

NOTICE OF INTENT

Department of Insurance
Commissioner of Insurance

Regulation 60—Advertising of Life Insurance

Under the authority of R.S. 22:3, and the Administrative Procedure Act, R.S. 49:950 et seq., the Department of Insurance gives notice that the following regulation is to be adopted effective January 1, 1997. This intended action complies with the statutory law administered by the Department of Insurance.

Regulation 60

Rules Governing the Advertising of Life Insurance

Section 1. Purpose

The purpose of this regulation is to set forth minimum standards and guidelines to assure a full and truthful disclosure to the public of all material and relevant information in the advertising of life insurance policies and annuity contracts.

Section 2. Authority

This regulation is promulgated by the Department of Insurance under the authority granted by R.S. Title 22, Section 3, and the Administrative Procedure Act, R.S. 49:950 et seq.

Section 3. Definitions

For the purpose of these rules:

A. *Advertisement*—shall be material designed to create public interest in life insurance or annuities or in an insurer, or in an insurance producer; or to induce the public to purchase, increase, modify, reinstate, borrow on, surrender, replace, or retain a policy including:

(1) printed and published material, audiovisual material, and descriptive literature of an insurer or insurance producer used in direct mail, newspapers, magazines, radio and television scripts, billboards and similar displays;

(2) descriptive literature and sales aids of all kinds, authored by the insurer, its insurance producers, or third parties, issued, distributed or used by such insurer or insurance producer; including but not limited to circulars, leaflets, booklets, depictions, illustrations and form letters;

(3) material used for the recruitment, training, and education of an insurer's insurance producers which is designed to be used or is used to induce the public to purchase, increase, modify, reinstate, borrow on, surrender, replace or retain a policy;

(4) prepared sales talks, presentations and material for use by insurance producers.

B. *Advertisement*—for the purpose of these rules shall NOT include:

(1) communications or materials used within an insurer's own organization and not intended for dissemination to the public;

(2) communications with policyholders other than material urging policyholders to purchase, increase, modify, reinstate or retain a policy;

(3) a general announcement from a group or blanket policyholder to eligible individuals on an employment or membership list that a policy or program has been written or arranged; provided the announcement clearly indicates that it is preliminary to the issuance of a booklet explaining the proposed coverage.

C. *Department or Department of Insurance*—the Louisiana Department of Insurance.

D. *Insurance Producer*—a person [as defined in R.S. 1212(D)] who solicits, negotiates, effects, procures, delivers, renews, continues or binds policies of insurance for risks residing, located, or intended for issuance in this State.

E. *Insurer*—includes any individual, corporation, association, partnership, reciprocal exchange, inter-insurer, Lloyd's, fraternal benefit society, and any other legal entity which is defined as an *insurer* in the Louisiana Insurance Code or issues life insurance or annuities in this State and is engaged in the advertisement of a policy.

F. *Policy*—includes any policy, plan, certificate, including a fraternal benefit certificate, contract, agreement, statement of coverage, rider or endorsement which provides for life insurance or annuity benefits.

G. *Nonguaranteed Policy Elements*—the premiums, benefits, values, credits or charges under a

policy of life insurance that are not guaranteed or not determined at issue.

H. *Preneed Funeral Contract or Prearrangement*—an agreement by or for an individual before the individual's death relating to the purchase or provision of specific funeral or cemetery merchandise or services.

Section 4. Applicability

A. These rules shall apply to any life insurance or annuity advertisement intended for dissemination in this State.

B. Every insurer shall establish and at all times maintain a system of control over the content, form and method of dissemination of all advertisements of its policies. All such advertisements, regardless of by whom written, created, designed or presented, shall be the responsibility of the insurer, provided the insurer shall not be responsible for advertisements that are published in violation of written procedures or guidelines of the insurer.

Section 5. Form and Content of Advertisements

A. Advertisements shall be truthful and not misleading in fact or by implication. The form and content of an advertisement of a policy shall be sufficiently complete and clear so as to avoid deception. It shall not have the capacity or tendency to mislead or deceive.

Whether an advertisement has the capacity or tendency to mislead or deceive shall be determined by the Department of Insurance from the overall impression that the advertisement may be reasonably expected to create upon a person of average education or intelligence within the segment of the public to which it is directed.

B. No advertisement shall use the terms *investment, investment plan, founder's plan, charter plan, deposit, expansion plan, profit, profits, profit sharing, interest plan, savings, savings plan*, or other similar terms in connection with a policy in a context or under such circumstances or conditions as to have the capacity or tendency to mislead a purchaser or prospective purchaser of such policy to believe that he will receive, or that it is possible that he will receive, something other than a policy or some benefit not available to other persons of the same class and equal expectation of life.

