REQUEST FOR MODEL LAW DEVELOPMENT

This form is intended to gather information to support the development of a new model law or amendment to an existing model law. Prior to development of a new or amended model law, approval of the respective Parent Committee and the NAIC’s Executive Committee is required. The NAIC’s Executive Committee will consider whether the request fits the criteria for model law development. Please complete all questions and provide as much detail as necessary to help in this determination.

Please check whether this is:  □ New Model Law  or  ☑ Amendment to Existing Model

1. Name of group to be responsible for drafting the model:
   Contingent Deferred Annuity (A) Working Group

2. NAIC staff support contact information:
   Jennifer R. Cook, jcook@naic.org, Phone: 202-471-3986

3. Please provide a description and proposed title of the new model law. If an existing law, please provide the title, attach a current version to this form and reference the section(s) proposed to be amended.
   Suitability in Annuity Transactions Model Regulation (#275)
   Revise to specifically reference its applicability to the sale of contingent deferred annuities (CDAs), including the one-time, four hour training and the product-specific training requirements.

4. Does the model law meet the Model Law Criteria?  ☑ Yes  or  □ No  (Check one)
   (If answering no to any of these questions, please reevaluate charge and proceed accordingly to address issues).
   a. Does the subject of the model law necessitate a national standard and require uniformity amongst all states?  ☑ Yes  or  □ No  (Check one)
      If yes, please explain why
      Due to increasing interest at state and federal levels in both suitability and mitigating longevity risk, state laws should be clear as to the applicability of their laws to CDAs.
   b. Does Committee believe NAIC members should devote significant regulator and Association resources to educate, communicate and support this model law?
      ☑ Yes  or  □ No  (Check one)
5. What is the likelihood that your Committee will be able to draft and adopt the model law within one year from the date of Executive Committee approval?

☐ 1  ☑ 2  ☐ 3  ☐ 4  ☐ 5  (Check one)

High Likelihood  Low Likelihood

Explanation, if necessary:

6. What is the likelihood that a minimum two-thirds majority of NAIC members would ultimately vote to adopt the proposed model law?

☐ 1  ☐ 2  ☐ 3  ☐ 4  ☐ 5  (Check one)

High Likelihood  Low Likelihood

Explanation, if necessary: States will want to include this clarification, especially since the federal government continues to scrutinize state's ability to protect consumers, including the adequacy of state suitability laws.

7. What is the likelihood that state legislature will adopt the model law in a uniform manner within three years of adoption by the NAIC?

☐ 1  ☐ 2  ☑ 3  ☐ 4  ☐ 5  (Check one)

High Likelihood  Low Likelihood

Explanation, if necessary:

8. Is this model law referenced in the Accreditation Standards? If so, does the standard require the model law to be adopted in a substantially similar manner?

No

9. Is this model law in response to or impacted by federal laws or regulations? If yes, please explain.

No
SUITABILITY IN ANNUITY TRANSACTIONS
MODEL REGULATION

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Section 1. Purpose

A. The purpose of this regulation is to require insurers to establish a system to supervise recommendations and to set forth standards and procedures for recommendations to consumers that result in transactions involving annuity products so that the insurance needs and financial objectives of consumers at the time of the transaction are appropriately addressed.

B. Nothing herein shall be construed to create or imply a private cause of action for a violation of this regulation.

Drafting Note: The language of subsection B comes from the NAIC Unfair Trade Practices Act. If a State has adopted different language, it should be substituted for subsection B.

Section 2. Scope

This regulation shall apply to any recommendation to purchase, exchange or replace an annuity made to a consumer by an insurance producer, or an insurer where no producer is involved, that results in the purchase, exchange or replacement recommended.

Section 3. Authority

This regulation is issued under the authority of [insert reference to enabling legislation].

Drafting Note: States may wish to use the Unfair Trade Practices Act as enabling legislation or may pass a law with specific authority to adopt this regulation.

