

Firm Brochure

(Part 2A of Form ADV)

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This brochure provides information about the qualifications and business practices of ESSENTIAL PLANNING, LLC. If you have any questions about the contents of this brochure, please contact us at: 603-427-5164, or by Andy@essential-planning.com at: ANDY@ESSENTIAL-PLANNING.COM. The information in this brochure has not been approved or verified by the United States Securities and Exchange Commission, or by any state securities authority.

Additional information about ESSENTIAL PLANNING, LLC is available on the SEC's [Essential-planning.com](http://essential-planning.com) at www.adviserinfo.sec.gov

03/31/2012

Material Changes

Annual Update

The Material Changes section of this brochure will be updated annually when material changes occur since the previous release of the Firm Brochure.

Material Changes since the Last Update

The U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission issued a final rule in July 2010 requiring advisers to provide a Firm Brochure in narrative “plain English” format. The new final rule specifies mandatory sections and organization.

Full Brochure Available

Whenever you would like to receive a complete copy of our Firm Brochure, please contact us by Telephone @603-427-5164 or by email @ Andy@essential-planning.com.

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Advisory Business

Firm Description

ESSENTIAL PLANNING, LLC, ("FIRM NAME") was founded in 1984.

ESSENTIAL PLANNING, LLC provides personalized confidential financial planning and investment management to individuals, pension and profit sharing plans, trusts, estates and charitable organizations. Advice is provided through consultation with the client and may include: determination of financial objectives, identification of financial problems, cash flow management, tax planning, insurance review, investment management, education funding, retirement planning, and estate planning.

ESSENTIAL PLANNING, LLC is in the business of selling annuities, insurance, stocks, bonds, mutual funds, limited partnerships, or other commissioned products. ESSENTIAL PLANNING, LLC is paid cash by or receives some economic benefit (including commissions, equipment or non-research services) from a non-client in connection with giving advice to clients. ESSENTIAL PLANNING, LLC directly or indirectly compensates for client referrals.

Investment advice is an integral part of financial planning. In addition, ESSENTIAL PLANNING, LLC advises clients regarding cash flow, college planning, retirement planning, tax planning and estate planning.

Investment advice is provided, with the client making the final decision on investment selection. ESSENTIAL PLANNING, LLC does not act as a custodian of client assets. The client always maintains asset control. ESSENTIAL PLANNING, LLC places trades for clients under a limited power of attorney.

A written evaluation of each client's initial situation is provided to the client, often in the form of a net worth statement. Periodic reviews are also communicated to provide reminders of the specific courses of action that need to be taken. More frequent reviews occur but are not necessarily communicated to the client unless immediate changes are recommended.

Other professionals (e.g., lawyers, accountants, insurance agents, etc.) are engaged directly by the client on an as-needed basis. Conflicts of interest will be disclosed to the client in the unlikely event they should occur.

The initial meeting, which may be by tele 603-427-5164, is free of charge and is considered an exploratory interview to determine the extent to which financial planning and investment management may be beneficial to the client.

Principal Owners

Andrew C. Lord is a 100 % stockholder.

Types of Advisory Services

ESSENTIAL PLANNING, LLC provides investment supervisory services, also known as asset management services; manages investment advisory accounts not involving investment supervisory services; furnishes investment advice through consultations; issues periodicals about securities by or other devices which clients may use to evaluate securities.

On more than an occasional basis, ESSENTIAL PLANNING, LLC furnishes advice to clients on matters not involving securities, such as financial planning matters, taxation issues, and trust services that often include estate planning.

ESSENTIAL PLANNING, LLC provides a timing service (*explain*).

As of DATE, ESSENTIAL PLANNING, LLC manages approximately \$137M in assets for approximately 275 clients. \$0 is managed on a discretionary basis, and \$137M is managed on a non-discretionary basis.

Tailored Relationships

The goals and objectives for each client are documented in our client relationship management system. Investment policy statements are created that reflect the stated goals and objective. Clients may impose restrictions on investing in certain securities or types of securities.

Agreements may not be assigned without client consent.

Types of Agreements

The following agreements define the typical client relationships.

Financial Planning Agreement

A financial plan is designed to help the client with all aspects of financial planning without ongoing investment management after the financial plan is completed.

