

# **Materetsky Financial Group, Inc. d/b/a: Materetsky Financial Group**

**2240 Woolbright Road  
Suite 354  
Boynton Beach, FL 33426**

**6800 Jericho Turnpike  
Suite #120W  
Syosset, NY 11791**

**Telephone: 561-735-9227  
Facsimile: 561-735-9815**

**[www.materetsky.com](http://www.materetsky.com)**

**March 21, 2019**

## **PART 2A - APPENDIX 1 WRAP FEE PROGRAM BROCHURE**

This brochure provides information about the qualifications and business practices of Materetsky Financial Group. If you have any questions about the contents of this brochure, contact us at 561-735-9227. 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 Materetsky Financial Group (CRD/IARD # 292353) is available on the SEC's website at [www.adviserinfo.sec.gov](http://www.adviserinfo.sec.gov).

Materetsky Financial Group 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 the initial filed Brochure dated March 13, 2018, we have the following material changes to report:

- We amended the *Additional Information* section of the Brochure to reflect updated information related to Associate Persons and their individual roles with unaffiliated financial institution or outside business activities as follow:
  - Persons providing investment advice on behalf of our firm that are also registered representatives changed the broker-dealer they were registered with from Royal Alliance Associates, Inc. to Private Client Services, Inc. All disclosures have been updated to reflect the registration with Private Client Services, Inc.
  - We amended the disclosure under the sub-section of 'Certified Public Accountant and Associated Services' to better reflect Thomas Gau's outside business activities and the services provided through Mr. Gau outside of the Firm.

Please contact the Chief Compliance Officer, Ira Materetsky with any questions related to the updated disclosures. Mr. Materetsky can be reach at 561-735-9227.

### Item 3 Table of Contents

Item 1 Cover Page	Page 1
Item 2 Summary of Material Changes	Page 2
Item 3 Table of Contents	Page 3
Item 4 Services, Fees, and Compensation	Page 4
Item 5 Account Requirements and Types of Clients	Page 8
Item 6 Portfolio Manager Selection and Evaluation	Page 8
Item 7 Client Information Provided to Portfolio Managers	Page 11
Item 8 Client Contact with Portfolio Managers	Page 11
Item 9 Additional Information	Page 12
Item 10 Requirements for State-Registered Advisers	Page 15

## Item 4 Services, Fees, and Compensation

### Description of Firm

Materetsky Financial Group, Inc. d/b/a Materetsky Financial Group is a registered investment adviser based in Boynton Beach, Florida and Syosset, New York. We are organized as a corporation under the laws of the State of Florida. We have been providing investment advisory services since April 2018. We are owned by Howard Materetsky and Ira S. Materetsky.

As used in this brochure, the words "we," "our," and "us" refer to Materetsky Financial Group 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 in this brochure. Our Associated Persons are our firm's officers, employees, and all individuals providing investment advice on behalf of our firm.

We offer portfolio management services exclusively through a wrap-fee program ("Program") as described in this wrap fee program brochure to prospective and existing clients. We are the sponsor and investment adviser for the Program. A wrap-fee program is a type of investment program that provides clients with asset management and brokerage services for one all-inclusive fee. If you participate in our wrap fee program, you will pay our firm a single fee, which includes money management fees, financial planning, certain transaction costs, and custodial and administrative costs. You are not charged separate fees for the respective components of the total services. We receive a portion of the wrap fee for our services. The overall cost you will incur if you participate in our wrap fee program may be higher or lower than you might incur by separately purchasing the types of securities available in the Program.

Prior to becoming a client under the Program, you will be required to enter into a separate written agreement with us that sets forth the terms and conditions of the engagement and describes the scope of the services to be provided, and the fees to be paid.

### Client Investment Process

We offer personalized investment advisory services to clients on a non-discretionary basis. Non-discretionary means that all investment portfolio changes are discussed with you prior to making a purchase or sale and your investment accounts are not traded on a discretionary basis without your approval. Investment advice is custom tailored to meet the needs and investment objectives of each client. We primarily offer advice on mutual funds but we may also advise on equities, money market funds, municipal bonds, variable life insurance and variable annuities. Please refer to the *Additional Information* section below for additional disclosures on this topic.

Additionally, we may advise you on various types of investments 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.

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. You have an unrestricted right to decline to implement any advice provided by our firm on a non-discretionary basis.

