be extended for up to an additional 30 days, provided that the claimant is notified, prior to the expiration of the first 30-day extension period, of the circumstances requiring the extension and the date by which a decision is expected to be rendered. In the case of any such extension, the notice of extension shall specifically explain the standards on which entitlement to a benefit is based, the unresolved issues that prevent a decision on the claim, and the additional information needed to resolve those issues, and the claimant shall be afforded at least 45 days within which to provide the specified information.

Calculating time periods. The period of time within which a benefit determination is required to be made shall begin at the time a claim is filed, without regard to whether all the information necessary to make a benefit determination accompanies the filing. In the event that a period of time is extended due to a claimant's failure to submit information necessary to decide a claim, the period for making the benefit determination shall be tolled from the date on which the notification of the extension is sent to the claimant until the date on which the claimant responds to the request for additional information.

## **MANNER AND CONTENT OF NOTIFICATION OF BENEFIT DETERMINATION**

### Non-Disability Benefit Claims

A Claimant shall be provided with written notification of any Adverse Benefit Determination. The notification shall set forth, in a manner calculated to be understood by the claimant, the following:

1. The specific reason or reasons for the adverse determination;
2. Reference to the specific plan/policy provisions on which the determination is based;
3. A description of any additional material or information necessary for the claimant to perfect the claim and an explanation of why such material or information is necessary; and
4. A description of the review procedures and the time limits applicable to such procedures, including a statement of the claimant's right to bring a civil action under section 502(a) of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 as amended ("ERISA") (where applicable), following an Adverse Benefit Determination on Review.

### Disability Benefit Claims

A claimant shall be provided with written notification of any Adverse Benefit Determination. The notification shall be set forth, in a manner calculated to be understood by the claimant, the following:

1. The specific reason or reasons for the adverse determination;
2. Reference to the specific plan/policy provisions on which the determination is based;
3. A description of any additional material or information necessary for the claimant to perfect the claim and an explanation of why such material or information is necessary;
4. A description of the review procedures and the time limits applicable to such procedures, including a statement of the claimant's right to bring a civil action under section 502(a) of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 as amended ("ERISA") (where applicable), following an Adverse Benefit Determination on Review; and
5. A discussion of the decision, including an explanation of the basis for disagreeing with or not following:
  - a) The views presented by the claimant to the plan of health care professionals treating the claimant and vocational professionals who evaluated the claimant;
  - b) The views of medical or vocational experts whose advice was obtained on behalf of the plan in connection with a claimant's Adverse Benefit Determination, without regard to whether the advice was relied upon in making the benefit determination; and
  - c) A disability determination regarding the claimant presented by the claimant to the plan made by the Social Security Administration;
6. Either the specific internal rules, guidelines, protocols, standards or other similar criteria of the plan relied upon in making the adverse determination, or, alternatively, a statement that such rules, guidelines, protocols, standards or other similar criteria of the plan do not exist;
7. A statement that the claimant is entitled to receive, upon request and free of charge, reasonable access to, and copies of, all documents, records, and other information relevant (defined below) to a claim for benefits; and
8. The notification shall be provided in a Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate (defined below) manner.

## **APPEALS OF ADVERSE BENEFIT DETERMINATIONS**

Appeals of Adverse Benefit Determinations may be submitted in accordance with the following procedures to:

Reliance Standard Life Insurance Company  
Quality Review Unit  
P.O. Box 8330  
Philadelphia, PA 19101-8330

### Non-Disability Benefit Claims

1. Claimants (or their authorized representatives) must appeal within 60 days following their receipt of a notification of an Adverse Benefit Determination, and only one appeal is allowed;
2. Claimants shall be provided with the opportunity to submit written comments, documents, records, and/or other information relating to the claim for benefits in conjunction with their timely appeal;
3. Claimants shall be provided, upon request and free of charge, reasonable access to, and copies of, all documents, records, and other information relevant to the claimant's claim for benefits;
4. The review on (timely) appeal shall take into account all comments, documents, records, and other information submitted by the claimant relating to the claim, without regard to whether such information was submitted or considered in the initial benefit determination;
5. No deference to the initial Adverse Benefit Determination shall be afforded upon appeal;

6. The appeal shall be conducted by an individual who is neither the individual who made the (underlying) Adverse Benefit Determination that is the subject of the appeal, nor the subordinate of such individual; and
7. Any medical or vocational expert(s) whose advice was obtained in connection with a claimant's Adverse Benefit Determination shall be identified, without regard to whether the advice was relied upon in making the benefit determination.

