

Form 5500 Department of the Treasury Internal Revenue Service Department of Labor Employee Benefits Security Administration Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation	Annual Return/Report of Employee Benefit Plan This form is required to be filed for employee benefit plans under sections 104 and 4065 of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (ERISA) and sections 6057(b) and 6058(a) of the Internal Revenue Code (the Code). ▶ Complete all entries in accordance with the instructions to the Form 5500.	OMB Nos. 1210-0110 1210-0089 2021 This Form is Open to Public Inspection
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Part I	Annual Report Identification Information
For calendar plan year 2021 or fiscal plan year beginning <u>01/01/2021</u> and ending <u>12/31/2021</u>	
A	This return/report is for: ☐ a multiemployer plan ☐ a multiple-employer plan (Filers checking this box must attach a list of participating employer information in accordance with the form instructions.)
	☒ a single-employer plan ☐ a DFE (specify) _____
B	This return/report is: ☐ the first return/report ☐ an amended return/report ☐ the final return/report ☐ a short plan year return/report (less than 12 months)
C	If the plan is a collectively-bargained plan, check here. ▶ ☐
D	Check box if filing under: ☒ Form 5558 ☐ special extension (enter description) ☐ automatic extension ☐ the DFVC program
E	If this is a retroactively adopted plan permitted by SECURE Act section 201, check here. ▶ ☐

Part II	Basic Plan Information—enter all requested information
1a	Name of plan <u>EL POLLO LOCO, INC. 401(K) PLAN</u>
1b	Three-digit plan number (PN) ▶ <u>002</u>
	1c Effective date of plan <u>01/01/2000</u>
2a	Plan sponsor's name (employer, if for a single-employer plan) Mailing address (include room, apt., suite no. and street, or P.O. Box) City or town, state or province, country, and ZIP or foreign postal code (if foreign, see instructions) <u>EL POLLO LOCO, INC.</u> <u>3535 HARBOR BOULEVARD</u> <u>SUITE 100</u> <u>COSTA MESA, CA 92626</u>
2b	Employer Identification Number (EIN) <u>33-0377527</u>
2c	Plan Sponsor's telephone number <u>949-399-2090</u>
2d	Business code (see instructions) <u>722511</u>

Caution: A penalty for the late or incomplete filing of this return/report will be assessed unless reasonable cause is established.

Under penalties of perjury and other penalties set forth in the instructions, I declare that I have examined this return/report, including accompanying schedules, statements and attachments, as well as the electronic version of this return/report, and to the best of my knowledge and belief, it is true, correct, and complete.

SIGN HERE	Filed with authorized/valid electronic signature.	10/07/2022	ROSANNE SETOGUCHI
	Signature of plan administrator	Date	Enter name of individual signing as plan administrator
SIGN HERE			
	Signature of employer/plan sponsor	Date	Enter name of individual signing as employer or plan sponsor
SIGN HERE			
	Signature of DFE	Date	Enter name of individual signing as DFE

For Paperwork Reduction Act Notice, see the Instructions for Form 5500.

Form 5500 (2021)
v. 210624

3a Plan administrator's name and address ☒ Same as Plan Sponsor		3b Administrator's EIN	
		3c Administrator's telephone number	
4 If the name and/or EIN of the plan sponsor or the plan name has changed since the last return/report filed for this plan, enter the plan sponsor's name, EIN, the plan name and the plan number from the last return/report: a Sponsor's name c Plan Name		4b EIN 4d PN	
5 Total number of participants at the beginning of the plan year		5	3158
6 Number of participants as of the end of the plan year unless otherwise stated (welfare plans complete only lines 6a(1) , 6a(2) , 6b , 6c , and 6d).			
a(1) Total number of active participants at the beginning of the plan year.....		6a(1)	3029
a(2) Total number of active participants at the end of the plan year		6a(2)	2597
b Retired or separated participants receiving benefits.....		6b	2
c Other retired or separated participants entitled to future benefits		6c	160
d Subtotal. Add lines 6a(2) , 6b , and 6c		6d	2759
e Deceased participants whose beneficiaries are receiving or are entitled to receive benefits.		6e	1
f Total. Add lines 6d and 6e		6f	2760
g Number of participants with account balances as of the end of the plan year (only defined contribution plans complete this item)		6g	505
h Number of participants who terminated employment during the plan year with accrued benefits that were less than 100% vested		6h	0
7 Enter the total number of employers obligated to contribute to the plan (only multiemployer plans complete this item).....		7	
8a If the plan provides pension benefits, enter the applicable pension feature codes from the List of Plan Characteristics Codes in the instructions: 2F 2G 2J 2K 2T 3D			
b If the plan provides welfare benefits, enter the applicable welfare feature codes from the List of Plan Characteristics Codes in the instructions:			
9a Plan funding arrangement (check all that apply) (1) ☒ Insurance (2) ☐ Code section 412(e)(3) insurance contracts (3) ☒ Trust (4) ☐ General assets of the sponsor		9b Plan benefit arrangement (check all that apply) (1) ☒ Insurance (2) ☐ Code section 412(e)(3) insurance contracts (3) ☒ Trust (4) ☐ General assets of the sponsor	
10 Check all applicable boxes in 10a and 10b to indicate which schedules are attached, and, where indicated, enter the number attached. (See instructions)			
a Pension Schedules (1) ☒ R (Retirement Plan Information) (2) ☐ MB (Multiemployer Defined Benefit Plan and Certain Money Purchase Plan Actuarial Information) - signed by the plan actuary (3) ☐ SB (Single-Employer Defined Benefit Plan Actuarial Information) - signed by the plan actuary		b General Schedules (1) ☒ H (Financial Information) (2) ☐ I (Financial Information – Small Plan) (3) ☒ <u>1</u> A (Insurance Information) (4) ☒ C (Service Provider Information) (5) ☒ D (DFE/Participating Plan Information) (6) ☐ G (Financial Transaction Schedules)	

Part III Form M-1 Compliance Information (to be completed by welfare benefit plans)

11a If the plan provides welfare benefits, was the plan subject to the Form M-1 filing requirements during the plan year? (See instructions and 29 CFR 2520.101-2.) ☐ Yes ☐ No

If "Yes" is checked, complete lines 11b and 11c.

11b Is the plan currently in compliance with the Form M-1 filing requirements? (See instructions and 29 CFR 2520.101-2.) ☐ Yes ☐ No

11c Enter the Receipt Confirmation Code for the 2021 Form M-1 annual report. If the plan was not required to file the 2021 Form M-1 annual report, enter the Receipt Confirmation Code for the most recent Form M-1 that was required to be filed under the Form M-1 filing requirements. (Failure to enter a valid Receipt Confirmation Code will subject the Form 5500 filing to rejection as incomplete.)

Receipt Confirmation Code _____

SCHEDULE A (Form 5500) Department of the Treasury Internal Revenue Service Department of Labor Employee Benefits Security Administration Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation	Insurance Information This schedule is required to be filed under section 104 of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (ERISA). ▶ File as an attachment to Form 5500. ▶ Insurance companies are required to provide the information pursuant to ERISA section 103(a)(2).	OMB No. 1210-0110 2021 This Form is Open to Public Inspection
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For calendar plan year 2021 or fiscal plan year beginning 01/01/2021 and ending 12/31/2021		
A Name of plan EL POLLO LOCO, INC. 401(K) PLAN	B Three-digit plan number (PN) ▶	002
C Plan sponsor's name as shown on line 2a of Form 5500 EL POLLO LOCO, INC.	D Employer Identification Number (EIN) 33-0377527	

Part I	Information Concerning Insurance Contract Coverage, Fees, and Commissions	Provide information for each contract on a separate Schedule A. Individual contracts grouped as a unit in Parts II and III can be reported on a single Schedule A.
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1 Coverage Information:

(a) Name of insurance carrier TRANSAMERICA LIFE INSURANCE COMPANY
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(b) EIN	(c) NAIC code	(d) Contract or identification number	(e) Approximate number of persons covered at end of policy or contract year	Policy or contract year	
				(f) From	(g) To
39-0989781	86231	990442	505	01/01/2021	12/31/2021

2 Insurance fee and commission information. Enter the total fees and total commissions paid. List in line 3 the agents, brokers, and other persons in descending order of the amount paid.

(a) Total amount of commissions paid 68091	(b) Total amount of fees paid
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3 Persons receiving commissions and fees. (Complete as many entries as needed to report all persons).

(a) Name and address of the agent, broker, or other person to whom commissions or fees were paid SIMA BERNER REID 5001 AIRPORT PLAZA DR. SUITE 200 LONG BEACH, CA 90815

(b) Amount of sales and base commissions paid	Fees and other commissions paid		(e) Organization code
	(c) Amount	(d) Purpose	
68091			3

(a) Name and address of the agent, broker, or other person to whom commissions or fees were paid

(b) Amount of sales and base commissions paid	Fees and other commissions paid		(e) Organization code
	(c) Amount	(d) Purpose	

(a) Name and address of the agent, broker, or other person to whom commissions or fees were paid

(b) Amount of sales and base commissions paid	Fees and other commissions paid		(e) Organization code
	(c) Amount	(d) Purpose	

(a) Name and address of the agent, broker, or other person to whom commissions or fees were paid

(b) Amount of sales and base commissions paid	Fees and other commissions paid		(e) Organization code
	(c) Amount	(d) Purpose	

(a) Name and address of the agent, broker, or other person to whom commissions or fees were paid

(b) Amount of sales and base commissions paid	Fees and other commissions paid		(e) Organization code
	(c) Amount	(d) Purpose	

(a) Name and address of the agent, broker, or other person to whom commissions or fees were paid

(b) Amount of sales and base commissions paid	Fees and other commissions paid		(e) Organization code
	(c) Amount	(d) Purpose	

(a) Name and address of the agent, broker, or other person to whom commissions or fees were paid

(b) Amount of sales and base commissions paid	Fees and other commissions paid		(e) Organization code
	(c) Amount	(d) Purpose	

Part II Investment and Annuity Contract Information

Where individual contracts are provided, the entire group of such individual contracts with each carrier may be treated as a unit for purposes of this report.

4	Current value of plan's interest under this contract in the general account at year end	4	3108765
5	Current value of plan's interest under this contract in separate accounts at year end.....	5	25675082

6 Contracts With Allocated Funds:**a** State the basis of premium rates ▶

b	Premiums paid to carrier	6b	
c	Premiums due but unpaid at the end of the year	6c	
d	If the carrier, service, or other organization incurred any specific costs in connection with the acquisition or retention of the contract or policy, enter amount. Specify nature of costs ▶	6d	

e Type of contract: (1) ☐ individual policies (2) ☐ group deferred annuity
(3) ☐ other (specify) ▶

f If contract purchased, in whole or in part, to distribute benefits from a terminating plan, check here ▶ ☐**7** Contracts With Unallocated Funds (Do not include portions of these contracts maintained in separate accounts)

a Type of contract: (1) ☐ deposit administration (2) ☐ immediate participation guarantee
(3) ☐ guaranteed investment (4) ☒ other ▶ STABLE VALUE OPTION

b	Balance at the end of the previous year	7b	2945848
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c	Additions: (1) Contributions deposited during the year	7c(1)	201296	
	(2) Dividends and credits.....	7c(2)		
	(3) Interest credited during the year.....	7c(3)	43953	
	(4) Transferred from separate account.....	7c(4)	42897	
	(5) Other (specify below)	7c(5)	99035	

▶ LOAN PRINCIPAL & INTEREST PAID INTO FIXED FUND, ADDITIONS TO FORFEITURES

(6) Total additions	7c(6)	387181
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d	Total of balance and additions (add lines 7b and 7c(6))	7d	3333029
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e Deductions:

	(1) Disbursed from fund to pay benefits or purchase annuities during year	7e(1)	45480	
	(2) Administration charge made by carrier.....	7e(2)	4623	
	(3) Transferred to separate account.....	7e(3)	80068	
	(4) Other (specify below)	7e(4)	94093	

▶ LOANS ISSUED FROM FIXED FUND, ALLOCATED FORFEITURES AND ADV ER

(5) Total deductions	7e(5)	224264
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f	Balance at the end of the current year (subtract line 7e(5) from line 7d)	7f	3108765
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Part III Welfare Benefit Contract Information

If more than one contract covers the same group of employees of the same employer(s) or members of the same employee organizations(s), the information may be combined for reporting purposes if such contracts are experience-rated as a unit. Where contracts cover individual employees, the entire group of such individual contracts with each carrier may be treated as a unit for purposes of this report.