Section 4. Exemptions

Unless otherwise specifically included, this regulation shall not apply to transactions involving:

A. Direct response solicitations where there is no recommendation based on information collected from the consumer pursuant to this regulation;

B. Contracts used to fund:

   (1) An employee pension or welfare benefit plan that is covered by the Employee Retirement and Income Security Act (ERISA);
(2) A plan described by sections 401(a), 401(k), 403(b), 408(k) or 408(p) of the Internal Revenue Code (IRC), as amended, if established or maintained by an employer;

(3) A government or church plan defined in section 414 of the IRC, a government or church welfare benefit plan, or a deferred compensation plan of a state or local government or tax exempt organization under section 457 of the IRC;

(4) A nonqualified deferred compensation arrangement established or maintained by an employer or plan sponsor;

(5) Settlements of or assumptions of liabilities associated with personal injury litigation or any dispute or claim resolution process; or

(6) Formal prepaid funeral contracts.

Section 5. Definitions

A. “Annuity” means an annuity, that is an insurance product under State law that is individually solicited, whether the product is classified as an individual or group annuity.

B. “Continuing education credit” or “CE credit” means one continuing education credit as defined in [insert reference in State law or regulations governing producer continuing education course approval].

C. “Continuing education provider” or “CE provider” means an individual or entity that is approved to offer continuing education courses pursuant to [insert reference in State law or regulations governing producer continuing education course approval].

D. “FINRA” means the Financial Industry Regulatory Authority or a succeeding agency.

E. “Insurer” means a company required to be licensed under the laws of this state to provide insurance products, including annuities.

F. “Insurance producer” means a person required to be licensed under the laws of this state to sell, solicit or negotiate insurance, including annuities.

G. “Recommendation” means advice provided by an insurance producer, or an insurer where no producer is involved, to an individual consumer that results in a purchase, exchange or replacement of an annuity in accordance with that advice.

H. “Replacement” means a transaction in which a new policy or contract is to be purchased, and it is known or should be known to the proposing producer, or to the proposing insurer if there is no producer, that by reason of the transaction, an existing policy or contract has been or is to be:

(1) Lapsed, forfeited, surrendered or partially surrendered, assigned to the replacing insurer or otherwise terminated;

(2) Converted to reduced paid-up insurance, continued as extended term insurance, or otherwise reduced in value by the use of nonforfeiture benefits or other policy values;

(3) Amended so as to effect either a reduction in benefits or in the term for which coverage would otherwise remain in force or for which benefits would be paid;

(4) Reissued with any reduction in cash value; or

(5) Used in a financed purchase.

Drafting Note: The definition of “replacement” above is derived from the NAIC Life Insurance and Annuities Replacement Model Regulation. If a State has a different definition for “replacement,” the State should either insert the text of that
definition in place of the definition above or modify the definition above to provide a cross-reference to the definition of “replacement” that is in State law or regulation.

I. “Suitability information” means information that is reasonably appropriate to determine the suitability of a recommendation, including the following:

(1) Age;
(2) Annual income;
(3) Financial situation and needs, including the financial resources used for the funding of the annuity;
(4) Financial experience;
(5) Financial objectives;
(6) Intended use of the annuity;
(7) Financial time horizon;
(8) Existing assets, including investment and life insurance holdings;
(9) Liquidity needs;
(10) Liquid net worth;
(11) Risk tolerance; and
(12) Tax status.

Section 6. Duties of Insurers and of Insurance Producers

A. In recommending to a consumer the purchase of an annuity or the exchange of an annuity that results in another insurance transaction or series of insurance transactions, the insurance producer, or the insurer where no producer is involved, shall have reasonable grounds for believing that the recommendation is suitable for the consumer on the basis of the facts disclosed by the consumer as to his or her investments and other insurance products and as to his or her financial situation and needs, including the consumer’s suitability information, and that there is a reasonable basis to believe all of the following:

(1) The consumer has been reasonably informed of various features of the annuity, such as the potential surrender period and surrender charge, potential tax penalty if the consumer sells, exchanges, surrenders or annuitizes the annuity, mortality and expense fees, investment advisory fees, potential charges for and features of riders, limitations on interest returns, insurance and investment components and market risk;

Drafting Note: If a State has adopted the NAIC Annuity Disclosure Model Regulation, the State should insert an additional phrase in paragraph (1) above to explain that the requirements of this section are intended to supplement and not replace the disclosure requirements of the NAIC Annuity Disclosure Model Regulation.

