

SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION
(Release No. 34-61543; File No. SR-FINRA-2010-005)

February 18, 2010

Self-Regulatory Organizations; Financial Industry Regulatory Authority, Inc.; Notice of Filing of Proposed Rule Change to Repeal Incorporated NYSE Rule 405(4) (Common Sales Accounts)

Pursuant to Section 19(b)(1) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 (“Act”)¹ and Rule 19b-4 thereunder,² notice is hereby given that on January 21, 2010, Financial Industry Regulatory Authority, Inc. (“FINRA”) filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission (“SEC” or “Commission”) the proposed rule change as described in Items I, II, and III below, which Items have been prepared by FINRA. The Commission is publishing this notice to solicit comments on the proposed rule change from interested persons.

I. Self-Regulatory Organization’s Statement of the Terms of Substance of the Proposed Rule Change

FINRA is proposing to repeal Incorporated NYSE Rule 405(4) (Common Sales Accounts) as part of the process to develop the consolidated FINRA rulebook.

The text of the proposed rule change is available on FINRA’s Web site at <http://www.finra.org>, at the principal office of FINRA and at the Commission’s Public Reference Room.

¹ 15 U.S.C. 78s(b)(1).

² 17 CFR 240.19b-4.

II. Self-Regulatory Organization’s Statement of the Purpose of, and Statutory Basis for, the Proposed Rule Change

In its filing with the Commission, FINRA included statements concerning the purpose of and basis for the proposed rule change and discussed any comments it received on the proposed rule change. The text of these statements may be examined at the places specified in Item IV below. FINRA has prepared summaries, set forth in sections A, B, and C below, of the most significant aspects of such statements.

A. Self-Regulatory Organization’s Statement of the Purpose of, and Statutory Basis for, the Proposed Rule Change

1. Purpose

As part of the process of developing a new consolidated rulebook (“Consolidated FINRA Rulebook”),³ FINRA is proposing to repeal NYSE Rule 405(4) (Common Sales Accounts).⁴

NYSE Rule 405(4) (Common Sales Accounts) requires proper supervision of registered representatives handling common sales accounts. The rule provides that a member may facilitate the isolated liquidation of securities valued at \$1,000 or less

³ The current FINRA rulebook consists of (1) FINRA Rules; (2) NASD Rules; and (3) rules incorporated from the New York Stock Exchange (“Incorporated NYSE Rules”) (together, the NASD Rules and Incorporated NYSE Rules are referred to as the “Transitional Rulebook”). While the NASD Rules generally apply to all FINRA members, the Incorporated NYSE Rules apply only to those members of FINRA that are also members of the NYSE (“Dual Members”). The FINRA Rules apply to all FINRA members, unless such rules have a more limited application by their terms. For more information about the rulebook consolidation process, see Information Notice, March 12, 2008 (Rulebook Consolidation Process).

⁴ For convenience, the Incorporated NYSE Rules are referred to as the “NYSE Rules.”

registered in the name of an individual who does not have an account, and which are not part of any distribution, through a common sales account set up for the specific purpose of handling such sales. The rule further provides that such sales may be effected on behalf of the customer without requiring the member to send a periodic customer account statement to the individual as otherwise generally required, provided the following conditions are satisfied: (1) the customer is identified as the individual in whose name the securities are registered; (2) the securities are received by the member, at or prior to the time of the entry of the order, in the exact amount to be sold in good delivery form; (3) a confirmation is sent to the customer; (4) all proceeds of such sales are paid out on or immediately following settlement date; and (5) a record is made in the common sales account that includes certain customer-specific information.

FINRA believes that the rule as written may raise potential investor protection concerns. The term “isolated” is not defined.⁵ Further, NYSE Rule 405(4) permits a

⁵ NYSE Rule 405(4) was adopted by the NYSE in the late 1960’s. In 1977, the NYSE proposed amendments to Rule 405(4) to define the term “isolated” to mean “not exceeding five \$2,000 transactions during any twelve-month period unless otherwise approved by the NYSE,” and to allow unsolicited purchases as well as sales of securities. In late 1977, the SEC instituted proceedings to determine whether to disapprove the proposed rule change and identified the potential grounds for disapproval. See Securities Exchange Act Release No. 14143 (November 7, 1977) (Order Instituting Proceedings to Determine Whether Proposed Changes to Rule 405 Should be Disapproved; File No. SR-NYSE-76-34). The SEC expressed concern that “execution of such transactions, and in particular of purchases [as proposed], in the common purchase and sale account may permit opportunities for fraudulent and manipulative acts or practices[.]” In February 1978, the NYSE withdrew the filing. See Securities Exchange Act Release No. 14630 (April 3, 1978) (Order Approving Withdrawal of NYSE’s Proposed Changes to Rule 405; File No. SR-NYSE-76-34).

