



# reliancestandard

LIFE INSURANCE COMPANY

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## CERTIFICATE OF INSURANCE

We certify that the Person whose name appears on the enrollment card attached to this Certificate is insured for the benefits which apply to his/her class, under Group Policy No. STD 165706 issued to The Public Health Trust/Jackson Health System, the Policyholder.

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.

  
Secretary

  
President

## GROUP WEEKLY INCOME INSURANCE CERTIFICATE

**IMPORTANT NOTICE:** This Certificate of Coverage is an important document and should be kept in a safe place. Sign your name in the space below when you receive this Certificate.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Certificate holder

**If you have any questions about your insurance, or need assistance, please call (866) 752-8116.**

This Weekly Income Certificate amends the previous Weekly Income Certificates and is dated November 15, 2023.



## SCHEDULE OF BENEFITS

**EFFECTIVE DATE:** August 1, 2017, as amended in the Policy through October 1, 2023

**ELIGIBLE CLASSES:** Each active, Full-time and Part-time employee in Company Code 110 and 351, except any person employed on a temporary or seasonal basis.

You may only be insured under one RSL Short Term Disability policy with us.

"Part-time" means scheduled to work for the Policyholder for a minimum of 30 hours during your regular work week. If you are a Part-time employee assigned to a 3/2 schedule Part-time means scheduled to work for the Policyholder an average of 57.5 hours bi-weekly.

**WAITING PERIOD:** First of the month following 60 days of continuous employment.

**INDIVIDUAL EFFECTIVE DATE:** The day the Waiting Period is completed.

**YOUR REINSTATEMENT:** 30 days

### WEEKLY INCOME BENEFIT

**DAY BENEFITS BEGIN:** Benefits, for one period of disability, will be paid as follows:

**INJURY AND SICKNESS:** We will pay benefits from the greater of: (1) the ninth consecutive day of disability; or (2) the expiration of extended illness/accumulated sick time to which you are entitled.

**MAXIMUM BENEFIT PERIOD:** Benefits, for one period of disability, will be paid up to a maximum of twelve (12) weeks.

**WEEKLY INCOME BENEFIT:** The Weekly Income Benefit for each Insured will be 70% of Earnings to a maximum benefit of \$3,000.

**MINIMUM WEEKLY BENEFIT:** In no event will the Weekly Income Benefit be less than \$25.00.

**CHANGES IN WEEKLY INCOME BENEFIT:** Increases and decreases in the benefit amount are effective on the date of the change, provided you are actively at work on the effective date of the change. If you are not actively at work on that date, the effective date of the increase or decreases in the benefit amount will be deferred until the date you return to active work.

**CONTRIBUTIONS:** You are not required to contribute toward the cost of this insurance.

Premium contributions will not be included in your gross income.

For purposes of filing your Federal Income Tax Return, this means that under the law as of the date the Policy was issued, your Weekly Income Benefit might be treated as taxable. It is recommended that you contact your personal tax advisor.

## DEFINITIONS

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

"You", "your" and "yours" means a person who meets the eligibility requirements of the Policy and is enrolled for this insurance.

"Actively at work" and "active work" means actually performing on a full-time or part-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 such as vacation, jury duty and funeral leave, but does not include time off as a result of Injury or Sickness.

"Claimant" means you or a duly authorized representative who makes a claim for benefits under the Policy for a loss covered by the Policy as a result of your Injury or Sickness.

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

"Disabled" means you are:

- (1) unable to do the material duties of your job; and
- (2) under the regular care of a physician.

"Injury" means bodily injury resulting directly from an accident, independent of all other causes. The injury must cause disability which begins while you are insured under the Policy.

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

If hourly employees are insured, the number of hours worked during a regular work week, not to exceed forty (40) hours per week, will be used to determine weekly earnings.

"Physician" means any duly licensed practitioner who is recognized by the law of the state in which treatment is received as qualified to treat the type of Injury or Sickness for which claim is made. The physician may not be you or a member of your immediate family.

"Regular Care" means Treatment that is administered as frequently as is medically required according to guidelines established by nationally recognized authorities, medical research, healthcare organizations, governmental agencies or rehabilitative organizations. Care must be rendered personally by your Physician according to generally accepted medical standards in your locality, be of a demonstrable medical value and be necessary to meet your basic health needs.

"Retirement" means the effective date of your:

- (1) retirement pension benefits under any plan of a state, county or municipal retirement system, if such pension benefits include any credit for employment with the Policyholder;
- (2) retirement pension benefits under any plan which the Policyholder sponsors, makes or has made contributions;
- (3) retirement benefits under the United States Social Security Act of 1935, as amended, or under any similar plan or act.

