This Provider Legislative Reference contains specific pieces of legislation relating to annuities that have been enacted over a number of years. It is important to know what impact the following pieces of legislation have had on annuity insurance. To review or obtain copies of the following pieces of legislation, you may log onto the California Legislature’s Web site at http://www.leginfo.legislature.ca.gov or you may call the Legislative Bill Room at (916) 445-2323 to order copies of this legislation. Please note that some laws contained in the bills listed below have since been amended.

Year: 2024

Senate Bill (SB) 263 (Dodd, Chapter 2) Insurance: annuities and life insurance policies.

## Revises the Suitability Requirements for Annuity Transactions in California law to generally reflect changes made by the National Association of Insurance Commissioners (NAIC) Suitability in Annuity Transactions Model Regulation #275 (Model #275) of 2020, with some changes.

# Requires any life insurance agent, licensed on or after January 1, 2024, who engages in the sale of specified life insurance policies on or after January 1, 2025, to complete four hours of training prior to soliciting individual consumers to sell these life insurance policies, and requires two hours of training prior to each license renewal, as specified.

# States the bill's purpose as ensuring insurance producers act in the “best interest” of the consumer, as defined therein, when making a recommendation of an annuity product, and requiring insurers to supervise such recommendations by producers.

# Adds or changes several definitions, including:

# a) Redefines "producer" as someone licensed under California law to sell, solicit, or negotiate insurance, including annuities, and if no agent is involved, the insurer is the producer.

# b) Defines “Nonguaranteed elements” as meaning the premiums, benefits, values, credits, charges, and other elements not guaranteed over the life of the annuity, such as credited interest rates, including any temporary bonus interest rate, dividends, noninterest-based credits, index parameters, periodic expense charges, or elements of formulas used to determine any of these nonguaranteed elements, that are subject to insurer discretion and are not guaranteed at issue. An element is considered nonguaranteed if any of the underlying nonguaranteed elements are used in its calculation.

# c) Redefines "recommendation" as advice or guidance made by a producer to an individual consumer that was intended to result or does result in the purchase, exchange or replacement of an annuity.

# Prohibits the producer from placing the producer's or insurer's financial interest ahead of the consumer's interest when recommending an annuity.

# Requires the producer, in making a recommendation, to exercise reasonable diligence and skill to, among other things:

# a) Know the consumer's financial situation, financial needs, insurance needs, and financial objectives.

# b) Have a reasonable basis to believe the recommended option effectively addresses the consumer's financial situation, as provided, and to believe that the consumer would receive a tangible net benefit from the transaction over the life of the product.

# c) Communicate the bases of the recommendation to the consumer both orally and in writing and to the insurer in writing.

# d) Exercise the care, skill, prudence, and diligence that a reasonable producer with similar authority and licensure who is familiar with those matters would use under the circumstances.

# e) Make a reasonable effort to obtain consumer profile information from the consumer prior to the recommendation of an annuity, as provided.

# States it does not require the producer to analyze or consider any products outside the authority and license of the producer, and does not create a fiduciary obligation or relationship between the producer and the consumer.

# Requires the producer to prominently disclose specified information to the consumer, including but not limited to, a description of the scope and terms of the relationship with the consumer, a description of the products the producer is licensed and authorized to sell, a description of the sources and types of compensation and non-cash compensation to be received by the producer as a result of the sale of an annuity, and a notice of the customer's right to request more information regarding the producer's compensation.

# Requires a producer, at the time of recommendation or sale, to satisfy several documentation requirements, as specified.

# Requires an insurer to establish, maintain, and utilize a supervision system that is reasonably designed to ensure the insurer's and its producers' compliance with these requirements, as specified.

# Requires the insurer to incorporate the requirements under this article into producer training manuals, provide product specific training and training materials that explain all material features of its annuity products to its producers, and maintain and utilize procedures to require its producers to comply with producer annuity training requirements.

