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Holocaust insurance claim deadline is Feb. 15

FRANKFORT, Ky. - Holocaust survivors and their heirs should be aware that time is running out to file insurance claims with the International Commission on Holocaust Era Insurance Claims (ICHEIC), said Janie A. Miller, commissioner for the Kentucky Department of Insurance.

"The deadline for filing claims is Feb. 15, 2002. People who believe they are entitled to benefits from a Holocaust-era policy should submit their claims to the International Commission before that date," she said. The commission was created in 1998 to locate beneficiaries and help them make claims on unpaid dowry, education or life insurance policies purchased by victims of the Holocaust.

There is a searchable database containing the names of potential claimants online at the International Commission's Web site at <http://www.icheic.org>. The fact that a name appears on a published list is not a guarantee of payment. However, inclusion on list suggests that a policy was in effect during the relevant period (1920-1945), and that the policy may not have been paid.

There is no charge for filing a claim and it is not necessary to hire a lawyer. Claim forms may be obtained by calling the International Commission toll-free at (800) 957-3203 or visiting the commission Web site.

Lists of Holocaust-era policyholders are still being produced by participating insurance companies and the commission Web site is updated regularly. Additional lists are expected should an agreement with non-participating companies be reached.

ICHEIC established a two-year window for the filing of claims, as well as relaxed standards of proof to provide claims payments without full documentation. Provisions are also in place to provide benefits for those with claims against companies no longer in existence or companies that were nationalized under communism.

Twelve claims have been made by Kentucky residents as of Dec. 7, 2001. The national total is 20,116.

About ICHEIC

The International Commission on Holocaust Era Insurance Claims was established in 1998 by the National Association of Insurance Commissioners (NAIC) in cooperation with several European insurance companies, European regulators, representatives of several Jewish organizations and the State of Israel. The commission is charged with establishing a just process that will expeditiously address the issue of unpaid insurance policies issued to victims of the Holocaust.