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FORM ADV PART 2A

BROCHURE

This Brochure provides information about the qualifications and business practices of Patriot Investment Management Group, Inc. If you have any questions about the contents of this Brochure, please contact us at the phone number listed above. 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 Patriot Investment Management Group, Inc. is also available on the SEC's website at [www.adviserinfo.sec.gov](http://www.adviserinfo.sec.gov). The searchable IARD/CRD number for Patriot Investment Management Group, Inc. is 112155.

Patriot Investment Management Group, Inc. is a registered investment adviser. Registration with the United States Securities and Exchange Commission or any state securities authority does not imply a certain level of skill or training.

## Item 2 Summary of Material Changes

Form ADV Part 2 requires registered investment advisers to amend their brochure when information becomes materially inaccurate. If there are any material changes to an adviser's disclosure brochure, the adviser is required to notify you and provide you with a description of the material changes.

Since our last annual updating amendment dated February 16, 2016 this Brochure has been amended to disclose the following changes:

- We amended Items 12 and 14 to enhance disclosures pertaining to economic benefits that our firm may receive from Charles Schwab.
- We amended Item 20 to include disclosures pertaining to IRA rollover considerations and our firm's ERISA fiduciary status.
- We amended Item 14 to disclose that our firm does not have any engagements whereby a solicitor is paid a referral fee for client referrals.

If you have any questions about these changes, please contact our firm and ask to speak to the Chief Compliance Officer.

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## Item 4 Advisory Business

### Description of Services and Fees

Patriot Investment Management Group, Inc. is a registered investment adviser based in Knoxville, TN. We are organized as a corporation under the laws of the State of Tennessee. We have been providing investment advisory services since 1998. Brad Bower is our principal owner. Currently, we offer the following investment advisory services, which are personalized to each individual client:

- Portfolio Management Services
- Financial Planning Services
- Pension Consulting Services
- Selection of Other Advisers

The following paragraphs describe our services and fees. Please refer to the description of each investment advisory service listed below for information on how we tailor our advisory services to your individual needs. As used in this Brochure, the words "we", "our" and "us" refer to Patriot Investment Management Group, Inc. and the words "you", "your" and "client" refer to you as either a client or prospective client of our firm. Also, you may see the term Associated Person throughout this Brochure. As used in this Brochure, our Associated Persons are our firm's officers, employees, and all individuals providing investment advice on behalf of our firm.

### Portfolio Management Services

We offer discretionary and non-discretionary portfolio management services. Our investment advice is tailored to meet our clients' needs and investment objectives. If you retain our firm for portfolio management services, we will meet with you to determine your investment objectives, risk tolerance, and other relevant information (the "suitability information") at the beginning of our advisory relationship. We will use the suitability information we gather to develop a strategy that enables our firm to give you continuous and focused investment advice and/or to make investments on your behalf. Once we construct an investment portfolio for you, we will monitor your portfolio's performance on an ongoing basis, and will rebalance the portfolio as required by changes in market conditions and in your financial circumstances.

If you participate in our discretionary portfolio management services, we require you to grant our firm discretionary authority to manage your account. Discretionary authorization will allow our firm to determine the specific securities, and the amount of securities, to be purchased or sold for your account without your approval prior to each transaction. Discretionary authority is typically granted by the investment advisory agreement you sign with our firm or trading authorization forms. In our sole discretion, you negotiate the ability to limit our discretionary authority (for example, limiting the types of securities that can be purchased for your account) by providing our firm with your restrictions and guidelines in writing. If you enter into non-discretionary arrangements with our firm, we must obtain your approval prior to executing any transactions on behalf of your account.

### Financial Planning Services

We offer broad-based, modular, and consultative financial planning services. Financial planning will typically involve providing a variety of advisory services to clients regarding the management of their financial resources based upon an analysis of their individual needs. If you retain our firm for financial planning services, we will meet with you to gather information about your financial circumstances and objectives. Once we review and analyze the information you provide to our firm, we may deliver a written plan to you, designed to help you achieve your stated financial goals and objectives.

Financial plans are based on your financial situation at the time we present the plan to you, and on the financial information you provide to our firm. You must promptly notify our firm if your financial situation, goals, objectives, or needs change.