# Prohibits an insurer or producer from dissuading, or attempting to dissuade, a consumer from truthfully responding to a request for consumer profile information, filing a complaint, or cooperating with the investigation of a complaint.

# Provides a "safe harbor" for recommendations and sales of annuities by financial professionals, as defined, made in compliance with specified comparable business rules, controls, and procedures that satisfy a comparable standard, but provides that the Insurance Commissioner (Commissioner) retains authority to enforce, and conduct investigations related to, the requirements in the statute, regardless of whether the financial professional is operating under a comparable standard.

# Requires the insurer to monitor the conduct of the financial professional seeking to utilize the safe harbor, as specified.

# Requires life insurance agents to complete annuity product training requirements, as specified.

# Requires a life insurer to provide all consumers who purchase an annuity with a National Association of Insurance Commissioners (NAIC) approved annuity buyer's guide as a standalone document with the annuity or prior to delivery of the annuity.

# Grants the Commissioner authority to adopt reasonable rules and regulations to implement these provisions.

# Maintains the authority of the Commissioner to impose sanctions and penalties.

Year: 2011

Assembly Bill (AB) 689 (Blumenfield, Chapter 295) Insurance: annuity transactions: required disclosures and prohibited sales practices.

An act to add Article 9 (commencing with Section 10509.910) to Chapter 5 of Part 2 of Division 2 of the Insurance Code, relating to annuity transactions.

* Required the insurance producer and the insurer when recommending to a consumer the purchase or exchange of an annuity to have reasonable grounds for believing that the recommendation is suitable for the consumer.
* Provided that 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. In no event shall an insurance producer or insurer recommend to a person 65 years or older the sale of annuity to replace an existing annuity that requires the insured to pay a surrender charge for the annuity that is being replaced, where purchase of the annuity does not confer a substantial financial benefit over the life of the policy, so that a reasonable person would believe the purchase is unnecessary.
* Required an insurer to establish a supervision system, with specified elements, that is designed to achieve the insurer's and its insurance producer's compliance with this bill.
* Made an insurer responsible for compliance with this article. If a violation occurs, either because of the action or inaction of the insurer or its insurance producer, the Insurance Commissioner would be authorized to order the following:

1. An insurer to take reasonable appropriate corrective action for any consumer harmed by the insurer's violation of this bill; and,
2. Administrative penalties and sanctions ranging from $1,000 to $300,000 for each violation.

Year: 2003

SB 620 (Scott, Chapter 547) Annuities: life insurance: required disclosures and prohibited sales practices.

An act to amend Sections 787, 1725.5, [10127.10](https://10127.10/), and 10509.8 of, and to add Sections 789.9, 789.10, 1724, and 1749.8 to, the Insurance Code, relating to insurance.

* Enacts additional restrictions on advertising practices that target senior citizens and would expand the scope of existing restrictions, currently applicable to disability insurance, to life insurance and annuities.
* Prohibits the sale of annuities to seniors in certain circumstances.
* Prohibits insurance agents, brokers, and solicitors who are not attorneys from sharing commissions or other compensation with attorneys
* Requires, effective January 1, 2005, specific training for life agents in order for these producers to sell annuities, unless the agents are nonresident agents who represent a direct response provider, as defined.
* Limits the investment of premiums during the 30-day cancellation period, except as specified, and revises the disclosure requirements applicable to the sale of life insurance and annuity products to seniors.
* Imposes restrictions on the sale of life insurance policies and annuities in the home of a senior citizen.
* Prohibits an agent or insurer from recommending the unnecessary replacement, as defined, of an annuity by a senior citizen.
* Imposes certain duties on the Insurance Commissioner in this regard, and enacts other related provisions.

SB 618 (Scott, Chapter 546) Insurance: unfair acts: licenses.

An act to amend Sections 782, 786, 789.3, and 10509.9 of, and to add Sections 1668.1 and 1738.5 to, the Insurance Code, relating to unfair acts.