Retirement Benefits do not include:

- (1) a federal government employee pension benefit;
- (2) a thrift plan;
- (3) a deferred compensation plan;
- (4) an individual retirement account (IRA);
- (5) a tax sheltered annuity (TSA);
- (6) a stock ownership plan;
- (7) a profit sharing plan; or
- (8) section 401(k), 403(b) or 457 plans.

"Sickness" means illness or disease causing disability which begins while you are insured under the Policy. Sickness includes pregnancy, childbirth, miscarriage or abortion, or any complications therefrom.

"Treatment" means care consistent with the diagnosis of your Injury or Sickness that has its purpose of maximizing your medical improvement. It must be provided by a Physician whose specialty or experience is most appropriate for the Injury or Sickness and conforms with generally accepted medical standards to effectively manage and treat your Injury or Sickness.

## GENERAL PROVISIONS

**INCONTESTABILITY:** Any statements made by you or on your behalf 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 you are covered. The following rules apply to each statement:

- (1) No statement will be used in a contest unless:
  - (a) it is in written form signed by you, or on your behalf; and
  - (b) a copy of such written instrument is or has been furnished to you, your beneficiary or legal representative.
- (2) If the statement relates to your 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 lifetime.

**NOT IN LIEU OF WORKERS' COMPENSATION:** The Policy is not a Workers' Compensation Policy. It does not provide Workers' Compensation benefits.

## CLAIMS PROVISIONS

**NOTICE OF CLAIM:** Written notice must be given to us within thirty-one (31) days after the loss occurs, or as soon as reasonably possible. The notice should be sent to us at our Administrative Office or to our authorized agent. The notice should include your name and the Policy Number.

**CLAIM FORMS:** When we receive notice of claim, we will send the claimant the forms to file the proof of loss. If we do not send them within fifteen (15) days after we receive notice, then the proof of loss requirements will be met by giving us a written statement of the nature and extent of the loss within ninety (90) days after the loss began.

**WRITTEN PROOF OF LOSS:** For any covered loss, written proof must be sent to us within ninety (90) days. If it is not reasonably possible to give proof within ninety (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 one (1) year unless the claimant is legally incapable of doing so.

**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 for each period as we become liable. We will pay benefits to you, if living, or else to your estate.

If you have died and we have not paid all benefits due, we may pay up to \$1,000 to any relative by blood or marriage, or to the executor or administrator of your estate. The payment will only be made to persons entitled to it. An expense incurred as a result of your last illness, death or burial will entitle a person to this payment. The payments will cease when a valid claim is made for the benefit. We will not be liable for any payment we have made in good faith.

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.

**PHYSICAL EXAMINATION:** At our own expense, we will have the right to have you examined as reasonably necessary when a claim is pending. We can have an autopsy made unless prohibited by law.

**LEGAL ACTIONS:** No legal action may be brought against us to recover on the Policy within 60 days after written proof of loss has been given as required by the Policy. No action may be brought after the expiration of the applicable statute of limitations from the time written proof of loss is required to be given.

## EFFECTIVE DATE AND TERMINATION

**EFFECTIVE DATE OF INDIVIDUAL INSURANCE:** If the Policyholder pays the entire premium, your insurance will go into effect on the date stated on the Schedule of Benefits.

If you pay a part of the premium, you must apply in writing for the insurance to go into effect. You will become insured on the date stated on the Schedule of Benefits, except that the insurance will go into effect on the later of:

- (1) the date you apply, if you apply within thirty-one (31) days of the date you are first eligible; or
- (2) the date we approve any required proof of good health. We require proof of good health if you apply:
  - (a) after thirty-one (31) days from the date you first become eligible; or
  - (b) after you terminated this insurance but remained in a class eligible for this insurance.

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

If you are not actively at work on the day your insurance is to go into effect, the insurance will go into effect on the day you return to active work for one full day.

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

- (1) the date the Policy terminates; or
- (2) the end of the pay period 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 you; or
- (4) the date you enter military service (not including Reserve or National Guard).

**YOUR REINSTATEMENT:** If you are terminated, your insurance may be reinstated if you return to Active Work with the Policyholder within the period of time as shown on the Schedule of Benefits page. You must also be a member of an Eligible Class, as shown on the Schedule of Benefits page, and have been:

- (1) on a leave of absence approved by the Policyholder; or
- (2) on temporary lay-off.