8 Benefit and contract type (check all applicable boxes)

- a** ☐ Health (other than dental or vision)
b ☐ Dental
c ☐ Vision
d ☐ Life insurance
e ☐ Temporary disability (accident and sickness)
f ☐ Long-term disability
g ☐ Supplemental unemployment
h ☐ Prescription drug
i ☐ Stop loss (large deductible)
j ☐ HMO contract
k ☐ PPO contract
l ☐ Indemnity contract
m ☐ Other (specify) ▶

9 Experience-rated contracts:

a Premiums: (1) Amount received	9a(1)		
(2) Increase (decrease) in amount due but unpaid	9a(2)		
(3) Increase (decrease) in unearned premium reserve	9a(3)		
(4) Earned ((1) + (2) - (3))		9a(4)	
b Benefit charges (1) Claims paid	9b(1)		
(2) Increase (decrease) in claim reserves	9b(2)		
(3) Incurred claims (add (1) and (2))		9b(3)	
(4) Claims charged		9b(4)	
c Remainder of premium: (1) Retention charges (on an accrual basis) --			
(A) Commissions	9c(1)(A)		
(B) Administrative service or other fees	9c(1)(B)		
(C) Other specific acquisition costs	9c(1)(C)		
(D) Other expenses	9c(1)(D)		
(E) Taxes	9c(1)(E)		
(F) Charges for risks or other contingencies	9c(1)(F)		
(G) Other retention charges	9c(1)(G)		
(H) Total retention		9c(1)(H)	
(2) Dividends or retroactive rate refunds. (These amounts were ☐ paid in cash, or ☐ credited.)		9c(2)	
d Status of policyholder reserves at end of year: (1) Amount held to provide benefits after retirement		9d(1)	
(2) Claim reserves		9d(2)	
(3) Other reserves		9d(3)	
e Dividends or retroactive rate refunds due. (Do not include amount entered in line 9c(2).)		9e	

10 Nonexperience-rated contracts:

a Total premiums or subscription charges paid to carrier	10a	
b If the carrier, service, or other organization incurred any specific costs in connection with the acquisition or retention of the contract or policy, other than reported in Part I, line 2 above, report amount. Specify nature of costs.	10b	

Part IV Provision of Information

11 Did the insurance company fail to provide any information necessary to complete Schedule A? ☐ Yes ☒ No

12 If the answer to line 11 is "Yes," specify the information not provided. ▶

SCHEDULE C (Form 5500) Department of the Treasury Internal Revenue Service Department of Labor Employee Benefits Security Administration Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation	Service Provider Information This schedule is required to be filed under section 104 of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (ERISA). ▶ File as an attachment to Form 5500.	OMB No. 1210-0110
		2021
		This Form is Open to Public Inspection.
For calendar plan year 2021 or fiscal plan year beginning 01/01/2021 and ending 12/31/2021		
A Name of plan EL POLLO LOCO, INC. 401(K) PLAN	B Three-digit plan number (PN) ▶	002
C Plan sponsor's name as shown on line 2a of Form 5500 EL POLLO LOCO, INC.	D Employer Identification Number (EIN) 33-0377527	

Part I Service Provider Information (see instructions)

You must complete this Part, in accordance with the instructions, to report the information required for **each person** who received, directly or indirectly, \$5,000 or more in total compensation (i.e., money or anything else of monetary value) in connection with services rendered to the plan or the person's position with the plan during the plan year. If a person received **only** eligible indirect compensation for which the plan received the required disclosures, you are required to answer line 1 but are not required to include that person when completing the remainder of this Part.

1 Information on Persons Receiving Only Eligible Indirect Compensation

- a** Check "Yes" or "No" to indicate whether you are excluding a person from the remainder of this Part because they received only eligible indirect compensation for which the plan received the required disclosures (see instructions for definitions and conditions)..... ☒ Yes ☐ No
- b** If you answered line 1a "Yes," enter the name and EIN or address of each person providing the required disclosures for the service providers who received only eligible indirect compensation. Complete as many entries as needed (see instructions).

(b) Enter name and EIN or address of person who provided you disclosures on eligible indirect compensation

TRANSAMERICA LIFE INSURANCE COMPANY

39-0989781

(b) Enter name and EIN or address of person who provided you disclosures on eligible indirect compensation

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2. Information on Other Service Providers Receiving Direct or Indirect Compensation. Except for those persons for whom you answered "Yes" to line 1a above, complete as many entries as needed to list each person receiving, directly or indirectly, \$5,000 or more in total compensation (i.e., money or anything else of value) in connection with services rendered to the plan or their position with the plan during the plan year. (See instructions).

(a) Enter name and EIN or address (see instructions)

TRANSAMERICA LIFE INSURANCE COMPANY

39-0989781

(b) Service Code(s)	(c) Relationship to employer, employee organization, or person known to be a party-in-interest	(d) Enter direct compensation paid by the plan. If none, enter -0-.	(e) Did service provider receive indirect compensation? (sources other than plan or plan sponsor)	(f) Did indirect compensation include eligible indirect compensation, for which the plan received the required disclosures?	(g) Enter total indirect compensation received by service provider excluding eligible indirect compensation for which you answered "Yes" to element (f). If none, enter -0-.	(h) Did the service provider give you a formula instead of an amount or estimated amount?
15 37 52 62 64 67	RECORDKEEPER	35527	Yes ☒ No ☐	Yes ☒ No ☐	0	Yes ☐ No ☒

(a) Enter name and EIN or address (see instructions)

MESIROW FINANCIAL, INC.

36-3194849

(b) Service Code(s)	(c) Relationship to employer, employee organization, or person known to be a party-in-interest	(d) Enter direct compensation paid by the plan. If none, enter -0-.	(e) Did service provider receive indirect compensation? (sources other than plan or plan sponsor)	(f) Did indirect compensation include eligible indirect compensation, for which the plan received the required disclosures?	(g) Enter total indirect compensation received by service provider excluding eligible indirect compensation for which you answered "Yes" to element (f). If none, enter -0-.	(h) Did the service provider give you a formula instead of an amount or estimated amount?
27	INVESTMENT ADVISORY-PLAN	5491	Yes ☐ No ☒	Yes ☐ No ☐		Yes ☐ No ☐

(a) Enter name and EIN or address (see instructions)

(b) Service Code(s)	(c) Relationship to employer, employee organization, or person known to be a party-in-interest	(d) Enter direct compensation paid by the plan. If none, enter -0-.	(e) Did service provider receive indirect compensation? (sources other than plan or plan sponsor)	(f) Did indirect compensation include eligible indirect compensation, for which the plan received the required disclosures?	(g) Enter total indirect compensation received by service provider excluding eligible indirect compensation for which you answered "Yes" to element (f). If none, enter -0-.	(h) Did the service provider give you a formula instead of an amount or estimated amount?
			Yes ☐ No ☐	Yes ☐ No ☐		Yes ☐ No ☐

2. Information on Other Service Providers Receiving Direct or Indirect Compensation. Except for those persons for whom you answered "Yes" to line 1a above, complete as many entries as needed to list each person receiving, directly or indirectly, \$5,000 or more in total compensation (i.e., money or anything else of value) in connection with services rendered to the plan or their position with the plan during the plan year. (See instructions).

(a) Enter name and EIN or address (see instructions)

(b) Service Code(s)	(c) Relationship to employer, employee organization, or person known to be a party-in-interest	(d) Enter direct compensation paid by the plan. If none, enter -0-.	(e) Did service provider receive indirect compensation? (sources other than plan or plan sponsor)	(f) Did indirect compensation include eligible indirect compensation, for which the plan received the required disclosures?	(g) Enter total indirect compensation received by service provider excluding eligible indirect compensation for which you answered "Yes" to element (f). If none, enter -0-.	(h) Did the service provider give you a formula instead of an amount or estimated amount?
			Yes ☐ No ☐	Yes ☐ No ☐		Yes ☐ No ☐

(a) Enter name and EIN or address (see instructions)

(b) Service Code(s)	(c) Relationship to employer, employee organization, or person known to be a party-in-interest	(d) Enter direct compensation paid by the plan. If none, enter -0-.	(e) Did service provider receive indirect compensation? (sources other than plan or plan sponsor)	(f) Did indirect compensation include eligible indirect compensation, for which the plan received the required disclosures?	(g) Enter total indirect compensation received by service provider excluding eligible indirect compensation for which you answered "Yes" to element (f). If none, enter -0-.	(h) Did the service provider give you a formula instead of an amount or estimated amount?
			Yes ☐ No ☐	Yes ☐ No ☐		Yes ☐ No ☐

(a) Enter name and EIN or address (see instructions)

(b) Service Code(s)	(c) Relationship to employer, employee organization, or person known to be a party-in-interest	(d) Enter direct compensation paid by the plan. If none, enter -0-.	(e) Did service provider receive indirect compensation? (sources other than plan or plan sponsor)	(f) Did indirect compensation include eligible indirect compensation, for which the plan received the required disclosures?	(g) Enter total indirect compensation received by service provider excluding eligible indirect compensation for which you answered "Yes" to element (f). If none, enter -0-.	(h) Did the service provider give you a formula instead of an amount or estimated amount?
			Yes ☐ No ☐	Yes ☐ No ☐		Yes ☐ No ☐

Part I Service Provider Information (continued)

3. If you reported on line 2 receipt of indirect compensation, other than eligible indirect compensation, by a service provider, and the service provider is a fiduciary or provides contract administrator, consulting, custodial, investment advisory, investment management, broker, or recordkeeping services, answer the following questions for (a) each source from whom the service provider received \$1,000 or more in indirect compensation and (b) each source for whom the service provider gave you a formula used to determine the indirect compensation instead of an amount or estimated amount of the indirect compensation. Complete as many entries as needed to report the required information for each source.

(a) Enter service provider name as it appears on line 2	(b) Service Codes (see instructions)	(c) Enter amount of indirect compensation
(d) Enter name and EIN (address) of source of indirect compensation	(e) Describe the indirect compensation, including any formula used to determine the service provider's eligibility for or the amount of the indirect compensation.	
(a) Enter service provider name as it appears on line 2	(b) Service Codes (see instructions)	(c) Enter amount of indirect compensation
(d) Enter name and EIN (address) of source of indirect compensation	(e) Describe the indirect compensation, including any formula used to determine the service provider's eligibility for or the amount of the indirect compensation.	
(a) Enter service provider name as it appears on line 2	(b) Service Codes (see instructions)	(c) Enter amount of indirect compensation
(d) Enter name and EIN (address) of source of indirect compensation	(e) Describe the indirect compensation, including any formula used to determine the service provider's eligibility for or the amount of the indirect compensation.	

Part II Service Providers Who Fail or Refuse to Provide Information

4 Provide, to the extent possible, the following information for each service provider who failed or refused to provide the information necessary to complete this Schedule.

