



Cigna Corporation (CI)

Updated May 6th, 2024 by Nathan Parsh

Key Metrics

Current Price:	\$342	5 Year CAGR Estimate:	13.1%	Market Cap:	\$97 billion
Fair Value Price:	\$369	5 Year Growth Estimate:	10.0%	Ex-Dividend Date:	06/04/2024
% Fair Value:	93%	5 Year Valuation Multiple Estimate:	1.5%	Dividend Payment Date:	06/20/2024
Dividend Yield:	1.6%	5 Year Price Target	\$595	Years Of Dividend Growth:	4
Dividend Risk Score:	B	Retirement Suitability Score:	C	Rating:	Buy

Overview & Current Events

Cigna is a leading provider of insurance products and services. The company's products include dental, medical, disability and life insurance that it provides through employer-sponsored, government-sponsored, and individual coverage plans. Cigna operates four business segments, including Evernorth, which provides pharmacy services and benefit management, U.S. Medical, which provides commercial and government health insurance, International Markets and Group Disability. Evernorth contributes 70% of annual revenues while Cigna Healthcare accounts for 24%. Cigna has annual revenues of ~\$235 billion.

On January 31st, 2024, Cigna announced that it was selling its Medicare business to Health Care Service Corporation for \$3.7 billion.

On February 2nd, 2024, Cigna announced that it was increasing its quarterly dividend 14% to \$1.40.

On May 2nd, 2024, Cigna reported first quarter results for the period ending March 31st, 2024. For the quarter, revenue grew 23.2% to \$57.3 billion, which was \$670 million above estimates. Adjusted earnings-per-share of \$6.47 compared to adjusted earnings-per-share of \$5.41 in the prior year and was \$0.25 better than expected.

For the quarter, total pharmacy customers increased 4.3% to 122.8 million. Total medical customers declined 1.5% year-over-year to 19.2 million. Adjusted revenue for the Evernorth segment, which is the largest within the company, improved 28% to \$46.2 billion due to gains in specialty and care services. Adjusted revenue for Cigna Healthcare was up 4% to \$13.3 billion due once again to premium rate increases.

Cigna also provided a revised outlook for 2024. Revenue is expected to be least \$235 billion for the year while adjusted earnings-per-share should be at least \$28.40, up from \$28.25 previously. We have updated our forecast accordingly.

Growth on a Per-Share Basis

Year	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2029
EPS	\$7.43	\$8.66	\$8.10	\$10.46	\$14.22	\$17.05	\$18.45	\$20.47	\$23.27	\$25.09	\$28.40	\$45.74
DPS	\$0.04	\$0.04	\$0.04	\$0.04	\$0.04	\$0.04	\$0.04	\$4.00	\$4.48	\$4.92	\$5.60	\$9.02
Shares¹	264	257	257	244	381	373	355	327	305	293	284	275

Earnings-per-share have a compound annual growth rate of 12.9% for the 2014 through 2023 period. An increase in the share count during this time hides the fact that net profit has increased at a rate of 14.1% per year. Cigna's growth rate has remained solid in the medium-term as earnings-per-share have a compound annual growth rate of 8.0 % since 2019. One reason that earnings have a CAGR in the double-digit range is that the need for pharmacy services and health care plans will increase as more people age. Cigna's merger with Express Scripts, one of the top pharmacy benefit managers in the market, in 2018 should also provide tailwinds. In addition, Cigna has an ambitious goal to reduce its health care costs, which, overall, have risen much higher than inflation. We reaffirm our targeted earnings-per-share growth rate of 10% through 2029 as we find Cigna's business model very attractive.

¹ Share count in millions

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Cigna’s dividend had never been a priority for the company. After cutting its dividend by 20% in 2009, the company has paid the same amount every year up until 2020. It should be noted that Cigna had typically paid an annual dividend in April of each year. That all changed when the company declared a \$1.00 quarterly dividend for the March 25th, 2021 payment date. The company followed that up with a double-digit increase or near double-digit increase each of the last three years. We now anticipate dividend growth of at least 10% annually through 2029.

Valuation Analysis

Year	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Now	2029
Avg. P/E	12.1	15.5	16.4	16.3	13.3	10.1	10.2	11.2	14.2	11.9	12.0	13.0
Avg. Yld.	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%	1.7%	1.4%	1.6%	1.6%	1.5%

Shares of Cigna have gained \$14, or 4.3%, since our February 2nd, 2024 report. The stock has an average price-to-earnings ratio of 13.1 over the last decade. Currently, the stock is valued at 12.0 times earnings estimates for the year. Price-to-earnings ratios were likely lower during the early portions of the past decade due to market concerns over how health care plans would do. Those fears appear to have abated somewhat. Reaching our 2029 target multiple of 13 times earnings could add 1.5% to annual returns over the next five years.

Cigna’s dividend has largely not played a role in the company’s total returns. That changed somewhat as Cigna’s stock now offers a yield that is nearly in-line with the average yield of the S&P 500 index.