* Raises the fine for a violation of these provisions to $1,500.
* Extends to individuals age 65 or older who purchase life insurance the protections described above that apply to those individuals who purchase disability policies.
* Declares that it applies to the purchase of life insurance only to the extent that it does not conflict with the provisions of law regarding cancellation of life insurance policies and annuities.
* Increases the amounts of these monetary penalties, as specified. Provides that, if the commissioner brings an action against a licensee under these provisions and determines that the licensee may reasonably be expected to cause significant harm to seniors, the commissioner may suspend the license pending the outcome of the action. It allows the commissioner to require the rescission of any contract marketed, offered, or issued in violation of these provisions.
* Authorizes the commissioner to suspend or revoke any permanent license issued if the licensee induces the client to make a loan or gift to or investment with the licensee, or to otherwise act in other specified ways that benefit the licensee or other people acquainted with or related to the licensee.
* Requires that, if a disciplinary hearing of this type involves allegations of misconduct directed against a person age 65 or over, the hearing be held within 90 days after the Department of Insurance receives the notice of defense, unless a continuance is granted.
* Sets forth the grounds for granting a continuance, and provides that the burden of proof in a hearing shall be by a preponderance of the evidence.
* Increases the amounts of these monetary penalties, as specified, and allows the commissioner to suspend or revoke the license of any person who violates these provisions.

AB 284 (Chavez, Chapter 381) Deferred annuities: nonforfeiture.

An act to amend Sections 10168.1 and 10168.2 of, and to add Sections [10168.25](https://10168.25/) and [10168.92](https://10168.92/) to, the Insurance Code, relating to annuities.

* Requires that these annuity contracts also provide that the company shall grant the paid-up annuity benefit upon the written request of the contract owner.
* Eliminates the requirement applicable to certain contracts that a company reserve the right to defer the payment of the cash surrender benefit for a period of 6 months, and instead allows the company to reserve that right after making written request and receiving written approval of the commissioner, as specified.
* Allows payment of the cash surrender benefit to be deferred for a period not to exceed 6 months.
* Provides for a uniform method of calculating minimum nonforfeiture amounts under these contracts. It modifies the interest rate applicable to accumulations under these contracts, the amounts by which those accumulations may be decreased, and the minimum amount of considerations used to determine the minimum nonforfeiture amount, as specified.
* Provides that these provisions shall apply to contracts issued on and after January 1, 2006, but that a company may elect to apply them, on a contract-form-by-contract- form basis, to any contract issued on or after January 1, 2004, and before January 1, 2006.
* Allows the Insurance Commissioner to adopt regulations to implement these provisions and to adjust the calculation of minimum nonforfeiture amounts for certain other contracts.

Year: 2002

AB 2984 (Committee on Insurance, Chapter 203) Insurance: depository institutions: production agencies: surplus line brokers: reinsurance intermediaries.

An act to amend Sections 1628, 1637, 1639, 1656, 1662, 1679, 1704, 1750.5, 1765.2, 1767, 1768, 1781.3, and [10234.93](https://10234.93/) of, to add Sections 1638.5 and 1639.1 to, to add Article 5.2 (commencing with Section 759) to Chapter 1 of Part 2 of Division 1 of, and to repeal Sections 1647, 1648, 1649, 1659, and 1714 of, the Insurance Code, relating to insurance.

* Establishes provisions regulating retail sales practices, solicitations, advertising, and offers of any insurance product or annuity to a consumer by a depository institution, or any person engaged in those activities at the office of a depository institution or on behalf of a depository institution.
* Revises licensing provisions with regard to production agencies, surplus line brokers, and reinsurance intermediaries, and also revises requirements for certain licensees within those categories. Because this bill expands the duties of a surplus line broker and thereby expand the definitions of crimes associated with a violation of these duties, the bill imposes a state-mandated local program.
* Provides that no reimbursement is required by this act for a specified reason.

Year: 2000

SB 423 (Johnston, Chapter 694) Life insurance: guaranteed living benefits.

An act to add Section 10506.5 to the Insurance Code, relating to insurance, and declaring the urgency thereof, to take effect immediately.

