

What You Need to Know About... Underwriting Clients During a Pandemic



The novel COVID-19 pandemic is widespread, affecting millions of people around the world as well as numerous businesses, including those in the life insurance industry. While the full effects of the virus are still unknown and life insurance carriers are updating their underwriting guidelines on a regular basis, there are a few things to keep in mind when considering submitting a life insurance application during this unprecedented time. Depending on the carrier, the following restrictions may apply:

- Decreased retention limits are dependent on age. However, the majority of auto-bind and jumbo limits have remained intact.
- Table shave programs may be modified, suspended, or discontinued.
- Life insurance medical exams may be dependent on current state lock-down guidelines, and in some cases, may be unavailable.
- Foreign national and foreign residency programs may be suspended, especially in areas that are considered COVID-19 hotspots.
- Future foreign travel plans will result in a postponement of coverage or approval and/or a suspension of underwriting. Underwriting decisions involving applicants with past travel to certain hotspots may also be postponed for a period of time. Note that certain states prohibit adverse underwriting action based on an applicant's future or past legal foreign travel. A postponement of coverage/approval/suspension of underwriting may occur for applicants:
 - Who have visited a foreign country for a minimum period of 30 days after they return to the U.S.
 - Who plan to visit a foreign country for a minimum period of 30 days after they return to the U.S.
 - With a COVID-19 diagnosis for a minimum period of 30 days and up to six months, depending on if the applicant was hospitalized.
 - With known exposure to COVID-19 for a period of up to 30 days.
- Rate class availability may be limited and is age-dependent.
- Medical conditions that make a client more susceptible to COVID-19 may be postponed (e.g. coronary artery disease, metabolic disorders, respiratory impairments, underlying malignancies).
- [Attending Physician Statements](#) (APS) may be delayed due to office closures.
- Requirements to include attestations and/or amendments confirming a client has not been exposed to or diagnosed with COVID-19 may be requested either during the underwriting process and/or as a policy delivery requirement.

[continued]



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The Good News! 😊

- Several carriers have expanded their [accelerated underwriting programs](#) for healthy clients to include face amounts of up to \$5 million, multiple product options, and ages 18-60 (or above).
- Even if your client does not qualify for an accelerated underwriting program, many carriers are utilizing Electronic Health Records (EHR) and lab data to speed the process along.
- Many doctors' offices have lab portals available that enable clients to access and download their medical records to speed up the medical record gathering process.
- Some carriers are making exceptions to forgo exam requirements on a case-by-case basis if a client has had full physical exam and labs completed within the past 12 months. Exceptions are generally dependent on an insured's age, medical history, and the face amount requested. To find out if a carrier can make an exception for your client, complete the [Accelerating the Underwriting Process](#) form. After completion, submit this form to your underwriter, who will then look into carrier options for you.

GPAgency is here for you! Our underwriters are well-versed in the most current carrier guidelines. Contact GPAgency at 800.283.8376 before submitting an application for life insurance and we will recommend the best options for your clients based on their unique situation.



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