



## MAINE BUREAU OF INSURANCE CONSUMER HEALTH CARE DIVISION

- ❖ Do you need answers to your insurance questions?
- ❖ Are you having a problem with your insurance company?

### WE CAN HELP!

We help Mainers for **FREE**, in person, by phone, via email and through the mail.

Last year, the Bureau's health, life & disability staff responded to over 5,000 questions from the public, helped over 500 consumers with written complaints and obtained over \$1 million in either claims paid or money returned to consumers.

### CONTACT US:

Maine Bureau of Insurance  
34 State House Station  
Augusta, Maine 04333  
Toll Free: 1-800-300-5000 (In Maine)  
Long Distance: (207)-624-8475  
TDD: (207) 624-8563  
Fax: (207) 624-8599  
[www.maine.gov/insurance](http://www.maine.gov/insurance)

## HEALTH INSURANCE

The Bureau regulates fully-insured individual or group plans which must follow Maine laws. (Other group plans, called self-insured plans, follow federal laws; if you're not sure which kind of plan you have, check with your Human Resource Office.) We can answer questions about any kind of health insurance.

*Things to know about health insurance:*

- ❖ In Maine, you cannot be denied insurance, or charged more, because of a health condition.
- ❖ If you don't have a break in coverage for so many days (specified in law), your new insurance must cover any pre-existing condition to the same extent as the old policy did. (Call us for details on the number of days.)
- ❖ You have the right: to see the reason for a denied claim in writing; to know who is making decisions about your claim; to ask questions; and to appeal decisions made by your health insurance company.

## MEDICARE SUPPLEMENT INSURANCE (MEDIGAP)

Medicare Supplement insurance covers some of the expenses not paid by Medicare.

*Things to know about Medicare supplement insurance:*

- ❖ Medicare supplement insurance products come in 10 standard plans, plus one high deductible plan. Any

insurance plan (A-L) under a particular letter will have the same benefits regardless of which company sells it.

- ❖ Plan "A" is the one plan that **must** be offered by all insurers. Insurers may sell any of the other plans.
- ❖ If, for any reason, you are not happy with your policy, you can return it within 30 days and all your money will be returned.

## LONG TERM CARE INSURANCE

If you develop a chronic physical or cognitive impairment, you may need long term care in a nursing or assisted living facility, or at home. Long term care insurance helps pay for such care. Whether you should buy a long term care insurance policy will depend upon your age, health status, income, and assets.

*Things to know about long term care insurance:*

- ❖ Medicare, Medicare supplement insurance and health insurance policies will not pay for long term care.
- ❖ The services covered and benefit amounts will vary from policy to policy.
- ❖ Beware of long term care insurance advertising that appears to be from an official government source. Only private insurance companies sell long term care insurance.

## LIFE INSURANCE

Life insurance provides income replacement to beneficiaries in the event of a death.

*Things to know about life insurance:*

- ❖ Life insurance comes in two basic types: term and cash-value. Term insurance generally has lower premiums in the early years, but does not build up cash values that you can use in the future. Cash-value insurance includes: whole life, universal life, and variable life.
- ❖ Base your choice on your needs now and in the future and on what you can afford.
- ❖ We can help you locate a lost life insurance policy, or your insurance company.

## DISABILITY INSURANCE

Disability policies can replace part of your income should you become unable to work.

*Things to know about disability insurance:*

- ❖ There are two main types: short term and long term.
- ❖ Most insurance companies reduce the disability benefit by the amount of other income you may receive (such as Social Security).

## ANNUITIES

An annuity is a contract in which an insurance company gives you a series of payments in return for premiums you've paid.

*Things to know about annuities:*

- ❖ Annuities come in two basic types: fixed and variable. With a fixed annuity, the insurance company guarantees the rate of return and the payout. With a variable annuity, the rate of return varies with the stocks, bonds, etc. that you choose.
- ❖ Avoid being fooled by deceptive sales practices of some agents; watch out for high pressure sales pitches. Remember, if it seems too good to be true, it probably is.
- ❖ If you suspect you've been a victim of deceptive sales practices, contact us immediately.

## HOW DO I FILE A COMPLAINT AGAINST MY INSURANCE COMPANY?

- ❖ You can file a complaint at any time with the Bureau of Insurance.
- ❖ Complaints can be filed by mail, faxed (we will send you a form to fill out), or by logging on to our website.

## FOR MORE INFORMATION:

We have brochures on our website (or that we can mail to you) about the topics mentioned in this brochure, plus information on:

- ❖ Individual and small employer insurance
- ❖ Health insurance company finances
- ❖ Insurance company complaint ratios
- ❖ Independent external reviews
- ❖ Viatical & life settlements



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