



Modernizing Annuity Ecosystems: Understanding, Transacting, and Managing Annuities in Today's World

Implementation Guide to Activity Status

Executive Summary

This document highlights the critical challenge of financial professionals having transparency for submitted business, proposes a few short-term solutions, and emphasizes the importance of a digital-first approach to enhance efficiency and customer experience.

Problem Summary:

Financial professionals often submit applications/contracts with no additional insight into the status after submission. The lack of visibility into the status of their new business requires the financial professional or their office staff to call into the carrier for status information, often multiple times before a contract is issued. Clients also become upset with the financial professional due to the lack of contract issuance details because they are expecting their policy print or potential updates on a transfer transaction.

JOURNEY MAPPING: Activity Status

Activity status was voted the top priority for financial professionals in 2023 surveys. Once the business is written, there is little to no insight into the status of the transaction. Carriers have to manage questions on the status manual with emails and calls. By providing an electronic, standardized format for activity Status, firms can easily report the status of submitted business on dashboards. Transparency into the status will eliminate multiple pain points for financial professionals and will create a scalable solution for carriers that will help with their call center email and call volumes.



Persona

Matt, age 50, Financial Professional, dual registered selling Fixed and Fixed Indexed Annuities with some VA and RILA. For the last 8 years of his career, he is targeting clients close to retirement age with a minimum household income of \$500,000.

Scenario

Matt loves helping clients achieve their financial goals while treating them like family and providing peace of mind. The process to get the status of submitted business is not accurate and Matt gets different answers on the status depending on who he calls or emails. He has struggled to maintain his professional reputation and project to his clients that he is competent as a financial professional due to the transparency in the status of the submitted business.

	Activity Status	Implementation of Activity Status
Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide Financial Professionals the tools to have visibility into an application once it is submitted. Create efficiency and transparency in the submitted business. Reduce complexities and manual processes around checking the status of business including transfer status. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Notify Stakeholders for Implementation and Adoption. Align the industry with clear, standardized rules of engagement. Deliver essential information to Financial Professionals in their digital tools. Deliver scalable Digital First messages that support build once-use many model for multiple implementations. Financial Professionals will know the status of their activities to share with the client.
Thoughts and Emotions	<p>I've submitted the application/contract but haven't seen any updates on issuance.</p> <p>I need to call to check status again? I would like to know the status without needing to call repeatedly! Why can't I see the status of my submissions?</p> <p>Why is this taking so long? Every time I call, I get a different answer.</p> <p>I can't tell my client with confidence the status. "Trust me, I sent the money" is not a good answer. My client is getting upset with me!</p>	<p>I work in an industry where my thoughts and struggles are valued.</p> <p>Writing new contracts will be less stressful for me. I will have greater visibility into the status of all my activities.</p> <p>This process is so much easier for me! I can be more efficient with my time!</p>
MVP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transparency in activity status for financial professionals in the tools they use. More efficient process for financial professionals to track the status and provide timely and accurate updates to clients. A universal format for Activity Status using modern API technology. Activity status provided in real-time using data from the source. Consistent status regardless of location (website, API, calling) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transparency in activity status is provided to the Financial Professional in the tools they use. Manual processes are decreased due to Activity Status transparency. Create a single method to obtain the status in a build once, use many model.
Implementation and Adoption	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create a technical tool with a reusable format that is easy to decipher, use and implement. Align on terminology for websites and API responses. A universal Activity Status format using modern API technology. Carriers and consumers of the data can implement one time (build once, use many model). Work with industry partners to provide a standard API that can be implemented to provide status of activity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expedite Activity Status awareness for Financial Professionals. Work with ACCORD to create and own the standard. Work with DTCC to ensure 1 standard for both the centralized DTCC model and the direct to carrier model. Request Carriers and Solution providers to support the Activity Status message. Executive summary Matrix tracking Conference session as part of digital first.