Section 6. Disclosure Requirements

A. The information required to be disclosed by these rules shall not be minimized, rendered obscure, or presented in an ambiguous fashion or intermingled with the text of the advertisement so as to be confusing or misleading.

B. No advertisement shall omit material information or use words, phrases, statements, references or illustrations if such omission or such use has the capacity, tendency or effect of misleading or deceiving purchasers or prospective purchasers as to the nature or extent of any policy benefit payable, loss covered, premium payable, or state or federal tax consequences. The fact that the policy offered is made available to a prospective insured for inspection prior to consummation of the sale, or an offer is made to refund the premium if the purchaser is not satisfied, does not remedy misleading statements.

C. In the event an advertisement uses *Non-Medical, No Medical Examination Required*, or similar terms where issue is not guaranteed, such items shall be accompanied by a further disclosure of equal prominence and in juxtaposition thereto to the effect that issuance of the policy may depend upon the answers to the health questions set forth in the application.

D. An advertisement shall not use as the name or title of a life insurance policy any phrase which does not include the words *life insurance* unless accompanied by other language clearly indicating it is life insurance.

E. An advertisement shall prominently describe the type of policy advertised.

F. An advertisement of an insurance policy marketed by direct response techniques shall not state or imply that because there is no insurance producer or commission involved there will be a cost saving to prospective purchasers unless such is the fact. No such cost savings may be stated or implied without justification satisfactory to the Department of Insurance prior to use.

G. An advertisement for a policy containing graded or modified benefits shall prominently display any limitation of benefits. If the premium is level and coverage decreases or increases with age or duration, such fact shall be prominently disclosed. An advertisement of or for a life insurance policy under which the death benefit varies with the length of time the policy has been in force shall accurately describe and clearly call attention to the amount of minimum death benefit under the policy.

H. An advertisement for the types of policies described in (F) and (G) of this Section shall not use

the words *inexpensive*, *low cost*, or other phrase or words of similar import when such policies are being marketed to persons who are 50 years of age or older, where the policy is guaranteed issue.

I. Premiums

(1) An advertisement for a policy with non-level premiums shall prominently describe the premium changes.

(2) An advertisement in which the insurer describes a policy where it reserves the right to change the amount of the premium during the policy term, but which does not prominently describe this feature, is deemed to be deceptive and misleading and is prohibited.

(3) An advertisement shall not contain a statement or representation that premiums paid for a life insurance policy can be withdrawn under the terms of the policy. Reference may be made to amounts paid into an advance premium fund, which are intended to pay premiums at a future time, to the effect that they may be withdrawn under the conditions of the prepayment agreement. Reference may also be made to withdrawal rights under any unconditional premium refund offer.

(4) An advertisement which represents a pure endowment benefit as a *profit* or *return* on the premium paid rather than as a policy benefit for which a specific premium is paid is deemed to be deceptive and misleading and is prohibited.

J. Analogies between a life insurance policy's cash values and savings accounts or other investments and between premium payments and contributions to savings accounts or other investments must be complete and accurate.

K. An advertisement shall not state or imply in any way that interest charged on a policy loan or the reduction of death benefits by the amount of outstanding policy loans is unfair, inequitable, or in any manner an incorrect or improper practice.

L. If nonforfeiture values are shown in any advertisement, the values must be shown either for the entire amount of the basic life policy death benefit or for each \$1,000 of initial death benefit.

M. The words *free*, *no cost*, *without cost*, *no additional cost*, *at no extra cost*, or words of similar import shall not be used with respect to any benefit or service being made available with a policy unless true. If there is no charge to the insured, then the identity of the payor must be prominently disclosed. An advertisement may specify the charge for a benefit or a service or may state that a charge is included in the premium or use other appropriate language.

N. No insurance producer may use terms such as *financial planner*, *investment advisor*, *financial consultant*, or *financial counseling* in such a way as to imply that he or she is generally engaged in an advisory business in which compensation is unrelated to sales unless such actually is the case.

O. Nonguaranteed Policy Elements

(1) An advertisement shall not utilize or describe nonguaranteed policy elements in a manner which is misleading or has the capacity or tendency to mislead.

(2) An advertisement shall not state or imply that the payment or amount of nonguaranteed policy elements is guaranteed. If nonguaranteed policy elements are illustrated, they must be based on the insurer's current scale and the illustration must contain a statement to the effect that they are not to be construed as guarantees or estimates of amounts to be paid in the future.

(3) An advertisement that includes any illustrations or statements containing or based upon nonguaranteed elements shall set forth with equal prominence comparable illustrations or statements containing or based upon the guaranteed elements.

