

KIPLINGER READERS' CHOICE AWARDS 2026: ANNUITY PROVIDERS*

These are the best annuity providers chosen by Kiplinger readers.

By Rachael Green



For the fourth year, we're pleased to present the winners of our annual Readers' Choice Awards. In a survey we conducted on Kiplinger.com in January and February, more than 4,200 readers rated the financial products and services they use in 13 categories, from credit cards and banks to brokers, wealth managers and annuity providers. The results here offer valuable insight into the everyday experiences that Kiplinger readers have with their financial providers.

Respondents made their judgments on such criteria as their interactions with customer

service, the likelihood they would recommend the product or service to others, and their overall satisfaction with it. They also had the option to leave comments about their providers, and we have shared some of them here (remarks may be lightly edited for length and clarity).

For each category, we've listed an overall winner that earned the highest total score as well as other providers that earned above-average ratings for the various criteria that readers assessed. Our thanks to all of you who participated in the

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KIPLINGER READERS' CHOICE AWARDS: ANNUITY PROVIDERS

Annuities are contracts that allow you to pay an amount up front or over time in exchange for the opportunity to create a steady stream of income in retirement.

Often used as a way to hedge retirement portfolios against future market risks, the features and costs can vary widely. We asked readers to rate their annuity provider based on its customer service, how likely they are to recommend it to others and their overall satisfaction with the company.

OVERALL WINNER: PRUDENTIAL

Outstanding for:

- Customer service
- Most recommended
- Overall satisfaction

Prudential proved the prime choice among annuity companies in this year's awards. According to one reader and Prudential customer, "I took this annuity when I retired, and it provides a secure payment every year."

You can pick among a comprehensive set of Prudential annuities to fit your personal risk tolerance and income needs, including options with good downside protection and flexible withdrawals. The types available include variable annuities, fixed annuities, fixed indexed annuities, registered index-linked annuities and more.

Prudential has a reputation for financial staying power, earning an A+ financial strength rating from AM Best, a global credit rating agency.

HIGHLY-RATED PROVIDERS

MassMutual

Outstanding for:

- Customer service
- Most recommended
- Overall satisfaction

MassMutual scored highly for all three criteria we asked readers to rate. One survey respondent says, "The service and product is outstanding." The company offers a range of annuity types, including variable annuities, deferred fixed annuities, fixed indexed annuities, registered index-linked annuities and immediate annuities.

New York Life

Outstanding for:

- Most recommended
- Overall satisfaction

New York Life took home the crown for overall winner among annuity providers last year, and many readers still deem it a great choice, with one expressing confidence that "New York Life will be able to withstand any market downgrade."

That trust in an annuity provider's long-term financial strength is crucial for those who are depending on it for guaranteed retirement income. "New York Life is the gold standard," another respondent says. "I would not use anybody else."

TIAA

Outstanding for:

- Customer service
- Most recommended

TIAA offers fixed and variable annuities to fit the retirement goals of a wide variety of customers. The company offers wealth management services, too, for those who want additional guidance on their retirement-income strategy and other aspects of their financial plan.

Nationwide

Outstanding for: Customer service

Nationwide makes it easy to set up an account, and it offers a range of tools and calculators to help you decide which type of annuity makes sense for you and how it should fit into your overall financial plan. Its array of annuity products includes fixed annuities, fixed indexed annuities, registered index-linked annuities and variable annuities.

KIPLINGER READERS' CHOICE AWARDS CATEGORIES

- Readers' Choice Full-Service Brokers*
- Readers' Choice Wealth Management
- Readers' Choice Cash Back Credit Cards*
- Readers' Choice Airline Credit Card
- Rewards Programs*
- Readers' Choice National Banks*
- Readers' Choice Internet Banks*
- Readers' Choice Auto Insurance Companies
- Readers' Choice Homeowners Insurance Companies
- Readers' Choice Annuity Providers*
- Readers' Choice Tax Software*
- Readers' Choice Peer-to-Peer Payment Services
- Readers' Choice Awards Travel Rewards Credit Cards*

HOW READERS CHOSE THE WINNERS

Kiplinger readers were invited to take the Readers' Choice Awards survey on Kiplinger.com between January 22 and February 19, 2026. The survey asked respondents to choose the financial product or service that they most frequently use in 13 categories: brokerage firms, wealth managers, IRA providers, cash-back credit cards, travel rewards credit cards, airline credit card rewards programs, national banks, internet banks, annuity providers, homeowners insurers, auto insurers, tax software and peer-to-peer payment services.

We asked readers to rate each provider they selected on a scale of one to 10 based on a few criteria. In many categories, readers rated the strength of customer service, how likely they would be to recommend the product or service to others, and how satisfied they are overall with the provider. In some categories, we included more nuanced criteria. With wealth management

firms, we asked respondents to rate the trustworthiness of a firm's advisers and the quality of its financial advice and retirement-planning services. For IRA providers, respondents assessed the mix of investment choices available to them. For peer-to-peer payment apps and tax software, respondents evaluated ease of use, and for auto and home insurance companies, readers judged the competitiveness of rates and strength of the claims experience.

We calculated an average (mean) score for each criterion with each provider. We also calculated an overall mean score for all providers for each criterion we asked readers to judge. We compared individual provider mean scores with the overall mean, and the three highest-scoring providers that had a score above the overall mean won an "outstanding" accolade; in cases of a tie, more than three providers are named, and if fewer than three qualifying providers achieved an above-average score, only those providers are named "outstanding." In each category, providers are generally listed in descending order by the number of criteria for which they received the "outstanding" designation — so a product or company that is deemed "outstanding" in three areas, for example, is listed before a provider with one or two "outstanding" awards.

To choose an overall winner in each category, we added together the mean scores for each criterion rated for each product or service. The provider with the highest total score in each category took the prize for overall winner.

Because of a technical issue during 2026 survey data collection, some providers that readers evaluated in certain categories, marked with an asterisk, were ranked using patterns from 2025 consumer survey data.

Affected were three of 18 brokerage firms, six of 20 cash-back credit cards, two of 15 travel rewards credit cards, one of 13 airline credit card rewards programs, three of 33 banks, two of 14 annuity providers, and one of eight tax-software products. All other categories fully reflect 2026 data. All results represent actual Kiplinger reader feedback. ■

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INVESTMENT AND INSURANCE PRODUCTS ARE:

- NOT FDIC INSURED
- NOT INSURED BY ANY FEDERAL GOVERNMENT AGENCY
- NOT A DEPOSIT OR OTHER OBLIGATION OF, OR GUARANTEED BY, ANY BANK OR ANY OF ITS AFFILIATES
- SUBJECT TO INVESTMENT RISKS, INCLUDING POSSIBLE LOSS OF THE PRINCIPAL AMOUNT INVESTED

Annuities are issued by The Prudential Insurance Company of America, Newark, NJ, and its affiliates which has an A+ Financial Strength Ratings rating from AM Best. A+ is the second highest of the 16 ratings AM Best extends. The rating is an opinion on the insurer's financial strength and ability to meet its insurance policy and contractual obligation. Ratings are as of May 5, 2026 and are not a guarantee of future financial strength or claim paying ability. The ratings are subject to change and do not reflect any subsequent rating agency action.

An annuity is a long-term investment designed for retirement purposes. All guarantees are backed by the issuing company's claims-paying ability.