(2) The consumer would benefit from certain features of the annuity, such as tax-deferred growth, annuitization or death or living benefit;

(3) The particular annuity as a whole, the underlying subaccounts to which funds are allocated at the time of purchase or exchange of the annuity, and riders and similar product enhancements, if any, are suitable (and in the case of an exchange or replacement, the transaction as a whole is suitable) for the particular consumer based on his or her suitability information; and
(4) In the case of an exchange or replacement of an annuity, the exchange or replacement is suitable including taking into consideration whether:

(a) The consumer will incur a surrender charge, be subject to the commencement of a new surrender period, lose existing benefits (such as death, living or other contractual benefits), or be subject to increased fees, investment advisory fees or charges for riders and similar product enhancements;

(b) The consumer would benefit from product enhancements and improvements; and

(c) The consumer has had another annuity exchange or replacement and, in particular, an exchange or replacement within the preceding 36 months.

B. Prior to the execution of a purchase, exchange or replacement of an annuity resulting from a recommendation, an insurance producer, or an insurer where no producer is involved, shall make reasonable efforts to obtain the consumer’s suitability information.

C. Except as permitted under subsection D, an insurer shall not issue an annuity recommended to a consumer unless there is a reasonable basis to believe the annuity is suitable based on the consumer’s suitability information.

D. (1) Except as provided under paragraph (2) of this subsection, neither an insurance producer, nor an insurer, shall have any obligation to a consumer under subsection A or C related to any annuity transaction if:

(a) No recommendation is made;

(b) A recommendation was made and was later found to have been prepared based on materially inaccurate information provided by the consumer;

(c) A consumer refuses to provide relevant suitability information and the annuity transaction is not recommended; or

(d) A consumer decides to enter into an annuity transaction that is not based on a recommendation of the insurer or the insurance producer.

(2) An insurer’s issuance of an annuity subject to paragraph (1) shall be reasonable under all the circumstances actually known to the insurer at the time the annuity is issued.

E. An insurance producer or, where no insurance producer is involved, the responsible insurer representative, shall at the time of sale:

(1) Make a record of any recommendation subject to section 6A of this regulation;

(2) Obtain a customer signed statement documenting a customer’s refusal to provide suitability information, if any; and

(3) Obtain a customer signed statement acknowledging that an annuity transaction is not recommended if a customer decides to enter into an annuity transaction that is not based on the insurance producer’s or insurer’s recommendation.

F. (1) An insurer shall establish a supervision system that is reasonably designed to achieve the insurer’s and its insurance producers’ compliance with this regulation, including, but not limited to, the following:

(a) The insurer shall maintain reasonable procedures to inform its insurance producers of the requirements of this regulation and shall incorporate the requirements of this regulation into relevant insurance producer training manuals;
(b) The insurer shall establish standards for insurance producer product training and shall maintain reasonable procedures to require its insurance producers to comply with the requirements of section 7 of this regulation;

(c) The insurer shall provide product-specific training and training materials which explain all material features of its annuity products to its insurance producers;

(d) The insurer shall maintain procedures for review of each recommendation prior to issuance of an annuity that are designed to ensure that there is a reasonable basis to determine that a recommendation is suitable. Such review procedures may apply a screening system for the purpose of identifying selected transactions for additional review and may be accomplished electronically or through other means including, but not limited to, physical review. Such an electronic or other system may be designed to require additional review only of those transactions identified for additional review by the selection criteria;

(e) The insurer shall maintain reasonable procedures to detect recommendations that are not suitable. This may include, but is not limited to, confirmation of consumer suitability information, systematic customer surveys, interviews, confirmation letters and programs of internal monitoring. Nothing in this subparagraph prevents an insurer from complying with this subparagraph by applying sampling procedures, or by confirming suitability information after issuance or delivery of the annuity; and

(f) The insurer shall annually provide a report to senior management, including to the senior manager responsible for audit functions, which details a review, with appropriate testing, reasonably designed to determine the effectiveness of the supervision system, the exceptions found, and corrective action taken or recommended, if any.