The financial plan may include, but is not limited to: a net worth statement; a cash flow statement; a review of investment accounts, including reviewing asset allocation and providing repositioning recommendations; strategic tax planning; a review of retirement accounts and plans including recommendations; a review of insurance policies and recommendations for changes, if necessary; one or more retirement scenarios; estate planning review and recommendations; and education planning with funding recommendations.

Detailed investment advice and specific recommendations are provided as part of a financial plan. Implementation of the recommendations is at the discretion of the client.

The fee for a financial plan is predicated upon the facts known at the start of the engagement. Since financial planning is a discovery process, situations

occur wherein the client is unaware of certain financial exposures or predicaments.

In the event that the client's situation is substantially different than disclosed at the initial meeting, a revised fee will be provided for mutual agreement. The client must approve the change of scope in advance of the additional work being performed when a fee increase is necessary.

After delivery of a financial plan, future face-to-face meetings may be scheduled as necessary for up to one month. Follow-on implementation work is billed separately.

Advisory Service Agreement

Most clients choose to have ESSENTIAL PLANNING, LLC manage their assets in order to obtain ongoing in-depth advice and life planning. All aspects of the client's financial affairs are reviewed, including those of their children. Realistic and measurable goals are set and objectives to reach those goals are defined. As goals and objectives change over time, suggestions are made and implemented on an ongoing basis.

The scope of work and fee for an Advisory Service Agreement is provided to the client in writing prior to the start of the relationship. An Advisory Service Agreement includes: cash flow management; insurance review; investment management (including performance reporting); education planning; retirement planning; estate planning; and tax preparation, as well as the implementation of recommendations within each area.

The annual Advisory Service Agreement fee is based on a percentage of the investable assets according to the following schedule:

Under \$100,000	1.75%
\$100,001 - \$250,000	1.50%
\$250,001 - \$1,000,000	1.25%
\$1,000,001 - \$2,000,000	.75%

Although the Advisory Service Agreement is an ongoing agreement and constant adjustments are required, the length of service to the client is at the client's discretion. The client or the investment manager may terminate an Agreement by written notice to the other party. At termination, fees will be billed on a pro rata basis for the portion of the quarter completed. The portfolio value at the completion of the prior full billing quarter is used as the basis for the fee computation, adjusted for the number of days during the billing quarter prior to termination.

Retainer Agreement

In some circumstances, a *Retainer Agreement* is executed in lieu of an *Advisory Service Agreement* when it is more appropriate to work on a fixed-fee basis.

Asset Management

Assets are invested primarily in no-load or low-load mutual funds and exchange-traded funds, usually through discount brokers or fund companies. Fund companies charge each fund shareholder an investment management fee that is disclosed in the fund prospectus. Discount brokerages may charge a transaction fee for the purchase of some funds.

Stocks and bonds may be purchased or sold through a brokerage account when appropriate. The brokerage firm charges a fee for stock and bond trades. ESSENTIAL PLANNING, LLC does not receive any compensation, in any form, from fund companies.

Investments may also include: equities (stocks), warrants, corporate debt securities, commercial paper, certificates of deposit, municipal securities, investment company securities (variable life insurance, variable annuities, and mutual funds shares), U. S. government securities, options contracts, futures contracts, and interests in partnerships.

Initial public offerings (IPOs) are not available through ESSENTIAL PLANNING, LLC.

Termination of Agreement

A Client may terminate any of the aforementioned agreements at any time by notifying ESSENTIAL PLANNING, LLC in writing and paying the rate for the time spent on the investment advisory engagement prior to notification of termination. If the client made an advance payment, ESSENTIAL PLANNING, LLC will refund any unearned portion of the advance payment.

ESSENTIAL PLANNING, LLC may terminate any of the aforementioned agreements at any time by notifying the client in writing. If the client made an advance payment, ESSENTIAL PLANNING, LLC will refund any unearned portion of the advance payment.

Fees and Compensation

Description

ESSENTIAL PLANNING, LLC bases its fees on a percentage of assets under management, fixed fees or commissions.

Some *Retainer Agreements* may be priced based on the complexity of work, especially when asset management is not the most significant part of the relationship.

Financial plans are priced according to the degree of complexity associated with the client's situation.