(a) Enter name and EIN or address of service provider (see instructions)	(b) Nature of Service Code(s)	(c) Describe the information that the service provider failed or refused to provide
(a) Enter name and EIN or address of service provider (see instructions)	(b) Nature of Service Code(s)	(c) Describe the information that the service provider failed or refused to provide
(a) Enter name and EIN or address of service provider (see instructions)	(b) Nature of Service Code(s)	(c) Describe the information that the service provider failed or refused to provide
(a) Enter name and EIN or address of service provider (see instructions)	(b) Nature of Service Code(s)	(c) Describe the information that the service provider failed or refused to provide
(a) Enter name and EIN or address of service provider (see instructions)	(b) Nature of Service Code(s)	(c) Describe the information that the service provider failed or refused to provide
(a) Enter name and EIN or address of service provider (see instructions)	(b) Nature of Service Code(s)	(c) Describe the information that the service provider failed or refused to provide

Part III Termination Information on Accountants and Enrolled Actuaries (see instructions)
(complete as many entries as needed)

a Name:	b EIN:
c Position:	
d Address:	e Telephone:

Explanation:

a Name:	b EIN:
c Position:	
d Address:	e Telephone:

Explanation:

a Name:	b EIN:
c Position:	
d Address:	e Telephone:

Explanation:

a Name:	b EIN:
c Position:	
d Address:	e Telephone:

Explanation:

a Name:	b EIN:
c Position:	
d Address:	e Telephone:

Explanation:

SCHEDULE D (Form 5500) Department of the Treasury Internal Revenue Service Department of Labor Employee Benefits Security Administration	DFE/Participating Plan Information This schedule is required to be filed under section 104 of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (ERISA). ► File as an attachment to Form 5500.	OMB No. 1210-0110 2021 This Form is Open to Public Inspection.
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For calendar plan year 2021 or fiscal plan year beginning 01/01/2021 and ending 12/31/2021

A Name of plan <u>EL POLLO LOCO, INC. 401(K) PLAN</u>	B Three-digit plan number (PN) ►	<u>002</u>
C Plan or DFE sponsor's name as shown on line 2a of Form 5500 <u>EL POLLO LOCO, INC.</u>	D Employer Identification Number (EIN) <u>33-0377527</u>	

Part I	Information on interests in MTIAs, CCTs, PSAs, and 103-12 IEs (to be completed by plans and DFEs) (Complete as many entries as needed to report all interests in DFEs)
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a Name of MTIA, CCT, PSA, or 103-12 IE: AEGON BALANCED RET OPT

b Name of sponsor of entity listed in (a): TRANSAMERICA LIFE INS CO

c EIN-PN <u>39-0989781-119</u>	d Entity code <u>P</u>	e Dollar value of interest in MTIA, CCT, PSA, or 103-12 IE at end of year (see instructions) <u>1132926</u>
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a Name of MTIA, CCT, PSA, or 103-12 IE: WELLS FARGO DISCOVERY RET OPT

b Name of sponsor of entity listed in (a): TRANSAMERICA LIFE INS CO

c EIN-PN <u>39-0989781-546</u>	d Entity code <u>P</u>	e Dollar value of interest in MTIA, CCT, PSA, or 103-12 IE at end of year (see instructions) <u>1092683</u>
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a Name of MTIA, CCT, PSA, or 103-12 IE: AMERICAN CENTURY INF-ADJ BD INV OPT

b Name of sponsor of entity listed in (a): TRANSAMERICA LIFE INS CO

c EIN-PN <u>39-0989781-042</u>	d Entity code <u>P</u>	e Dollar value of interest in MTIA, CCT, PSA, or 103-12 IE at end of year (see instructions) <u>302456</u>
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a Name of MTIA, CCT, PSA, or 103-12 IE: AMERICAN CENTURY LG CO VAL INV OPT

b Name of sponsor of entity listed in (a): TRANSAMERICA LIFE INS CO

c EIN-PN <u>39-0989781-038</u>	d Entity code <u>P</u>	e Dollar value of interest in MTIA, CCT, PSA, or 103-12 IE at end of year (see instructions) <u>682184</u>
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a Name of MTIA, CCT, PSA, or 103-12 IE: AMERICAN FUNDS AMCAP RET OPT

b Name of sponsor of entity listed in (a): TRANSAMERICA LIFE INS CO

c EIN-PN <u>39-0989781-249</u>	d Entity code <u>P</u>	e Dollar value of interest in MTIA, CCT, PSA, or 103-12 IE at end of year (see instructions) <u>2784331</u>
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a Name of MTIA, CCT, PSA, or 103-12 IE: OPPENHEIMER GLOBAL RET OPT

b Name of sponsor of entity listed in (a): TRANSAMERICA LIFE INS CO

c EIN-PN <u>39-0989781-216</u>	d Entity code <u>P</u>	e Dollar value of interest in MTIA, CCT, PSA, or 103-12 IE at end of year (see instructions) <u>895261</u>
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a Name of MTIA, CCT, PSA, or 103-12 IE: JANUS HENDERSON TRITON RET OPT

b Name of sponsor of entity listed in (a): TRANSAMERICA LIFE INS CO

c EIN-PN <u>39-0989781-583</u>	d Entity code <u>P</u>	e Dollar value of interest in MTIA, CCT, PSA, or 103-12 IE at end of year (see instructions) <u>192379</u>
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a Name of MTIA, CCT, PSA, or 103-12 IE: JPMORGAN U.S. EQUITY RET OPT

b Name of sponsor of entity listed in (a): TRANSAMERICA LIFE INS CO

c EIN-PN 39-0989781-297	d Entity code P	e Dollar value of interest in MTIA, CCT, PSA, or 103-12 IE at end of year (see instructions) 1613339
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a Name of MTIA, CCT, PSA, or 103-12 IE: LOOMIS SAYLES BOND RET OPT

b Name of sponsor of entity listed in (a): TRANSAMERICA LIFE INS CO

c EIN-PN 39-0989781-150	d Entity code P	e Dollar value of interest in MTIA, CCT, PSA, or 103-12 IE at end of year (see instructions) 876690
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a Name of MTIA, CCT, PSA, or 103-12 IE: MFS INTL DIVERSIFICATION RET OPT

b Name of sponsor of entity listed in (a): TRANSAMERICA LIFE INS CO

c EIN-PN 39-0989781-665	d Entity code P	e Dollar value of interest in MTIA, CCT, PSA, or 103-12 IE at end of year (see instructions) 331471
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a Name of MTIA, CCT, PSA, or 103-12 IE: NEUBERGER BERMAN GENESIS INV OPT

b Name of sponsor of entity listed in (a): TRANSAMERICA LIFE INS CO

c EIN-PN 39-0989781-180	d Entity code P	e Dollar value of interest in MTIA, CCT, PSA, or 103-12 IE at end of year (see instructions) 674992
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a Name of MTIA, CCT, PSA, or 103-12 IE: PIMCO TOTAL RETURN RET OPT

b Name of sponsor of entity listed in (a): TRANSAMERICA LIFE INS CO

c EIN-PN 39-0989781-312	d Entity code P	e Dollar value of interest in MTIA, CCT, PSA, or 103-12 IE at end of year (see instructions) 225242
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a Name of MTIA, CCT, PSA, or 103-12 IE: STATE STREET INTL INDEX RET OPT

b Name of sponsor of entity listed in (a): TRANSAMERICA LIFE INS CO

c EIN-PN 39-0989781-035	d Entity code P	e Dollar value of interest in MTIA, CCT, PSA, or 103-12 IE at end of year (see instructions) 239038
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a Name of MTIA, CCT, PSA, or 103-12 IE: STATE STREET S&P 500 INDEX RET OPT

b Name of sponsor of entity listed in (a): TRANSAMERICA LIFE INS CO

c EIN-PN 39-0989781-102	d Entity code P	e Dollar value of interest in MTIA, CCT, PSA, or 103-12 IE at end of year (see instructions) 1994522
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a Name of MTIA, CCT, PSA, or 103-12 IE: STATE STREET S&P MD CP IDX RET OPT

b Name of sponsor of entity listed in (a): TRANSAMERICA LIFE INS CO

c EIN-PN 39-0989781-036	d Entity code P	e Dollar value of interest in MTIA, CCT, PSA, or 103-12 IE at end of year (see instructions) 168886
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a Name of MTIA, CCT, PSA, or 103-12 IE: TA VANGUARD REIT INDEX RET OPT

b Name of sponsor of entity listed in (a): TRANSAMERICA LIFE INS CO

c EIN-PN 39-0989781-099	d Entity code P	e Dollar value of interest in MTIA, CCT, PSA, or 103-12 IE at end of year (see instructions) 257936
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a Name of MTIA, CCT, PSA, or 103-12 IE: TA VANGUARD SMALL-CAP INDEX RET OPT

b Name of sponsor of entity listed in (a): TRANSAMERICA LIFE INS CO

c EIN-PN 39-0989781-107	d Entity code P	e Dollar value of interest in MTIA, CCT, PSA, or 103-12 IE at end of year (see instructions) 217912
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a Name of MTIA, CCT, PSA, or 103-12 IE: [TRANSAMERICA HI YIELD BOND RET OPT](#)

b Name of sponsor of entity listed in (a): [TRANSAMERICA LIFE INS CO](#)

c EIN-PN 39-0989781-103	d Entity code P	e Dollar value of interest in MTIA, CCT, PSA, or 103-12 IE at end of year (see instructions) 768265
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a Name of MTIA, CCT, PSA, or 103-12 IE: [TA BLACKROCK LP INDEX 2025 RET OPT](#)

b Name of sponsor of entity listed in (a): [TRANSAMERICA LIFE INS CO](#)

c EIN-PN 39-0989781-049	d Entity code P	e Dollar value of interest in MTIA, CCT, PSA, or 103-12 IE at end of year (see instructions) 632029
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a Name of MTIA, CCT, PSA, or 103-12 IE: [TA BLACKROCK LP INDEX 2030 RET OPT](#)

b Name of sponsor of entity listed in (a): [TRANSAMERICA LIFE INS CO](#)

c EIN-PN 39-0989781-111	d Entity code P	e Dollar value of interest in MTIA, CCT, PSA, or 103-12 IE at end of year (see instructions) 2214400
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a Name of MTIA, CCT, PSA, or 103-12 IE: [TA BLACKROCK LP INDEX 2035 RET OPT](#)

b Name of sponsor of entity listed in (a): [TRANSAMERICA LIFE INS CO](#)

c EIN-PN 39-0989781-050	d Entity code P	e Dollar value of interest in MTIA, CCT, PSA, or 103-12 IE at end of year (see instructions) 2777934
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a Name of MTIA, CCT, PSA, or 103-12 IE: [TA BLACKROCK LP INDEX 2040 RET OPT](#)

b Name of sponsor of entity listed in (a): [TRANSAMERICA LIFE INS CO](#)

c EIN-PN 39-0989781-112	d Entity code P	e Dollar value of interest in MTIA, CCT, PSA, or 103-12 IE at end of year (see instructions) 1144939
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a Name of MTIA, CCT, PSA, or 103-12 IE: [TA BLACKROCK LP INDEX 2045 RET OPT](#)

b Name of sponsor of entity listed in (a): [TRANSAMERICA LIFE INS CO](#)

c EIN-PN 39-0989781-051	d Entity code P	e Dollar value of interest in MTIA, CCT, PSA, or 103-12 IE at end of year (see instructions) 1108629
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a Name of MTIA, CCT, PSA, or 103-12 IE: [TA BLACKROCK LP INDEX 2050 RET OPT](#)

b Name of sponsor of entity listed in (a): [TRANSAMERICA LIFE INS CO](#)

c EIN-PN 39-0989781-113	d Entity code P	e Dollar value of interest in MTIA, CCT, PSA, or 103-12 IE at end of year (see instructions) 966614
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a Name of MTIA, CCT, PSA, or 103-12 IE: [TA BLACKROCK LP INDEX 2055 RET OPT](#)

b Name of sponsor of entity listed in (a): [TRANSAMERICA LIFE INS CO](#)

c EIN-PN 39-0989781-505	d Entity code P	e Dollar value of interest in MTIA, CCT, PSA, or 103-12 IE at end of year (see instructions) 771168
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a Name of MTIA, CCT, PSA, or 103-12 IE: [TA BLACKROCK LP INDEX 2060 RET OPT](#)

b Name of sponsor of entity listed in (a): [TRANSAMERICA LIFE INS CO](#)

c EIN-PN 39-0989781-612	d Entity code P	e Dollar value of interest in MTIA, CCT, PSA, or 103-12 IE at end of year (see instructions) 329835
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a Name of MTIA, CCT, PSA, or 103-12 IE: [TA BLACKROCK LP IDX RETMENT RET OPT](#)

