

**CHARTER OF THE AUDIT COMMITTEE  
OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF  
AMERICAN EQUITY INVESTMENT LIFE HOLDING COMPANY  
AS AMENDED AND RESTATED BY THE BOARD ON APRIL 5, 2004**

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**I. PURPOSE OF THE COMMITTEE**

The purpose of the Audit Committee (the "Committee") of the Board of Directors (the "Board") of American Equity Investment Life Holding Company (the "Corporation") is to (a) assist the Board's oversight of (i) the integrity of the Corporation's financial statements, (ii) the Corporation's compliance with legal and regulatory requirements as they pertain to the financial statements and annual audit process, (iii) the Corporation's independent auditors' qualifications and independence, and (iv) the performance of the Corporation's independent auditors and the Corporation's internal audit function, and (b) prepare the report required to be prepared by the Committee pursuant to the rules of the Securities and Exchange Commission (the "SEC") for inclusion in the Corporation's annual proxy statement.

**II. COMPOSITION OF THE COMMITTEE**

The Committee shall consist of three (3) or more directors as determined from time to time by the Board. Each member of the Committee shall be qualified to serve on the Committee pursuant to the requirements of the New York Stock Exchange (the "NYSE"), and any additional requirements that the Board deems appropriate.

No director may serve as a member of the Committee if such director serves on the audit committee of more than two other public companies, unless the Board determines that such simultaneous service would not impair the ability of such director to effectively serve on the Committee. Any such determination must be disclosed in the Corporation's annual proxy statement.

The chairperson of the Committee shall be designated by the Board, *provided* that if the Board does not so designate a chairperson, the members of the Committee, by a majority vote, may designate a chairperson.

Any vacancy on the Committee shall be filled by majority vote of the Board. No member of the Committee shall be removed except by majority vote of the Board.

Each member of the Committee must be financially literate, as such qualification is interpreted by the Board in its business judgment, or must become financially literate within a reasonable period of time after his or her appointment to the Committee. At least one member of the Committee must be designated by the Board to be the "audit committee financial expert," as defined by the SEC pursuant to the Sarbanes-Oxley Act of 2002 (the "Act").

No member of the Committee shall receive directly or indirectly any compensation from the Corporation other than Directors' fees and benefits.

### **III. MEETINGS OF THE COMMITTEE**

The Committee shall meet as often as it determines necessary to carry out its duties and responsibilities, but no less frequently than once every fiscal quarter. The Committee, in its discretion, may ask members of management or others to attend its meetings (or portions thereof) and to provide pertinent information as necessary. The Committee should meet separately on a periodic basis with (i) management, (ii) the director of the Corporation's internal auditing department or other person responsible for the internal audit function and (iii) the Corporation's independent auditors, in each case to discuss any matters that the Committee or any of the above persons or firms believe warrant Committee attention.

A majority of the members of the Committee present in person or by means of a conference telephone or other communications equipment by means of which all persons participating in the meeting can hear each other shall constitute a quorum.

The Committee shall maintain minutes of its meetings and records relating to those meetings.

### **IV. DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE COMMITTEE**

In carrying out its duties and responsibilities, the Committee's policies and procedures should remain flexible, so that it may be in a position to best address, react or respond to changing circumstances or conditions. The following duties and responsibilities are within the authority of the Committee and the Committee shall, consistent with and subject to applicable law and rules and regulations promulgated by the SEC, NYSE, or any other applicable regulatory authority:

#### ***Selection, Evaluation and Oversight of the Auditors***

(a) Be directly responsible for the appointment, compensation, retention and oversight of the work of any registered public accounting firm engaged for the purpose of preparing or issuing an audit report or performing other audit, review or attest services for the Corporation, and each such registered public accounting firm must report directly to the Committee (the registered public accounting firm engaged for the purpose of preparing or issuing an audit report for inclusion in the Corporation's Annual Report on Form 10-K is referred to herein as the "independent auditors");

(b) Review and, in its sole discretion, approve in advance the Corporation's independent auditors' annual engagement letter, including the proposed fees contained therein, as well as all audit and, as provided in the Act and the SEC rules and regulations promulgated thereunder, all permitted non-audit engagements and relationships between the Corporation and such independent auditors (which approval should be made after receiving input from the Corporation's management, if desired).

(c) Review the independent auditors' annual letter pursuant to Independence Standards Board Statement No. 1, Independence Discussions with Audit Committees, outlining all relationships that may impact their independence;

(d) Obtain at least annually from the Corporation's independent auditors and review a report describing:

- (i) the independent auditors' internal quality-control procedures;
- (ii) any material issues raised by the most recent internal quality-control review, or peer review, of the independent auditors, or by any inquiry or investigation by any governmental or professional authority, within the preceding five years, respecting one or more independent audits carried out by the independent auditors, and any steps taken to deal with any such issues; and
- (iii) all relationships between the independent auditors and the Corporation (including a description of each category of services provided by the independent auditors to the Corporation and a list of the fees billed for each such category);

(e) Review and evaluate the qualifications, independence and performance of the Corporation's independent auditors, including the lead partner and reviewing partner of the independent auditors;

The Committee should present its conclusions with respect to the above matters, as well as its review of the lead partner and the reviewing partner of the independent auditors, and its views on whether there should be a regular rotation of the independent auditors, to the Board.