(2) (a) Nothing in this subsection restricts an insurer from contracting for performance of a function (including maintenance of procedures) required under paragraph (1). An insurer is responsible for taking appropriate corrective action and may be subject to sanctions and penalties pursuant to section 8 of this regulation regardless of whether the insurer contracts for performance of a function and regardless of the insurer’s compliance with subparagraph (b) of this paragraph.

(b) An insurer’s supervision system under paragraph (1) shall include supervision of contractual performance under this subsection. This includes, but is not limited to, the following:

(i) Monitoring and, as appropriate, conducting audits to assure that the contracted function is properly performed; and

(ii) Annually obtaining a certification from a senior manager who has responsibility for the contracted function that the manager has a reasonable basis to represent, and does represent, that the function is properly performed.

(3) An insurer is not required to include in its system of supervision an insurance producer’s recommendations to consumers of products other than the annuities offered by the insurer.

G. An insurance producer shall not dissuade, or attempt to dissuade, a consumer from:

(1) Truthfully responding to an insurer’s request for confirmation of suitability information;

(2) Filing a complaint; or

(3) Cooperating with the investigation of a complaint.

H. (1) Sales made in compliance with FINRA requirements pertaining to suitability and supervision of annuity transactions shall satisfy the requirements under this regulation. This subsection applies to
FINRA broker-dealer sales of variable annuities and fixed annuities if the suitability and supervision is similar to those applied to variable annuity sales. However, nothing in this subsection shall limit the insurance commissioner’s ability to enforce (including investigate) the provisions of this regulation.

**Drafting Note:** Non-compliance with FINRA requirements means that the broker-dealer transaction is subject to compliance with the suitability requirements of this regulation.

(2) For paragraph (1) to apply, an insurer shall:

(a) Monitor the FINRA member broker-dealer using information collected in the normal course of an insurer’s business; and

(b) Provide to the FINRA member broker-dealer information and reports that are reasonably appropriate to assist the FINRA member broker-dealer to maintain its supervision system.

**Section 7. Insurance Producer Training**

A. An insurance producer shall not solicit the sale of an annuity product unless the insurance producer has adequate knowledge of the product to recommend the annuity and the insurance producer is in compliance with the insurer’s standards for product training. An insurance producer may rely on insurer-provided product-specific training standards and materials to comply with this subsection.

B. (1) (a) An insurance producer who engages in the sale of annuity products shall complete a one-time four (4) credit training course approved by the department of insurance and provided by the department of insurance-approved education provider.

(b) Insurance producers who hold a life insurance line of authority on the effective date of this regulation and who desire to sell annuities shall complete the requirements of this subsection within six (6) months after the effective date of this regulation. Individuals who obtain a life insurance line of authority on or after the effective date of this regulation may not engage in the sale of annuities until the annuity training course required under this subsection has been completed.

(2) The minimum length of the training required under this subsection shall be sufficient to qualify for at least four (4) CE credits, but may be longer.

(3) The training required under this subsection shall include information on the following topics:

(a) The types of annuities and various classifications of annuities;

(b) Identification of the parties to an annuity;

(c) How product fixed, variable and indexed specific annuity contract provisions/features affect consumers;

(d) The application of income taxation of qualified and non-qualified annuities;

(e) The primary uses of annuities; and

(f) Appropriate sales practices, replacement and disclosure requirements.

(4) Providers of courses intended to comply with this subsection shall cover all topics listed in the prescribed outline and shall not present any marketing information or provide training on sales techniques or provide specific information about a particular insurer’s products. Additional topics may be offered in conjunction with and in addition to the required outline.

(5) A provider of an annuity training course intended to comply with this subsection shall register as a CE provider in this State and comply with the rules and guidelines applicable to insurance
producer continuing education courses as set forth in [insert reference to State law or regulations governing producer continuing education course approval].

(6) Annuity training courses may be conducted and completed by classroom or self-study methods in accordance with [insert reference to State law or regulations governing producer continuing education course approval].

(7) Providers of annuity training shall comply with the reporting requirements and shall issue certificates of completion in accordance with [insert reference to State law or regulations governing producer continuing education course approval].

(8) The satisfaction of the training requirements of another State that are substantially similar to the provisions of this subsection shall be deemed to satisfy the training requirements of this subsection in this State.

