

Frequently Asked Questions Concerning Death Benefit Proceeds

Upon notification of an insured's death, how do I obtain a Death Benefit Proceeds form?

By phone: Call us directly at 800-CALL-NYL (800-225-5695)(8 a.m. - 7 p.m. ET). A Death Benefit Proceeds form will be mailed to the beneficiary(ies) on record.

Online: You can report a death online at www.newyorklife.com or download a Death Benefit Proceeds form to mail back to us with a death certificate.

Contact a New York Life Agent: Our agents are always available to help you through this difficult time.

* An individual beneficiary on a life insurance policy may be able to settle the claim verbally without providing additional documentation. Please call us at the phone number listed above for more information.

Where do I send my Death Benefit Proceeds form?

Please send your fully completed Death Benefit Proceeds form and one certified original death certificate, along with any additional documentation requested by the Claims & Benefits Team to:

New York Life Claims & Benefits
PO Box 130539
Dallas, TX 75313-0539

For overnight mail, please send to:

New York Life Claims & Benefits
5005 Lyndon B Johnson Fwy, Suite 1800
Dallas, TX 75244-6199

Why do I need to complete separate claim forms for Life Insurance and Annuity Policies?

The Annuity Death Benefit Proceeds form contains tax withholding and tax deferral options that are generally not applicable on life insurance policies. This also allows the beneficiary to claim the life insurance proceeds while considering tax deferral options available for the annuity proceeds.

What is a certified original death certificate and how do I obtain one?

Certified original death certificates have either a raised seal or a multicolored signature seal from the county, city, or state that issued the certificate. In addition, the certified original death certificate will contain the signature of the appropriate officer of the county, city, or state.

Most funeral homes will provide the family of the deceased with several certified original death certificates. You may also obtain this document by contacting the Vital Records Division from the state where the death occurred.

If there are multiple beneficiaries on a death claim, does each beneficiary need to send in an original certified death certificate?

No. Only one original certified death certificate is required per claim.

When is a copy of a death certificate acceptable?

All annuity claims, regardless of amount, and life claims \$100,000 or less (aggregate).

If a named beneficiary is deceased, may I submit a copy of the deceased beneficiary's certified death certificate as proof of their death?

Yes. A copy of the death certificate is acceptable.

What information is needed for a beneficiary that is a minor?

Payments on behalf of a minor must be made to an authorized representative of the minor, such as (i) a Custodian under the Uniform Transfers/Gifts to Minors Act, or (ii) a court designated Guardian of the "Person and Estate" or "Estate" of the minor. The legal representative must enter the minor's Social Security Number in the Income Tax Certification section on the Death Benefit Proceeds form. Additionally, the representative should sign his or her own name in the Beneficiary Signature section of the form. Minor beneficiary requirements vary by state. Please call the Claims & Benefits team at (800) CALL-NYL (800-225-5695) for more information.

What documents are needed for other types of authorized beneficiary representatives, such as custodians, conservators, and attorneys-in-fact?

A copy of the applicable legal paperwork is required. Additionally, the legal representative must enter the beneficiary's Social Security Number in the Income Tax Certification section on the Death Benefit Proceeds form. The authorized beneficiary representative should sign his or her name in the Beneficiary Signature section of the form.

If an attorney is handling on behalf of the beneficiary, what documentation is needed?

A written and signed statement of the representative on letterhead stationery, with the policy number referenced on it.



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My name has changed since the last beneficiary designation. What do I need to provide to validate the name change?

If a beneficiary's name has changed due to marriage or divorce, a copy of the marriage or divorce decree may be required. If the name has changed due to any other reason, we require a court document indicating the change from the name we have on record to the beneficiary's new name.

Is a Trust the same thing as an Estate?

No. They are two separate entities.

An **Estate** is money/property belonging to a deceased person. In some cases, an estate is submitted to a surrogate's court to be probated and the court will designate an estate representative. A surrogate court is a special court that deals with matters of probate and the administration of estates. An estate may be submitted to probate whether or not the deceased left a will. If the estate has few assets, it may not need to be fully probated. Depending on local law, the surrogate's court may issue a small estate affidavit or one may be completed by the next of kin listing all of the deceased's heirs.

A **Trust** is a legal entity created by a Grantor (or Settlor/ Trustor) dictating how property in the trust will be distributed.

There are two common types of trusts:

- **Living Trust (Inter Vivos):** The trust is established and active during the grantor's lifetime.
- **Testamentary Trust:** The trust is created through the grantor's will. Upon death, the will must first be submitted to probate for the trust to take effect.

In both cases, a Trustee is named to distribute the trust assets as specified in the trust.

What is probate?

Probate is a legal process that takes place after someone dies and determines how the deceased person's property is to be distributed. If the deceased left a will, this process determines the validity of the will. If there is no will, or the will is not valid, probate will determine how the property is distributed according to intestacy laws. Probate involves identifying, cataloging and appraising the deceased person's property, paying out debts and taxes and distributing the remaining assets as the will or intestacy law directs. After the probate process, the representative will receive a court document which will identify the estate representative.

New York Life Insurance Company

New York Life Insurance and Annuity Corporation, a wholly-owned subsidiary of New York Life Insurance Company
51 Madison Avenue, New York, NY 10010

Why does a beneficiary, estate, or trust need to provide their Social Security Number or Tax Identification Number?

The Social Security Number or Tax Identification Number is needed to report interest payments and any taxable gain to the Internal Revenue Service. Interest is paid on most life insurance claims from the date of death until the date the claim is paid. Variable Annuity death proceeds do not pay interest.

Are life insurance proceeds taxable?

The death benefit proceeds are generally not taxable, however, any interest paid is subject to federal and state taxation. If interest is greater than \$10 or if withholding is applied, this will be reported to the IRS through Form 1099-INT. We will not withhold tax from the interest unless:

- You have advised us that you are subject to backup withholding;
- You do not provide your Social Security Number or Tax Identification Number, or
- We do not have your Social Security Number certified on a signed Death Benefit Proceeds Form or IRS Form W-9.

Are annuity proceeds taxable?

All or part of the death benefit proceeds on an annuity may be taxable. You can elect to withhold on the taxable portion. If you make an election for anything other than no withholding or withhold at default rate, then you must submit a W-4R for lump sum taxable payments or a W-4P for taxable income payments. The taxable portion and any withholding is reported to the IRS through Form 1099-R. In addition, some States require withholding on the taxable portion. U.S. citizens living outside the United States cannot elect out of withholding. For more information regarding tax consequences, please consult your tax advisor as there may be options to defer the distribution of taxable payments.

Contact information

For Life Insurance and Fixed Annuities

(800) CALL-NYL (800-225-5695) (8 a.m. - 7 p.m. ET)

For Variable Life Insurance and Variable Annuities

(policies that begin with a 57, 58, 63, 755 and 775 - 780)

(800) 598-2019 (9 a.m. - 6 p.m. ET)

Neither New York Life Insurance Company, nor its agents, provide tax, legal, or accounting advice. Please consult your own tax, legal, or accounting professional before making any decisions.