You are under no obligation to act on our financial planning recommendations. Should you choose to act on any of our recommendations, you are not obligated to implement the financial plan through any of our other investment advisory services. Moreover, you may act on our recommendations by placing securities transactions with any brokerage firm.

### **Pension Consulting Services**

We offer pension consulting services to employee benefit plans and their fiduciaries based upon the needs of the plan and the services requested by the plan sponsor or named fiduciary. In general, these services may include an existing plan review and analysis, plan-level advice regarding fund selection and investment options, education services to plan participants, investment performance monitoring, and/or ongoing consulting. These pension consulting services will generally be non-discretionary and advisory in nature. The ultimate decision to act on behalf of the plan shall remain with the plan sponsor or other named fiduciary.

We may also assist with participant enrollment meetings and provide investment-related educational seminars to plan participants on such topics as: Diversification; Asset allocation; Risk tolerance; and Time horizon. Our educational seminars may include other investment-related topics specific to the particular plan. We may also provide additional types of pension consulting services to plans on an individually negotiated basis. All services, whether discussed above or customized for the plan based upon requirements from the plan fiduciaries (which may include additional plan-level or participant-level services) shall be detailed in a written agreement and be consistent with the parameters set forth in the plan documents. Our advisory fees for these customized services will be negotiated with the plan sponsor or named fiduciary on a case-by-case basis.

### **Selection of Other Advisers**

As part of our investment advisory services, we may recommend that you use the services of a third party asset manager ("TPAM") to manage your entire, or a portion of your, investment portfolio. After gathering information about your financial situation and objectives, we may recommend that you engage a specific TPAM or investment program. Factors that we take into consideration when making our recommendation(s) include, but are not limited to, the following: the TPAM's performance, methods of analysis, fees, your financial needs, investment goals, risk tolerance, and investment objectives. We will periodically monitor the TPAM(s)' performance to ensure its management and investment style remains aligned with your investment goals and objectives.

### **Types of Investments**

We may advise you on any type of investment that we deem appropriate based on your stated goals and objectives. We may also provide advice on any type of investment held in your portfolio at the inception of our advisory relationship.

You may request that we refrain from investing in particular securities or certain types of securities. You must provide these restrictions to our firm in writing.

### **Assets Under Management**

As of December 31, 2016, we manage approximately \$760,785,132 in client assets on a discretionary basis.

## Item 5 Fees and Compensation

### Portfolio Management Services

Our fee for portfolio management services is based on a percentage of your assets we manage and is set forth in the following fee schedule:

<u>Assets Under Management</u>	<u>Maximum Annual Advisory Rate</u>
Up to \$50,000	1.50%
\$50,001 to \$500,000	1.00%
\$500,001 to \$1,000,000	0.75%
Over \$1,000,000	Negotiable

Our annual portfolio management fee is billed and payable quarterly in advance based on the value of your account on the last day of the previous quarter. In certain circumstances, and at our sole discretion, we may negotiate other fee paying arrangements with you.

If the portfolio management agreement is executed at any time other than the first day of a calendar quarter, our fees will apply on a pro rata basis, which means that the advisory fee is payable in proportion to the number of days in the quarter for which you are a client. Our advisory fee is negotiable, depending on individual client circumstances.

At our discretion, we may combine the account values of family members living in the same household to determine the applicable advisory fee. For example, we may combine account values for you and your minor children, joint accounts with your spouse, and other types of related accounts. Combining account values may increase the asset total, which may result in your paying a reduced advisory fee based on the available breakpoints in our fee schedule stated above.

We will send you an invoice for the payment of our advisory fee, or we will deduct our fee directly from your account through the qualified custodian holding your funds and securities. We will deduct our advisory fee only when you have given our firm written authorization permitting the fees to be paid directly from your account. Further, the qualified custodian will deliver an account statement to you at least quarterly. These account statements will show all disbursements from your account. You should review all statements for accuracy.

You may terminate the portfolio management agreement upon written notice to our firm. Upon termination, you will not receive a refund for the remainder of the quarter in which you terminate your account. You will pay no further fees for subsequent quarters.

We encourage you to review the statement(s) you receive from the qualified custodian. If you find any inaccurate information between our invoice and the statement(s) you receive from the qualified custodian please call our main office number located on the cover page of this Brochure.