Fee Billing

Investment management fees are billed quarterly, in ARREARS, meaning that we invoice you *AFTER* the three-month billing period has *ENDED*. Payment in full is expected upon invoice presentation. Fees are usually deducted from a designated client account to facilitate billing. The client must consent in advance to direct debiting of their investment account.

Fees for financial plans are billed 50% in advance, with the balance due upon delivery of the financial plan.

Other Fees

Custodians may charge transaction fees on purchases or sales of certain mutual funds and exchange-traded funds. These transaction charges are usually small and incidental to the purchase or sale of a security. The selection of the security is more important than the nominal fee that the custodian charges to buy or sell the security.

ESSENTIAL PLANNING, LLC, in its sole discretion, may waive its minimum fee and/or charge a lesser investment advisory fee based upon certain criteria (e.g., historical relationship, type of assets, anticipated future earning capacity, anticipated future additional assets, dollar amounts of assets to be managed, related accounts, account composition, negotiations with clients, etc.).

New Advisory Service Agreement fees are calculated on a formula basis and adjusted for complexity of individual situations. *The formula is based on gross income, gross assets and other financial considerations.*

Expense Ratios

Mutual funds generally charge a management fee for their services as investment managers. The management fee is called an expense ratio. For example, an expense ratio of 0.50 means that the mutual fund company charges 0.5% for their services. These fees are in addition to the fees paid by you to ESSENTIAL PLANNING, LLC.

Performance figures quoted by mutual fund companies in various publications are after their fees have been deducted.

Past Due Accounts and Termination of Agreement

ESSENTIAL PLANNING, LLC reserves the right to stop work on any account that is more than 30 days overdue. In addition, ESSENTIAL PLANNING, LLC reserves the right to terminate any financial planning engagement where a client has willfully concealed or has refused to provide pertinent information about financial situations when necessary and appropriate, in ESSENTIAL

PLANNING, LLC's judgment, to providing proper financial advice. Any unused portion of fees collected in advance will be refunded within 30 days.

Performance-Based Fees

Sharing of Capital Gains

Some advisors offer performance fees as an alternative. This is an optional method to clients who meet the advisor's and SEC qualifications. For those that do, and that elect this fee alternative, the fee is generally a percentage of the profits earned, sometimes only after a certain minimum return has been achieved. Clients should review the pertinent fee agreement for more specifics about how this fee is charged.

Types of Clients

Description

ESSENTIAL PLANNING, LLC generally provides investment advice to individuals.

Client relationships vary in scope and length of service.

Account Minimums

Essential Planning, LLC has no account minimums.

Methods of Analysis, Investment Strategies and Risk of Loss

Methods of Analysis

Security analysis methods may include charting, fundamental analysis, technical analysis, and cyclical analysis.

The main sources of information include financial newspapers and magazines, inspections of corporate activities, research materials prepared by others, corporate rating services, annual reports, prospectuses, filings with the Securities and Exchange Commission, and company press releases.

Other sources of information that ESSENTIAL PLANNING, LLC may use include Morningstar Principia mutual fund information, Morningstar Principia stock information, Charles Schwab & Company's "SchwabLink" service, Advisor Intelligence, and the World Wide Web.

Investment Strategies

The primary investment strategy used on client accounts is strategic asset allocation utilizing a core and satellite approach. This means that we use passively-managed index and exchange-traded funds as the core

investments, and then add actively-managed funds where there are greater opportunities to make a difference. Portfolios are globally diversified to control the risk associated with traditional markets.

The investment strategy for a specific client is based upon the objectives stated by the client during consultations. The client may change these objectives at any time. Each client executes an Investment Policy Statement that documents their objectives and their desired investment strategy.

Other strategies may include long-term purchases, short-term purchases, trading, short sales, margin transactions, and option writing (including covered options, uncovered options or spreading strategies).

