

FinChoice Africa Ltd is a registered credit provider (NCRCP 8162) and authorised financial services provider (FSP 46962). FinChoice SA (Pty) Ltd is an authorised financial services provider (FSP no.52725). Underwritten by Guardrisk Life Limited a licensed life insurer in terms of the Insurance Act 18 of 2017 and an authorised financial services provider (Registration Number 1999/013922/06 and FSP No 76).

1. Introduction

The Company, as an authorised financial services provider, has a responsibility to conduct itself honestly, with integrity, fairness, dignity and ethically wherever it operates, with due regard to the environment, the societies in which it operates and its other stakeholders. The Claims Management Framework serves to meet the requirements of Section 62 of the Long Term Insurance act and Rule 17 of the Policyholder Protection Rules. It needs to ensure fair treatment of policyholders and beneficiaries and must be reviewed regularly.

2. Objective

The Claims Management Framework must be maintained, operated adequately and effectively and ensure that:

- 2.1 It is proportionate to the nature, scale and complexity of the Insurer's business and risks;
- 2.2 Is appropriate for the business model, policies, services and policyholders and beneficiaries of the Insurer;
- 2.3 Vent and appropriate information and circumstances, with due regard to the fair treatment of claimants; and
- 2.4 Does not impose unreasonable barriers to claimants.

3. Definitions

- 3.1 "**Beneficiary**" in respect of a –
- 3.2 registered insurer means –
- 3.3 a person nominated by the Policyholder as the person in respect of whom the Insurer should meet policy benefits; or
- 3.4 "**Business Day**" means any day excluding a Saturday, Sunday or public holiday.
- 3.5 "**Claim**" means, unless the context indicates otherwise, a demand for any policy benefits by a Claimant in relation to a policy, irrespective of whether or not the Claimant's demand is valid, made by submitting a duly completed claim form with supporting documentation;
- 3.6 "**Claimant**" means a person who makes a claim;
- 3.7 "**Claim Outcome**" shall relate to the following: "Accepted" shall mean that the claim has been finalised in such a manner that the Claimant has either explicitly accepted that the policy benefits have been fully paid or in such a manner that is reasonable for Guardrisk to assume that the Claimant has so accepted. A Claim should only be treatment forming the basis of a complaint, where the Company accepts liability for having caused the loss concerned, but excludes any –
 - a. goodwill payment;
 - b. payment contractually due to the Claimant in terms of a policy; or
 - c. refund of an amount paid by or on behalf of the Claimant to the Company where such payment was not contractually due;
- 3.11 and includes any interest on late payment of any amount referred to in (b) or (c);
- 3.12 "**Customer Query**" means a request to the Company by or on behalf of a policyholder/ beneficiary for information regarding a Claim or a policy, including policy benefits, no-claim bonus, loyalty benefit, waiting period or related service in relation to such policy. This shall also include a progress update on a request previously made or a progress update on a Claim.

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- 3.13 “**Escalated Claim**” shall refer to the following:
- a. an extension of a Claim relating to the outcome of the initial Claim;
 - b. the Claim is complex or unusual that it requires intervention by an impartial senior functionary appointed to deal with escalated claims;
 - c. the referral of the Claim to the appointed Insurer for further review and feedback;
 - d. the referral of the Claim to a Claims Committee mandated and authorised to review the Claim and provide an outcome;
 - e. The resolution of the initial Claim is not to the Claimant’s satisfaction and is then treated as a complaint and dealt with in terms of the Company’s Complaints Management Framework.
- 3.14 “**Exclusion**” means the losses or risk events not covered under a policy;
- 3.15 “**Goodwill Payment**” means a payment, by or on behalf of the Company to a Claimant as an expression of goodwill aimed at resolving a claim, where the Company does not accept liability for any financial loss to the Claimant as a result of the matter complained about;
- 3.16 “**Ombud**” has the meaning assigned to it in the –
- 3.17 Financial Services Ombud Schemes Act, 2004 (Act No. 37 of 2004) up until such time as such Act is repealed through Schedule 4 of the Financial Sector Regulation Act; and
- 3.18 Financial Sector Regulation Act, from the date on which such Act repeals the Financial Services Ombud Schemes Act, 2004 (Act 37 of 2004) through Schedule 4 of such Act;
- 3.19 “**Plain Language**” means communication that –
- a. is clear and easy to understand;
 - b. avoids uncertainty or confusion; and
 - c. is adequate and appropriate in the circumstances, taking into account the factually established or reasonably assumed level of knowledge of the person or average persons at whom the communication is targeted;
- 3.20 “**Policy**” means a long-term policy where the Policyholder is a –
- 3.21 Natural person.
- 3.22 “**Policyholder**” has the meaning assigned to it in the Act;
- 3.23 “**Repudiate**” in relation to a Claim means any action by which the Company, on behalf of and once approval has been granted by the Insurer rejects or refuses to pay a Claim or any part of a Claim, for any reason, and includes instances where a Claimant lodges a Claim –
- 3.24 In respect of a loss event or risk not covered by a Policy;
- 3.25 In respect of a loss event or risk covered by a Policy, but the premium or premiums payable in respect of that policy was not paid; and
- 3.26 In respect of the conditions of the policy no being adhered to,
- 3.27 and “**Repudiation**” shall have a corresponding meaning;
- 3.28 “**Service Provider**” means any person (whether or not that person is the agent of the Insurer) with whom an Insurer has an arrangement relating to the marketing, distribution, administration or provision of policies or related services;
- 3.29 “**Waiting Period**” means a period during which a Policyholder (or any affected Insured) is not entitled to Policy benefits and includes any deferred period to determine permanency of disability. Any claim event arising within the waiting period will not be covered and will remain uncovered even after the expiry of the waiting period;
- 3.30 “**Reports (or reporting)**” means any periodic or ad-hoc reports (and related documents) obtained from the Claims management system and other sources in the business which shall be used for analysis, monitoring, submissions to regulatory authorities, and the making of recommendations to the business in respect of Claims management.

