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[www.adviceguild.com](http://www.adviceguild.com)

Form ADV Part 2A

Client Brochure

March 30, 2019

This brochure provides information about the qualifications and business practices of AdviceGuild, A Public Benefit Corporation, a registered investment adviser. Registration does not imply a certain level of skill or training, but only indicates that AdviceGuild, PBC has registered its business with state and federal regulatory authorities, including the United States Securities and Exchange Commission. 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.

If you have any questions about the contents of this brochure, please contact us at: 610-891-7880, or by email at: [admin@adviceguild.com](mailto:admin@adviceguild.com)

Additional information about AdviceGuild, PBC is also available on the SEC's website at [www.adviserinfo.sec.gov](http://www.adviserinfo.sec.gov)

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## Material Changes

### Update

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

### Full Brochure Available

If you would like to receive a complete copy of our Firm Brochure, please contact us by telephone at 610-891-7882 or by email at [admin@adviceguild.com](mailto:admin@adviceguild.com).

## Advisory Business

AdviceGuild, PBC, was founded by Matthew B. O'Brien, Ph.D. to provide access to fiduciary financial advice—that is, financial advice that is exclusively in your best interest—through corporate retirement plans. Incorporated as a public benefit corporation in the State of Delaware, AdviceGuild includes its commitment to an undiluted fiduciary standard of care in its legal charter.

AdviceGuild is an independent company owned by Mr. O'Brien. The company does not have business relationships with any banks, brokerages, insurance companies, or fund companies. The firm does not sell stocks, bonds or other financial products, does not receive commissions on the purchases or sales of securities, and does not provide any investment advice about buying or selling particular investments.

AdviceGuild provides a financial wellness employee benefit program that the corporate sponsors of employee retirement plans offer to their employees. This program includes regular online newsletters and webinars that educate employees in a general way about personal finance and investing. The centerpiece of AdviceGuild's financial wellness benefit program is an online technology platform, through which employee plan participants have access to personalized investment advisory consultations from third-party registered investment advisors to help employee plan participants with their retirement plan investing. Our investment advisory business consists in recommending other, independent registered investment advisors who provide these consultations to you.

AdviceGuild vets the third-party advisors on our platform. Excluded from AdviceGuild's platform is any adviser that does not operate exclusively as a fiduciary at all times, or any adviser that receives commission-based compensation of any kind.

AdviceGuild does not provide any advice about the purchase or sale of investments, does not monitor any client accounts, and does not offer any advisory services to individual investors who are not active participants in an employer-sponsored retirement plan. AdviceGuild's advisory business is limited to recommending other independent, fiduciary advisors to the individual employee participants in corporate retirement plans who request professional help with their retirement plan investing. AdviceGuild operates its advisory business through its online platform.

We receive fees for our financial wellness employee benefit program from the corporate sponsors of retirement plans. We do not charge any fees to you, the employee retirement plan participant, if you use our educational content or receive investment advisory consultations from the other advisers that we recommend through our online platform. The corporate clients who hire AdviceGuild to provide our financial wellness employee benefit program may choose to pay our fees directly, or to deduct our fees from the assets of the employee retirement plans they sponsor. In this latter case, the employee plan participants who have access to AdviceGuild's financial wellness program pay our fees indirectly at the discretion of their plan sponsor.

AdviceGuild does not participate in wrap-fee programs.

AdviceGuild does not manage client assets, either on a discretionary or non-discretionary basis.

## **Fees and Compensation**

AdviceGuild's basic fee is a fixed, dollar amount per month for each employee retirement plan participant who has access to AdviceGuild's financial wellness program, billed quarterly in advance to the retirement plan's corporate sponsor. This fee is subject to an annual minimum. The amount of the fixed dollar monthly fee and annual minimum is negotiated with each retirement plan's corporate sponsor. Retirement plan corporate sponsors have the liberty to pay AdviceGuild's fee directly or to charge the fee to the assets of the relevant retirement plan(s) they sponsor.

AdviceGuild compensates the independent, fiduciary advisors we recommend on an hourly basis for the advisory consultations that they provide through our platform. AdviceGuild does not hold any client assets. Corporate plan sponsor clients choose their own retirement plan providers, such as custodians, recordkeepers, third-party administrators, fund companies, investment managers, and so on.