### Financial Planning Services

We charge an hourly fee of \$300 or \$150 for services performed by our Investment Adviser Representatives or Clerical Staff, respectively. We may also provide financial planning services on a fixed fee basis with fees ranging from \$500 to \$3,000. Our fee is negotiable depending on the scope and complexity of the plan, your situation, and your financial objectives. An estimate of the total time/cost will be determined at the start of the advisory relationship.

We require that you pay 50% of the fee in advance and the remaining portion upon the completion of the services rendered. We will not require prepayment of a fee more than six months in advance and in excess of \$1,200.

You may terminate the financial planning agreement by providing written notice to our firm. You will incur a pro rata charge for services rendered prior to the termination of the agreement. If you have pre-paid advisory fees that we have not yet earned, you will receive a prorated refund of those fees.

### **Pension Consulting Services**

Subject to negotiability, the compensation arrangement for these services will be based on a fixed fee, an hourly fee, or a percentage of assets. All terms, including the agreed upon fee and payment schedule, will be evidenced in the advisory agreement.

Either party to the pension consulting agreement may terminate the agreement upon 30-days' written notice to the other party. The pension consulting fees will be prorated for the quarter in which the termination notice is given and any unearned fees will be refunded to the client.

### **Selection of Other Advisers**

Our recommendations to use third party asset managers are included in our portfolio management fee. We do not charge you a separate fee for the selection of other advisers nor will we share in the advisory fee you pay directly to the TPAM. Advisory fees that you pay to the TPAM are established and payable in accordance with the Form ADV Part 2 or other equivalent disclosure document provided by each TPAM to whom you are referred. These fees may or may not be negotiable. You should review the recommended TPAM's brochure for information on its fees and services.

You will be required to sign an agreement directly with the recommended TPAM(s). You may terminate your advisory relationship with the TPAM according to the terms of your agreement with the TPAM. You should review each TPAM's Brochure for specific information on how you may terminate your advisory relationship with the TPAM and how you may receive a refund, if applicable. You should contact the TPAM directly for questions regarding your advisory agreement with the TPAM.

### **Additional Fees and Expenses**

As part of our investment advisory services to you, we may invest, or recommend that you invest, in mutual funds and exchange traded funds. The fees that you pay to our firm for investment advisory services are separate and distinct from the fees and expenses charged by mutual funds or exchange traded funds (described in each fund's prospectus) to their shareholders. These fees will generally include a management fee and other fund expenses. You will also incur transaction charges and/or brokerage fees when purchasing or selling securities. These charges and fees are typically imposed by the broker-dealer or custodian through whom your account transactions are executed. We do not share in any portion of the brokerage fees/transaction charges imposed by the broker-dealer or custodian. To fully understand the total cost you will incur, you should review all the fees charged by mutual funds, exchange traded funds, our firm, and others. For information on our brokerage practices, please refer to the "Brokerage Practices" section of this Brochure.

## **Item 6 Performance-Based Fees and Side-By-Side Management**

We do not accept performance-based fees or participate in side-by-side management. Our fees are calculated as described in the *Advisory Business* section above, and are not charged on the basis of a share of capital gains upon, or capital appreciation of, the funds in your advisory account.



## Item 7 Types of Clients

We offer investment advisory services to individuals, pension and profit sharing plans, trusts, estates, charitable organizations, corporations, and other business entities.

In general, we do not require a minimum dollar amount to open and maintain an advisory account; however, we have the right to terminate your Account if it falls below a minimum size which, in our sole opinion, is too small to effectively manage.

## Item 8 Methods of Analysis, Investment Strategies and Risk of Loss

### Our Methods of Analysis and Investment Strategies

We may use one or more of the following methods of analysis or investment strategies when providing investment advice to you:

- Fundamental Analysis - involves analyzing individual companies and their industry groups, such as a company's financial statements, details regarding the company's product line, the experience and expertise of the company's management, and the outlook for the company's industry. The resulting data is used to measure the true value of the company's stock compared to the current market value.
- Cyclical Analysis - a type of technical analysis that involves evaluating recurring price patterns and trends.

Our investment strategies and advice may vary depending upon each client's specific financial situation. As such, we determine investments and allocations based upon your predefined objectives, risk tolerance, time horizon, financial horizon, financial information, liquidity needs, and other various suitability factors. Your restrictions and guidelines may affect the composition of your portfolio.