b Name of sponsor of entity listed in (a): [TRANSAMERICA LIFE INS CO](#)

c EIN-PN 39-0989781-047	d Entity code P	e Dollar value of interest in MTIA, CCT, PSA, or 103-12 IE at end of year (see instructions) 752599
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a Name of MTIA, CCT, PSA, or 103-12 IE: TA VANGUARD SM-CP VAL IDX RET OPT

b Name of sponsor of entity listed in (a): TRANSAMERICA LIFE INS CO

c EIN-PN 39-0989781-108	d Entity code P	e Dollar value of interest in MTIA, CCT, PSA, or 103-12 IE at end of year (see instructions) 198123
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a Name of MTIA, CCT, PSA, or 103-12 IE: VIRTUS CEREDEx MD-CP VL EQ RET OPT

b Name of sponsor of entity listed in (a): TRANSAMERICA LIFE INS CO

c EIN-PN 39-0989781-302	d Entity code P	e Dollar value of interest in MTIA, CCT, PSA, or 103-12 IE at end of year (see instructions) 328299
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a Name of MTIA, CCT, PSA, or 103-12 IE: EATON VANCE ATLANTA CAP SMID

b Name of sponsor of entity listed in (a): TRANSAMERICA LIFE INS CO

c EIN-PN 39-0989781-638	d Entity code P	e Dollar value of interest in MTIA, CCT, PSA, or 103-12 IE at end of year (see instructions) 0
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a Name of MTIA, CCT, PSA, or 103-12 IE: VIRTUS CEREDEx SMLL CAP VAL EQTY RE

b Name of sponsor of entity listed in (a): TRANSAMERICA LIFE INS CO

c EIN-PN 39-0989781-478	d Entity code P	e Dollar value of interest in MTIA, CCT, PSA, or 103-12 IE at end of year (see instructions) 0
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a Name of MTIA, CCT, PSA, or 103-12 IE:

b Name of sponsor of entity listed in (a):

c EIN-PN	d Entity code	e Dollar value of interest in MTIA, CCT, PSA, or 103-12 IE at end of year (see instructions)
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a Name of MTIA, CCT, PSA, or 103-12 IE:

b Name of sponsor of entity listed in (a):

c EIN-PN	d Entity code	e Dollar value of interest in MTIA, CCT, PSA, or 103-12 IE at end of year (see instructions)
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a Name of MTIA, CCT, PSA, or 103-12 IE:

b Name of sponsor of entity listed in (a):

c EIN-PN	d Entity code	e Dollar value of interest in MTIA, CCT, PSA, or 103-12 IE at end of year (see instructions)
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a Name of MTIA, CCT, PSA, or 103-12 IE:

b Name of sponsor of entity listed in (a):

c EIN-PN	d Entity code	e Dollar value of interest in MTIA, CCT, PSA, or 103-12 IE at end of year (see instructions)
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a Name of MTIA, CCT, PSA, or 103-12 IE:

b Name of sponsor of entity listed in (a):

c EIN-PN	d Entity code	e Dollar value of interest in MTIA, CCT, PSA, or 103-12 IE at end of year (see instructions)
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a Name of MTIA, CCT, PSA, or 103-12 IE:

b Name of sponsor of entity listed in (a):

c EIN-PN	d Entity code	e Dollar value of interest in MTIA, CCT, PSA, or 103-12 IE at end of year (see instructions)
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Part II Information on Participating Plans (to be completed by DFEs)

(Complete as many entries as needed to report all participating plans)

a Plan name**b** Name of
plan sponsor**c** EIN-PN**a** Plan name**b** Name of
plan sponsor**c** EIN-PN**a** Plan name**b** Name of
plan sponsor**c** EIN-PN**a** Plan name**b** Name of
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plan sponsor**c** EIN-PN**a** Plan name**b** Name of
plan sponsor**c** EIN-PN**a** Plan name**b** Name of
plan sponsor**c** EIN-PN**a** Plan name**b** Name of
plan sponsor**c** EIN-PN

SCHEDULE H (Form 5500) Department of the Treasury Internal Revenue Service Department of Labor Employee Benefits Security Administration Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation	Financial Information This schedule is required to be filed under section 104 of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (ERISA), and section 6058(a) of the Internal Revenue Code (the Code). ► File as an attachment to Form 5500.	OMB No. 1210-0110 2021 This Form is Open to Public Inspection
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For calendar plan year 2021 or fiscal plan year beginning <u>01/01/2021</u> and ending <u>12/31/2021</u>		
A Name of plan <u>EL POLLO LOCO, INC. 401(K) PLAN</u>	B Three-digit plan number (PN) ►	<u>002</u>
C Plan sponsor's name as shown on line 2a of Form 5500 <u>EL POLLO LOCO, INC.</u>	D Employer Identification Number (EIN) <u>33-0377527</u>	

Part I	Asset and Liability Statement
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1 Current value of plan assets and liabilities at the beginning and end of the plan year. Combine the value of plan assets held in more than one trust. Report the value of the plan's interest in a commingled fund containing the assets of more than one plan on a line-by-line basis unless the value is reportable on lines 1c(9) through 1c(14). Do not enter the value of that portion of an insurance contract which guarantees, during this plan year, to pay a specific dollar benefit at a future date. **Round off amounts to the nearest dollar.** MTIAs, CCTs, PSAs, and 103-12 IEs do not complete lines 1b(1), 1b(2), 1c(8), 1g, 1h, and 1i. CCTs, PSAs, and 103-12 IEs also do not complete lines 1d and 1e. See instructions.

Assets		(a) Beginning of Year	(b) End of Year
a Total noninterest-bearing cash.....	1a		
b Receivables (less allowance for doubtful accounts):			
(1) Employer contributions	1b(1)		
(2) Participant contributions.....	1b(2)		
(3) Other	1b(3)	1605	343
c General investments:			
(1) Interest-bearing cash (include money market accounts & certificates of deposit)	1c(1)		
(2) U.S. Government securities	1c(2)		
(3) Corporate debt instruments (other than employer securities):			
(A) Preferred	1c(3)(A)		
(B) All other	1c(3)(B)		
(4) Corporate stocks (other than employer securities):			
(A) Preferred	1c(4)(A)		
(B) Common	1c(4)(B)		
(5) Partnership/joint venture interests	1c(5)		
(6) Real estate (other than employer real property)	1c(6)		
(7) Loans (other than to participants)	1c(7)		
(8) Participant loans	1c(8)	514560	378337
(9) Value of interest in common/collective trusts	1c(9)		
(10) Value of interest in pooled separate accounts	1c(10)	21837357	25675082
(11) Value of interest in master trust investment accounts	1c(11)		
(12) Value of interest in 103-12 investment entities	1c(12)		
(13) Value of interest in registered investment companies (e.g., mutual funds)	1c(13)		
(14) Value of funds held in insurance company general account (unallocated contracts).....	1c(14)	2945848	3108765
(15) Other.....	1c(15)		

1d Employer-related investments:		(a) Beginning of Year	(b) End of Year
(1) Employer securities.....	1d(1)		
(2) Employer real property.....	1d(2)		
e Buildings and other property used in plan operation	1e		
f Total assets (add all amounts in lines 1a through 1e)	1f	25299370	29162527

Liabilities

g Benefit claims payable	1g		
h Operating payables	1h		
i Acquisition indebtedness.....	1i		
j Other liabilities.....	1j		
k Total liabilities (add all amounts in lines 1g through 1j)	1k		

Net Assets

l Net assets (subtract line 1k from line 1f)	1l	25299370	29162527
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Part II Income and Expense Statement

2 Plan income, expenses, and changes in net assets for the year. Include all income and expenses of the plan, including any trust(s) or separately maintained fund(s) and any payments/receipts to/from insurance carriers. Round off amounts to the nearest dollar. MTIAs, CCTs, PSAs, and 103-12 IEs do not complete lines 2a, 2b(1)(E), 2e, 2f, and 2g.

Income

		(a) Amount	(b) Total
a Contributions:			
(1) Received or receivable in cash from: (A) Employers	2a(1)(A)	763090	
(B) Participants	2a(1)(B)	1601563	
(C) Others (including rollovers).....	2a(1)(C)	62369	
(2) Noncash contributions.....	2a(2)		2427022
(3) Total contributions. Add lines 2a(1)(A) , (B) , (C) , and line 2a(2)	2a(3)		
b Earnings on investments:			
(1) Interest:			
(A) Interest-bearing cash (including money market accounts and certificates of deposit).....	2b(1)(A)		
(B) U.S. Government securities	2b(1)(B)		
(C) Corporate debt instruments	2b(1)(C)		
(D) Loans (other than to participants)	2b(1)(D)		
(E) Participant loans.....	2b(1)(E)	19744	
(F) Other	2b(1)(F)	43953	
(G) Total interest. Add lines 2b(1)(A) through (F)	2b(1)(G)		63697
(2) Dividends: (A) Preferred stock.....	2b(2)(A)		
(B) Common stock	2b(2)(B)		
(C) Registered investment company shares (e.g. mutual funds).....	2b(2)(C)		
(D) Total dividends. Add lines 2b(2)(A) , (B) , and (C)	2b(2)(D)		
(3) Rents	2b(3)		
(4) Net gain (loss) on sale of assets: (A) Aggregate proceeds	2b(4)(A)		
(B) Aggregate carrying amount (see instructions).....	2b(4)(B)		
(C) Subtract line 2b(4)(B) from line 2b(4)(A) and enter result	2b(4)(C)		
(5) Unrealized appreciation (depreciation) of assets: (A) Real estate	2b(5)(A)		
(B) Other	2b(5)(B)		
(C) Total unrealized appreciation of assets. Add lines 2b(5)(A) and (B)	2b(5)(C)		

		(a) Amount	(b) Total
(6) Net investment gain (loss) from common/collective trusts.....	2b(6)		
(7) Net investment gain (loss) from pooled separate accounts.....	2b(7)		3532893
(8) Net investment gain (loss) from master trust investment accounts.....	2b(8)		
(9) Net investment gain (loss) from 103-12 investment entities.....	2b(9)		
(10) Net investment gain (loss) from registered investment companies (e.g., mutual funds).....	2b(10)		
c Other income.....	2c		
d Total income. Add all income amounts in column (b) and enter total.....	2d		6023612
Expenses			
e Benefit payment and payments to provide benefits:			
(1) Directly to participants or beneficiaries, including direct rollovers.....	2e(1)	2103708	
(2) To insurance carriers for the provision of benefits.....	2e(2)		
(3) Other.....	2e(3)		
(4) Total benefit payments. Add lines 2e(1) through (3).....	2e(4)		2103708
f Corrective distributions (see instructions).....	2f		
g Certain deemed distributions of participant loans (see instructions).....	2g		15729
h Interest expense.....	2h		
i Administrative expenses: (1) Professional fees.....	2i(1)		
(2) Contract administrator fees.....	2i(2)		
(3) Investment advisory and management fees.....	2i(3)	5491	
(4) Other.....	2i(4)	35527	
(5) Total administrative expenses. Add lines 2i(1) through (4).....	2i(5)		41018
j Total expenses. Add all expense amounts in column (b) and enter total.....	2j		2160455
Net Income and Reconciliation			
k Net income (loss). Subtract line 2j from line 2d.....	2k		3863157
l Transfers of assets:			
(1) To this plan.....	2l(1)		
(2) From this plan.....	2l(2)		

Part III Accountant's Opinion

3 Complete lines 3a through 3c if the opinion of an independent qualified public accountant is attached to this Form 5500. Complete line 3d if an opinion is not attached.

a The attached opinion of an independent qualified public accountant for this plan is (see instructions):

(1) ☒ Unmodified (2) ☐ Qualified (3) ☐ Disclaimer (4) ☐ Adverse

b Check the appropriate box(es) to indicate whether the IQPA performed an ERISA section 103(a)(3)(C) audit. Check both boxes (1) and (2) if the audit was performed pursuant to both 29 CFR 2520.103-8 and 29 CFR 2520.103-12(d). Check box (3) if pursuant to neither.