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4. Allocation of duties

The Operations Manager of the Company is responsible to ensure that all claims lodged are treated in line with this framework. The Operations Manager will ensure that adequate resources are allocated to claims handling and that any person dealing with claims are:

- 4.1 Adequately trained;
- 4.2 Experienced in claims handling and appropriately qualified;
- 4.3 Not be subject to a conflict of interest; and
- 4.4 Be adequately empowered to make impartial decisions or recommendations.

5. The claims process

The process that a claim will follow at the Company:

- 5.1 Claim received from claimant via Telephone, email or fax channels
- 5.2 Lodging of claim by Company's claims department on the internal system
- 5.3 Communication to acknowledge receipt of claim sent to claimant contemporaneously when the claim is lodged
- 5.4 Claim notification and documents reviewed (one full working day)
- 5.5 Any outstanding or additional information and documentation requested by claims handler from claimant or relevant party
- 5.6 Assessment of claim, decision making and oversight (48-hour Assessment and Finalisation period)
- 5.7 Insurer response with claim outcome
- 5.8 Claim outcome communicated to the claimant (within 1 full working day of decision)
- 5.9 Escalation to follow where applicable time lines are exceeded to management and the Insurer

6. Claim escalation and review process

Complex or unusual claims shall be escalated from the claims handler to:

- 6.1 the Operations Executive
- 6.2 the Insurer
- 6.3 the Reinsurer (where applicable)

7. Record keeping, monitoring and analysis

- 7.1 All claims received, assessed, and finalised will be kept for a minimum period of 5 years.
- 7.2 The documents are filed physically or electronic scanned copy on the internal network drives.
- 7.3 Trends, risks and remedial actions to review product design and disclosures in line with Treating Customers Fairly principles will be taken on a minimum half yearly basis.

8. Interest on late payment

The Company will endeavour to finalise claims within 48 hours (2 business days) of receipt of all required documentation. In instances where a delay occurs on the part of the Company, and such delay causes financial loss or any form of prejudice to a claimant, and where the delay is proven to have been unnecessary, the Company will pay interest @ 6% of the claim value.

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9. Repudiations or disputes

The Company, on behalf of the Insurer, once approval obtained from the Insurer, will communicate the following to the claimant:

- 9.1 The reason for the decision;
- 9.2 Including the facts that informed the decision;
- 9.3 That the claimant may within a period of not less than 90 days after the date of receipt of the notice make representations to the Insurer;
- 9.4 Have the right to lodge a complaint to the Insurer, or the relevant Ombud and provide the contact details and time limitations of the applicable Insurer and/or Ombud scheme.

10. Claim escalation and appeals process

Should a claimant or customer be dissatisfied with the outcome of the claim assessment, he/she may direct their dissatisfaction to the Company, who will refer the matter to the Insurer for review of the decision. The Insurer must respond to the claimant within 15 working days. Should this result in a decision that is still unsatisfactory, the matter may be referred to the Internal Dispute Arbitrator at the Insurer, before referring it to an external body, such as the National Financial Ombud Scheme. The Insurer's details are:

Guardrisk Life Limited
 Postal Address: PO Box 786015 Sandton, 20196
 Tel: (011) 669-1000
 Email: info@guardrisk.co.za

In addition, the claimant may send a formal complaint to the Company at the details below:
insurance.complaints@homechoice.co.za

The Company will acknowledge the complaint within a minimum of 2 working days.

11. Prohibited claims practices

The Company and the Insurer will not:

- 11.1 Dissuade a claimant from obtaining the services of an attorney or adjuster;
- 11.2 Deny a claim without performing a reasonable investigation; or
- 11.3 Deny a claim based on the outcome of a polygraph, lie detector or truth verification or similar test.

12. Valid claims received during periods of grace

If a claimant submits a claim in respect of an event that occurred during a grace period, the value of the claim may be reduced by the sum of the unpaid premium.

13. Claim Submission Contact Details

All claims can be submitted to:

Email: info@finchoice.com
 Contact: 0861 346 246
 Fax: 021 680 8260
 Postal Address: Private Bag X150, Claremont Cape Town 7735, South Africa