Risk of Loss

All investment programs have certain risks that are borne by the investor. Our investment approach constantly keeps the risk of loss in mind. Investors face the following investment risks:

- **Interest-rate Risk:** Fluctuations in interest rates may cause investment prices to fluctuate. For example, when interest rates rise, yields on existing bonds become less attractive, causing their market values to decline.
- **Market Risk:** The price of a security, bond, or mutual fund may drop in reaction to tangible and intangible events and conditions. This type of risk is caused by external factors independent of a security's particular underlying circumstances. For example, political, economic and social conditions may trigger market events.
- **Inflation Risk:** When any type of inflation is present, a dollar today will not buy as much as a dollar next year, because purchasing power is eroding at the rate of inflation.
- **Currency Risk:** Overseas investments are subject to fluctuations in the value of the dollar against the currency of the investment's originating country. This is also referred to as exchange rate risk.
- **Reinvestment Risk:** This is the risk that future proceeds from investments may have to be reinvested at a potentially lower rate of return (i.e. interest rate). This primarily relates to fixed income securities.
- **Business Risk:** These risks are associated with a particular industry or a particular company within an industry. For example, oil-drilling companies depend on finding oil and then refining it, a lengthy process, before they can generate a profit. They carry a higher risk of profitability than an electric company, which generates its income from a steady stream of customers who buy electricity no matter what the economic environment is like.

- **Liquidity Risk:** Liquidity is the ability to readily convert an investment into cash. Generally, assets are more liquid if many traders are interested in a standardized product. For example, Treasury Bills are highly liquid, while real estate properties are not.
- **Financial Risk:** Excessive borrowing to finance a business' operations increases the risk of profitability, because the company must meet the terms of its obligations in good times and bad. During periods of financial stress, the inability to meet loan obligations may result in bankruptcy and/or a declining market value.

Disciplinary Information

Legal and Disciplinary

The firm and its employees have not been involved in legal or disciplinary events related to past or present investment clients.

Other Financial Industry Activities and Affiliations

Financial Industry Activities

ESSENTIAL PLANNING, LLC is registered as a Registered Investment Advisory Firm.

Affiliations

ESSENTIAL PLANNING, LLC has arrangements that are material to its advisory of its clients with a related person who is a broker-dealer, Fortune Financial Services, Inc. and Lord & Sanborn, Inc.

Code of Ethics, Participation or Interest in Client Transactions and Personal Trading

Code of Ethics

The employees of ESSENTIAL PLANNING, LLC have committed to a Code of Ethics that is available for review by clients and prospective clients upon request. The firm will provide a copy of the Code of Ethics to any client or prospective client upon request.

Participation or Interest in Client Transactions

ESSENTIAL PLANNING, LLC and its employees may buy or sell securities that are also held by clients. Employees may not trade their own securities ahead of client trades. Employees comply with the provisions of the ESSENTIAL PLANNING, LLC *Compliance Manual*.

Personal Trading

The Compliance Officers of ESSENTIAL PLANNING, LLC are Andrew C. Lord and Amaretta M. Saviano. They review all employee trades each quarter. The personal trading reviews ensure that the personal trading of employees does not affect the markets, and that clients of the firm receive preferential treatment. Since most employee trades are small mutual fund trades or exchange-traded fund trades, the trades do not affect the securities markets.

Brokerage Practices

Selecting Brokerage Firms

ESSENTIAL PLANNING, LLC does not have any affiliation with product sales firms. Specific custodian recommendations are made to Clients based on their need for such services. ESSENTIAL PLANNING, LLC recommends custodians based on the proven integrity and financial responsibility of the firm and the best execution of orders at reasonable commission rates.

ESSENTIAL PLANNING, LLC recommends discount brokerage firms and trust companies (qualified custodians), such as TD Ameritrade, Charles Schwab and Fidelity.

ESSENTIAL PLANNING, LLC *DOES NOT* receive fees or commissions from any of these arrangements.

Best Execution

ESSENTIAL PLANNING, LLC reviews the execution of trades at each custodian each quarter. The review is documented in the ESSENTIAL PLANNING, LLC *Compliance Manual*. Trading fees charged by the custodians is also reviewed on a quarterly basis. ESSENTIAL PLANNING, LLC does not receive any portion of the trading fees.

Soft Dollars

ESSENTIAL PLANNING, LLC receives no soft dollar compensation.

Order Aggregation

Most trades are mutual funds or exchange-traded funds where trade aggregation does not garner any client benefit.

Review of Accounts

Periodic Reviews

Account reviews are performed quarterly by advisors Andrew C. Lord and Paul R. Doran. Account reviews are performed more frequently when market conditions dictate.

Review Triggers

Other conditions that may trigger a review are changes in the tax laws, new investment information, and changes in a client's own situation.

Regular Reports

Account reviewers are members from the firm. They are instructed to consider the client's current security positions and the likelihood that the performance of each security will contribute to the investment objectives of the client.