#### Disability Benefit Claims

1. Claimants (or their authorized representatives) must appeal within 180 days following their receipt of a notification of an Adverse Benefit Determination, and only one appeal is allowed;
2. Claimants shall be provided with the opportunity to submit written comments, documents, records, and/or other information relating to the claim for benefits in conjunction with their timely appeal;
3. Claimants shall be provided, upon request and free of charge, reasonable access to, and copies of, all documents, records, and other information Relevant (defined below) to the claimant's claim for benefits;
4. The review on (timely) appeal shall take into account all comments, documents, records, and other information submitted by the claimant relating to the claim, without regard to whether such information was submitted or considered in the initial benefit determination;
5. No deference to the initial Adverse Benefit Determination shall be afforded upon appeal;
6. The appeal shall be conducted by an individual who is neither the individual who made the (underlying) Adverse Benefit Determination that is the subject of the appeal, nor the subordinate of such individual;
7. Any medical or vocational expert(s) whose advice was obtained in connection with a claimant's Adverse Benefit Determination shall be identified, without regard to whether the advice was relied upon in making the benefit determination;
8. In deciding the appeal of any Adverse Benefit Determination that is based in whole or in part on a medical judgment, the individual conducting the appeal shall consult with a health care professional:
  - (a) who has appropriate training and experience in the field of medicine involved in the medical judgment; and
  - (b) who is neither an individual who was consulted in connection with the Adverse Benefit Determination that is the subject of the appeal; nor the subordinate of any such individual.

#### **TIMING OF NOTIFICATION OF BENEFIT DETERMINATION ON REVIEW**

##### Non-Disability Benefit Claims

The claimant (or their authorized representative) shall be notified of the benefit determination on review within a reasonable period of time, but not later than 60 days after receipt of the claimant's timely request for review, unless it is determined that special circumstances require an extension of time for processing the appeal. If it is determined that an extension of time for processing is required, written notice of the extension shall be furnished to the claimant prior to the termination of the initial 60-day period. In no event shall such extension exceed a period of 60 days from the end of the initial period. The extension notice shall indicate the special circumstances requiring an extension of time and the date by which the determination on review is expected to be rendered.

Calculating time periods. The period of time within which a benefit determination on review is required to be made shall begin at the time an appeal is timely filed, without regard to whether all the information necessary to make a benefit determination on review accompanies the filing. In the event that a period of time is extended as above due to a claimant's failure to submit information necessary to decide a claim, the period for making the benefit determination on review shall be tolled from the date on which the notification of the extension is sent to the claimant until the date on which the claimant responds to the request for additional information.

##### Disability Benefit Claims

The claimant (or their authorized representative) shall be notified of the benefit determination on review within a reasonable period of time, but not later than 45 days after receipt of the claimant's timely request for review, unless it is determined that special circumstances require an extension of time for processing the appeal. If it is determined that an extension of time for processing is required, written notice of the extension shall be furnished to the claimant prior to the termination of the initial 45-day period. In no event shall such extension exceed a period of 45 days from the end of the initial period. The extension notice shall indicate the special circumstances requiring an extension of time and the date by which the determination on review is expected to be rendered.

Calculating time periods. The period of time within which a benefit determination on review is required to be made shall begin at the time an appeal is timely filed, without regard to whether all the information necessary to make a benefit determination on review accompanies the filing. In the event that a period of time is extended as above due to a claimant's failure to submit information necessary to decide a claim, the period for making the benefit determination on

review shall be tolled from the date on which the notification of the extension is sent to the claimant until the date on which the claimant responds to the request for additional information.