(1) ☒ DOL Regulation 2520.103-8 (2) ☐ DOL Regulation 2520.103-12(d) (3) ☐ neither DOL Regulation 2520.103-8 nor DOL Regulation 2520.103-12(d).

c Enter the name and EIN of the accountant (or accounting firm) below:

(1) Name: BDO USA, LLP

(2) EIN: 13-5381590

d The opinion of an independent qualified public accountant is **not attached** because:

(1) ☐ This form is filed for a CCT, PSA, or MTIA. (2) ☐ It will be attached to the next Form 5500 pursuant to 29 CFR 2520.104-50.

Part IV Compliance Questions

4 CCTs and PSAs do not complete Part IV. MTIAs, 103-12 IEs, and GIAs do not complete lines 4a, 4e, 4f, 4g, 4h, 4k, 4m, 4n, or 5. 103-12 IEs also do not complete lines 4j and 4l. MTIAs also do not complete line 4l.

During the plan year:

a Was there a failure to transmit to the plan any participant contributions within the time period described in 29 CFR 2510.3-102? Continue to answer "Yes" for any prior year failures until fully corrected. (See instructions and DOL's Voluntary Fiduciary Correction Program.).....

	Yes	No	Amount
4a	X		107103

	Yes	No	Amount
b Were any loans by the plan or fixed income obligations due the plan in default as of the close of the plan year or classified during the year as uncollectible? Disregard participant loans secured by participant's account balance. (Attach Schedule G (Form 5500) Part I if "Yes" is checked.)			
4b		X	
c Were any leases to which the plan was a party in default or classified during the year as uncollectible? (Attach Schedule G (Form 5500) Part II if "Yes" is checked.)			
4c		X	
d Were there any nonexempt transactions with any party-in-interest? (Do not include transactions reported on line 4a. Attach Schedule G (Form 5500) Part III if "Yes" is checked.)			
4d		X	
e Was this plan covered by a fidelity bond?	X		5000000
f Did the plan have a loss, whether or not reimbursed by the plan's fidelity bond, that was caused by fraud or dishonesty?		X	
4f		X	
g Did the plan hold any assets whose current value was neither readily determinable on an established market nor set by an independent third party appraiser?		X	
4g		X	
h Did the plan receive any noncash contributions whose value was neither readily determinable on an established market nor set by an independent third party appraiser?		X	
4h		X	
i Did the plan have assets held for investment? (Attach schedule(s) of assets if "Yes" is checked, and see instructions for format requirements.)	X		
4i	X		
j Were any plan transactions or series of transactions in excess of 5% of the current value of plan assets? (Attach schedule of transactions if "Yes" is checked and see instructions for format requirements.)		X	
4j		X	
k Were all the plan assets either distributed to participants or beneficiaries, transferred to another plan, or brought under the control of the PBGC?		X	
4k		X	
l Has the plan failed to provide any benefit when due under the plan?		X	
4l		X	
m If this is an individual account plan, was there a blackout period? (See instructions and 29 CFR 2520.101-3.)		X	
4m		X	
n If 4m was answered "Yes," check the "Yes" box if you either provided the required notice or one of the exceptions to providing the notice applied under 29 CFR 2520.101-3.		X	
4n		X	

5a Has a resolution to terminate the plan been adopted during the plan year or any prior plan year? ☐ Yes ☒ No
If "Yes," enter the amount of any plan assets that reverted to the employer this year _____.

5b If, during this plan year, any assets or liabilities were transferred from this plan to another plan(s), identify the plan(s) to which assets or liabilities were transferred. (See instructions.)

5b(1) Name of plan(s)	5b(2) EIN(s)	5b(3) PN(s)

5c Was the plan a defined benefit plan covered under the PBGC insurance program at any time during this plan year? (See ERISA section 4021 and instructions.) ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not determined
If "Yes" is checked, enter the My PAA confirmation number from the PBGC premium filing for this plan year _____.

SCHEDULE R (Form 5500) Department of the Treasury Internal Revenue Service Department of Labor Employee Benefits Security Administration Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation	Retirement Plan Information This schedule is required to be filed under sections 104 and 4065 of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (ERISA) and section 6058(a) of the Internal Revenue Code (the Code). ► File as an attachment to Form 5500.	OMB No. 1210-0110 2021 This Form is Open to Public Inspection.
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For calendar plan year 2021 or fiscal plan year beginning 01/01/2021 and ending 12/31/2021

A Name of plan EL POLLO LOCO, INC. 401(K) PLAN	B Three-digit plan number (PN) ► 002
C Plan sponsor's name as shown on line 2a of Form 5500 EL POLLO LOCO, INC.	D Employer Identification Number (EIN) 33-0377527

Part I	Distributions
---------------	----------------------

All references to distributions relate only to payments of benefits during the plan year.

1 Total value of distributions paid in property other than in cash or the forms of property specified in the instructions.....	1	0
2 Enter the EIN(s) of payor(s) who paid benefits on behalf of the plan to participants or beneficiaries during the year (if more than two, enter EINs of the two payors who paid the greatest dollar amounts of benefits): EIN(s): 13-3689044		
Profit-sharing plans, ESOPs, and stock bonus plans, skip line 3.		
3 Number of participants (living or deceased) whose benefits were distributed in a single sum, during the plan year	3	

Part II	Funding Information (If the plan is not subject to the minimum funding requirements of section 412 of the Internal Revenue Code or ERISA section 302, skip this Part.)
----------------	---

4 Is the plan administrator making an election under Code section 412(d)(2) or ERISA section 302(d)(2)?	☐ Yes	☐ No	☐ N/A
If the plan is a defined benefit plan, go to line 8.			
5 If a waiver of the minimum funding standard for a prior year is being amortized in this plan year, see instructions and enter the date of the ruling letter granting the waiver. Date: Month _____ Day _____ Year _____ If you completed line 5, complete lines 3, 9, and 10 of Schedule MB and do not complete the remainder of this schedule.			
6 a Enter the minimum required contribution for this plan year (include any prior year accumulated funding deficiency not waived)	6a		
b Enter the amount contributed by the employer to the plan for this plan year	6b		
c Subtract the amount in line 6b from the amount in line 6a. Enter the result (enter a minus sign to the left of a negative amount)	6c		
If you completed line 6c, skip lines 8 and 9.			
7 Will the minimum funding amount reported on line 6c be met by the funding deadline?	☐ Yes	☐ No	☐ N/A
8 If a change in actuarial cost method was made for this plan year pursuant to a revenue procedure or other authority providing automatic approval for the change or a class ruling letter, does the plan sponsor or plan administrator agree with the change?	☐ Yes	☐ No	☐ N/A

Part III	Amendments
-----------------	-------------------

9 If this is a defined benefit pension plan, were any amendments adopted during this plan year that increased or decreased the value of benefits? If yes, check the appropriate box. If no, check the "No" box.....	☐ Increase	☐ Decrease	☐ Both	☐ No
--	-----------------------------------	-----------------------------------	-------------------------------	-----------------------------

Part IV	ESOPs (see instructions). If this is not a plan described under section 409(a) or 4975(e)(7) of the Internal Revenue Code, skip this Part.
----------------	---

10 Were unallocated employer securities or proceeds from the sale of unallocated securities used to repay any exempt loan?	☐ Yes	☐ No
11 a Does the ESOP hold any preferred stock?	☐ Yes	☐ No
b If the ESOP has an outstanding exempt loan with the employer as lender, is such loan part of a "back-to-back" loan? (See instructions for definition of "back-to-back" loan.)	☐ Yes	☐ No
12 Does the ESOP hold any stock that is not readily tradable on an established securities market?	☐ Yes	☐ No

For Paperwork Reduction Act Notice, see the Instructions for Form 5500.

Schedule R (Form 5500) 2021
v. 201209

Part V Additional Information for Multiemployer Defined Benefit Pension Plans

13 Enter the following information for each employer that contributed more than 5% of total contributions to the plan during the plan year (measured in dollars). See instructions. *Complete as many entries as needed to report all applicable employers.*

a Name of contributing employer

b EIN

c Dollar amount contributed by employer

d Date collective bargaining agreement expires (If employer contributes under more than one collective bargaining agreement, check box ☐ and see instructions regarding required attachment. Otherwise, enter the applicable date.) Month _____ Day _____ Year _____

e Contribution rate information (If more than one rate applies, check this box ☐ and see instructions regarding required attachment. Otherwise, complete lines 13e(1) and 13e(2).)

(1) Contribution rate (in dollars and cents) _____

(2) Base unit measure: ☐ Hourly ☐ Weekly ☐ Unit of production ☐ Other (specify): _____

a Name of contributing employer

b EIN

c Dollar amount contributed by employer

d Date collective bargaining agreement expires (If employer contributes under more than one collective bargaining agreement, check box ☐ and see instructions regarding required attachment. Otherwise, enter the applicable date.) Month _____ Day _____ Year _____

e Contribution rate information (If more than one rate applies, check this box ☐ and see instructions regarding required attachment. Otherwise, complete lines 13e(1) and 13e(2).)

(1) Contribution rate (in dollars and cents) _____

(2) Base unit measure: ☐ Hourly ☐ Weekly ☐ Unit of production ☐ Other (specify): _____

a Name of contributing employer

b EIN

c Dollar amount contributed by employer

d Date collective bargaining agreement expires (If employer contributes under more than one collective bargaining agreement, check box ☐ and see instructions regarding required attachment. Otherwise, enter the applicable date.) Month _____ Day _____ Year _____

e Contribution rate information (If more than one rate applies, check this box ☐ and see instructions regarding required attachment. Otherwise, complete lines 13e(1) and 13e(2).)

(1) Contribution rate (in dollars and cents) _____

(2) Base unit measure: ☐ Hourly ☐ Weekly ☐ Unit of production ☐ Other (specify): _____

a Name of contributing employer

b EIN

c Dollar amount contributed by employer

d Date collective bargaining agreement expires (If employer contributes under more than one collective bargaining agreement, check box ☐ and see instructions regarding required attachment. Otherwise, enter the applicable date.) Month _____ Day _____ Year _____

e Contribution rate information (If more than one rate applies, check this box ☐ and see instructions regarding required attachment. Otherwise, complete lines 13e(1) and 13e(2).)

(1) Contribution rate (in dollars and cents) _____

(2) Base unit measure: ☐ Hourly ☐ Weekly ☐ Unit of production ☐ Other (specify): _____

a Name of contributing employer

b EIN

c Dollar amount contributed by employer

d Date collective bargaining agreement expires (If employer contributes under more than one collective bargaining agreement, check box ☐ and see instructions regarding required attachment. Otherwise, enter the applicable date.) Month _____ Day _____ Year _____

e Contribution rate information (If more than one rate applies, check this box ☐ and see instructions regarding required attachment. Otherwise, complete lines 13e(1) and 13e(2).)

(1) Contribution rate (in dollars and cents) _____

(2) Base unit measure: ☐ Hourly ☐ Weekly ☐ Unit of production ☐ Other (specify): _____

a Name of contributing employer

b EIN

c Dollar amount contributed by employer

d Date collective bargaining agreement expires (If employer contributes under more than one collective bargaining agreement, check box ☐ and see instructions regarding required attachment. Otherwise, enter the applicable date.) Month _____ Day _____ Year _____

e Contribution rate information (If more than one rate applies, check this box ☐ and see instructions regarding required attachment. Otherwise, complete lines 13e(1) and 13e(2).)

(1) Contribution rate (in dollars and cents) _____

(2) Base unit measure: ☐ Hourly ☐ Weekly ☐ Unit of production ☐ Other (specify): _____

- 14** Enter the number of deferred vested and retired participants (inactive participants), as of the beginning of the plan year, whose contributing employer is no longer making contributions to the plan for:

a The current plan year. Check the box to indicate the counting method used to determine the number of inactive participants: ☐ last contributing employer ☐ alternative ☐ reasonable approximation (see instructions for required attachment).....

