

Moody's: 'Northwestern Mutual has a very strong commitment to serving its policyowners'

MILWAUKEE, July 21, 2016 /PRNewswire/ -- Moody's Investors Service has affirmed Northwestern Mutual's Aaa financial strength rating, noting its "commitment to policyowner value and financial strength."

The rating reflects the company's strong capital position, disciplined expense management and ability to meet policyowner obligations.

Rating rationale

As rationale for the rating, Moody's cited Northwestern Mutual's "leading positions and strong franchise in its core markets, with a focus on participating whole life insurance, excellent career agency-based distribution, strong underwriting skills, and its robust and resilient balance sheet.

Following are excerpts from the rating report highlighting some of the company's key strengths.

Leading-market position

"The company's leading market share in the U.S. individual life market is excellent, especially given it is an extremely fragmented market. The Northwestern Mutual brand is extremely well respected in the industry."

Productive field force

"Unlike many other companies, Northwestern Mutual does not use alternative forms of distribution, such as banks, independent agents or financial planners. Northwestern Mutual's field force is one of the most productive and efficient distribution forces in the industry."

Strong profitability

"The company's very strong, long-term pre-dividend profitability – more than double mutual peers – can be attributed to the following strengths: 1) a record of better-than-average mortality experience, which is in turn attributable to sound underwriting; 2) excellent policy persistency; and 3) a well-established position as a low-cost producer – the result of its well-managed distribution force and good cost controls."

Policyowner focus

"Northwestern Mutual has a very strong commitment to serving its policyowners...Its branding and consumer marketing is tightly linked with its participating product focus and commitment to policyowner value and financial strength."

"The company's management does not stray from its policyowner-oriented principles, which align well with creditor interests."

Best ratings

With this latest affirmation, Northwestern Mutual continues to have the highest financial strength ratings awarded to any life insurer by all four of the major rating agencies: A.M. Best Company, A++ (highest), May 2016; Fitch Ratings, AAA (highest), May 2016; Moody's Investors Service, Aaa (highest), July 2016; and S&P Global Ratings, AA+ (second highest), June 2016. Third-party ratings are subject to change. Ratings are for The Northwestern Mutual Life Insurance Company and Northwestern Long Term Care Insurance Company.

For more information, see the [Our Commitment to Financial Strength](#) page on northwesternmutual.com.

About Northwestern Mutual

Northwestern Mutual has been helping families and businesses achieve financial security for nearly 160 years. Our financial representatives build relationships with clients through a distinctive planning approach that integrates risk management with wealth accumulation, preservation and distribution. With \$238.5 billion in assets, \$27.9 billion in revenues and more than \$1.6 trillion worth of life insurance protection in force, Northwestern Mutual delivers financial security to more than 4.3 million people who rely on us for insurance and investment solutions, including life, disability income and long-term care insurance; annuities; trust services; mutual funds; and investment advisory products and services. Northwestern Mutual is recognized by FORTUNE magazine as one of the "World's Most Admired" life insurance companies in 2016.

SOURCE Northwestern Mutual

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