

Beneficiary Designation

The **Beneficiary Designation** is to be completed by each plan member for the purpose of allocation of proceeds from Employee Life, Employee Optional Life, Accidental Death and Dismemberment (AD&D) and Employee Optional Accidental Death and Dismemberment benefits, in the event the plan member becomes deceased.

- Benefits payable due to the death of a plan member are payable to the designated beneficiary/ies for each benefit.
- If there are no surviving primary beneficiary/ies at the time of the death of the plan member, the proceeds will be paid to the contingent/alternate beneficiaries.
- If there are no designated or surviving contingent beneficiaries, the proceeds will be paid to the estate.
- If a Beneficiary Designation is not on file, benefits will be paid to the estate.

All other benefits for a plan member such as Dependant Life insurance are payable to the employee. If the employee is not alive, these benefits will be payable to the estate.

A Beneficiary Designation takes effect as of the date the form was signed with respect to any payment made after the time it was filed.

Beneficiaries can be designated on the Ariel system, SSBA Plan Member Portal or via paper Beneficiary/Enrollment forms. All paper forms should be retained with the school division. Under the SSBA plan, neither Manulife nor SSBA are required to retain Beneficiary Designations.

In the event of a life claim, the school division would provide a copy of the Beneficiary Designation to the insurer; Manulife does not require an original signed document for claims assessment.

It is the school division policy as to whether a new Beneficiary Designation is required when an employee is reinstated within 12 months. Note that Ariel does not trigger new beneficiary information to be completed when reinstated within 12 months.

Beneficiary Designations – Electronic vs Paper

Beneficiaries may be designated electronically, however, there are two scenarios in which a paper signed form is required.

- If a **Plan Administrator completes the beneficiary designations in Ariel on behalf of the Plan Member**, the Ariel system will produce a PDF Beneficiary form that needs to be signed by the Plan Member.

- If a **Plan Member completes the beneficiary designations on the SSBA Plan Member Portal and assigns a minor beneficiary**, the portal will produce a PDF Beneficiary form that needs to be signed by the Plan Member.

Note: If a Plan Member completes the beneficiary designations on the SSBA Plan Member Portal and no minor beneficiaries are designated, the designation is valid electronically and there is no need for a signed paper form.

Beneficiary Designation shows as “Pending”

If a Beneficiary Designation is showing **Pending** on Ariel or the SSBA Plan Member Portal, it is the school division Plan Administrator’s responsibility to ensure they receive the necessary signed paper form and mark the form as “Approved” in Ariel. Refer to the Ariel Admin Guide - Beneficiary Form Processing section for details.

Plan Member Name Change

A new beneficiary form is NOT required when the plan member changes their name, nor is a new beneficiary form required when a named beneficiary changes their name.

Life claims tie the initial beneficiary or most recent beneficiary to the plan member by their cert number and eligibility. A change in name is always a legal change and recognized as valid.

It is strongly recommended that the plan member review their beneficiary designation as a name change could mean the plan member is either adding or removing a dependant spouse and/or possible changes to their dependants.

Alternate/Contingent Scenario

If a plan member designates 2 people as primary beneficiaries at 50% each and one primary beneficiary passes away, in most cases, 100% of the life insurance benefit would go to the remaining primary beneficiary.

The alternate or contingent beneficiary would only receive the life proceeds if there were no surviving Primary beneficiaries at the time of the insured plan member’s passing.

Other Resources

See the Manulife Beneficiary Guide which contains Manulife’s contact information and beneficiary claim information.