(9) An insurer shall verify that an insurance producer has completed the annuity training course required under this subsection before allowing the producer to sell an annuity product for that insurer. An insurer may satisfy its responsibility under this subsection by obtaining certificates of completion of the training course or obtaining reports provided by commissioner-sponsored database systems or vendors or from a reasonably reliable commercial database vendor that has a reporting arrangement with approved insurance education providers.

* * * * * * * * *
Project History

SUITABILITY IN ANNUITY TRANSACTIONS MODEL REGULATION (#275)

1. Description of the Project, Issues Addressed, etc.

The *Suitability in Annuity Transactions Model Regulation* (#275) was revised to clarify its application to contingent deferred annuities (CDAs) by:

- Deleting references to variable and fixed and leaving the broader reference to “annuities” in Section 6H, which states that sales made in compliance with Financial Industry Regulatory Authority (FINRA) requirements pertaining to suitability and supervision of annuity transactions shall satisfy the requirements under this regulation.

- Adding to Section 7. Producer Training the clarification that training include how *product-specific* annuity contract features affect consumers.

2. Name of Group Responsible for Drafting the Model and States Participating

The Contingent Deferred Annuity (A) Working Group of the Life Insurance and Annuities (A) Committee was responsible for drafting the revisions.

*States Participating:*

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>State</th>
<th>Notes</th>
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<tr>
<td>Ted Nickel, Chair</td>
<td>Wisconsin</td>
<td>Roger A. Sevigny/Keith Nyhan</td>
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<tr>
<td>Robert Chester</td>
<td>Connecticut</td>
<td>Joseph Torti III/Elizabeth Dwyer</td>
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<td>Jim Mumford</td>
<td>Iowa</td>
<td>Michael Humphreys</td>
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<td>Jason Lapham</td>
<td>Kansas</td>
<td>Tomasz Serbinowski</td>
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<td>Bruce R. Ramge</td>
<td>Nebraska</td>
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3. Project Authorized by What Charge and Date First Given to the Group

The project was authorized in 2012 by the following charge: Appoint a Contingent Deferred Annuity (A) Working Group to develop NAIC guidelines and/or model bulletin that can serve as a reference for states interested in modifying their annuity laws to clarify their applicability to contingent deferred annuities (CDAs) and, as part of this work, review existing NAIC model laws and regulations applicable to consumer protection issues associated with CDAs.

4. A General Description of the Drafting Process (e.g., drafted by a subgroup, interested parties, the full group, etc). Include any parties outside the members that participated.

The revisions to the *Suitability in Annuity Transactions Model Regulation* (#275) were drafted by the Contingent Deferred Annuity (A) Working Group. The revisions, and comments received on them, were reviewed and discussed by the Working Group. All comments were posted on the NAIC website. The Working Group adopted a draft of proposed revisions at the 2014 Fall National Meeting, which was then forwarded to the Life Insurance and Annuities (A) Committee. The Life Insurance and Annuities (A) Committee also adopted the revisions at the 2014 Fall National Meeting.

All drafts were distributed to more than 100 interested parties and posted on the NAIC website. Numerous interested parties participated, including: the American Council of Life Insurers (ACLI); the National Association for Fixed Annuities (NAFA); the Insured Retirement Institute (IRI); the National Association for Insurance and Financial Advisors (NAIFA); Birny Birnbaum (Center for Economic Justice—CEJ); and the American Academy of Actuaries (Academy).

5. A General Description of the Due Process (e.g., exposure periods, public hearings or any other means by which widespread input from industry, consumers and legislators was solicited)

The Contingent Deferred Annuity (A) Working Group met at each national meeting and held interim meetings and interim conference calls beginning in June 2012 until adopting the revisions at the 2014 Fall National Meeting.
6. A Discussion of the Significant Issues (e.g., items of some controversy raised during the due process and the group’s response)

There were concerns that using the term “CDAs” when revising the model would be too limiting and that subsequent model revisions would be necessary to address every innovation in the industry. The language adopted seeks to address this concern by using broader language.

7. Any Other Important Information (e.g., amending an accreditation standard)

None