Fundamental Analysis - The risk of fundamental analysis is that information obtained may be incorrect and the analysis may not provide an accurate estimate of earnings, which may be the basis for a stock's value. If securities prices adjust rapidly to new information, utilizing fundamental analysis may not result in favorable performance.

Cyclical Analysis - Economic/business cycles may not be predictable and may have many fluctuations between long term expansions and contractions. The lengths of economic cycles may be difficult to predict with accuracy and therefore the risk of cyclical analysis is the difficulty in predicting economic trends and consequently the changing value of securities that would be affected by these changing trends.

Our strategies and investments may have unique and significant tax implications. However, unless we specifically agree otherwise, and in writing, tax efficiency is not our primary consideration in the management of your assets. Regardless of your account size or any other factors, we strongly recommend that you continuously consult with a tax professional prior to and throughout the investing of your assets.

Moreover, as a result of revised IRS regulations, custodians and broker-dealers will begin reporting the cost basis of equities acquired in client accounts on or after January 1, 2011. Your custodian will default to the FIFO (First-In First-Out) accounting method for calculating the cost basis of your investments. You are responsible for contacting your tax advisor to determine if this accounting method is the right choice for you. If your tax advisor believes another accounting method is more advantageous, please provide written notice to our firm immediately and we will alert your account



custodian of your individually selected accounting method. Please note that decisions about cost basis accounting methods will need to be made before trades settle, as the cost basis method cannot be changed after settlement.

### **Risk of Loss**

Investing in securities involves risk of loss that you should be prepared to bear. We do not represent or guarantee that our services or methods of analysis can or will predict future results, successfully identify market tops or bottoms, or insulate clients from losses due to market corrections or declines. We cannot offer any guarantees or promises that your financial goals and objectives will be met. Past performance is in no way an indication of future performance.

### **Recommendation of Particular Types of Securities**

As disclosed under the "Advisory Business" section in this Brochure, we may recommend other types of investments as appropriate for you since each client has different needs and different tolerance for risk. Each type of security has its own unique set of risks associated with it and it would not be possible to list here all of the specific risks of every type of investment. Even within the same type of investment, risks can vary widely. However, in very general terms, the higher the anticipated return of an investment, the higher the risk of loss associated with it.

## **Item 9 Disciplinary Information**

Patriot Investment Management Group, Inc. has been registered and providing investment advisory services since 1998. Neither our firm nor any of our Associated Persons has any reportable disciplinary information.

## **Item 10 Other Financial Industry Activities and Affiliations**

### **Other Industry Activities**

Persons providing investment advice on behalf of our firm may provide accounting services as an outside business activity. Additionally, James Roland Shankles, an Investment Adviser Representative of our firm, is also an owner and Certified Public Accountant of Summit Accounting Services, a certified public accounting firm. Clients of Summit Accounting Services may also be clients of Mr. Shankles in his separate capacity as a certified public accountant. The services provided and compensation received by Mr. Shankles, or from anyone else associated with our firm, for accounting related activities are separate and distinct from any fees paid for advisory services provided through Patriot Investment Management Group Inc.

### **Recommendation of Other Advisers**

We may recommend that you use a third party adviser ("TPAM") based on your needs and suitability. Our recommendations to use third party asset managers are included in our portfolio management fee. We do not charge you a separate fee for the selection of other advisers nor will we share in the advisory fee you pay directly to the TPAM. Advisory fees that you pay to the TPAM are established and payable in accordance with the Form ADV Part 2 or other equivalent disclosure document provided by each TPAM to whom you are referred. These fees may or may not be negotiable. You should review the recommended TPAM's brochure for information on its fees and services. You are not obligated, contractually or otherwise, to use the services of any TPAM we recommend.

## **Item 11 Code of Ethics, Participation or Interest in Client Transactions and Personal Trading**

### **Description of Our Code of Ethics**

We strive to comply with applicable laws and regulations governing our practices. Therefore, our Code of Ethics includes guidelines for professional standards of conduct for our Associated Persons. Our goal is to protect your interests at all times and to demonstrate our commitment to our fiduciary duties of honesty, good faith, and fair dealing with you. All of our Associated Persons are expected to adhere strictly to these guidelines. Persons associated with our firm are also required to report any violations of our Code of Ethics. Additionally, we maintain and enforce written policies reasonably designed to prevent the misuse or dissemination of material, non-public information about you or your account holdings by persons associated with our firm.