(4) If an advertisement refers to any nonguaranteed policy element, it shall indicate that the insurer reserves the right to change any such element at any time and for any reason. However, if an insurer has agreed to limit this right in any way; such as, for example, if it has agreed to change these elements only at certain intervals or only if there is a change in the insurer's current or anticipated experience, the advertisement may indicate any such limitation on the insurer's right.

(5) An advertisement shall not refer to dividends as *tax free* or use words of similar import, unless the tax treatment of dividends is fully explained and the nature of the dividend as a return of premium is indicated clearly.

P. An advertisement shall not state that a purchaser of a policy will share in or receive a stated percentage or portion of the earnings on the general account assets of the company.

Q. Testimonials, Appraisals, Analysis, or Endorsements by Third Parties

(1) Testimonials, appraisals or analysis used in advertisements must be genuine; represent

the current opinion of the author; be applicable to the policy advertised, if any; and be accurately reproduced with sufficient completeness to avoid misleading or deceiving prospective insureds as to the nature or scope of the testimonial, appraisal, analysis or endorsement. In using testimonials, appraisals or analysis; the insurer or insurance producer makes as its own all of the statements contained therein, and such statements are subject to all the provisions of these rules.

(2) If the individual making a testimonial, appraisal, analysis or an endorsement has a financial interest in the insurer or a related entity as a stockholder, director, officer, employee or otherwise, or receives any benefit directly or indirectly other than required union scale wages, such fact shall be prominently disclosed in the advertisement.

(3) An advertisement shall not state or imply that an insurer or a policy has been approved or endorsed by a group of individuals, society, association or other organization unless such is the fact and unless any proprietary relationship between an organization and the insurer is disclosed. If the entity making the endorsement or testimonial is owned, controlled or managed by the insurer, or receives any payment or other consideration from the insurer for making such endorsement or testimonial, such fact shall be disclosed in the advertisement.

R. An advertisement shall not contain statistical information relating to any insurer or policy unless it accurately reflects recent and relevant facts. The source of any such statistics used in an advertisement shall be identified therein.

S. Policies Sold to Students

(1) The envelope in which insurance solicitation material is contained may be addressed to the parents of students. The address may not include any combination of words which imply that the correspondence is from a school, college, university or other education or training institution nor may it imply that the institution has endorsed the material or supplied the insurer with information about the student unless such is a correct and truthful statement.

(2) All advertisements including but not limited to informational flyers used in the solicitation of insurance must be identified clearly as coming from an insurer or insurance producer, if such is the case, and these entities must be clearly identified as such.

(3) The return address on the envelope may not imply that the soliciting insurer or insurance producer is affiliated with university, college, school or other educational or training institution, unless true.

T. Introductory, Initial or Special Offers and Enrollment Periods

(1) An advertisement of an individual policy or combination of such policies shall not state or imply that such policy or combination of such policies is an introductory, initial or special offer, or that applicants will receive substantial advantages not available at a later date, or that the offer is available only to a specified group of individuals, unless such is the fact. An advertisement shall not describe an enrollment period as "special" or "limited" or use similar words or phrases in describing it when the insurer uses successive enrollment periods as its usual method of marketing its policies.

(2) An advertisement shall not state or imply that only a specific number of policies will be sold, or that a time is fixed for the discontinuance of the sale of the particular policy advertised because of special advantages available in the policy.

(3) An advertisement shall not offer a policy which utilizes a reduced initial premium rate in a manner which overemphasizes the availability and the amount of the reduced initial premium. When an insurer charges an initial premium that differs in amount from the amount of the renewal premium payable on the same mode, all references to the reduced initial premium shall be followed by an asterisk or other appropriate symbol which refers the reader to that specific portion of the advertisement which contains the full rate schedule for the policy being advertised.

(4) An enrollment period during which a particular insurance policy may be purchased on an individual basis shall not be offered within this State unless there has been a lapse of not less than six months between the close of the immediately preceding enrollment period for the same policy and the opening of the new enrollment period. The advertisement shall specify the date by which the applicant must mail the application which shall be not less than 10 days and not more than 40 days from the date on which such enrollment period is advertised for the first time. This rule applies to all advertising media, i.e., mail, newspapers, radio, television, magazines and periodicals - by any one insurer or insurance producer. The phrase *any one insurer* includes all the affiliated companies of a group of insurance companies under common management or control. This rule does not apply to the use of an termination or cutoff date beyond which an individual application for a guaranteed

issue policy will not be accepted by an insurer in those instances where the application has been sent to the applicant in response to his request. It is also inapplicable to solicitations of employees or members of a particular group or association which otherwise would be eligible under specified provisions of the Louisiana Insurance Code for group, blanket or franchise insurance. In cases where an insurance product is marketed on a direct mail basis to prospective insureds by reason of some common relationship with a sponsoring organization, this rule shall be applied separately to each sponsoring organization.