The firm does not accept any compensation for the sale of securities or other investment products.

From the third-party, fiduciary advisors who provide consultations to retirement plan investors through our platform, AdviceGuild may receive a referral fee. We receive such a fee when a third-party advisor is introduced to a new individual client through our platform and that new client hires the advisor to provide additional services that go beyond the scope of the limited retirement plan consultations arranged by AdviceGuild. The amount of this fee is 0.15% of referred new client assets under management by the third-party advisor, or in cases where the advisor provides hourly financial planning instead of asset management, 15% of those hourly fees. AdviceGuild does *not* receive prior compensation from third-party advisors as a condition of their participating in our financial wellness service to corporate retirement plan participants.

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

AdviceGuild does not charge performance-based fees.

## **Types of Clients**

Our investment advisory clients are the individual employees of companies that retain AdviceGuild's online financial wellness program.

AdviceGuild does not provide any advisory services to corporate retirement plan sponsors about the management or design of the retirement plans they sponsor, nor to individual investors who are not active participants in their corporate employer's retirement plan.

We do not have an ongoing advisory relationship with our clients. Rather, at the time an employee plan participant requests an advisory consultation we will recommend another advisor to provide the consultation and we will help to arrange it through our online platform.

There is no minimum retirement plan account balance or portfolio size for retirement plan participants to use AdviceGuild's financial wellness program and receive a recommendation to consult with an independent, fiduciary advisor. Retirement plan participants whose employer has retained AdviceGuild are entitled on one consultation annually with an advisor we recommend.

## **Methods of Analysis, Investment Strategies and Risk of Loss**

AdviceGuild does not give any advice about the purchase or sale of securities. We select other advisors for individual employee retirement plan participants who request

professional advice about their retirement plan investing, and we evaluate the advisors we recommend based upon several factors, including:

- Work experience in investment management and/or financial planning
- Educational attainment and professional certification
- State and federal regulatory status and compliance history
- Commitment to a fiduciary-only “at all times” financial advisory business
- Fees and expenses
- Absence of bankruptcies, tax liens, and criminal convictions

We do not track or take into consideration the past investment performance of the other advisors we recommend. We encourage our employee plan participant clients to remember that past performance does not guarantee good returns in the future.

## **Disciplinary Information**

AdviceGuild does not have any disciplinary information to disclose. We strive to operate by high ethical standards, and have incorporated our commitment to promoting fiduciary financial advice in our legal charter as a public benefit corporation.

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

No managers or employees at AdviceGuild are registered, or have applied to register as a broker-dealer or a registered representative of a broker-dealer. No managers or employees at the firm are registered, or have an application pending to register, as a futures commission merchant, commodity pool operator, a commodity trading advisor, or an associated person of the foregoing entities.

AdviceGuild’s only connection to any other financial services company is through its founder, chief executive, and investment adviser representative, Matthew B. O’Brien, Ph.D. (CRD# 6556205). Mr. O’Brien is also an employee and investment adviser representative of O’Brien Greene & Co., Inc., an investment adviser registered with the U.S. Securities & Exchange Commission (CRD# 110281 / SEC# 801-5866) and based in Media, Pennsylvania. AdviceGuild currently uses office space provided by O’Brien Greene & Co.

In order to eliminate any potential conflict of interest, O’Brien Greene & Co. does not participate as a recommended advisor in AdviceGuild’s financial wellness program, and therefore, AdviceGuild will never recommend O’Brien Greene & Co. to the users of the program. Neither AdviceGuild nor O’Brien Greene & Co. receives any material financial benefits from the other (apart from the aforementioned shared office space) and the firms do not share any clients.

None of AdviceGuild's employees or owner have any financial interest in the other independent registered investment advisers that we recommend through our financial wellness program.

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

Our firm's Code of Ethics consists of two main parts: General Standards of Conduct and Impartiality. A copy of the complete Code of Ethics is available on request to clients and prospective clients.

Our Impartiality Policy requires that AdviceGuild employees maintain impartiality towards other advisers who are currently participating on our platform or who may do so in the future, and thus to avoid accepting any gifts, entertainment, outside employment, or other material benefits from these advisors that might unduly influence AdviceGuild's evaluation of these advisors.