Clients or prospective clients may obtain a copy of our Code of Ethics by contacting us at the telephone number on the cover page of this Brochure.

### **Participation or Interest in Client Transactions**

Neither our firm nor any of our Associated Persons has any material financial interest in client transactions beyond the provision of investment advisory services as disclosed in this Brochure.

### **Personal Trading Practices**

Our firm or persons associated with our firm may buy or sell the same securities that we recommend to you or securities in which you are already invested. A conflict of interest exists in such cases because we have the ability to trade ahead of you and potentially receive more favorable prices than you will receive. To eliminate this conflict of interest, it is our policy that neither our Associated Persons nor we shall have priority over your account in the purchase or sale of securities.

## **Item 12 Brokerage Practices**

### **The Custodian and Brokers We Use**

We do not maintain custody of your assets that we manage, although we may be deemed to have custody of your assets if you give us authority to withdraw assets from your account (see *Item 15 - Custody*, below). Your assets must be maintained in an account at a "qualified custodian," generally a broker/dealer or bank. We recommend that our clients use Charles Schwab & Co., Inc. (Schwab), a registered broker-dealer, member SIPC, as the qualified custodian. We are independently owned and operated and are not affiliated with Schwab. Schwab will hold your assets in a brokerage account and buy and sell securities when we instruct them to. While we recommend that you use Schwab as custodian/broker, you will decide whether to do so and will open your account with Schwab by entering into an account agreement directly with them. We do not open the account for you, although we may assist you in doing so. Not all advisors require their clients to use a particular broker-dealer or other custodian selected by the advisor. Even though your account is maintained at Schwab, we can still use other brokers to execute trades for your account as described below (see "*Your Brokerage and Custody Costs*").

### **How We Select Brokers/Custodians**

We seek to recommend a custodian/broker who will hold your assets and execute transactions on terms that are, overall, most advantageous when compared to other available providers and their services. We consider a wide range of factors, including, among others:

- Combination of transaction execution services and asset custody services (generally without a separate fee for custody)

- Capability to execute, clear, and settle trades (buy and sell securities for your account)
- Capability to facilitate transfers and payments to and from accounts (wire transfers, check requests, bill payment, etc.)
- Breadth of available investment products (stocks, bonds, mutual funds, exchange-traded funds (ETFs), etc.)
- Availability of investment research and tools that assist us in making investment decisions
- Quality of services
- Competitiveness of the price of those services (commission rates, margin interest rates, other fees, etc.) and willingness to negotiate the prices
- Reputation, financial strength, and stability
- Prior service to us and our other clients
- Availability of other products and services that benefit us, as discussed below (see "*Products and Services Available to Us From Schwab*")

### **Your Brokerage and Custody Costs**

For our clients' accounts that Schwab maintains, Schwab generally does not charge you separately for custody services but is compensated by charging you commissions or other fees on trades that it executes or that settle into your Schwab account. This commitment benefits you because the overall commission rates you pay are lower than they would be otherwise. In addition to commissions, Schwab charges you a flat dollar amount as a "prime broker" or "trade away" fee for each trade that we have executed by a different broker-dealer but where the securities bought or the funds from the securities sold are deposited (settled) into your Schwab account. These fees are in addition to the commissions or other compensation you pay the executing broker-dealer. Because of this, in order to minimize your trading costs, we have Schwab execute most trades for your account. We have determined that having Schwab execute most trades is consistent with our duty to seek "best execution" of your trades. Best execution means the most favorable terms for a transaction based on all relevant factors, including those listed above (see "*How We Select Brokers/Custodians*").

### **Products and Services Available to Us From Schwab**

Schwab Advisor Services™ (formerly called Schwab Institutional®) is Schwab's business serving independent investment advisory firms like us. They provide us and our clients with access to its institutional brokerage—trading, custody, reporting, and related services—many of which are not typically available to Schwab retail customers. Schwab also makes available various support services. Some of those services help us manage or administer our clients' accounts, while others help us manage and grow our business. Following is a more detailed description of Schwab's support services:

**Services That Benefit You.** Schwab's institutional brokerage services include access to a broad range of investment products, execution of securities transactions, and custody of client assets. The investment products available through Schwab include some to which we might not otherwise have access or that would require a significantly higher minimum initial investment by our clients.

