

What is MIB?

■ MIB Group, Inc. is a not-for-profit membership corporation owned by Member life insurance companies in the United States and Canada.

What does MIB do?

■ MIB maintains a database for Members to exchange confidential information of underwriting significance when an individual applies for life, health, disability income, long-term care or critical illness insurance. This information is maintained and safeguarded in a coded format that is accessible only to authorized personnel of a Member company to which you have applied for insurance and have authorized the company to use MIB as an information source.

Why is this important?

■ MIB's primary purpose is to protect our Member companies from proposed insureds who knowingly or unknowingly omit information about their insurability on their applications. When a person applies for an individually underwritten insurance policy, he or she is asked a number of questions that help to classify him or her as an insurance risk. In the case where an applicant either forgets to answer a question correctly or knowingly omits information on the application, MIB provides an alert to the company where the person has applied for insurance regarding information that may be relevant in the risk assessment process. MIB saves its Member companies an estimated \$1 billion annually by enabling them to avoid fraudulent insurance applications and early claims. These savings are potentially passed down to insurance buying consumers in the form of lower premiums (and higher dividends payable by mutual companies).

Who are Members of MIB?

■ Members are insurers that write individually underwritten life, disability income, health, long-term care or critical illness insurance.

A Consumer's Guide to MIB

For more than 100 years, we at MIB have played a pivotal role in helping keep life, health and other forms of insurance affordable for consumers in the United States and Canada. The information that constitutes the MIB Checking Service – coded to ensure consumers' privacy and released to carriers only when applicants give their written consent – helps our more than 500 Member companies underwrite policies efficiently and effectively. MIB and its Member companies operate in conformity with the federal Fair Credit Reporting Act.

This brochure was developed to give you a clearer idea of the way MIB operates and the role that MIB plays in the insurance industry.

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What do these companies do with this information?

■ Authorized underwriting personnel of the Member company review the application information provided by the person applying for insurance and compare it to what is in the person's MIB file. The information in the person's MIB file is used only as an alert. No underwriting decision can be made solely on the basis of a coded report, such as issuing a policy with an extra premium or declining to offer coverage.

How does information get into my MIB file?

■ When an application is made to an MIB Member company, any information that is of significance to health or longevity (whether admitted on the application or discovered during the underwriting process) is sent to MIB by the Member company in a coded, encrypted format. Use of these codes ensures that this confidential information is protected.

How do I know if MIB will be checked at the time of my insurance application?

■ If a Member Company wishes to check with MIB to see if you have an MIB record, then it must provide you with the MIB Pre-Notice and it must obtain your signature on an authorization in which MIB is identified as an information source along with other sources that might have records, such as your personal physician.

Who else can get my MIB file?

■ Unless otherwise required by law, only Member companies will have access to information in the MIB database and only when you are applying for individually underwritten insurance. Employers, vendors, and non-Members do not have access to MIB files.

What does an MIB file say about me?

■ Coded information identifies medical conditions or medical tests that are reported by MIB Members to MIB under broad categories. There are also a few codes that are non-medical. Those codes report potentially hazardous avocations or hobbies, or results of a motor vehicle report showing a poor driving history. MIB has no actual "reports" or "medical records" on file, only the coded "resume" provided by the Member.

Where does this information that goes into an MIB file come from?

■ As part of the underwriting process, an applicant provides information to the Member company and in addition, the insurance company may obtain your medical records along with other underwriting requirements. Any information that has significance in the underwriting process may be reported to MIB.

How long do MIB codes stay on my MIB file?

■ Based on today's environment, MIB has elected to automatically and uniformly purge MIB records from our database after seven years.

Does everyone have an MIB file?

■ You may have an MIB record if you have applied for individual insurance in the last seven years with an MIB Member company, and have a condition or avocation that is considered significant to your health or longevity.

How can I find out if I have an MIB file?

■ The federal Fair Credit Reporting Act, as amended by the Fair and Accurate Credit Transactions Act (FACTA) of 2003, allows a consumer to request free disclosure of his or her consumer report once annually. Only you can request an MIB file on yourself. This is done by calling MIB's toll-free telephone number 866-692-6901 (TTY 866-346-3642 for hearing impaired) to request disclosure of your file. You will be asked for some personal identifying information so that your record can be located, if one exists. During this recorded call, you will need to certify, under penalty of law, that the information you are providing is accurate, and that you are the person requesting disclosure. The personal identifying information that we collect is used only to locate your MIB record, if any, and for no other purpose. We safeguard this information and keep it confidential.

What else would I see in my MIB file?

■ When disclosure is requested, MIB provides you with a list of Member companies that have made an inquiry on you in the prior twenty-four months. Also provided is a list of any Member companies that received your MIB record in the prior twelve months. Even if you have an MIB record, it will not contain any information regarding the underwriting decision made on your application.

How long will free disclosure take?

■ A response will be mailed within 15 days of receipt of adequate identifying information to locate your record, should one exist. If we cannot determine if a record exists from information provided, MIB will contact you with instructions as to any additional identification information and/or steps needed to complete your request for disclosure.

What if I have a letter of adverse action from the insurance company?

■ If your insurance company advised you by letter that it has taken an unfavorable action on your application and the letter specifies that MIB was an informational source, then you may call the toll free number—866-692-6901 (TTY 866-346-3642 for hearing impaired) Alternatively, you may request free disclosure in writing by sending us a request for disclosure along with a copy of the adverse action letter. We will send you an identification form and your request will be processed within 30 days of having received adequate identifying information to locate your record. If you wish, you can email us at infoline@mib.com to request the form or send a letter to:

For U.S. Residents:

MIB, Inc.
Information Office
50 Braintree Hill Park, Suite. 400
Braintree, MA 02184-8734

For Canadian Residents

MIB, Inc.
330 University Ave, Suite 501
Toronto, Ontario, Canada
M5G 1R7

What if I disagree with the information that you have about me?

■ If you do not agree with the information in your MIB record, you should contact MIB and request a reinvestigation. MIB will send you a Request for Reinvestigation Form where you indicate the specific information with which you disagree. MIB will then initiate a reinvestigation with the Member company that reported the disputed information.

What if I am not satisfied with the outcome, or if the reinvestigation does not result in any changes to my MIB record?

■ If this should happen, you may submit a STATEMENT OF DISPUTE, which will then become part of your MIB file. From that point forward, any MIB Member that receives your MIB file will also receive a copy of your STATEMENT OF DISPUTE.