

WAC 284-54-270 Requirement to offer inflation protection. (1)

No insurer may offer a long-term care insurance contract unless, in addition to any other inflation protection option, the insurer offers to the policyholder the option to purchase a contract that provides for benefit levels to increase with benefit maximums or reasonable durations which are meaningful to account for reasonably anticipated increases in the costs of long-term care services covered by the contract. Insurers must offer to each applicant, at the time of purchase, the option to purchase a contract with an inflation protection feature no less favorable than one of the following:

(a) Increases benefit levels annually in a manner so that the increases are compounded annually at a rate not less than five percent;

(b) Guarantees the insured individual the right to periodically increase benefit levels without providing evidence of insurability or health status so long as the option for the previous period has not been declined. The amount of the additional benefit shall be no less than the difference between the existing policy benefit and that benefit compounded annually at a rate of at least five percent for the period beginning with the purchase of the existing benefit and extending until the year in which the offer is made; or

(c) Covers a specified percentage of actual or reasonable charges and does not include a maximum specified indemnity amount or limit.

(2) Where the contract is issued to a group, the required offer in subsection (1) of this section shall be made to the group policyholder; except, if the policy is issued to an association group (defined in RCW 48.24.045) other than to a continuing care retirement community, the offering shall be made to each proposed certificate holder.

(3) The offer in subsection (1) of this section shall not be required of life insurance policies or riders containing accelerated long-term care benefits.

(4) (a) Insurers shall include the following information in or with the disclosure form:

(i) A graphic comparison of the benefit levels of a contract that increases benefits over the contract period with a contract that does not increase benefits. The graphic comparison shall show benefit levels over at least a twenty-year period.

(ii) Any expected premium increases or additional premiums to pay for automatic or optional benefit increases.

(b) An insurer may use a reasonable hypothetical, or a graphic demonstration, for the purposes of this disclosure.

(c) It is intended that meaningful inflation protection be provided. Meaningful benefit minimums or durations may, for example, include providing increases to attained age, or for a period such as at least twenty years, or for some multiple of the policy's maximum benefit, or throughout the period of coverage.

(5) Inflation protection benefit increases under a contract which contains such benefits shall continue without regard to an insured's age, claim status or claim history, or the length of time the person has been insured under the contract.

(6) An offer of inflation protection which provides for automatic benefit increases shall include an offer of a premium which the insurer expects to remain constant. Such offer shall disclose in a conspicuous manner that the premium may change in the future unless the premium is guaranteed to remain constant.

(7) (a) Inflation protection as provided in subsection (1)(a) of this section shall be included in a long-term care insurance contract

unless an insurer obtains a written rejection of inflation protection signed by the applicant.

(b) The rejection shall be considered a part of the application and shall state:

"I have reviewed the outline of coverage and the graphs that compare the benefits and premiums of this contract with and without inflation protection. Specifically, I have reviewed Plans , and I reject inflation protection."

[Statutory Authority: RCW 48.02.060, 48.84.030 and 48.84.050. WSR 95-19-028 (Order R 95-5), § 284-54-270, filed 9/11/95, effective 10/12/95. Statutory Authority: RCW 48.02.060, 48.84.030 and 48.01.030. WSR 94-14-100 (Order R 94-10), § 284-54-270, filed 7/6/94, effective 8/6/94.]