14a

b The plan year immediately preceding the current plan year. ☐ Check the box if the number reported is a change from what was previously reported (see instructions for required attachment).....

14b

c The second preceding plan year. ☐ Check the box if the number reported is a change from what was previously reported (see instructions for required attachment).....

14c

- 15** Enter the ratio of the number of participants under the plan on whose behalf no employer had an obligation to make an employer contribution during the current plan year to:

a The corresponding number for the plan year immediately preceding the current plan year.....

15a

b The corresponding number for the second preceding plan year.....

15b

- 16** Information with respect to any employers who withdrew from the plan during the preceding plan year:

a Enter the number of employers who withdrew during the preceding plan year.....

16a

b If line 16a is greater than 0, enter the aggregate amount of withdrawal liability assessed or estimated to be assessed against such withdrawn employers.....

16b

- 17** If assets and liabilities from another plan have been transferred to or merged with this plan during the plan year, check box and see instructions regarding supplemental information to be included as an attachment..... ☐

Part VI Additional Information for Single-Employer and Multiemployer Defined Benefit Pension Plans

- 18** If any liabilities to participants or their beneficiaries under the plan as of the end of the plan year consist (in whole or in part) of liabilities to such participants and beneficiaries under two or more pension plans as of immediately before such plan year, check box and see instructions regarding supplemental information to be included as an attachment..... ☐

- 19** If the total number of participants is 1,000 or more, complete lines (a) through (c)

a Enter the percentage of plan assets held as:

Stock: _____% Investment-Grade Debt: _____% High-Yield Debt: _____% Real Estate: _____% Other: _____%

b Provide the average duration of the combined investment-grade and high-yield debt:

☐ 0-3 years ☐ 3-6 years ☐ 6-9 years ☐ 9-12 years ☐ 12-15 years ☐ 15-18 years ☐ 18-21 years ☐ 21 years or more

c What duration measure was used to calculate line 19(b)?

☐ Effective duration ☐ Macaulay duration ☐ Modified duration ☐ Other (specify): _____

- 20 PBGC missed contribution reporting requirements.** If this is a multiemployer plan or a single-employer plan that is not covered by PBGC, skip line 20.

a Is the amount of unpaid minimum required contributions for all years from Schedule SB (Form 5500) line 40 greater than zero? ☐ Yes ☐ No

b If line 20a is "Yes," has PBGC been notified as required by ERISA sections 4043(c)(5) and/or 303(k)(4)? Check the applicable box:

☐ Yes.

☐ No. Reporting was waived under 29 CFR 4043.25(c)(2) because contributions equal to or exceeding the unpaid minimum required contribution were made by the 30th day after the due date.

☐ No. The 30-day period referenced in 29 CFR 4043.25(c)(2) has not yet ended, and the sponsor intends to make a contribution equal to or exceeding the unpaid minimum required contribution by the 30th day after the due date.

☐ No. Other. Provide explanation _____



El Pollo Loco, Inc. 401(k) Plan

Financial Statements and Supplemental Schedules

**As of December 31, 2021 and 2020 and
for the Year Ended December 31, 2021**

El Pollo Loco, Inc. 401(k)

Financial Statements and Supplemental Schedule
As of December 31, 2021 and 2020 and for the Year Ended December 31, 2021

El Pollo Loco, Inc. 401(k) Plan

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Note: Other schedules required by Section 2520.103.10 of the Department of Labor's Rules and Regulations for Reporting and Disclosure under ERISA have been omitted because they are not applicable.



Independent Auditor's Report

To the Plan Administrator
El Pollo Loco, Inc. 401(k)
Plan Costa Mesa,
California

Scope and Nature of the ERISA Section 103(a)(3)(C) Audit

We have performed audits of the financial statements of El Pollo Loco, Inc. 401(k) Plan (the Plan), an employee benefit plan subject to the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (ERISA), as permitted by ERISA Section 103(a)(3)(C), which comprise the statement of net assets available for plan benefits as of December 31, 2021 and 2020, and the related statement of changes in net assets available for plan benefits for the year ended December 31, 2021, and the related notes to the financial statements.

Management, having determined it is permissible in the circumstances, has elected to have the audit of the financial statements performed in accordance with ERISA Section 103(a)(3)(C) pursuant to 29 CFR 2520.103-8 of the Department of Labor's (DOL) Rules and Regulations for Reporting and Disclosure under ERISA (ERISA Section 103(a)(3)(C) audit). As permitted by ERISA Section 103(a)(3)(C), our audit need not extend to any statements or information related to assets held for investment of the Plan (investment information) by a bank or similar institution or insurance carrier that is regulated, supervised, and subject to periodic examination by a state or federal agency (qualified institution), provided that the investment information is prepared and certified to by the qualified institution in accordance with 29 CFR 2520.103-5 of the DOL's Rules and Regulations for Reporting and Disclosure under ERISA.

Management has obtained certifications from a qualified institution as of December 31, 2021 and 2020, and for the year ended December 31, 2021, stating that the certified investment information, as described in Note 4 to the financial statements, is complete and accurate.

Opinion

In our opinion, based on our audits and the procedures performed as described in the *Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements* section of our report

- the amounts and disclosures in the accompanying financial statements, other than those agreed to or derived from the certified investment information, are presented fairly, in all material respects, in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America (GAAP); and
- the certified investment information in the accompanying financial statements agrees to, or is derived from, in all material respects, the information prepared and certified by a qualified institution that management determined meets the requirements of ERISA Section 103(a)(3)(C).



Basis for Opinion

We conducted our audits in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America (GAAS). Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the *Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements* section of our report. We are required to be independent of the Plan and to meet our other ethical responsibilities, in accordance with the relevant ethical requirements relating to our audits. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our ERISA Section 103(a)(3)(C) audit opinion.

Responsibilities of Management for the Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in accordance with GAAP, and for the design, implementation, and maintenance of internal control relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error. Management's election of the ERISA Section 103(a)(3)(C) audit does not affect management's responsibility for the financial statements.

In preparing the financial statements, management is required to evaluate whether there are conditions or events, considered in the aggregate, that raise substantial doubt about the Plan's ability to continue as a going concern within one year after the date that the financial statements are issued or available to be issued.

Management is responsible for maintaining a current plan instrument, including all plan amendments. Management is also responsible for administering the Plan and determining that the Plan's transactions that are presented and disclosed in the financial statements are in conformity with the Plan's provisions, including maintaining sufficient records with respect to each of the participants, to determine the benefits due or which may become due to such participants.

Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements

Except as described in the *Scope and Nature of the ERISA Section 103(a)(3)(C) Audit* section of our report, our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not absolute assurance and therefore is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with GAAS will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control. Misstatements are considered material if, there is a substantial likelihood that, individually or in the aggregate, they would influence the judgment made by a reasonable user based on the financial statements.

In performing an audit in accordance with GAAS, we:

- Exercise professional judgment and maintain professional skepticism throughout the audit.
- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, and design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks. Such procedures include examining, on a test basis, evidence regarding the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements.



- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Plan's internal control. Accordingly, no such opinion is expressed.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of significant accounting estimates made by management, as well as evaluate the overall presentation of the financial statements.
- Conclude whether, in our judgment, there are conditions or events, considered in the aggregate, that raise substantial doubt about the Plan's ability to continue as a going concern for a reasonable period of time.

Our audits did not extend to the certified investment information, except for obtaining and reading the certifications, comparing the certified investment information with the related information presented and disclosed in the financial statements, and reading the disclosures relating to the certified investment information to assess whether they are in accordance with the presentation and disclosure requirements of GAAP.

Accordingly, the objective of an ERISA Section 103(a)(3)(C) audit is not to express an opinion about whether the financial statements as a whole are presented fairly, in all material respects, in accordance with GAAP.

We are required to communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit, significant audit findings, and certain internal control-related matters that we identified during the audit.

Other Matter –Supplemental Schedules Required by ERISA

The supplemental schedule of Schedule H, Line 4i - Schedule of Assets (Held at End of Year) as of December 31, 2021, and Schedule H, Line 4a - Schedule of Delinquent Participant Contributions for the year ended December 31, 2021, are presented for purposes of additional analysis and are not a required part of the financial statements but are supplementary information required by the DOL's Rules and Regulations for Reporting and Disclosure under ERISA. Such information is the responsibility of management and was derived from and relates directly to the underlying accounting and other records used to prepare the financial statements. The information included in the supplemental schedules, other than that agreed to or derived from the certified investment information, has been subjected to auditing procedures applied in the audit of the financial statements and certain additional procedures, including comparing and reconciling such information directly to the underlying accounting and other records used to prepare the financial statements or to the financial statements themselves, and other additional procedures in accordance with GAAS. For information included in the supplemental schedules that agreed to or is derived from the certified investment information, we compared such information to the related certified investment information.

In forming our opinion on the supplemental schedules, we evaluated whether the supplemental schedules, other than the information agreed to or derived from the certified investment information, including their form and content, are presented in conformity with the DOL's Rules and Regulations for Reporting and Disclosure under ERISA.



In our opinion

- the form and content of the supplemental schedules, other than the information in the supplemental schedules that agreed to or is derived from the certified investment information, is presented, in all material respects, in conformity with the DOL's Rules and Regulations for Reporting and Disclosure under ERISA.
- the certified investment information in the supplemental schedules agrees to, or is derived from, in all material respects, the information prepared and certified by a qualified institution that management determined meets the requirements of ERISA Section 103(a)(3)(C).

BDO USA, LLP

September 7, 2022

Financial Statements

El Pollo Loco, Inc. 401(k) Plan

Statements of Net Assets Available for Plan Benefits

<i>December 31,</i>	2021	2020
Assets:		
Investments at fair value	\$ 28,783,847	\$ 24,783,205
Notes receivable from participants	378,680	516,165
Net Assets Available for Plan Benefits	\$ 29,162,527	\$ 25,299,370

See accompanying notes to the financial statements.

El Pollo Loco, Inc. 401(k) Plan

Statements of Changes in Net Assets Available for Plan Benefits

<i>For the year ended December 31,</i>	<i>2021</i>
Changes in net assets attributed to:	
Contributions:	
Participant contributions	\$ 1,601,563
Employer contributions	763,090
Participant rollover contributions	62,369
Total contributions	2,427,022
Net appreciation in fair value of investments	3,576,846
Interest income on notes receivable from participants	19,744
Total additions	6,023,612
Deductions:	
Benefits paid to participants	(2,119,437)
Administrative expenses	(41,018)
Total deductions	(2,160,455)
Increase in net assets	3,863,157
Net Assets Available for Plan Benefits, Beginning of Year	25,299,370
Net Assets Available for Plan Benefits, End of Year	\$ 29,162,527

See accompanying notes to the financial statements.

El Pollo Loco, Inc. 401(k) Plan

Notes to Financial Statements

1. Description of the Plan

The following description of the El Pollo Loco, Inc. 401(k) Plan (the “Plan”) provides only general information. Participants should refer to the Plan agreement, as amended, for a more complete description of the Plan’s provisions.

General

The Plan is a qualified defined contribution plan which provides for retirement benefits and covers all non-union employees who are at least 21 years of age and have completed at least 3 consecutive months with 250 hours of service from the date of employment with El Pollo Loco, Inc. (the “Company” or the “Plan Sponsor”). Plan entry dates fall on the first day of the month coinciding with or next following the date of achieving eligibility. The Plan is subject to the provisions of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974, as amended (“ERISA”).

Plan Administration

The Company and certain members of management who are the trustees also act as the Plan administrator. The Plan administrator has been given all powers necessary to carry out its duties including, but not limited to, the power to administer and interpret the Plan, to answer all questions affecting eligibility of participants in the Plan and to authorize disbursements for the payment of the Plan’s benefits. Transamerica Life Insurance Company (“Transamerica”) serves as the recordkeeper and holds and executes investment transactions, makes payments as directed by the Plan participants, provides recordkeeping and other functions as defined.