Because AdviceGuild does not manage any assets or make recommendations about clients' purchase or sale of securities, and is not involved in custody or brokerage, the firm's Code of Ethics Policy allows employees to maintain personal securities accounts, including any accounts for immediate family or household members, without identifying these accounts or reporting transactions in them to AdviceGuild's Compliance Officer.

We are committed to safeguarding your confidential information and hold all personal information provided to us in the strictest confidence. These records include all personal information that we collect from you or receive from other firms in connection with any of the financial services they provide. We also require other firms with whom we deal with to restrict the use of your information. Our Privacy Policy is available upon request.

## **Brokerage Practices**

AdviceGuild does not provide advice about the purchase or sale of securities, and therefore is not involved in any brokerage practices.

The choice of a retirement plan's custodian or broker is the responsibility of that plan's fiduciary, not AdviceGuild.

The firm has no bills paid through soft dollar arrangements.

## **Review of Accounts**

AdviceGuild does not have any client accounts under its management.

## **Client Referrals and Other Compensation**

In some cases we may compensate a third party for referring to us a corporate retirement plan sponsor client. In such cases, the corporate client will be provided a notice related to this compensation. This type of arrangement will not increase the fees paid by our client or by any retirement plan for which our client is the corporate sponsor. AdviceGuild may also from time to time sponsor marketing promotions with the employees of our corporate clients which might reward these employees with nominal rewards (e.g., gift cards) for engaging with the educational portion of our financial wellness program.

From the third-party, fiduciary advisors who provide consultations to retirement plan investors through our platform, AdviceGuild may receive a referral fee. We receive such a fee when a third-party advisor is introduced to a new individual client through our platform and that new client hires the advisor to provide additional services that go beyond the scope of the limited retirement plan consultations arranged by AdviceGuild. The amount of this fee is 0.15% of referred new client assets under management by the third-party advisor, or in cases where the advisor provides hourly financial planning instead of asset management, 15% of those hourly fees. AdviceGuild does *not* receive prior compensation from third-party advisors as a condition of their participation in our financial wellness service to corporate retirement plan participants.

## **Custody**

AdviceGuild does not custody any client assets or recommend any custodian to clients.

## **Investment Discretion**

AdviceGuild does not have any investment discretion over client assets.



## Voting Client Securities

The firm does not accept authority to vote client securities.

## Financial Information

The firm does not require or solicit prepayment of more than \$1,200 in fees per client, six months or more in advance, and so is not required to attach a balance sheet.

### APPENDIX FORM ADV Part 2B:

March 30, 2019 Brochure Supplements

**Advisor:** Matthew B. O'Brien, Ph.D.

AdviceGuild, PBC, 218 W. State St., Media, PA 19063

610-891-7880 or via email at [admin@adviceguild.com](mailto:admin@adviceguild.com).

This item provides information about Matthew B. O'Brien that supplements the AdviceGuild, PBC brochure. Please contact 610-891-7880 or via email at [admin@adviceguild.com](mailto:admin@adviceguild.com) if you would like to receive our brochure or if you have any questions about the contents of this supplement. Additional information about Matthew B. O'Brien is available on the SEC's website at [www.adviserinfo.sec.gov](http://www.adviserinfo.sec.gov).

### Educational Background and Business Experience:

**Name:** Matthew B. O'Brien

**Year of Birth:** 1980

**Education:** Princeton University, A.B. *cum laude* in Philosophy, 2003; University of Pennsylvania, Post-Baccalaureate in Classics, 2004; University of Texas at Austin, M.A. in Philosophy, 2008; University of Texas at Austin, Ph.D. in Philosophy, 2011.

**Professional Designations:** Series 65 Uniform Investment Adviser Exam

**Business Background (preceding five years):** O'Brien Greene & Co, Inc., 2012 to Present: Equity Analyst & Retirement Plan Consultant

**Additional Information:** Mr. O'Brien has no disciplinary information to disclose. Mr. O'Brien is also an investment advisor representative with O'Brien Greene & Co., Inc, located in Media, Pennsylvania, which provides office space to AdviceGuild. There are no other compensation arrangements to disclose. Mr. O'Brien is subject to supervision through the Compliance program in place at AdviceGuild, PBC.