



# NEWS RELEASE

A.M. BEST COMPANY, INC., OLDWICK, NJ • A.M. BEST EUROPE – RATING SERVICES LIMITED, LONDON  
A.M. BEST EUROPE – INFORMATION SERVICES LIMITED, LONDON • A.M. BEST ASIA-PACIFIC, LTD., HONG KONG

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **A.M. Best Upgrades Ratings of AmFirst Insurance Company and Monitor Life Insurance Company of New York**

**OLDWICK, N.J., April 24, 2012**—**A.M. Best Co.** has upgraded the financial strength rating to B++ (Good) from B+ (Good) and issuer credit ratings to “bbb” from “bbb-” of **AmFirst Insurance Company** (AmFirst) (Oklahoma City, OH) and its wholly-owned subsidiary, **Monitor Life Insurance Company of New York** (Monitor Life) (Utica, NY). The outlook for all ratings is stable.

The upgrading of the ratings reflects AmFirst’s consistent growth in capital, as displayed by its solid risk-adjusted capitalization, as well as the positive earnings stream and expanded geographic and product diversification. The AmFirst group also benefits from a well established and growing medical gap plan niche market.

Monitor Life’s ratings are bolstered by the implicit and explicit support of AmFirst, including the capital contribution it received in 2011, which allowed for Monitor Life to grow its capital, as well as AmFirst’s commitment to allow Monitor Life to grow its capital in the future through retained earnings. A.M. Best expects AmFirst and Monitor Life to maintain operating stability through positive premium growth trends and organic capital growth via continued earnings expansion going forward. A.M. Best also believes that AmFirst’s acquisition of Monitor Life has created opportunities for product and market expansion in Monitor Life’s geographic areas and has provided an additional vehicle for the group to expand its profitability.

A.M. Best believes AmFirst and Monitor Life are well positioned at their current ratings.



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Key factors that could lead to negative rating actions include a deterioration in either company's operating performance, erosion of its absolute and/or risk-adjusted capitalization or any major disruptions to its core niche product business model.

The methodology used in determining these ratings is Best's Credit Rating Methodology, which provides a comprehensive explanation of A.M. Best's rating process and contains the different rating criteria employed in the rating process. Key criteria utilized include: "Risk Management and the Rating Process for Insurance Companies"; "Understanding BCAR for Life/Health Insurers"; "Rating Members of Insurance Groups"; and "Assessing Country Risk." Best's Credit Rating Methodology can be found at [www.ambest.com/ratings/methodology](http://www.ambest.com/ratings/methodology).

**Founded in 1899, A.M. Best Company is the world's oldest and most authoritative insurance rating and information source. For more information, visit [www.ambest.com](http://www.ambest.com).**

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