

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).

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

| OMB APPROVAL | |
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| 1. Name and Address of Reporting Person* <u>Samuelson Scott A.</u> (Last) (First) (Middle) <u>6000 WESTOWN PARKWAY</u> (Street) <u>WEST DES MOINES IA 50266</u> (City) (State) (Zip) | 2. Issuer Name and Ticker or Trading Symbol <u>AMERICAN EQUITY INVESTMENT LIFE HOLDING CO [AEL]</u> 3. Date of Earliest Transaction (Month/Day/Year) <u>02/27/2018</u> 4. If Amendment, Date of Original Filed (Month/Day/Year) | 5. Relationship of Reporting Person(s) to Issuer (Check all applicable) Director 10% Owner <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Officer (give title below) Other (specify below) <u>Vice President-Controller</u> 6. Individual or Joint/Group Filing (Check Applicable Line) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Form filed by One Reporting Person Form filed by More than One Reporting Person |
|--|---|--|

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 | 02/27/2018 | | A | | 915 ⁽¹⁾ | A | \$0 | 14,785 | D | |
| Common Stock | | | | | | | | 6,988 ⁽²⁾ | I | By ESOP |

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 | | | | | |
| | | | | Code | V | (A) | (D) | Title | Amount or Number of Shares | | | |

Explanation of Responses:

1. An award of restricted stock pursuant to the American Equity Investment Life Holding Company 2016 Employee Incentive Plan that vests on the third anniversary of the date of grant.
2. Reflects ESOP allocations that have occurred since the date of the reporting person's last ownership report.

Remarks:

Renee D. Montz, by Power of Attorney 03/01/2018

** 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.