U. An advertisement of a particular policy shall not state or imply that prospective insureds shall be or become members of a special class, group, or quasi-group and as such enjoy special rates, dividends or underwriting privileges, unless such is the fact.

V. An advertisement shall not make unfair or incomplete comparisons of policies, benefits, dividends or rates of other insurers. An advertisement shall not disparage other insurers, insurance producers, policies, services or methods of marketing.

W. For individual deferred annuity products or deposit funds, the following shall apply:

(1) Any illustrations or statements containing or based upon interest rates higher than the guaranteed accumulation interest rates shall likewise set forth with equal prominence comparable illustrations or statements containing or based upon the guaranteed accumulation interest rates. Such higher interest rates shall not be greater than those currently being credited by the company unless such higher rates have been publicly declared by the company with an effective date for new issues not more than three months subsequent to the date of declaration.

(2) If an advertisement states the net premium accumulation interest rate, whether guaranteed or not, it shall also disclose in close proximity thereto and with equal prominence, the actual relationship between the gross and the net premiums.

(3) If any contract does not provide a cash surrender benefit prior to commencement of payment of any annuity benefits, any illustrations or statements concerning such contract shall prominently state that cash surrender benefits are not provided.

X. An advertisement of a life insurance product and an annuity as a single policy or life insurance policy with an annuity rider shall include the following disclosure or substantially similar statement at the point of sale before the application is taken; provided, however, if the policy contains an unconditional refund provision of at least 10 days, then the disclosure statement shall be delivered with or prior to the delivery of the policy, or upon the applicant's request, whichever occurs sooner. The disclosure shall include the first five policy years, the tenth and twentieth policy years, at least one age from 60 to 70, and the scheduled commencement of annuity payments:

GUARANTEED CASH YEAR ANNUITY	LIFE %	GROSS ANNUAL	PREMIUM	VALUE OF
			ANNUITY %	
1		%		
%			\$	
2		%		
%			\$	
3		%		
%			\$	
4		%		
%			\$	
5		%		
%			\$	
10		%		
%			\$	
20		%		
%			\$	
etc.		%		
%			\$	

Information in the disclosure statement shall be based on gross premium. The life and annuity percentages of the total gross premium shall equal 100 percent for each required duration. The guaranteed cash value of the annuity shall be the value at the end of the contract year. A copy of the disclosure statement shall be

provided to the applicant.

Y. An advertisement for the solicitation or sale of a preneed funeral contract or prearrangement as defined in Section 3(H) above which is funded or to be funded by a life insurance policy or annuity contract shall adequately disclose the following:

(1) the fact that a life insurance policy or annuity contract is involved or being used to fund a prearrangement as defined in Section 3(H) of these rules; and

(2) the nature of the relationship among the soliciting agent or agents, the provider of the funeral or cemetery merchandise or services, the administrator and any other person.

Section 7. Identity of Insurer

A. The name of the insurer shall be clearly identified in all advertisements, and if any specific individual policy is advertised it shall be identified either by form number or other appropriate description. If an application is a part of the advertisement, the name of the insurer shall be shown on the application. An advertisement shall not use a trade name, an insurance group designation, name of the parent company of the insurer, name of a particular division of the insurer, service mark, slogan, symbol or other device or reference without disclosing the name of the insurer, if the advertisement would have the capacity or tendency to mislead or deceive as to the true identity of the insurer or create the impression that a company other than the insurer would have any responsibility for the financial obligation under a policy.

B. No advertisement shall use any combination of words, symbols or physical materials which by their content, phraseology, shape, color or other characteristics are so similar to a combination of words, symbols or physical materials used by a governmental program or agency or otherwise appear to be of such a nature that they tend to mislead prospective insureds into believing that the solicitation is in some manner connected with such governmental program or agency.

Section 8. Jurisdictional Licensing and Status of Insurer

A. An advertisement which is intended to be seen or heard beyond the limits of the jurisdiction in which the insurer is licensed shall not imply licensing beyond such limits.

B. An advertisement may state that an insurer or insurance producer is licensed in the state where the advertisement appears, provided it does not exaggerate such fact or suggest or imply that competing insurers or insurance producers may not be so licensed.