You will not be required to fulfill the eligibility requirements of the Policy again. The insurance will go into effect on the day you return to Active Work. If you return after having resigned or having been discharged, you will be required to fulfill the eligibility requirements of the Policy again. If you return after terminating at your request or for failure to pay premium when due, proof of good health must be approved by us before you may be reinstated.

**EXTENSION OF BENEFITS:** Termination of the Policy will not affect any claim which was covered prior to termination, subject to the terms and conditions of the Policy.



## WEEKLY INCOME INSURANCE

**BENEFITS PAYABLE:** We will pay Weekly Income Benefits if you:

- (1) are Disabled due to Sickness or Injury; and
- (2) become Disabled while insured by the Policy.

Weekly Income Benefits are reduced by any income from all Other Sources as listed below and payable from the Day Benefits Begin. Benefits are payable up to the Maximum Benefit Period for one period of disability. Weekly Income Benefits, the Day Benefits Begin and the Maximum Benefit Period can be found on the Schedule of Benefits.

If we have underpaid any benefit for any reason, we will make a lump sum payment. If we have overpaid any benefit for any reason, the overpayment must be repaid to us. At our option, we may reduce the Weekly Income Benefit or ask for a lump sum refund. If we reduce the benefit, the Minimum Benefit, if any, as shown on the Schedule of Benefits page, would not apply. Interest does not accrue on any underpaid or overpaid benefit unless required by applicable law.

**PERIOD OF DISABILITY:** Each period of disability starts from the first day benefits are due. It will end when:

- (1) you are no longer disabled;
- (2) all benefits due have been paid; or
- (3) you have retired from employment with the Policyholder.

Two or more disabilities will be deemed the same period of disability if they are from:

- (1) the same or related causes and are not separated by one (1) week of active work; or
- (2) a different cause and are not separated by one (1) full day of active work.

**EXCLUSIONS:** Weekly Income Benefits are not paid for any period of disability:

- (1) caused or contributed to by an intentionally self-inflicted Injury; or
- (2) caused or contributed to by an act of war, declared or undeclared; or
- (3) caused by an Injury or Sickness that occurs while you are confined to any penal or correctional institution; or
- (4) while you are confined in any penal or correctional institution; or
- (5) caused or contributed to by your committing a felony; or
- (6) caused or contributed to by Sickness which is covered by a Workers' Compensation Act, or other worker's disability law; or
- (7) caused or contributed to by Injury which occurs out of or in the course of work for wage or profit; or
- (8) caused or contributed to by any of the following:
  - (a) cosmetic surgery or treatment primarily to change appearance;
  - (b) in vitro fertilization;
  - (c) embryo transfer procedures;
  - (d) artificial insemination;
  - (e) reversal of sterilization;
  - (f) liposuction; or
  - (g) radial keratotomy.

“Other Sources” are disability benefits payable under any of the following Acts:

- (a) California Unemployment Compensation Disability Insurance;
- (b) the Hawaii Temporary Disability Insurance Law;
- (c) the New Jersey Temporary Disability Benefits Law;
- (d) the New York Disability Benefits Law;
- (e) the Rhode Island Disability Benefits Law; or
- (f) the Puerto Rico Disability Benefits Act.

“Other Sources” for the purpose of the Partial Disability Benefit only, are disability benefits payable under any of the following Acts:

- (a) California Unemployment Compensation Disability Insurance;
- (b) the Hawaii Temporary Disability Insurance Law;
- (c) the New Jersey Temporary Disability Benefits Law;
- (d) the New York Disability Benefits Law;
- (e) the Rhode Island Disability Benefits Law; or
- (f) the Puerto Rico Disability Benefits Act.

## **PARTIAL DISABILITY BENEFIT**

We will pay Partial Disability Benefits if:

- (1) you have been Disabled for thirty (30) days;
- (2) a Weekly Income Benefit is payable under the Policy for such period of disability; and
- (3) you accept Rehabilitative Employment.

Benefits are paid up to the Maximum Benefit Period as shown on the Schedule of Benefits for one period of disability.

Partial Disability Benefits will equal the Weekly Income Benefits payable under the Policy but in no event will the sum of:

- (1) the Partial Disability Benefit;
- (2) income from Rehabilitative Employment; and
- (3) income from all Other Sources;

exceed 100% of your Earnings. If it does, the Partial Disability Benefit will be reduced by one dollar for every dollar the sum exceeds 100%. The Partial Disability Benefit is subject to the Maximum Benefit Period shown in the Schedule of Benefits for any one period of disability.