**Services That May Not Directly Benefit You.** Schwab also makes available to us other products and services that benefit us but may not directly benefit you or your account. These products and services assist us in managing and administering our clients' accounts. They include investment research, both Schwab's own and that of third parties. We may use this research to service all or a substantial number of our clients' accounts. In addition to investment research, Schwab also makes available software and other technology that:

- Provide access to client account data (such as duplicate trade confirmations and account statements)
- Facilitate trade execution and allocate aggregated trade orders for multiple client accounts

- Provide pricing and other market data
- Facilitate payment of our fees from our clients' accounts
- Assist with back-office functions, recordkeeping, and client reporting

### **Services and Other Items That Generally Benefit Only Us.**

Schwab also offers other services intended to help us manage and further develop our business enterprise. These services include:

- Educational conferences and events
- Consulting on technology, compliance, legal, and business needs
- Publications and conferences on practice management and business succession
- Access to employee benefits providers, human capital consultants, and insurance providers

Schwab may provide some of these services itself. In other cases, it will arrange for third-party vendors to provide the services to us. Schwab may also discount or waive its fees for some of these services or pay all or a part of a third party's fees. Schwab may also provide us with other benefits, such as occasional business entertainment of our personnel.

Schwab may also credit our firm with certain fees associated with Schwab related conferences.

### **Our Interest in Schwab's Services**

The availability of these services from Schwab benefits us because we do not have to produce or purchase them. This may give us an incentive to recommend that you maintain your account with Schwab, based on our interest in receiving Schwab's services that benefit our business rather than based on your interest in receiving the best value in custody services and the most favorable execution of your transactions. This is a potential conflict of interest. We believe, however, that our selection of Schwab as custodian and broker is in the best interests of our clients. Our selection is primarily supported by the scope, quality, and price of Schwab's services (see "*How We Select Brokers/Custodians*") and not Schwab's services that benefit only us.

### **Block Trades**

Transactions for each client generally will be effected independently, unless we decide to purchase or sell the same securities for several clients at approximately the same time. We may, but are not obligated to, combine multiple orders for shares of the same securities purchased for advisory accounts we manage (this practice is commonly referred to as "block trading"). We will then distribute a portion of the shares to participating accounts in a fair and equitable manner. The distribution of the shares purchased is typically proportionate to the size of the account, but it is not based on account performance or the amount or structure of management fees. Subject to our discretion regarding factual and market conditions, when we combine orders, each participating account pays an average price per share for all transactions and pays a proportionate share of all transaction costs on any given day. Accounts owned by our firm or persons associated with our firm are prohibited by our firm to participate in block trading orders with your account.

## **Item 13 Review of Accounts**

We will monitor your accounts on an ongoing basis and will conduct account reviews at least annually and upon your request to ensure that the advisory services provided to you and the portfolio mix are consistent with your stated investment needs and objectives. The Investment Adviser Representative assigned to your account will monitor and review your account. Additional reviews may be conducted based on various circumstances, including, but not limited to: contributions and withdrawals, year-end tax planning, market moving events, security specific events, and/or, changes in your risk/return objectives.

We will not provide you with additional or regular written reports in conjunction with account reviews. You will receive trade confirmations and monthly or quarterly statements from your account custodian(s).

We will review your financial plan only at your request. Otherwise, we do not review or monitor your financial plan. At your request, we may meet with you and/or your third-party money manager(s) to discuss asset allocation, but we will not make recommendations regarding specific investments or provide any regular written reports to you.

## **Item 14 Client Referrals and Other Compensation**

We do not compensate any individual or firm for client referrals.

Our firm and/or our firm's investment adviser representatives may receive compensation from third party investment advisers for client referrals.

Our firm may receive an economic benefit from Schwab in the form of the support products and services it makes available to us and other independent investment advisers that have their clients maintain accounts at Schwab. These products and services, how they benefit us, and the related conflicts of interest are described above (see Item 12 - Brokerage Practices). The availability to us of Schwab's products and services is not based on us giving particular investment advice, such as buying particular securities for our clients.