C. An advertisement shall not create the impression that the insurer, its financial condition or status, the payment of its claims or the merits, desirability, or advisability of its policy forms or kinds of plans of insurance are recommended or endorsed by an governmental entity. However, where a governmental entity has recommended or endorsed a policy form or plan, such fact may be stated if the entity authorizes its recommendation or endorsement to be used in an advertisement.

Section 9. Statements About the Insurer

An advertisement shall not contain statements, pictures or illustrations which are false or misleading, in fact or by implication, with respect to the assets, liabilities, insurance in force, corporate structure, financial condition, age or relative position of the insurer in the insurance business. An advertisement shall not contain a recommendation by any commercial rating system unless it clearly defines the scope and extent of the recommendation.

Section 10. Enforcement Procedures

A. Each insurer shall maintain at its home or principal office a complete file containing a specimen copy of every printed, published or prepared advertisement of its individual policies and specimen copies of typical printed, published or prepared advertisements of its blanket, franchise and group policies, hereafter disseminated in this State, with a notation indicating the manner and extent of distribution and the form number of any policy advertisement. Such file shall be subject to inspection by this Department. All such advertisements shall be maintained in said file for a period of either four years or until the filing of the next regular report on the examination of the insurer, whichever is the longer period of time.

B. If the Department determines that an advertisement has the capacity or tendency to mislead or deceive the public, the Department may require an insurer or insurance producer to submit all or any part of the advertising material for review or approval prior to use.

C. Each insurer subject to the provisions of these rules shall file with this Department with its Annual Statement a certificate of compliance executed by an authorized officer of the insurer wherein it is stated that to the best of his knowledge, information and belief the advertisements which were disseminated by or on behalf of the insurer in this State during the preceding statement year, or during the portion of such year when these rules were in effect, complied or were made to comply in all respects with the provisions of these rules and the Insurance Laws of this State as implemented and interpreted by these rules.

Section 11. Conflict With Other Rules

It is not intended that these rules conflict with or supersede any rules currently in force or subsequently adopted in this State governing specific aspect of the sale or replacement of life insurance including, but not limited to, rules dealing with life insurance cost comparison indices, deceptive practices in the sale of life insurance, and replacement of life insurance policies. Consequently, no disclosure required under any such rules shall be deemed to be an advertisement within the meaning of these rules.

Section 12. Severability

If any section, term or provision of this rule shall be adjudged invalid for any reason, such judgment shall not affect, impair or invalidate any other Section, term or provision of this rule, and the remaining Sections, terms and provisions shall be and remain in full force and effect.

Section 13. Effective Date

This regulation shall become effective January 1, 1997 and shall apply to any life insurance or annuity advertisement intended for dissemination in this State on or after the effective date.

A public hearing on this proposed regulation will be held on October 29, 1996, at 8:30 a.m., in the Plaza Hearing Room of the Insurance Building located at 950 North Fifth Street, Baton Rouge, LA. All interested persons will be afforded an opportunity to make comments.

Interested persons may submit oral or written comments to, Lester Dunlap, Assistant Commissioner, Department of Insurance, Box 94214, Baton Rouge, LA 70804-9214, telephone (504) 342-5415. Comments will be accepted through the close of business at 4:30 p.m., October 29, 1996.

Brown

James H. "Jim"

Commissioner

**FISCAL AND ECONOMIC IMPACT STATEMENT
FOR ADMINISTRATIVE RULES
RULE TITLE: Regulation 60—Advertising of Life Insurance**

I. ESTIMATED IMPLEMENTATION COSTS (SAVINGS) TO STATE OR LOCAL GOVERNMENTAL UNITS (Summary)

It is not anticipated that the Department of Insurance will incur any costs or savings as a result of implementing this proposed regulation. Any new duties imposed upon the Department by this proposed regulation would be handled by existing personnel.

II. ESTIMATED EFFECT ON REVENUE COLLECTIONS OF STATE OR LOCAL GOVERNMENTAL UNITS (Summary)

Adoption of this proposed amendment will not have any effect on revenue collections by the local governmental units. No provisions in the proposed regulation call for fines or other fees; therefore there would be no additional revenue generated for the state.

III. ESTIMATED COSTS AND/OR ECONOMIC BENEFITS TO DIRECTLY AFFECTED PERSONS OR NONGOVERNMENTAL GROUPS (Summary)

It is possible that this proposed amendment could impose additional costs on insurers; however, there is insufficient data available to determine the amount of such costs, if any.

IV. ESTIMATED EFFECT ON COMPETITION AND EMPLOYMENT (Summary)

It is not anticipated that adoption of this proposed regulation would have any effect on employment or competition.

Brenda St. Romain
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Assistant Commissioner
Management and Finance
Office

H. Gordon

Chief Coordinator of the
Legislative Fiscal