Safety, Quality, Competitive Advantage, & Recession Resiliency

Year	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2029
Payout	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	20%	19%	20%	20%	20%

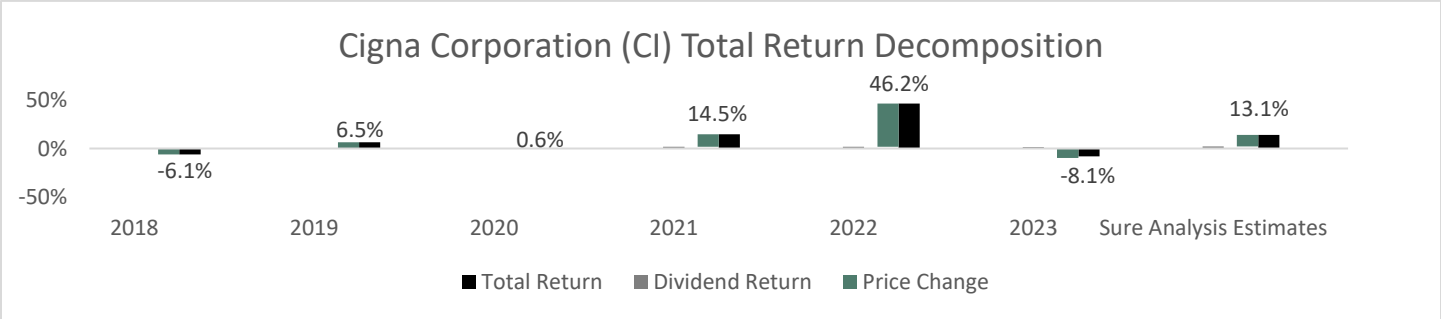
Cigna happens to operate in an industry that tends to hold up well during recessionary times as health insurance and pharmacy businesses are still in demand. Earnings-per-share fell from \$3.96 in 2007 to \$3.42 in 2008 (a 13.6% decrease), but rebounded to make a new high in 2009. Cigna has seen earnings-per-share grow each year since except for 2016.

We feel that Cigna has some immense competitive advantages. The company is one of the largest names in its industry, giving it a size and scale that is hard to match. Cigna’s acquisition of Express Scripts appears to have been a solid move, strengthening the company’s presence in its pharmacy business. Perhaps most important, an aging demographic will need increased pharmacy and medical services, giving Cigna an incredibly large pool of potential customers.

Final Thoughts & Recommendation

Cigna is now expected to produce total returns of 13.1% through 2029, down from our prior estimate of 13.9%. Our projected return stems from a 10% earnings growth rate, a starting yield of 1.6%, and a low single-digit tailwind from multiple expansion. Cigna once again experienced growth throughout its business in the most recent quarter and the company raised its already aggressive guidance for 2024. Shares continue to earn a buy rating due to projected returns.

Total Return Breakdown by Year



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Income Statement Metrics

Year	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Revenue	34914	37876	40007	42043	48569	153743	160577	174272	180021	195187
SG&A Exp.			9790	10030	11934	14053	14072	13030	13186	14822
Depr. & Amor.	588	585	610	566	695	3651	2802	2923	2937	3035
Net Profit	2102	2094	1867	2237	2637	5104	8458	5365	6668	5164
Net Margin	6.0%	5.5%	4.7%	5.3%	5.4%	3.3%	5.3%	3.1%	3.7%	2.6%
Free Cash Flow	1685	2423	3565	3615	3242	8435	9256	6037	7361	10240
Income Tax	1210	1250	1136	1374	935	1450	2379	1367	1607	141

Balance Sheet Metrics

Year	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Total Assets	55870	57088	59360	61759	153226	155774	155451	154889	143932	152761
Cash & Equivalents	1420	1968	3185	2972	3855	4619	10182	5081	5924	7822
Acc. Receivable	9837	10507	9555	8667	15704	16003	17199	19639	21713	23407
Goodwill & Int.	6698	6587	6404	6509	83508	81164	79827	79913	78303	75122
Total Liabilities	45081	45044	45633	48048	112191	110430	105123	107705	98981	106410
Accounts Payable	8444	8848	8946	489	15068	15544	18825	6655	7775	8553
Long-Term Debt	5126	5169	5032	5439	42478	37407	32919	33670	31093	30930
Total Equity	10774	12035	13723	13711	41028	45338	50321	47112	44872	46223
LTD/E Ratio	0.48	0.43	0.37	0.40	1.04	0.83	0.65	0.71	0.69	0.67

Profitability & Per Share Metrics

Year	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Return on Assets	3.8%	3.7%	3.2%	3.7%	2.5%	3.3%	5.4%	3.5%	4.5%	3.5%
Return on Equity	19.7%	18.4%	14.5%	16.3%	9.6%	11.8%	17.7%	11.0%	14.5%	11.3%
ROIC	13.2%	12.6%	10.4%	11.8%	5.1%	6.1%	10.2%	6.5%	8.5%	6.7%
Shares Out.	264	257	257	244	381	373	355	327	305	293
Revenue/Share	129.98	145.35	154.08	164.83	196.91	408.98	439.96	515.66	575.03	657.46
FCF/Share	6.27	9.30	13.73	14.17	13.14	22.44	25.36	17.86	23.51	34.49

Note: All figures in millions of U.S. Dollars unless per share or indicated otherwise.

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