member to effect sales of securities for customers without expressly requiring prior customer consent and without the need to send periodic account statements to the customer. For these reasons, FINRA proposes to eliminate NYSE Rule 405(4) and not adopt its content into the Consolidated FINRA Rulebook.⁶

FINRA will announce the implementation date of the proposed rule change in a Regulatory Notice to be published no later than 90 days following Commission approval. The implementation date will be no later than 180 days following Commission approval.

2. Statutory Basis

FINRA believes that the proposed rule change is consistent with the provisions of Section 15A(b)(6) of the Act,⁷ which requires, among other things, that FINRA rules must be designed to prevent fraudulent and manipulative acts and practices, to promote just and equitable principles of trade, and, in general, to protect investors and the public interest. FINRA believes that the proposed rule change will streamline and improve FINRA's rulebook by eliminating a rule that contains terms that are not clearly defined and may raise potential investor protection concerns.

⁶ FINRA notes that in the event a member may seek permission not to send customer account statements under certain limited circumstances, proposed FINRA Rule 2231 which relates to customer account statements, would authorize FINRA to exempt members from the provisions of such rule, including the requirement to deliver periodic account statements, pursuant to the Rule 9600 Series. See Securities Exchange Act Release No. 59921 (May 14, 2009), 74 FR 23912 (May 21, 2009) (Notice of Filing; File No. SR-FINRA-2009-028).

⁷ 15 U.S.C. 78o-3(b)(6).

B. Self-Regulatory Organization's Statement on Burden on Competition

FINRA does not believe that the proposed rule change will result in any burden on competition that is not necessary or appropriate in furtherance of the purposes of the Act.

C. Self-Regulatory Organization's Statement on Comments on the Proposed Rule Change Received from Members, Participants, or Others

Written comments were neither solicited nor received.

III. Date of Effectiveness of the Proposed Rule Change and Timing for Commission Action

Within 35 days of the date of publication of this notice in the Federal Register or within such longer period (i) as the Commission may designate up to 90 days of such date if it finds such longer period to be appropriate and publishes its reasons for so finding or (ii) as to which the self-regulatory organization consents, the Commission will:

(A) by order approve such proposed rule change, or

(B) institute proceedings to determine whether the proposed rule change should be disapproved.

IV. Solicitation of Comments

Interested persons are invited to submit written data, views and arguments concerning the foregoing, including whether the proposed rule change is consistent with the Act. Comments may be submitted by any of the following methods:

Electronic Comments:

- Use the Commission's Internet comment form

(<http://www.sec.gov/rules/sro.shtml>); or

- Send an e-mail to rule-comments@sec.gov. Please include File Number SR-FINRA-2010-005 on the subject line.

Paper Comments:

- Send paper comments in triplicate to Elizabeth M. Murphy, Secretary, Securities and Exchange Commission, 100 F Street, NE, Washington, DC 20549-1090.

All submissions should refer to File Number SR-FINRA-2010-005. This file number should be included on the subject line if e-mail is used. To help the Commission process and review your comments more efficiently, please use only one method. The Commission will post all comments on the Commission's Internet Web site (<http://www.sec.gov/rules/sro.shtml>). Copies of the submission, all subsequent amendments, all written statements with respect to the proposed rule change that are filed with the Commission, and all written communications relating to the proposed rule change between the Commission and any person, other than those that may be withheld from the public in accordance with the provisions of 5 U.S.C. 552, will be available for Web site viewing and printing in the Commission's Public Reference Room, 100 F Street, NE, Washington, DC 20549, on official business days between the hours of 10:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. Copies of such filing also will be available for inspection and copying at the principal office of FINRA. All comments received will be posted without change; the Commission does not edit personal identifying information from submissions. You should submit only information that you wish to make available publicly. All

submissions should refer to File Number SR-FINRA-2010-005 and should be submitted on or before [insert date 21 days from publication in the Federal Register].

For the Commission, by the Division of Trading and Markets, pursuant to delegated authority.⁸

Florence E. Harmon
Deputy Secretary

⁸ 17 CFR 200.30-3(a)(12).