Contributions

Each participant may elect to make pre-tax deferred contributions (“Deferred Contributions”) of a prescribed percentage or a fixed amount of his or her eligible compensation to the Plan. For employees who elect to participate, such percentage shall not be less than 1% or exceed 25% of compensation as defined under the Plan, subject to certain Internal Revenue Code (“IRC”) limitations. Participants that are 50 years of age or older who have met the annual IRC deferral limit or the specified Plan limits for deferral, may contribute a catch-up contribution. Participants may also rollover amounts representing distributions from other qualified plans which are reflected as rollover contributions in the Statement of Changes in Net Assets Available for Plan Benefits. All contributions to each participant’s account are self-directed by the participant in one or more of the investments offered under the Plan.

The Plan provides for a safe harbor matching contribution (“Safe Harbor Matching Contribution”) in which the Company, in order to satisfy the “safe harbor” requirements of the IRC, contributes a matching contribution on behalf of the participant based upon each participant’s Deferred Contributions. The Safe Harbor Matching Contribution for 2021 was equal to 100% of the participant’s Deferred Contributions up to 3% of the participant’s eligible compensation, plus 50% of the Deferred Contributions between 3% and 5% of the participant’s compensation. The Safe Harbor Matching Contributions are determined each pay period. For the year ended December 31, 2021, Safe Harbor Matching Contributions totaled \$763,090 which are included in the Statement of Changes in Net Assets Available for Plan Benefits. The Company may make additional contributions to the Plan, however, there were no such contributions made during the year ended December 31, 2021.

El Pollo Loco, Inc. 401(k) Plan

Notes to Financial Statements

Vesting

Participants are fully vested in their Deferred Contributions, the Safe Harbor Matching Contributions and the earnings thereon. Vesting of employer contributions other than Safe Harbor Matching Contributions is based upon the following schedule:

<u>Years of Service</u>	<u>Vested Percentage</u>
Less than 1	0%
1	33%
2	66%
3 or more	100%

Forfeited Amounts

Participants who terminate their employment prior to the completion of the minimum number of applicable years of service forfeit their unvested employer contributions, other than Safe Harbor Matching Contributions, under the Plan. Forfeitures shall be used to pay Plan expenses or reduce employer matching contributions. As of December 31, 2021 and 2020, forfeitures included in Plan assets totaled \$983 and \$7,609, respectively. For the year ended December 31, 2021, \$45,747 of forfeitures were used.

Participant Accounts

Individual accounts are maintained for each of the Plan's participants to reflect each participant's Deferred Contributions and related employer contributions, as well as the participant's share of the Plan's earnings and any related administrative expenses. Allocations are based on participant earnings, account balances, or specific participant transactions, as defined. The benefit to which a participant is entitled is the benefit that can be provided from the participant's vested account.

Payment of Benefits

Upon termination of service including death, disability or retirement, a participant may elect to receive an amount equal to the value of the participant's vested interest in his or her account. These payments are paid in a single lump sum payment.

Upon termination of service, participants with account balances not in excess of \$1,000 will receive an automatic lump-sum payout. Participants with account balances in excess of \$1,000 but not in excess of \$5,000, may elect to receive a lump sum payment or rollover the account to an Individual Retirement Account ("IRA") or another qualified plan. If the participant does not make an election, the amount will be rolled over into an IRA selected by the plan administrator on behalf of the participant. For participants with account balances in excess of \$5,000, no distribution will occur until a withdrawal request is completed. A participant may elect to leave his or her account balance in the Plan, receive either a lump-sum amount equal to the value of the participant's vested interest in his or her account, or rollover the account to another qualified plan or an IRA.

In-service withdrawals from the Plan may also be made upon circumstances of financial hardship or attainment of age 59 ½, in accordance with provisions specified in the Plan agreement. However, participants cannot receive hardship withdrawals from Safe Harbor Matching Contributions and earnings thereon.

El Pollo Loco, Inc. 401(k) Plan

Notes to Financial Statements

Notes Receivable from Participants

Notes receivable from participants consist of participant loans that are secured by the balance in the participant's account. Participants may borrow from their accounts in any amount greater than \$1,000, but not to exceed the lesser of \$50,000 reduced by the highest outstanding loan balance during the previous 12 months or 50% of their vested account balance. The loans bear commercially reasonable rates of interest, which the plan administrator has determined to be the prime rate plus one percent. Interest rates on outstanding loans as of December 31, 2021, ranged from 4.25% to 6.5% maturing on various dates through 2027. Principal and interest are paid ratably through payroll deductions. Participants may only have one loan outstanding at any time. Loans must be repaid within five years, unless the loan was for the purchase of a principal residence, which repayment may be longer, up to 30 years. Initial loan fees of \$50 and annual fees of \$50 are deducted from participant accounts for each loan. These loans are available to all participants on a nondiscriminatory basis.

2. Summary of Significant Accounting Policies

Basis of Accounting

The accompanying financial statements are prepared on the accrual basis of accounting in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America ("U.S. GAAP").

Use of Estimates

The preparation of financial statements in conformity with U.S. GAAP requires Plan management to make estimates and assumptions that affect the reported amounts of assets, liabilities and changes therein, and disclosure of contingent assets and liabilities. Actual results could differ materially from those estimates.

Risks and Uncertainties

The Plan provides for various investment options. Investment securities, in general are exposed to various risks such as interest rate, market and credit risks. Due to the level of risk associated with certain investment securities and the level of uncertainty related to changes in the value of investment securities, it is at least reasonably possible that changes in the various risk factors in the near term could materially affect participants' account balances and the amounts reported in the Statements of Net Assets Available for Plan Benefits and the Statement of Changes in Net Assets Available for Plan Benefits.

The impact of the coronavirus COVID-19 pandemic has contributed to significant fluctuations in financial markets. As a result, the Plan's investment portfolio has and may continue to fluctuate in response to changing market conditions due to the pandemic.

Investment Valuation and Income Recognition

Investments are reported at fair value. Fair value is the price that would be received to sell an asset or paid to transfer a liability in an orderly transaction between market participants at the measurement date. The Plan's administrator determines the Plan's valuation policies utilizing information provided by the Plan's investment advisors and Transamerica. See Note 3 for discussion of fair value measurements.

El Pollo Loco, Inc. 401(k) Plan

Notes to Financial Statements

Purchases and sales of investments are recorded on a trade-date basis. Interest income is recorded on the accrual basis. Net appreciation (depreciation) in fair value of investments includes the Plan's gains and losses on investments bought and sold as well as held during the year.

Notes Receivable from Participants

Notes receivable from participants are measured at their unpaid principal balance plus any accrued but unpaid interest. Interest income is recorded on the accrual basis. Related fees are recorded as administrative expenses and are expensed when they are incurred.

Management determines the collectability of notes receivable from participants on a periodic basis. This determination is made based on the terms of the Plan document and the related Plan policies and procedures. If notes receivable from participants are deemed to be uncollectible, they are written off and included as benefits paid to participants in the financial statements and deemed distributions in the Form 5500 for financial reporting purposes in the year the determination is made. Amounts recovered on notes receivable from participants previously deemed uncollectible are reported as a reduction of benefits paid to participants in the financial statements and the Form 5500 for financial reporting purposes in the year the recovery is made. During the year ended December 31, 2021, there were no amounts recovered on notes receivable from participants previously deemed uncollectible. During the year ended December 31, 2021, \$15,729 of defaulted loans were recorded as benefits paid to participants in the accompanying Statement of Changes in Net Assets Available for Plan Benefits. No allowance for credit losses has been recorded as of December 31, 2021 or 2020.

Administrative Expenses

Certain expenses of maintaining the Plan are paid by the Plan, unless otherwise paid by the Company. Expenses that are paid for by the Company are excluded from these financial statements. The Plan's participants absorb certain transaction specific and administration expenses as permitted by the Plan. Such administrative expenses paid by the Plan totaled \$41,018 for the year ended December 31, 2021.

Payment of Benefits

Benefits are recorded on the date distributions are made.

3. Fair Value Measurements

FASB ASC 820 provides the framework for measuring fair value. That framework provides a fair value hierarchy that prioritizes the inputs to valuation techniques used to measure fair value. The hierarchy gives the highest priority to unadjusted quoted prices in active markets for identical assets or liabilities (level 1) and the lowest priority to unobservable inputs (level 3). The three levels of the fair value hierarchy under ASC 820, are described as follows:

Level 1 - Inputs to the valuation methodology are unadjusted quoted prices for identical assets or liabilities in active markets that the Plan has the ability to access.

Level 2 - Inputs to the valuation methodology include:

- Quoted prices for similar assets or liabilities in active markets;
- Quoted prices for identical or similar assets or liabilities in inactive markets;
- Inputs other than quoted prices that are observable for the asset or liability;
- Inputs that are derived principally from or corroborated by observable market data by correlation or other means.

El Pollo Loco, Inc. 401(k) Plan

Notes to Financial Statements

If the asset or liability has a specified (contractual) term, the level 2 input must be observable for substantially the full term of the asset or liability.

Level 3 - Inputs to the valuation methodology are unobservable and significant to the fair value measurement.

The asset or liability's fair value measurement level within the fair value hierarchy is based on the lowest level of any input that is significant to the fair value measurement. Valuation techniques maximize the use of relevant observable inputs and minimize the use of unobservable inputs.

The following is a description of the valuation methodologies used for investments measured at fair value. There have been no changes in the methodologies used as of December 31, 2021 and 2020.

Stable value general account: The stable value investment is offered through an indirect investment in a fully benefit-responsive group annuity contract and consists of an investment in the general account of Transamerica. The stable value investment is a depository liability with no formal underlying maturities and is considered fairly valued at contract value, as a proxy for fair value, because of this specific distinction. The value of the stable value investment is guaranteed by Transamerica. The guaranteed rate of interest is determined on a semi-annual basis, and there is no stated minimum or maximum interest rate. The account is credited with earnings on the underlying investments and charged for participant withdrawals and administrative expenses. Participants may ordinarily direct the withdrawal or transfer of all or a portion of their investments at contract value. Currently, management believes that the occurrence of an event that would cause the Plan to transact contract distributions at less than contract value is not probable. As of December 31, 2021, the Plan had no unfunded commitments related to the stable value investment. The stable value investment has a daily redemption frequency and redemption notice period. There are no other restrictions on the timing of redemption; however, participant redemptions may be subject to certain redemption fees.

Pooled separate accounts: Pooled separate accounts invest mainly in mutual funds, domestic equity securities, and fixed maturity securities. Units held in pooled separate accounts are stated at fair value using the net asset value per share (or its equivalent) as a practical expedient as reported by Transamerica, based on pricing inputs, including quoted market prices for similar assets in active or inactive markets. While the underlying asset values are based on quoted prices, the net asset values of the separate accounts are not publicly quoted. As of December 31, 2021, the Plan had no unfunded commitments related to the pooled separate accounts. The pooled separate accounts have a daily redemption frequency and a daily redemption notice period.

The preceding methods described may produce a fair value calculation that may not be indicative of net realizable value or reflective of future fair values. Furthermore, although the Plan believes its valuation methods are appropriate and consistent with other market participants, the use of different methodologies or assumptions to determine the fair value of certain financial instruments could result in a different fair value measurement at the reporting date.

El Pollo Loco, Inc. 401(k) Plan

Notes to Financial Statements

The following table sets forth by level, within the fair value hierarchy, the Plan's investments at fair value as of December 31, 2021 and 2020:

	Investments at Fair Value as of December 31, 2021			Total
	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	
Stable value general account	\$ -	\$ 3,108,765	\$ -	\$ 3,108,765
Pooled separate accounts, measured at net asset value ⁽¹⁾	-	-	-	25,675,082
Total investments at fair value	\$ -	\$ 3,108,765	\$ -	\$ 28,783,847

	Investments at Fair Value as of December 31, 2020			Total
	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	
Stable value general account	\$ -	\$ 2,945,848	\$ -	\$ 2,945,848
Pooled separate accounts, measured at net asset value ⁽¹⁾	-	-	-	21,837,357
Total investments at fair value	\$ -	\$ 2,945,848	\$ -	\$ 24,783,205

(1) Certain investments measured at fair value using the net asset value per share (or its equivalent) practical expedient have not been classified in the fair value hierarchy. The fair value amounts presented in this table are intended to permit reconciliation of the fair value hierarchy to the amounts presented in the Statements of Net Assets Available for Plan Benefits.