#### ***Oversight of Annual Audit and Quarterly Reviews***

(f) Review and discuss with the independent auditors their annual audit plan, including the timing and scope of audit activities, and monitor such plan's progress and results during the year;

(g) Review with management, the Corporation's independent auditors and, if appropriate, the director of the Corporation's internal auditing department, the following:

- (i) the Corporation's annual audited financial statements and quarterly financial statements, including the Corporation's disclosures under "Management's Discussion and Analysis of Financial Condition and Results of Operations," and any major issues related thereto;
- (ii) major issues regarding accounting principles and financial statements presentations, including any significant changes in the Corporation's selection or application of accounting principles;
- (iii) any analyses prepared by management and/or the independent auditors setting forth significant financial reporting issues and judgments made in connection with the preparation of the financial statements, including analyses of the effects of alternative

generally accepted accounting principles methods on the Corporation's financial statements; and

(iv) the effect of regulatory and accounting initiatives, as well as off-balance sheet structures, on the financial statements of the Corporation;

(h) Resolve all disagreements between the Corporation's independent auditors and management regarding financial reporting;

(i) Review on a regular basis with the Corporation's independent auditors any problems or difficulties encountered by the independent auditors in the course of any audit work, including management's response with respect thereto, any restrictions on the scope of the independent auditor's activities or on access to requested information, and any significant disagreements with management.

***Oversight of the Financial Reporting Process and Internal Controls***

(j) Review the adequacy and effectiveness of the Corporation's accounting and internal control policies and procedures on a regular basis, including the responsibilities, budget, compensation and staffing of the Corporation's internal audit function, through inquiry and discussions with the Corporation's independent auditors and management;

(k) Discuss guidelines and policies governing the process by which senior management of the Corporation and the relevant departments of the Corporation, including the internal auditing department, assess and manage the Corporation's exposure to risk, as well as the Corporation's major financial risk exposures and the steps management has taken to monitor and control such exposures;

(l) Review with management the progress and results of all internal audit projects, and, when deemed necessary or appropriate by the Committee, make recommendations to the Corporation's chief executive officer regarding the assignment of additional internal audit projects to the director of the Corporation's internal auditing department;

(m) Review with management the Corporation's administrative, operational and accounting internal controls, including any special audit steps adopted in light of the discovery of material control deficiencies;

(n) Receive periodic reports from the Corporation's independent auditors, management and director of the Corporation's internal auditing department to assess the impact on the Corporation of significant accounting or financial reporting developments that may have a bearing on the Corporation;

### *Miscellaneous*

(o) Review the type and presentation of information to be included in the Corporation's earnings press releases (especially the use of "pro forma" or "adjusted" information not prepared in compliance with generally accepted accounting principles), as well as financial information and earnings guidance provided by the Corporation to analysts and rating agencies (which review may be done generally (i.e., discussion of the types of information to be disclosed and type of presentations to be made), and the Committee need not discuss in advance each earnings release or each instance in which the Corporation may provide earnings guidance);

(p) Establish clear hiring policies by the Corporation for employees or former employees of the Corporation's independent auditors;

(q) Prepare the report required by the rules of the SEC to be included in the Corporation's annual proxy statement and such other reports as may from time to time be necessary or appropriate;

(r) Establish procedures for (i) the receipt, retention and treatment of complaints received by the Corporation regarding accounting, internal accounting controls or auditing matters, and (ii) the confidential, anonymous submission by employees of the Corporation of concerns regarding questionable accounting or auditing matters;

(s) Secure independent expert advice to the extent the Committee determines it to be appropriate, including retaining, at the Corporation's expense, with or without Board approval, independent counsel, accountants, consultants or others, to assist the Committee in fulfilling its duties and responsibilities;

(t) Report regularly to the Board on its activities, as appropriate. In connection therewith, the Committee should review with the Board any issues that arise with respect to the quality or integrity of the Corporation's financial statements, the Corporation's compliance with legal or regulatory requirements, the performance and independence of the Corporation's independent auditors, or the performance of the internal audit function; and

(u) Perform such additional activities, and consider such other matters, within the scope of its responsibilities, as the Committee or the Board deems necessary or appropriate.

### **V. EVALUATION OF THE COMMITTEE**

The Committee shall, on an annual basis, evaluate its performance. The evaluation may address any matters that the Committee considers relevant to its performance, and shall be conducted in such manner as the Committee deems appropriate.

## **VI. INVESTIGATIONS AND STUDIES; OUTSIDE ADVISERS**

The Committee may conduct or authorize investigations into or studies of matters within the Committee's scope of responsibilities, and may retain, at the Corporation's expense, such independent counsel or other consultants or advisers as it deems necessary.

While the Committee has the duties and responsibilities set forth in this Charter, the Committee is not responsible for preparing or certifying the financial statements, for planning or conducting the audit or for determining whether the Corporation's financial statements are complete and accurate and are in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles.

In fulfilling their responsibilities hereunder, it is recognized that members of the Committee are not full-time employees of the Corporation, it is not the duty or responsibility of the Committee or its members to conduct "field work" or other types of auditing or accounting reviews or procedures or to set auditor independence standards, and each member of the Committee shall be entitled to rely on (i) the integrity of those persons and organizations within and outside the Corporation from which it receives information and (ii) the accuracy of the financial and other information provided to the Committee, in either instance absent actual knowledge to the contrary.

Nothing contained in this Charter is intended to create, or should be construed as creating, any responsibility or liability of the members of the Committee, except to the extent otherwise provided under applicable federal or state law.