Clients receive periodic communications on at least an annual basis. *Advisory Service Agreement* clients, *Investment Management* clients, and *Retainer Agreement* clients receive written quarterly updates. The written updates may include a net worth statement, portfolio statement, tax return (if the client requests tax preparation services), and a summary of objectives and progress towards meeting those objectives.

Client Referrals and Other Compensation

Incoming Referrals

ESSENTIAL PLANNING, LLC has been fortunate to receive many client referrals over the years. The referrals came from current clients, estate planning attorneys, accountants, employees, personal friends of employees and other similar sources. The firm does not compensate referring parties for these referrals.

Referrals Out

ESSENTIAL PLANNING, LLC does not accept referral fees or any form of remuneration from other professionals when a prospect or client is referred to them.

Custody

Account Statements

All assets are held at qualified custodians, which means the custodians provide account statements directly to clients at their address of record at least quarterly.

Performance Reports

Clients are urged to compare the account statements received directly from their custodians to the performance report statements provided by ESSENTIAL PLANNING, LLC.

Net Worth Statements

Clients are frequently provided net worth statements and net worth graphs that are generated from our client relationship management system. Net worth statements contain approximations of bank account balances provided by the client, as well as the value of land and hard-to-price real estate. The net worth statements are used for long-term financial planning where the exact values of assets are not material to the financial planning tasks.

Investment Discretion

Discretionary Authority for Trading

N/A

Limited Power of Attorney

A limited power of attorney is a trading authorization for this purpose. You sign a limited power of attorney so that we may execute the trades that you have approved.

Voting Client Securities

Proxy Votes

ESSENTIAL PLANNING, LLC does not vote proxies on securities. Clients are expected to vote their own proxies.

When assistance on voting proxies is requested, ESSENTIAL PLANNING, LLC will provide recommendations to the Client. If a conflict of interest exists, it will be disclosed to the Client.

Financial Information

Financial Condition

ESSENTIAL PLANNING, LLC does not have any financial impairment that will preclude the firm from meeting contractual commitments to clients.

A balance sheet is not required to be provided because ESSENTIAL PLANNING, LLC does not serve as a custodian for client funds or securities, and does not require prepayment of fees of more than \$1,200 per client, and six months or more in advance.

****Please note: state-registered advisors: substitute the following paragraph for the one above:*

A balance sheet is not required to be provided because ESSENTIAL PLANNING, LLC does not serve as a custodian for client funds or securities, and does not require prepayment of fees of more than \$600 per client, and six months or more in advance.

Business Continuity Plan

General

ESSENTIAL PLANNING, LLC has a Business Continuity Plan in place that provides detailed steps to mitigate and recover from the loss of office space, communications, services or key people.

Disasters

The Business Continuity Plan covers natural disasters such as snow storms, hurricanes, tornados, and flooding. The Plan covers man-made disasters such as loss of electrical power, loss of water pressure, fire, bomb threat, nuclear emergency, chemical event, biological event, T-1 communications line outage, Internet outage, railway accident and aircraft accident. Electronic files are backed up daily and archived offsite.

Alternate Offices

Alternate offices are identified to support ongoing operations in the event the main office is unavailable. It is our intention to contact all clients within five days of a disaster that dictates moving our office to an alternate location.

Loss of Key Personnel

ESSENTIAL PLANNING, LLC has signed a Business Continuation Agreement with another financial advisory firm to support ESSENTIAL PLANNING, LLC in the event of NAME's serious disability or death.

Information Security Program

Information Security

ESSENTIAL PLANNING, LLC maintains an information security program to reduce the risk that your personal and confidential information may be breached.

Privacy Notice

ESSENTIAL PLANNING, LLC is committed to maintaining the confidentiality, integrity and security of the personal information that is entrusted to us.

The categories of nonpublic information that we collect from you may include information about your personal finances, information about your health to the extent that it is needed for the financial planning process, information about transactions between you and third parties, and information from consumer reporting agencies, e.g., credit reports. We use this information to help you meet your personal financial goals.

With your permission, we disclose limited information to attorneys, accountants, and mortgage lenders with whom you have established a relationship. You may opt out from our sharing information with these nonaffiliated third parties by notifying us at any time by telephone @ 603-427-5164, email @ Andy@essential-planning.com, or in person. With your permission, we share a limited amount of information about you with your brokerage firm in order to execute securities transactions on your behalf.