4. Information Certified by Transamerica

The plan administrator has elected the method of annual reporting compliance permitted by ERISA Section 103(a)(3)(C) pursuant to 29 CFR 2520.103-8 of the Department of Labor's Rules and Regulations for Reporting and Disclosure under ERISA. Accordingly, Transamerica, a qualified institution, has certified that the following investment information included in the accompanying financial statements and ERISA-required supplemental schedule is complete and accurate:

- Investments and notes receivable from participants as reflected on the accompanying Statements of Net Assets Available for Plan Benefits as of December 31, 2021 and 2020;
- Investment activity, including the net appreciation in fair value of investments and interest income on notes receivable from participants as reflected in the Statement of Changes in Net Assets Available for Plan Benefits for the year ended December 31, 2021;
- Investment values as disclosed in Note 3 as of December 31, 2021 and 2020; and
- Investments and notes receivable from participants as reflected in Form 5500 - Schedule H, Line 4i - Schedule of Assets (Held at End of Year) as of December 31, 2021.

El Pollo Loco, Inc. 401(k) Plan

Notes to Financial Statements

At the request of the Plan administrator, the Plan's independent auditors did not perform auditing procedures with respect to this certified investment information, except for comparing such certified investment information to the related investment information included in the financial statements and ERISA-required supplemental schedule.

5. Tax Status

The Plan has adopted the Non-Standardized Pre-Approved Defined Contribution Plan prepared by Transamerica Retirement Solutions LLC, which received a favorable opinion letter from the Internal Revenue Service ("IRS") dated June 30, 2020, which stated that the prototype plan was designed in accordance with applicable IRC requirements as of that date. Although the Plan has been amended since receiving the determination letter, the Plan administrator believes that the Plan is currently designed and being operated in compliance with the applicable requirements of the IRC, and, therefore, believes the Plan is qualified and tax exempt. Accordingly, no provision for income taxes has been included in the accompanying financial statements.

GAAP requires plan management to evaluate tax positions taken by the plan and recognize a tax liability if the plan has taken an uncertain position that more likely than not would not be sustained upon examination by the IRS. The Plan is subject to routine audits by taxing jurisdictions; however, there are currently no audits for any tax periods in progress.

6. Related Party and Parties-In-Interest Transactions

Plan investments are in funds and accounts that are managed by Transamerica or their subsidiaries and affiliates. The Plan also paid for third party administrator fees and participant loan and distribution processing fees are paid to Transamerica by participants. The Plan also issues loans to participants which are secured by the vested balance of the participants' accounts. Certain management fees in the form of an expense ratio charged to each investment option are paid by the Plan and deducted from earnings on investments. These transactions are party-in-interest transactions, which are exempt from prohibited transaction rules.

7. Plan Termination

While the Company has not expressed any intent to terminate the Plan, it is free to do so at any time, subject to the provisions of ERISA. In the event of such termination, the Plan provides that each participant's interest shall become fully vested. The net assets of the Plan, after deducting estimated expenses for liquidation and distribution, shall be allocated among the participants and beneficiaries of the Plan based upon their vested interest on the date of termination.

8 Delinquent Participant Contributions

During the Plan year ended December 31, 2021, participant contributions totaling \$107,103 were not remitted to the Plan within the period prescribed by DOL regulations. These transactions constitute prohibited transactions as defined by ERISA. These contributions were remitted to the Plan during 2021 and the related lost earnings will be remitted during 2022.

9. Subsequent Events

Management has evaluated subsequent events through September 7, 2022, the date the financial statements were available to be issued, and has determined that there were no material events requiring recognition or disclosure.

Supplemental Schedules

El Pollo Loco, Inc. 401(k) Plan

Schedule H, Line 4a - Schedule of Delinquent Participant Contributions

EIN: 33-0377527

Plan Number: 002

Year ended December 31, 2021

Year	Participant contributions transferred late to Plan	Total that Constitutes Nonexempt Prohibited Transactions			Total fully corrected under VFCP* and PTE 2002-51
	Check here if late participant loan repayments are included: ☒	Contributions not corrected	Contributions corrected outside VFCP*	Contributions pending correction in VFCP*	
2021	\$ 107,103	\$ 107,103	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -

* Voluntary Fiduciary Correction Program (DOL)

El Pollo Loco, Inc. 401(k) Plan

Form 5500 - Schedule H, Part IV, Line 4i - Schedule of Assets (Held at End of Year) December 31, 2021

EIN: 33-0377527

Plan Number: 002

(a) (b) Identity of issue, borrower, lessor, or similar party	(c) Description of investment including maturity date, rate of interest, collateral, par or maturity value	(d) Cost**	(e) Current value
Stable Value General Account:			
* Transamerica Asset Management	Transamerica Stable Value Adv Opt		\$ 3,108,765
Pooled Separate Accounts:			
* Transamerica Asset Management	AEGON Balanced Ret Opt		1,132,926
* Transamerica Asset Management	Allspring Discovery Ret Opt		1,092,683
* Transamerica Asset Management	American Century Inflation-Adj Bond Inv Opt		302,456
* Transamerica Asset Management	American Century Large Company Value Inv Opt		682,184
* Transamerica Asset Management	American Funds AMCAP Ret Opt		2,784,331
* Transamerica Asset Management	Invesco Dynamics Ret Opt		895,261
* Transamerica Asset Management	Janus Triton Ret Opt		192,379
* Transamerica Asset Management	JPMorgan U.S. Equity Ret Opt		1,613,339
* Transamerica Asset Management	Loomis Sayles Bond Ret Opt		876,690
* Transamerica Asset Management	MSFS International Diversification		331,471
* Transamerica Asset Management	Neuberger Berman Genesis Inv Opt		674,992
* Transamerica Asset Management	PIMCO Total Return Ret Opt		225,242
* Transamerica Asset Management	State Street International Index Ret Opt		239,038
* Transamerica Asset Management	State Street S&P 500 Index Ret Opt		1,994,522
* Transamerica Asset Management	State Street S&P Mid Cap Index Ret Opt		168,886
* Transamerica Asset Management	TA BlackRock Lifepath Index 2025 Ret Opt		632,029
* Transamerica Asset Management	TA BlackRock Lifepath Index 2030 Ret Opt		2,214,400
* Transamerica Asset Management	TA BlackRock Lifepath Index 2035 Ret Opt		2,777,934
* Transamerica Asset Management	TA BlackRock Lifepath Index 2040 Ret Opt		1,144,939
* Transamerica Asset Management	TA BlackRock Lifepath Index 2045 Ret Opt		1,108,629
* Transamerica Asset Management	TA BlackRock Lifepath Index 2050 Ret Opt		966,614
* Transamerica Asset Management	TA BlackRock Lifepath Index 2055 Ret Opt		771,168
* Transamerica Asset Management	TA BlackRock Lifepath Index 2060 Ret Opt		329,835
* Transamerica Asset Management	TA BlackRock Lifepath Index Ret Opt		752,599
* Transamerica Asset Management	Vanguard Small-cap Index Ret Opt		217,912
* Transamerica Asset Management	Transamerica High Yield Bond Ret Opt		768,265
* Transamerica Asset Management	Vanguard REIT Index Ret Opt		257,936
* Transamerica Asset Management	Vanguard Small-Cap Value Index Ret		198,123
* Transamerica Asset Management	Virtus Ceredex Mid Cap Value Equity Ret		328,299
Total pooled separate accounts			25,675,082
Total investments			28,783,847
* Notes receivable from participants	Notes receivable from participants (Interest rates range from 4.25% to 6.5%)		378,680
Total			\$ 29,162,527

* Represents a party-in-interest to the Plan, as defined by ERISA.

** All investments are participant directed. The cost of participant-directed investments is not required to be disclosed.

El Pollo Loco, Inc. 401(k) Plan
EIN No.: 33-0377527, Plan No. 002
Schedule H, Line 4i - Schedule of Assets
Plan Year Ending: 12/31/2021

(a)	(b) Identity of Issuer, Borrower, Lessor or Similar Party	(c) Description of Investment, Including Maturity Date, Rate of Interest, Par or Maturity Value	(d) CURRENT VALUE
*	Transamerica Life Ins. Co.	Transamerica Stbl Val Adv Op	\$ 3,108,765
		General Insurance Fund Total	\$ 3,108,765
*	Transamerica Life Ins. Co.	AEGON Balanced Ret Opt	\$ 1,132,926
*	Transamerica Life Ins. Co.	Wells Fargo Discovery Ret Opt	\$ 1,092,683
*	Transamerica Life Ins. Co.	American Century Inf-Adj Bd Inv Opt	\$ 302,456
*	Transamerica Life Ins. Co.	American Century Lg Co Val Inv Opt	\$ 682,184
*	Transamerica Life Ins. Co.	American Funds AMCAP Ret Opt	\$ 2,784,331
*	Transamerica Life Ins. Co.	Oppenheimer Global Ret Opt	\$ 895,261
*	Transamerica Life Ins. Co.	Janus Henderson Triton Ret Opt	\$ 192,379
*	Transamerica Life Ins. Co.	JPMorgan U.S. Equity Ret Opt	\$ 1,613,339
*	Transamerica Life Ins. Co.	Loomis Sayles Bond Ret Opt	\$ 876,690
*	Transamerica Life Ins. Co.	MFS Intl Diversification Ret Opt	\$ 331,471
*	Transamerica Life Ins. Co.	Neuberger Berman Genesis Inv Opt	\$ 674,992
*	Transamerica Life Ins. Co.	PIMCO Total Return Ret Opt	\$ 225,242
*	Transamerica Life Ins. Co.	State Street Intl Index Ret Opt	\$ 239,038
*	Transamerica Life Ins. Co.	State Street S&P 500 Index Ret Opt	\$ 1,994,522
*	Transamerica Life Ins. Co.	State Street S&P Md cp Idx Ret Opt	\$ 168,886
*	Transamerica Life Ins. Co.	TA Vanguard REIT Index Ret Opt	\$ 257,936
*	Transamerica Life Ins. Co.	TA Vanguard Small-Cap Index Ret Opt	\$ 217,912
*	Transamerica Life Ins. Co.	Transamerica Hi Yield Bond Ret Opt	\$ 768,265
*	Transamerica Life Ins. Co.	TA BlackRock LP Index 2025 Ret Opt	\$ 632,029
*	Transamerica Life Ins. Co.	TA BlackRock LP Index 2030 Ret Opt	\$ 2,214,400
*	Transamerica Life Ins. Co.	TA BlackRock LP Index 2035 Ret Opt	\$ 2,777,934
*	Transamerica Life Ins. Co.	TA BlackRock LP Index 2040 Ret Opt	\$ 1,144,939
*	Transamerica Life Ins. Co.	TA BlackRock LP Index 2045 Ret Opt	\$ 1,108,629
*	Transamerica Life Ins. Co.	TA BlackRock LP Index 2050 Ret Opt	\$ 966,614
*	Transamerica Life Ins. Co.	TA BlackRock LP Index 2055 Ret Opt	\$ 771,168
*	Transamerica Life Ins. Co.	TA BlackRock LP Index 2060 Ret Opt	\$ 329,835
*	Transamerica Life Ins. Co.	TA BlackRock LP Idx Retment Ret Opt	\$ 752,599
*	Transamerica Life Ins. Co.	TA Vanguard Sm-cp Val Idx Ret Opt	\$ 198,123
*	Transamerica Life Ins. Co.	Virtus Ceredex Md-Cp VI Eq Ret Opt	\$ 328,299
		Separate Account Totals	\$ 25,675,082
*	Participants	Notes Receivable with interest rates of 4.25% to 6.50%	\$ 378,337
		TOTAL PLAN ASSETS	\$ 29,162,184

* Indicates Party-In-Interest to the Plan