## **MANNER AND CONTENT OF NOTIFICATION OF BENEFIT DETERMINATION ON REVIEW**

### Non-Disability Benefit Claims

A claimant shall be provided with written notification of the benefit determination on review. In the case of an Adverse Benefit Determination on Review, the notification shall set forth, in a manner calculated to be understood by the claimant, the following:

1. The specific reason or reasons for the adverse determination;
2. Reference to the specific plan/policy provisions on which the determination is based;
3. A statement that the claimant is entitled to receive, upon request and free of charge, reasonable access to, and copies of, all documents, records, and other information Relevant (defined below) to the claimant's claim for benefits; and
4. A statement of the claimant's right to bring an action under section 502(a) of ERISA (where applicable).

### Disability Benefit Claims

A claimant must be provided with written notification of the determination on review. In the case of Adverse Benefit Determination on Review, the notification shall set forth, in a manner calculated to be understood by the claimant, the following:

1. The specific reason or reasons for the adverse determination;
2. Reference to the specific plan/policy provisions on which the determination is based;
3. A statement that the claimant is entitled to receive, upon request and free of charge, reasonable access to, and copies of, all documents, records, and other information Relevant (defined below) to the claimant's claim for benefits;
4. A statement of the claimant's right to bring an action under section 502(a) of ERISA (where applicable) as well as a description of any applicable contractual limitations period that applies to the claimant's right to bring such an action, including the calendar date on which the contractual limitations period expires for the claim;
5. A discussion of the decision, including an explanation of the basis for disagreeing with or not following:
  - a) The views presented by the claimant to the plan of health care professionals treating the claimant and vocational professionals who evaluated the claimant;
  - b) The views of medical or vocational experts whose advice was obtained on behalf of the plan in connection with a claimant's Adverse Benefit Determination, without regard to whether the advice was relied upon in making the benefit determination; and
  - c) A disability determination regarding the claimant presented by the claimant to the plan made by the Social Security Administration;
6. Either the specific internal rules, guidelines, protocols, standards or other similar criteria of the plan relied upon in making the adverse determination, or, alternatively, a statement that such rules, guidelines, protocols, standards or other similar criteria of the plan do not exist;
7. A statement that the claimant is entitled to receive, upon request and free of charge, reasonable access to, and copies of, all documents, records, and other information Relevant (defined below) to a claim for benefits; and
8. The notification shall be provided in a Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate (defined below) manner.

## **REQUESTS CONCERNING ALLEGED VIOLATION OF THESE PROCEDURES**

In the event that a claimant requests a written explanation of any alleged violation of these procedures, such explanation should be provided within 10 days, including a specific description of any basis for asserting that any violation should not cause any administrative remedies available under the plan to be exhausted (where applicable).

## **DEFINITIONS**

The term "Adverse Benefit Determination" means any of the following: a denial, reduction, or termination of, or a failure to provide or make payment (in whole or in part) for, a benefit, including any such denial, reduction, termination, or failure to provide or make payment that is based on a determination of a participant's or beneficiary's eligibility to participate in a plan.

The term "Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Manner" means:

- Oral language services (such as telephone customer assistance hotline) that includes answering questions in any Applicable Non-English Language and providing assistance with filing claims and appeals in any Applicable Non-English Language must be provided;
- A notice in any Applicable Non-English Language must be provided upon request; and
- A statement prominently displayed in any Applicable Non-English Language clearly indicating how to access the language services provided must be included in the English versions of all notices.

The term "Applicable Non-English Language" means:

With respect to an address in any United States county to which a notice is sent, a non-English language is an Applicable Non-English Language if ten percent or more of the population residing in the county is literate only in the same non-English language as determined in guidance published by the United States Secretary of Health and Human Services.

The term "us" or "our" refers to Reliance Standard Life Insurance Company.