As part of the Program, we offer financial planning services to clients. Financial planning services will typically involve providing a variety of services, principally advisory in nature, to clients regarding the management of their financial resources based upon an analysis of their individual needs. As part of our initial consultation, we collect pertinent information about your financial circumstances and objectives. Once such information has been reviewed and analyzed, a written or oral financial plan

designed to achieve your stated financial goals and objectives, will be produced and presented to you. The primary objective of this process is to allow our firm to assist you in developing a strategy for the successful management of income, assets and liabilities in meeting your financial goals and objectives.

Financial plans are based on your financial situation at the time the plan is presented to you and are based on financial information disclosed by you. Clients are advised that certain assumptions may be made with respect to interest and inflation rates and the use of past trends and performance of the market and economy. Past performance is in no way an indication of future performance. We cannot offer any guarantee or promises that the client's financial goals and objectives will be met. As the client's financial situation, goals, objectives, or needs change, the client must notify us promptly.

All program accounts are cleared and custodied at Pershing LLC ("Pershing"). To compare the cost of the wrap fee program with non-wrap fee portfolio management services, you should consider the frequency of trading activity associated with our investment strategies and the brokerage commissions charged by Pershing and the advisory fees charged by investment advisers.

Our annual portfolio management fee varies between 0.90% to 1.40% depending upon the market value of your assets under our management, the type and complexity of the asset management services provided, as well as the level of administration requested either directly or assumed by the client. Assets in each of your account(s) are included in the fee assessment unless specifically identified in writing for exclusion. Our annual portfolio management fee is billed and payable quarterly in advance based on the account balance at end of billing period.

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.

As a client, you should be aware that the wrap fee charged by our firm may be higher (or lower) than those charged by others in the industry, and that it may be possible to obtain the same or similar services from other firms at lower (or higher) rates. A client may be able to obtain some or all of the types of services available through our firm's wrap fee program on an individual basis through other firms and, depending on the circumstances, the aggregate of any separately paid fees may be lower or higher than the annual fees shown above.

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.

### **Employee Benefit Plans and Participants**

We offer the same investment advisory services to employee benefit plans ("the Plan"), their fiduciaries and plan participants based upon the needs of the plan and the services requested by the plan sponsor, named fiduciary or the individual plan participant. In general, these services may include an existing plan review and analysis, plan-level or participant-level advice regarding fund selection and investment options, portfolio management of the Plan or participant's self-directed account, education services to plan participants, investment performance monitoring, and/or ongoing consulting. The investment advisory and pension consulting services will 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. In the event of a self-directed account, the ultimate decision to act shall remain with the plan participant.

Our advisory fees for the Plan and the plan participant's self-directed accounts will be 1.00% based upon the market value of the Plan or participants self-directed assets under our management. Our advisory fee for the Plan or the individual participant's self-directed account is billed and payable quarterly in arrears based on the Plan assets or the individual plan participant's self-directed account assets, respectively, at end of billing period. 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 the Plan or the individual participant is a client. Our advisory fee is negotiable, depending on individual client circumstances.

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
- Time horizon

Our educational seminars may include other investment-related topics specific to the particular plan.

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. The Plan's Third Party Administrator ("TPA") will bill the Plan and plan participant separately for the Plan creation and annual maintenance of the plan. TPA expenses are not included in the Program fee.

Either party to the Plan advisory agreement or participant advisory agreement may terminate the agreement upon written notice to the other party in accordance with the terms of the agreement for services. The Plan or participant's advisory fees will be prorated for the quarter in which the termination notice is given and any unearned fees will be refunded to the client.

### **Withdrawal of Assets**

You may withdraw account assets upon notice to our firm, and subject to the usual and customary securities settlement procedures. However, we design our portfolios as long-term investments and asset withdrawals may impair the achievement of your specific investment objectives.

### **Payment of Fees**

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.

### **Termination of Advisory Relationship**

You may terminate the wrap fee program agreement upon written notice to our firm. You will incur a pro rata charge for services rendered prior to the termination of the wrap fee program agreement, which means you will incur advisory fees only in proportion to the number of days in the quarter for which you are a client. If you have pre-paid advisory fees that we have not yet earned, you will receive a prorated refund of those fees.

Upon termination of accounts held at Pershing, LLC ("Pershing"), they will deliver securities and funds held in the account per your instructions unless you request that the account be liquidated. After the wrap fee program agreement has been terminated, transactions are processed at the prevailing brokerage rates/fees. You become responsible for monitoring your own assets and our firm has no further obligation to act upon or to provide advice with respect to those assets.