## **Item 15 Custody**

As paying agent for our firm, your independent custodian will directly debit your account(s) for the payment of our advisory fees. This ability to deduct our advisory fees from your accounts causes our firm to exercise limited custody over your funds or securities. We do not have physical custody of any of your funds and/or securities. Your funds and securities will be held with a bank, broker-dealer, or other independent qualified custodian. You will receive account statements from the independent qualified custodian(s) holding your funds and securities at least quarterly. The account statements from your custodian(s) will indicate the amount of our advisory fees deducted from your account(s) each billing period. You should carefully review account statements for accuracy.

## **Item 16 Investment Discretion**

Before we can buy or sell securities on your behalf, you must first sign our discretionary management agreement and/or trading authorization forms.

You may grant our firm discretion over the selection and amount of securities to be purchased or sold for your account(s) without obtaining your consent or approval prior to each transaction. At our discretion, you may specify investment objectives, guidelines, and/or impose certain conditions or investment parameters for your account(s). For example, you may specify that the investment in any particular stock or industry should not exceed specified percentages of the value of the portfolio and/or restrictions or prohibitions of transactions in the securities of a specific industry or security. Please refer to the "Advisory Business" section in this Brochure for more information on our discretionary management services.

If you enter into non-discretionary arrangements with our firm, we will obtain your approval prior to the execution of any transactions for your account(s). You have an unrestricted right to decline to implement any advice provided by our firm on a non-discretionary basis.

## **Item 17 Voting Client Securities**

### **Proxy Voting**

We will not vote proxies on behalf of your advisory accounts. At your request, we may offer you advice regarding corporate actions and the exercise of your proxy voting rights. If you own shares of applicable securities, you are responsible for exercising your right to vote as a shareholder.

In most cases, you will receive proxy materials directly from the account custodian. However, in the event we were to receive any written or electronic proxy materials, we would forward them directly to you by mail, unless you have authorized our firm to contact you by electronic mail, in which case, we would forward any electronic solicitation to vote proxies.

## **Item 18 Financial Information**

We are not required to provide financial information to our clients because we do not:

- require the prepayment of more than \$1,200 in fees and six or more months in advance, or
- take custody of client funds or securities, or
- have a financial condition that is reasonably likely to impair our ability to meet our commitments to you.

## **Item 19 Requirements for State Registered Investment Advisers**

We are a federally registered investment adviser; therefore, we are not required to respond to this item.

## **Item 20 Additional Information**

### **Your Privacy**

We view protecting your private information as a top priority. Pursuant to applicable privacy requirements, we have instituted policies and procedures to ensure that we keep your personal information private and secure.

We do not disclose any non-public personal information about you to any non-affiliated third parties, except as permitted by law. In the course of servicing your account, we may share some information with our service providers, such as transfer agents, custodians, broker-dealers, accountants, consultants, and attorneys.



We restrict internal access to non-public personal information about you to employees, who need that information in order to provide products or services to you. We maintain physical and procedural safeguards that comply with regulatory standards to guard your non-public personal information and to ensure our integrity and confidentiality. We will not sell information about you or your accounts to anyone. We do not share your information unless it is required to process a transaction, at your request, or required by law.

You will receive a copy of our privacy notice prior to or at the time you sign an advisory agreement with our firm. Thereafter, we will deliver a copy of the current privacy policy notice to you on an annual basis. Please contact our main office at the telephone number on the cover page of this Brochure if you have any questions regarding this policy.

### **IRA Rollover Considerations**

As part of our investment advisory services to you, we may recommend that you withdraw the assets from your employer's retirement plan and roll the assets over to an individual retirement account ("IRA") that we will manage on your behalf. If you elect to roll the assets to an IRA that is subject to our management, we will charge you an asset based fee as set forth in the agreement you executed with our firm. This practice presents a conflict of interest because persons providing investment advice on our behalf have an incentive to recommend a rollover to you for the purpose of generating fee based compensation rather than solely based on your needs. You are under no obligation, contractually or otherwise, to complete the rollover. Moreover, if you do complete the rollover, you are under no obligation to have the assets in an IRA managed by our firm.