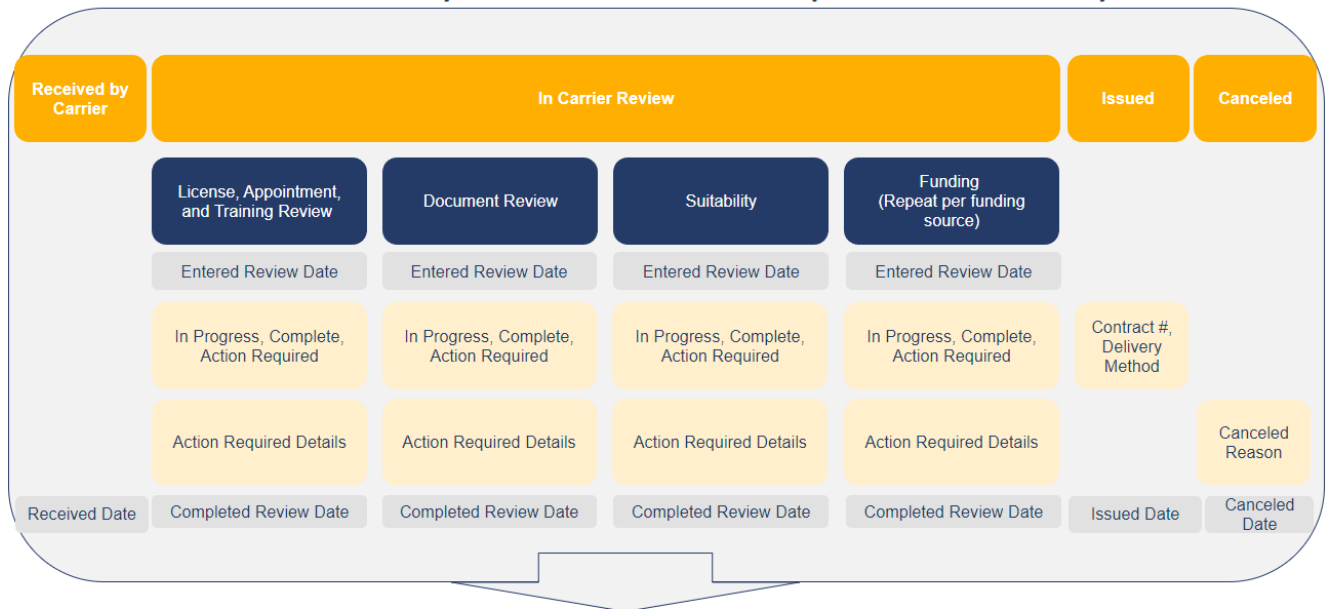
Deep Dive: Activity Status Improvement Proposal

Activity Status MVP:

Provide financial professionals the tools to have visibility into an application once it is submitted as well as reduce complexities and manual processes around checking the status of 1035 Exchange/Transfers for the Financial Professional.

The charts below outline the minimally viable product (MVP) proposed to improve activity status data flow and communication across the industry as well as the three linked projects identified as required to deliver an accurate and up-to-date activity status.

Standard Activity Status to be Implemented by Q1'24



Carriers display these statuses on their portal and respond to the standard API for status display in 3rd party and distributor portals.

Implementation:

2 options

- Direct to carrier
- DTCC centralized model (currently being prioritized)

ACORD Standards:

Activity Status messages leverage ACORD's Next Generation Digital Standards. These standards will be available upon full release [here](#) (an ACORD membership is required). For questions about specs and layouts or membership, please contact memberservices@acord.org.

Anticipated Costs:

Many carriers already have projects underway to build an Activity Status model. If projects are inflight, the cost to align the industry on standard status with standard communication mechanisms may be incremental and may save cost on the requirement phase as the industry will supply feature level requirements that can be worked into firm-specific requirements. Please refer to the [IRI Implementation Heat Map](#) for specific cost-benefit analysis.

Anticipated Timeline:

A [BETA version](#) of the standards and data element spreadsheet was released in December 2023 through ACORD. The finalized version will be available in April 2024. For questions on how to access the standards, please contact memberservices@acord.org.

Activity Status was voted as a top priority friction point for financial professionals by IRI members. IRI and its member firms recommend implementation of this service in 2024. Please refer to the [IRI Implementation Heat Map](#) for specific firm-level timelines.