### **Wrap Fee Program Disclosures**

- The benefits under a wrap fee program depend, in part, upon the size of the Account, the management fee charged, and the number of transactions likely to be generated in the Account. For example, a wrap fee program may not be suitable for Accounts with little trading activity. In order to evaluate whether a wrap fee program is suitable for you, you should compare the Program Fee and any other costs of the Program with the amounts that would be charged by other advisers, broker-dealers, and custodians, for advisory fees, brokerage and other execution costs, and custodial services comparable to those provided under the Program.
- In considering the investment programs described in this brochure, you should be aware that participating in a wrap fee program may cost more or less than the cost of purchasing advisory, brokerage, and custodial services separately from other advisers or broker-dealers.
- Our firm and Associated Persons receive compensation as a result of your participation in the Program. This compensation may be more or less than the amount our firm or the Associated Persons would receive if you paid separately for investment advice, brokerage, and other services. Accordingly, a conflict of interest exists because our firm and our Associated Persons have a financial incentive to recommend the Program.
- Similar advisory services may be available from other registered investment advisers for higher or lower fees.

### **Additional Fees And Expenses**

The Program Fee includes the costs of brokerage commissions for transactions executed through the Qualified Custodian (or a broker-dealer designated by the Qualified Custodian), and charges relating to the settlement, clearance, or custody of securities in the Account. The Program Fee does not include mark-ups and mark-downs, dealer spreads or other costs associated with the purchase or sale of securities, interest, taxes, or other costs, such as national securities exchange fees, charges for transactions not executed through the Qualified Custodian, costs associated with exchanging currencies, wire transfer fees, or other fees required by law or imposed by third parties. The Account will be responsible for these additional fees and expenses. Additionally, retirement accounts that are charged an annual custodian/administrative fee by Pershing will be paid by the client.

The wrap program fees that you pay to our firm for portfolio management 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. 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.

### **Brokerage Practices**

If you participate in the Program, you will be required to establish an account with Pershing LLC ("Pershing"), member FINRA/SIPC, an unaffiliated FINRA regulated broker-dealer. If you do not direct our firm to execute transactions through Pershing, we reserve the right to not accept your account. Not all advisers require their clients to direct brokerage. Since you are required to use Pershing, we may be unable to achieve the most favorable execution of your transactions. We believe that Pershing provides quality execution services based on several factors, including, but not limited to, the ability to provide professional services, reputation, experience and financial stability.



**Research and Other Soft Dollar Benefits**

We do not have any soft dollar arrangements.

**Economic Benefits**

As a registered investment adviser, we have access to the institutional platform of your account custodian. As such, we will also have access to research products and services from your account custodian and/or other brokerage firm. These products may include financial publications, information about particular companies and industries, research software, and other products or services that provide lawful and appropriate assistance to our firm in the performance of our investment decision-making responsibilities. Such research products and services are provided to all investment advisers that utilize the institutional services platforms of these firms, and are not considered to be paid for with soft dollars. However, you should be aware that the commissions charged by a particular broker for a particular transaction or set of transactions may be greater than the amounts another broker who did not provide research services or products might charge.

**Brokerage for Client Referrals**

We do not receive client referrals from broker-dealers in exchange for cash or other compensation, such as brokerage services or research.

**Assets Under Management**

As of March 3, 2019 we manage approximately \$260,000,000 in client assets on a non-discretionary basis.

**Item 5 Account Requirements and Types of Clients**

We offer investment advisory services to individuals, including high net worth individuals and pension and profit sharing plans.

In general, we require a minimum of \$250,000 to open and maintain an advisory account. At our discretion, we may waive this minimum account size. For example, we may waive the minimum if you appear to have significant potential for increasing your assets under our management.

We may also combine account values for you and your minor children, joint accounts with your spouse, and other types of related accounts to meet the stated minimum.

**Item 6 Portfolio Manager Selection and Evaluation****Performance-Based Fees and Side-by-Side Management**

We do not accept performance-based fees or participate in side-by-side management. Performance-based fees are fees that are based on a share of capital gains or capital appreciation of a client's account. Side-by-side management refers to the practice of managing accounts that are charged performance-based fees while at the same time managing accounts that are not charged performance-based fees. Our fees are calculated as described 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.

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

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



Modern Portfolio Theory (MPT) - a theory of investment which attempts to maximize portfolio expected return for a given amount of portfolio risk, or equivalently minimize risk for a given level of expected return, by carefully diversifying the proportions of various assets.

