

FORM 4

UNITED STATES SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION

Washington, D.C. 20549

STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN BENEFICIAL OWNERSHIP

Check this box if no longer subject to Section 16. Form 4 or Form 5 obligations may continue. See Instruction 1(b).

| OMB APPROVAL                                 |           |
|----------------------------------------------|-----------|
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Filed pursuant to Section 16(a) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 or Section 30(h) of the Investment Company Act of 1940

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |                                                                                                          |                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. Name and Address of Reporting Person*<br><u>GERLACH JAMES M</u><br><br>(Last) (First) (Middle)<br><u>6000 WESTOWN PARKWAY</u><br><br>(Street)<br><u>WEST DES MOINES IA 50266</u><br><br>(City) (State) (Zip) | 2. Issuer Name and Ticker or Trading Symbol<br><u>AMERICAN EQUITY INVESTMENT LIFE HOLDING CO [ AEL ]</u> | 5. Relationship of Reporting Person(s) to Issuer (Check all applicable)<br><br><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Director 10% Owner<br><br>Officer (give title below) Other (specify below) |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | 3. Date of Earliest Transaction (Month/Day/Year)<br><u>06/01/2017</u>                                    |                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| 4. If Amendment, Date of Original Filed (Month/Day/Year)                                                                                                                                                        |                                                                                                          |                                                                                                                                                                                               |

Table I - Non-Derivative Securities Acquired, Disposed of, or Beneficially Owned

| 1. Title of Security (Instr. 3) | 2. Transaction Date (Month/Day/Year) | 2A. Deemed Execution Date, if any (Month/Day/Year) | 3. Transaction Code (Instr. 8) |   | 4. Securities Acquired (A) or Disposed Of (D) (Instr. 3, 4 and 5) |            |       | 5. Amount of Securities Beneficially Owned Following Reported Transaction(s) (Instr. 3 and 4) | 6. Ownership Form: Direct (D) or Indirect (I) (Instr. 4) | 7. Nature of Indirect Beneficial Ownership (Instr. 4) |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|---|-------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|-------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|
|                                 |                                      |                                                    | Code                           | V | Amount                                                            | (A) or (D) | Price |                                                                                               |                                                          |                                                       |
| Common Stock                    | 06/01/2017                           |                                                    | A                              |   | 3,000 <sup>(1)</sup>                                              | A          | \$0   | 219,667                                                                                       | D                                                        |                                                       |

Table II - Derivative Securities Acquired, Disposed of, or Beneficially Owned (e.g., puts, calls, warrants, options, convertible securities)

| 1. Title of Derivative Security (Instr. 3) | 2. Conversion or Exercise Price of Derivative Security | 3. Transaction Date (Month/Day/Year) | 3A. Deemed Execution Date, if any (Month/Day/Year) | 4. Transaction Code (Instr. 8) | 5. Number of Derivative Securities Acquired (A) or Disposed of (D) (Instr. 3, 4 and 5) | 6. Date Exercisable and Expiration Date (Month/Day/Year) |                 | 7. Title and Amount of Securities Underlying Derivative Security (Instr. 3 and 4) | 8. Price of Derivative Security (Instr. 5) | 9. Number of derivative Securities Beneficially Owned Following Reported Transaction(s) (Instr. 4) | 10. Ownership Form: Direct (D) or Indirect (I) (Instr. 4) | 11. Nature of Indirect Beneficial Ownership (Instr. 4) |
|--------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|
|                                            |                                                        |                                      |                                                    |                                |                                                                                        | Date Exercisable                                         | Expiration Date |                                                                                   |                                            |                                                                                                    |                                                           |                                                        |
|                                            |                                                        |                                      |                                                    |                                |                                                                                        |                                                          |                 |                                                                                   |                                            |                                                                                                    |                                                           |                                                        |

Explanation of Responses:

1. An award of restricted stock that vests one year from the date of grant or on the day of AEL's 2018 annual meeting of the shareholders, whichever is earlier.

Remarks:

Renee D. Montz, by Power of Attorney. 06/01/2017

\*\* Signature of Reporting Person Date

Reminder: Report on a separate line for each class of securities beneficially owned directly or indirectly.

\* If the form is filed by more than one reporting person, see Instruction 4 (b)(v).

\*\* Intentional misstatements or omissions of facts constitute Federal Criminal Violations See 18 U.S.C. 1001 and 15 U.S.C. 78ff(a).

Note: File three copies of this Form, one of which must be manually signed. If space is insufficient, see Instruction 6 for procedure.

Persons who respond to the collection of information contained in this form are not required to respond unless the form displays a currently valid OMB Number.