

Employees Need Life Insurance Now More Than Ever – And That’s A Fact!

According to a recent LIMRA report, four in 10 U.S. adults have no life insurance at all¹ – the lowest level ever. No wonder half of U.S. households (58 million) say they need more life insurance – the highest level ever.²

Although the economic instability and high unemployment rates of the last few years have surely contributed to these alarming figures – the surprising reality is that the proportion of adults with life insurance has been generally decreasing *over the last five decades*.¹ But regardless of the overall trends, employees continue to heavily depend on employers to help provide this important coverage, even though fewer employers are doing so.

Less coverage opportunities: The number of employers offering life insurance has steadily declined, from 66% of employees in 2002 to 61% in 2010.³

Counting on employers: One in four U.S. households rely only on group life insurance to provide financial protection.²

Still not enough: Not only are more adults depending solely on life insurance obtained through their employer than in the past, they are also carrying the lowest average amount of group life insurance.¹

Make life a priority for your clients

Life is still the cornerstone of any employee benefits package. Now is the ideal time to talk to clients about life insurance with renewed urgency and enthusiasm. Whether you have clients who don’t offer life, don’t offer enough life coverage, or could enhance their current life offering – here are a few questions they should think about to help ensure their employees have access to this essential benefit and get the most out of their workplace offering.

Why aren’t they offering life insurance?

With employer budgets still tight, cost might be the most common answer. However, given the wide variety of voluntary life plans available, cost is really no excuse. In order to maximize participation in these plans, look for carriers whose enrollment services focus on educating employees about the value of/need for coverage and includes easy-to-use enrollment tools and calculators.

Are they offering enough life coverage?

The best way to ensure employees get the most coverage is to offer generous guaranteed issue amounts. That way employees don’t have to go through the worry or hassle of providing medical information – or risk being turned down. More progressive carriers may also offer plans where benefit amounts automatically increase every year to keep up with inflation.

Do they help ensure coverage – even for employees who leave or lose their job?

Employers can help employees who leave their company avoid coverage gaps by ensuring benefits are portable or can be easily converted to a permanent whole life policy – often without Evidence of Insurability. If an employee’s loss of employment is due to a disability, some life plans allow premiums to be waived for as long as the insured remains disabled.

Can they provide additional life benefits beyond a lump sum payment?

There are plenty of options and value-added services that can vastly improve even an already solid group life plan. These range from Employee Assistance Programs and supplemental income for severely disabled insureds – to more specialized services, such as help with will preparation, and protection for employees involved in a security or medical crisis while they are away from home.

For additional insights and recommendations on how your clients’ life insurance programs can work harder for their employees, speak with your Guardian Sales Representative or visit www.aboutemployeebenefits.com

¹“Personal Trends in US Life Insurance Ownership”, LIMRA 2011

²“Facts About Life 2010”, LIMRA Life Insurance Consumer Studies 2010 ³“Weathering the Storm”, LIMRA 2011

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