We maintain a secure office to ensure that your information is not placed at unreasonable risk. We employ a firewall barrier, secure data encryption techniques and authentication procedures in our computer environment.

We do not provide your personal information to mailing list vendors or solicitors. We require strict confidentiality in our agreements with unaffiliated third parties that require access to your personal information, including financial service companies, consultants, and auditors. Federal and state securities regulators may review our Company records and your personal records as permitted by law.

Personally identifiable information about you will be maintained while you are a client, and for the required period thereafter that records are required to be maintained by federal and state securities laws. After that time, information may be destroyed.

We will notify you in advance if our privacy policy is expected to change. We are required by law to deliver this *Privacy Notice* to you annually, in writing.

****Please note: Delete the following two paragraphs after making your Brochure Supplement decision.*

The Brochure Supplement (Part 2B of Form ADV) contains the biographies of the advisors in the firm. The Brochure Supplement may be provided separately, or as part of the Part 2A Brochure (recommended solution). Distributing the Firm Brochure is simplified if Part 2A and Part 2B are combined into one document.

Larger firms with many advisors may wish to separate Part 2A and Part 2B from each other. If this option is chosen, then Part 2B must have its own cover page and no Material Changes section. See the separate Word document "Part 2B Standalone.doc."

Brochure Supplement (Part 2B of Form ADV)

Education and Business Standards

ESSENTIAL PLANNING, LLC requires that advisors in its employ have a bachelor's degree or further coursework demonstrating knowledge of financial planning and tax planning. Examples of acceptable coursework include: an MBA, a CFP®, a CFA, a ChFC, JD, CTFA, EA or CPA. Additionally, advisors must have work experience that demonstrates their aptitude for financial planning and investment management.

Andrew C. Lord

- Date of birth: 11/23/1962

Business Experience:

- BA** (1984) **Bachelor of Arts** University of New Hampshire with an emphasis in Economics at the prestigious Whittemore School of Business and Economics.
- LUTCF** (1986) **Life Underwriter Training Council Fellow** A professional services trade group designation awarded after completion and teaching a curriculum including estate planning, financial planning and business related financial planning.
- CLU** (1988) **Chartered Life Underwriter** Designation achieved after completion of advanced courses in the estate planning field offered by The American College.
- ChFC** (1992) **Chartered Financial Consultant** Designation achieved after completion of courses dedicated to sophisticated tax and financial planning subjects through The American College.

- NQA** Perennial winner of our trade organization's National Quality Award for persistence and quality of business. I believe this recognition is earned because we take the time to listen to our clients concerns and help them formulate goals and objectives.
- TOT** **Top of the Table** Andy is one of the youngest repeat qualifiers for the Million Dollar Round Table's prestigious TOT qualification. This group is limited to the top 1% of their worldwide membership. More important, it gives us regular access to some of the best problem solvers in the industry.
- PRESIDENT** Andy served as President of the state's largest chapter of his industry's professional association. This culminated five years of service to the local chapter as well as time served as a board member at the state level.
- OTHER** Industry achievements include publishing the popular newsletter Your Financial Future, teaching courses on business and financial planning at Notre Dame College and developing a solid reputation as a public speaker on various issues facing retirees. Speaking references include AARP, The American Red Cross, The American Heart Association, The Arthritis Society, North Shore Elder Services and many others.

SUPERVISOR'S contact information:
603-427-5164 ANDY@ESSENTIAL-PLANNING.COM

Paul R. Doran

- Date of birth: 05/07/1970
- Bachelor of Science Degree in Business from the University of Maine at Orono

Business Experience:

- Essential Planning, LLC (2006 – to present)
- Avery Insurance (2004 – 2011)
- Doran Independent Insurance (2011 – to present)

Other Business Activities:

Paul R. Doran is the owner of Paul R. Doran Independent Insurance, LLC. Paul R. Doran Independent Insurance, LLC is a New Hampshire registered insurance business.

Supervision:

Paul R. Doran is supervised by Andrew C. Lord. He reviews Paul Doran's work through frequent office interactions as well as remote interactions. He also reviews Paul Doran's activities through our client relationship management system.

SUPERVISOR'S contact information: 603-427-5164
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