The term "Relevant" means:

A document, record, or other information shall be considered relevant to a claimant's claim if such document, record or other information:

- Was relied upon in making the benefit determination;
- Was submitted, considered, or generated in the course of making the benefit determination, without regard to whether such document, record or other information was relied upon in making the benefit determination;
- Demonstrates compliance with administrative processes and safeguards designed to ensure and to verify that benefit claim determinations are made in accordance with governing plan documents and that, where appropriate, the plan provisions have been applied consistently with respect to similarly situated claimants; or
- In the case of a plan providing disability benefits, constitutes a statement of policy or guidance with respect to the plan concerning the denied benefit of the claimant's diagnosis, without regard to whether such advice or statement was relied upon in making the benefit determination.

The term "Reliance Standard Life Insurance Company" means Reliance Standard Life Insurance Company and/or its authorized claim administrators.

## ERISA STATEMENT OF RIGHTS

As a participant in the Group Insurance Plan, you may be entitled to certain rights and protections in the event that the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (ERISA) applies. ERISA provides that all Plan Participants shall be entitled to:

### **Receive Information About Your Plan and Benefits**

Examine, without charge, at the Plan Administrator's office and at other specified locations, such as worksites and union halls, all documents governing the Plan, including insurance contracts and collective bargaining agreements, and a copy of the latest annual report (Form 5500 Series) filed by the Plan with the U.S. Department of Labor and available at the Public Disclosure Room of the Employee Benefits Security Administration.

Obtain, upon written request to the Plan Administrator, copies of documents governing the operation of the Plan, including

insurance contracts and collective bargaining agreements, and copies of the latest annual report (Form 5500 Series) and updated summary plan description. The Administrator may make a reasonable charge for the copies.

Receive a summary of the Plan's annual financial report. The Plan Administrator is required by law to furnish each participant with a copy of this summary annual report.

### **Prudent Actions by Plan Fiduciaries**

In addition to creating rights for Plan Participants, ERISA imposes duties upon the people who are responsible for the operation of the employee benefits plan. The people who operate your Plan, called "fiduciaries" of the Plan, have a duty to do so prudently and in the interests of you and other Plan Participants and Beneficiaries. No one, including your employer, your union, or any other person, may fire you or otherwise discriminate against you in any way to prevent you from obtaining a benefit or exercising your rights under ERISA.

Reliance Standard Life Insurance Company shall serve as the claims review fiduciary with respect to the insurance policy and the Plan. The claims review fiduciary has the discretionary authority to interpret the Plan and the insurance policy and to determine eligibility for benefits. Decisions by the claims review fiduciary shall be complete, final and binding on all parties.

### **Enforce Your Rights**

If your claim for a benefit is denied or ignored, in whole or in part, you have a right to know why this was done, to obtain copies of documents relating to the decision without charge, and to appeal any denial, all within certain time schedules.

Under ERISA, there are steps you can take to enforce the above rights. For instance, if you request a copy of the Plan documents or the latest annual report from the Plan and do not receive them within 30 days, you may file suit in a Federal court. In such a case, the court may require the Plan Administrator to provide the materials and pay you up to \$110 a day until you receive the materials, unless the materials were not sent because of reasons beyond the control of the Administrator. If you have a claim for benefits which is denied or ignored, in whole or part, you may file suit in a state or Federal court. In addition, if you disagree with the Plan's decision or lack thereof concerning the qualified status of a domestic relations order or a medical child support order, you may file suit in Federal Court. If it should happen that Plan Fiduciaries misuse the Plan's money, or if you are discriminated against for asserting your rights, you may seek assistance from the U.S. Department of Labor, or you may file suit in a Federal court. The court will decide who should pay court costs and legal fees. If you are successful, the court may order the person you have sued to pay these costs and fees. If you lose, the court may order you to pay these costs and fees, for example, if it finds your claim is frivolous.

### **Assistance with Your Questions**

If you have any questions about your Plan, you should contact the Plan Administrator. If you have any questions about this statement or about your rights under ERISA, or if you need assistance in obtaining documents from the Plan Administrator, you should contact the nearest Office of the Employee Benefits Security Administration, U.S. Department of Labor, listed in your telephone directory or the Division of Technical Assistance and Inquiries, Employee Benefits Security Administration, U.S. Department of Labor, 200 Constitution Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20210. You may also obtain certain publications about your rights and responsibilities under ERISA by calling the publications hotline of the Employee Benefits Security Administration.