Many employers permit former employees to keep their retirement assets in their company plan. Also, current employees can sometimes move assets out of their company plan before they retire or change jobs. In determining whether to complete the rollover to an IRA, and to the extent the following options are available, you should consider the costs and benefits of:

1. Leaving the funds in your employer's (former employer's) plan.
2. Moving the funds to a new employer's retirement plan.
3. Cashing out and taking a taxable distribution from the plan.
4. Rolling the funds into an IRA rollover account.

Each of these options has advantages and disadvantages and before making a change we encourage you to speak with your CPA and/or tax attorney.

If you are considering rolling over your retirement funds to an IRA for us to manage here are a few points to consider before you do so:

1. Determine whether the investment options in your employer's retirement plan address your needs or whether you might want to consider other types of investments.
  - a. Employer retirement plans generally have a more limited investment menu than IRAs.
  - b. Employer retirement plans may have unique investment options not available to the public such as employer securities, or previously closed funds.
2. Your current plan may have lower fees than our fees.
  - a. If you are interested in investing only in mutual funds, you should understand the cost structure of the share classes available in your employer's retirement plan and how the costs of those share classes compare with those available in an IRA.
  - b. You should understand the various products and services you might take advantage of at an IRA provider and the potential costs of those products and services.
3. Our strategy may have higher risk than the option(s) provided to you in your plan.
4. Your current plan may also offer financial advice.



5. If you keep your assets titled in a 401k or retirement account, you could potentially delay your required minimum distribution beyond age 70.5.
6. Your 401k may offer more liability protection than a rollover IRA; each state may vary.
  - a. Generally, federal law protects assets in qualified plans from creditors. Since 2005, IRA assets have been generally protected from creditors in bankruptcies. However, there can be some exceptions to the general rules so you should consult with an attorney if you are concerned about protecting your retirement plan assets from creditors.
7. You may be able to take out a loan on your 401k, but not from an IRA.
8. IRA assets can be accessed any time; however, distributions are subject to ordinary income tax and may also be subject to a 10% early distribution penalty unless they qualify for an exception such as disability, higher education expenses or the purchase of a home.
9. If you own company stock in your plan, you may be able to liquidate those shares at a lower capital gains tax rate.
10. Your plan may allow you to hire us as the manager and keep the assets titled in the plan name.

It is important that you understand the differences between these types of accounts and to decide whether a rollover is best for you. Prior to proceeding, if you have questions contact your investment adviser representative, or call our main number as listed on the cover page of this brochure.

### **General - Advisory Services to Retirement Plans and Plan Participants**

We offer various levels of advisory and consulting services to employee benefit plans ("Plan") and to the participants of such plans ("Participants"). Pursuant to adopted regulations of the U.S. Department of Labor, we are required to provide the Plan's responsible plan fiduciary (the person who has the authority to engage us as an investment adviser to the Plan) with a written statement of the services we provide to the Plan, the compensation we receive for providing those services, and our status (which is described below).

The services we provide to your Plan and the compensation we will receive are described in this Brochure and/or in the service agreement that you have signed with our firm. We do not reasonably expect to receive any other compensation, direct or indirect, for the services we provide to the Plan or Participants, unless the plan sponsor directs us to deduct our fee from the plan or directs the plan record-keeper to issue payment for our fee out of the plan. If we receive any other compensation for such services, we will (i) offset the compensation against our stated fees, and (ii) we will promptly disclose the amount of such compensation, the services rendered for such compensation and the payer of such compensation to you.

We are registered as an investment adviser with the Securities and Exchange Commission, and represent that our firm is not subject to any disqualification as set forth in Section 411 of ERISA. To the extent our firm provides Fiduciary Services, we are acting as a fiduciary of the Plan as defined in Section 3(21) under the Employee Retirement Income Security Act ("ERISA").

### **Trade Errors**

In the event a trading error occurs in your account, our policy is to restore your account to the position it should have been in had the trading error not occurred. Depending on the circumstances, corrective actions may include canceling the trade, adjusting an allocation, and/or reimbursing the account.

### **Class Action Lawsuits**

We do not determine if securities held by you are the subject of a class action lawsuit or whether you are eligible to participate in class action settlements or litigation nor do we initiate or participate in litigation to recover damages on your behalf for injuries as a result of actions, misconduct, or negligence by issuers of securities held by you.