* Authorizes a life insurer to deliver or issue for delivery variable contracts or riders to variable contracts containing guaranteed living benefits, as defined, under certain conditions.

AB 2107 (Scott, Chapter 442) Elder Abuse.

An act to add Section 6177 to the Business and Professions Code, and to amend and renumber Section 10193 of, to amend Section 10234.8 of, and to add Section 789.8 to, the Insurance Code, and to amend Section [15610.30](https://15610.30/) of the Welfare and Institutions Code, relating to elder abuse.

* Imposes the duty of honesty, good faith, and fair dealing on insurers, brokers, agents, and others engaged in the business of Medicare supplemental insurance and long- term care insurance with respect to prospective policyholders.
* Only permits life agents, on or after July 1, 2001, to sell or offer for sale to an elder or his or her agent any financial product on the basis of the product's treatment under Medi-Cal after providing the elder or his or her agent with a specified disclosure, in writing, explaining the resource and income requirements of the Medi-Cal program, including, but not limited to, certain exempt resources, certain protections against spousal impoverishment, and certain circumstances under which an interest in a home may be transferred without affecting Medi-Cal eligibility. The bill excludes from the application of these disclosure provisions credit life insurance, as defined.
* Requires the State Bar to make a report, by December 31 of each year, to the Legislature on the provision of financial services by lawyers to elders, as specified. The report would include the number of complaints filed and investigations initiated, the type of charges made, and the number and nature of disciplinary actions taken by the State Bar.
* Revises the definition of existing law that defines financial abuse for the purpose of reporting and investigating elder and dependent adult abuse.

Year: 1998

SB 1718 (Calderon, Chapter 386) Life insurance.

An act to amend Sections 10509.6 and 10541 of the Insurance Code, relating to life insurance.

* Existing law provides that every life insurer that uses an agent shall, among other things, when a replacement of insurance is involved, provide a notice delivered with the policy that the applicant has a right to an unconditional refund of all premiums, which right may be exercised within 20 days of the date of delivery of the policy. Existing law contains other provisions applicable to variable annuity contracts, variable life insurance contracts, and modified guaranteed contracts that authorize the return of the contract during the cancellation period. This bill adds the latter provision to the previous provisions requiring the applicant to be given notice of a right to an unconditional refund, and changes the 20-day period for the exercise of the right to obtain a refund to a 30-day period.
* Existing law permits certain insurers to issue funding agreements and provides that this authorization does not affect the priority of claims against insolvent insurers. This bill corrects a cross-reference relating to this priority of claims.

Year: 1997

SB 203 (Lewis, Chapter 28) Insurers: mortality tables.

An act to amend Sections 10163.2, 10489.2, and 10489.3 of the Insurance Code, relating to insurance.

* Existing law regulates the types of benefits to be paid under a policy of life insurance in the event of a default in premium payments or upon surrender of the policy, and also regulates the manner in which reserves are to be maintained by insurers issuing life insurance policies and annuity and pure endowment contracts.,
* Existing law provides for insurers to use certain mortality tables for these purposes that have been approved by the Insurance Commissioner through promulgation of a regulation. This bill alternatively allows the commissioner to approve mortality tables through issuance of a bulletin.

Year: 1994

SB 1505 (Calderon, Chapter 984) Life insurance and annuity contracts: senior citizen policies and annuities.

An act to amend Sections [10127.10](https://10127.10/), [10127.11](https://10127.11/), [10127.12](https://10127.12/), [10127.13](https://10127.13/), and 10506.3 of the Insurance Code, relating to life insurance, and declaring the urgency thereof, to take effect immediately.