Risk: Market risk is that part of a security's risk that is common to all securities of the same general class (stocks and bonds) and thus cannot be eliminated by diversification.

Long-Term Purchases - securities purchased with the expectation that the value of those securities will grow over a relatively long period of time, generally greater than one year.

Risk: Using a long-term purchase strategy generally assumes the financial markets will go up in the long-term which may not be the case. There is also the risk that the segment of the market that you are invested in or perhaps just your particular investment will go down over time even if the overall financial markets advance. Purchasing investments long-term may create an opportunity cost - "locking-up" assets that may be better utilized in the short-term in other investments.

Short-Term Purchases - securities purchased with the expectation that they will be sold within a relatively short period of time, generally less than one year, to take advantage of the securities' short-term price fluctuations.

Risk: Using a short-term purchase strategy generally assumes that we can predict how financial markets will perform in the short-term which may be very difficult and will incur a disproportionately higher amount of transaction costs compared to long-term trading. There are many factors that can affect financial market performance in the short-term (such as short-term interest rate changes, cyclical earnings announcements, etc.) but may have a smaller impact over longer periods of times.

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 information, liquidity needs, and other various suitability factors. Your restrictions and guidelines may affect the composition of your portfolio.

### **Tax Considerations**

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 consult with a tax professional regarding the taxation of investing your assets.

Moreover, custodians and broker-dealers must report 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, provide written notice to our firm immediately and we will alert your account custodian of your individually selected accounting method. 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.

## **Other Risk Considerations**

When evaluating risk, financial loss may be viewed differently by each client and may depend on many different risks, each of which may affect the probability and magnitude of any potential losses. The following risks may not be all-inclusive, but should be considered carefully by a prospective client before retaining our services.

Liquidity Risk: The risk of being unable to sell your investment at a fair price at a given time due to high volatility or lack of active liquid markets. You may receive a lower price or it may not be possible to sell the investment at all.

Credit Risk: Credit risk typically applies to debt investments such as corporate, municipal, and sovereign fixed income or bonds. A bond issuing entity can experience a credit event that could impair or erase the value of an issuer's securities held by a client.

Inflation and Interest Rate Risk: Security prices and portfolio returns will likely vary in response to changes in inflation and interest rates. Inflation causes the value of future dollars to be worth less and may reduce the purchasing power of a client's future interest payments and principal. Inflation also generally leads to higher interest rates which may cause the value of many types of fixed income investments to decline.

Horizon and Longevity Risk: The risk that your investment horizon is shortened because of an unforeseen event, for example, the loss of your job. This may force you to sell investments that you were expecting to hold for the long term. If you must sell at a time that the markets are down, you may lose money. Longevity Risk is the risk of outliving your savings. This risk is particularly relevant for people who are retired, or are nearing retirement.

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

We primarily recommend mutual funds. However, we may advise on other types of investments as appropriate for you since each client has different needs and a 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 the investment.

## **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 solicitations to vote proxies.

## Item 7 Client Information Provided to Portfolio Managers

In order to provide the Program services, we will share your private information with your account custodian. We may also provide your private information to mutual fund companies and/or private managers as needed. We will only share the information necessary in order to carry out our obligations to you in servicing your account. We share your personal account data in accordance with our privacy policy as described below.

### Privacy Notice

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 nonpublic 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 nonpublic personal information about you to employees who do not 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 nonpublic 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. Contact our main office at the telephone number on the cover page of this brochure if you have any questions regarding this policy.

If you decide to close your account(s) we will adhere to our privacy policies, which may be amended from time to time.

If we make any substantive changes in our privacy policy that would further permit or require disclosures of your private information, we will provide written notice to you. Where the change is based on permitted disclosures, you will be given an opportunity to direct us as to whether such disclosure is acceptable. Where the change is based on required disclosures, you will only receive written notice of the change. You may not opt out of the required disclosures.

If you have questions about our privacy policies contact our main office at the telephone number on the cover page of this brochure and ask to speak to the Chief Compliance Officer.

## Item 8 Client Contact with Portfolio Managers

Without restriction, you should contact our firm or your advisory representative directly with any questions regarding your Program account. You should contact your advisory representative with respect to changes in your investment objectives, risk tolerance, or requested restrictions placed on the management of your Program assets.

## Item 9 Additional Information

### Disciplinary Information

We are required to disclose the facts of any legal or disciplinary events that are material to a client's evaluation of our advisory business or the integrity of our management. Our firm or a management person has been involved in the event(s) described below.