"Rehabilitative Employment" means working in any gainful occupation for which your training, education or experience will reasonably allow. The Rehabilitative Employment and a plan of rehabilitation must be supervised by a Physician or licensed rehabilitation specialist, and both must be approved by us. Rehabilitative Employment includes performing all of the material duties of your regular occupation on a part-time basis or some of the material duties on a full-time basis. It does not include performing all of the material duties of your regular occupation on a full-time basis.

## **TRANSFER OF INSURANCE COVERAGE**

If you were covered under any group weekly income insurance plan maintained by the Policyholder prior to the Policy's Effective Date, you will be insured under the Policy, provided that you are Actively At Work and meet all of the requirements for being an Eligible Person under the Policy on its effective date.

If you were covered under the prior group weekly income disability plan maintained by the Policyholder prior to the Policy's Effective Date, but were not Actively at Work due to Injury or Sickness on the Effective Date of the Policy and would otherwise qualify as an Eligible Person, coverage will be allowed under the following conditions:

- (1) You must have been insured with the prior carrier on the date of the transfer; and
- (2) Premiums must be paid.

If you are receiving weekly income benefits, become eligible for coverage under another group weekly income disability insurance plan, or have a period of recurrent disability under the prior group weekly income insurance plan, you will not be covered under the Policy. If premiums have been paid on your behalf under the Policy, those premiums will be refunded. However, if you are not eligible for coverage under the Policy due to your receiving group weekly income benefits or having a period of recurrent disability under the prior group weekly income plan, you will be covered under the Policy upon your return to Active work, provided that you meet all the requirements for being an Eligible Person under the Policy. No benefits are payable under the Policy for a disability which began prior to the Policy's Effective Date.

### **Waiting Period Credit**

If you are an Eligible Person on the Effective Date of the Policy, any time used to satisfy any Waiting Period of the prior group weekly income insurance plan will be credited towards the satisfaction of the Waiting Period of the Policy.

## **EXTENSION OF COVERAGE UNDER THE FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE ACT AND UNIFORMED SERVICES EMPLOYMENT AND REEMPLOYMENT RIGHTS ACT (USERRA)**

### **Family and Medical Leave of Absence:**

We will continue your coverage in accordance with the Policyholder's policies regarding leave under the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993, as amended, or any similar state law, as amended, if:

- (1) the premium for you continues to be paid during the leave; and
- (2) the Policyholder has approved your leave in writing and provides a copy of such approval within thirty-one (31) days of our request.

As long as the above requirements are satisfied, we will continue coverage until the later of:

- (1) the end of the leave period required by the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993, as amended; or
- (2) the end of the leave period required by any similar state law, as amended.

### **Military Services Leave of Absence:**

We will continue your coverage in accordance with the Policyholder's policies regarding Military Services Leave of Absence under USERRA if the premium for you continues to be paid during the leave.

As long as the above requirement is satisfied, we will continue coverage until the end of the period required by USERRA.

The Policy, while coverage is being continued under the Military Services Leave of Absence extension, does not cover any loss which occurs while on active duty in the military if such loss is caused by or arises out of such military service, including but not limited to war or any act of war, whether declared or undeclared.

While you are on a Family and Medical Leave of Absence for any reason other than your own illness, injury or disability or Military Services Leave of Absence you will be considered Actively at Work. Any changes such as revisions to coverage due to age, class or salary changes, as applicable, will apply during the leave except that increases in the amount of insurance, whether automatic or subject to election, will not be effective if you are not considered Actively at Work until you have returned to Active Work for one (1) full day.

A leave of absence taken in accordance with the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 or USERRA will run concurrently with any other applicable continuation of insurance provision in the Policy.

Your coverage will cease under this extension on the earliest of:

- (1) the date the Policy terminates; or
- (2) the end of the period for which premium has been paid for you; or
- (3) the date such leave should end in accordance with the Policyholder's policies regarding Family and Medical Leave of Absence and Military Services Leave of Absence in compliance with the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993, as amended and USERRA. Coverage will not be terminated if you become Disabled during the period of the leave and are eligible for benefits according to the terms of the Policy. Any Weekly Benefit which becomes payable will be based on your Earnings immediately prior to the date of Disability.

Should the Policyholder choose not to continue your coverage during a Family and Medical Leave of Absence and/or Military Services Leave of Absence, your coverage will be reinstated.

## **Claim Procedures**



**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:

Matrix Absence Management, Inc.  
2421 W. Peoria Avenue  
Suite 200  
Phoenix, AZ 85029-4940

Claim forms are available from your benefits representative or may be requested by writing to the above address or by calling 1-800-866-2301.

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.

### 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; and
4. 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;
5. 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;
6. 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
7. 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; and
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.

### 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 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;
5. 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;
6. 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
7. 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.