* Makes specified changes in the cancellation procedures and notice requirements and, in addition, applies those procedures and requirements to individual annuity contracts. In addition, for variable annuity contracts, variable life insurance contracts, and modified guaranteed contracts, a cancelling purchaser would be entitled to a refund of any policy fee paid as well as payment for the value of the account. These provisions do not apply to specified types of group life insurance or group annuity contracts. Under specified circumstances, senior citizens are entitled to refunds if they cancel policies of group term life insurance during the first 30 days of the policy period. The bill also makes conforming changes.\
* Also adds the options of stating only the location in the policy text of the required information in 12-point bold type on the cover page of the policy, or by disclosing that information on a sticker that is affixed to the cover page of the policy or to the policy jacket.
* Provides that modified guaranteed annuities are subject to the forfeiture provisions for individual deferred annuities computed under the terms of the annuity, but excluding market adjustment factors, as specified. In addition, group annuities exempted from the provisions governing individual deferred annuities are also exempted from any modified guaranteed annuity regulations.
* This exemption is retroactive to January 1, 1987, to the extent that the assets underlying the group contracts have not been maintained in a separate account. The bill provides that it is to take effect immediately as an urgency statute.

AB 1667 (Hoge, Chapter 6) California Insurance Guarantee Association.

An act to amend Sections 1063, 1063.1, 1063.2, 1063.4, 1063.5, 1063.7, g1067.04, 1067.05, and 10112.5 of, to add Section 1067.055 to, and to repeal and add Section 1063.3 of, the Insurance Code, relating to insurance, and declaring the urgency thereof, to take effect immediately.

* Existing law establishes a California Insurance Guarantee Association and specifies those insurers that are required to be members of the association. It exempts certain classes of insurance from assessments and other requirements of the association. This bill specifically enumerates those exempt classes of insurance, and provides that any insurer admitted to transact only those classes or kinds of insurance excluded from specified provisions shall not be a member of the association.
* Existing law provides that the association shall be managed by a board of governors serving for 3 year terms. Those terms expire each year. This bill provides that those terms expire each year on December 31.
* This bill also, among other things, does all of the following with respect to the California Insurance Guarantee Association:

(a) Revises the definition of "insolvent insurer," and "covered claims," and defines "ocean marine insurance," as specified.

(b) Revises certain policy construction and cancellation provisions with respect to insurer insolvency. (c) Revises the authorization of the association to submit reports and make recommendations to the Insurance Commissioner regarding the financial condition of member insurers, and certain examination and other report requirements, as specified. (d) Revises insolvency premium provisions, as specified. (e) Specifies certain notice provisions with respect to an ancillary liquidator.

* Existing law provides for the California Life and Health Insurance Guarantee Association. The statute that established that association abolished the California Life Insurance Guaranty Association and the Robbins-Seastrand Health Insurance Guaranty Association. This bill provides that the California Life and Health Insurance Guarantee Association is created by the merger of the Robbins-Seastrand Health Insurance Guaranty Association with and into the California Life Insurance Guaranty Association and that the association succeeds to the rights, property, and obligations of the predecessors, as specified.
* Revises provisions dealing with the applicability of specified disability insurance policies issued outside of California to an employer whose principle place of business and majority of employees are located outside of California.

Year: 1993

SB 1065 (Mello, Chapter 516) Life insurance.

An act to add Sections [10127.10](https://10127.10/), [10127.11](https://10127.11/), [10127.12](https://10127.12/), and [10127.13](https://10127.13/) to the Insurance Code, relating to insurance.

* Adds additional provisions which permit a senior citizen, as defined, to cancel any policy of life insurance within 30 days following delivery, as specified. It requires those policies to contain a notice of that provision. Those provisions are inapplicable to individual life insurance policies issued in connection with a credit transaction or issued under a contractual policy change or conversion privilege provisions contained in a policy.
* Additionally, makes those provisions inapplicable to noncontributory employer group life insurance contracts.
* Requires offerings of life insurance policies to senior citizens that contain illustrations of nonguaranteed values to contain certain disclosures. It requires annual statements to senior citizen policyowners to disclose the current accumulation value and current cash surrender value and requires life insurance policies for senior citizens, which contain a surrender charge period to disclose the surrender period and penalties associated therewith.