### Regulatory Actions

On May 23, 2017, a regulatory action was commenced by the Florida Office of Financial Regulation, ("FOFR") against Howard Materetsky alleging violations of Rule 69W-600.002(1)(C) and 69W-600.002(3) F.A.C.(Case No. 71728-S), for failing to maintain an accurate Form U4 related to the a Florida Branch Office Address. Howard Materetsky entered into a Stipulation of Consent Agreement with the Division of Securities, dated May 23, 2017, and without admitting or denying the allegations, Mr. Materetsky agreed to a monetary fine of \$3,000, which was paid on May 23, 2017.

The details on these matters related to Howard Materetsky's disciplinary history can be found on the BrokerCheck database of the Financial Industry Regulatory Authority ("FINRA"). The BrokerCheck link is <https://brokercheck.finra.org/>. Mr. Materetsky's CRD number: 1003610.

### Other Financial Industry Activities and Affiliations

We have provided information below on other financial industry activities and affiliations that is material to our advisory business or to our clients.

### Registrations with Broker-Dealer

Persons providing investment advice on behalf of our firm may be registered representatives with Private Client Services, LLC, a securities broker-dealer, and a member of the Financial Industry Regulatory Authority and the Securities Investor Protection Corporation. In their capacity as registered representatives, these persons will receive commission-based compensation in connection with the purchase and sale of securities. Compensation earned by these persons in their capacities as registered representatives is separate and in addition to our advisory fees. This practice presents a conflict of interest because persons providing investment advice on behalf of our firm who are registered representatives have an incentive to effect securities transactions for the purpose of generating commissions rather than solely based on your needs. You are under no obligation, contractually or otherwise, to purchase securities products through any person affiliated with our firm.

### Licensed Insurance Agents

Persons providing investment advice on behalf of our firm are separately licensed as insurance agents. These persons will earn commission-based compensation for selling insurance products, including insurance products they sell to you. Insurance commissions earned by these persons are separate from our advisory fees. Insurance commissions earned by these persons are separate and in addition to our advisory fees. This practice presents a conflict of interest because persons providing investment advice on behalf of our firm who are insurance agents have an incentive to recommend insurance products to you for the purpose of generating commissions rather than solely based on your needs. You are under no obligation, contractually or otherwise, to purchase insurance products through any person affiliated with our firm.

### Certified Public Accountant and Associated Services

Thomas Gau is President and a certified public accountant ("CPA") with Tax and Estate Planning Specialists, Inc., a financial consulting firm that provides tax and estate planning advice, and also teaches financial, tax, and estate planning to other professionals. Clients of our firm may also be clients of Tax and Estate Planning Specialists, Inc. The services provided and compensation received by Mr. Gau and Tax and Estate Planning Specialists, Inc. for these services are separate and distinct

from any fees paid for advisory services provided by our firm. This practice presents conflicts of interests because Mr. Gau has a financial incentive to recommend the services provided through Tax and Estate Planning Specialists, Inc. to you. You are under no obligation, contractually or otherwise, to contract for accounting services through Tax and Estate Planning Specialists, Inc., Mr. Gau or through any person affiliated with our firm.

### **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 persons associated with our firm. 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 persons associated with our firm 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 persons associated with our firm has any material financial interest in client transactions beyond the provision of investment advisory services as disclosed in this brochure.

### **Review of Accounts**

The investment adviser representative assigned to your relationship will monitor your accounts on an ongoing basis and will conduct account reviews at least annually, to ensure the advisory services provided to you are consistent with your investment needs and objectives. 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.

The individuals conducting reviews may vary from time to time, as personnel join or leave our firm.

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

### **Client Referrals and Other Compensation**

We do not receive any compensation from any third party in connection with providing investment advice to you nor do we compensate any individual or firm for client referrals.

### **Block Trades**

We do not combine multiple orders for shares of the same securities purchased for advisory accounts we manage (this practice is commonly referred to as "block trading") because we invest primarily in Mutual Funds which do not trade in blocks and our investment advisory services are offered on a non-discretionary basis.

**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.

**Financial Information**

Our firm does not have any financial condition or impairment that would prevent us from meeting our contractual commitments to you. We do not take physical custody of client funds or securities, or serve as trustee or signatory for client accounts, and we do not require the prepayment of more than \$1,200 in fees six or more months in advance. Therefore, we are not required to include a financial statement with this brochure.

We have not filed a bankruptcy petition at any time in the past ten years.

**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 or lower 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.

## **Item 10 Requirements for State-Registered Advisers**

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