

**Form ADV Part 2A – Firm Brochure  
Item 1 – Cover Page**



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This brochure (“**Brochure**”) provides information about the qualifications and investment advisory business practices of Sikich Financial. If you have any questions about the contents of this Brochure please contact Barry Stark, Chief Compliance Officer, at 630-566-8571. The information in this Brochure has not been approved or verified by the United States Securities and Exchange Commission (“**SEC**”) or by any state securities authority.

Additional information about our investment advisory business is also available on the Internet at [www.adviserinfo.sec.gov](http://www.adviserinfo.sec.gov). You can view our information on this website by searching for “Sikich Financial”. You can also search using the Firm’s CRD number. The CRD number for the Firm is **142640**.

\*Registration as an investment advisor does not imply a certain level of skill or training.

## **Item 2 – Material Changes**

This item provides information regarding specific material changes and a summary of such changes made to the Disclosure Brochure since the last annual update of the Brochure which occurred in March 2018.

Since the last annual update filing in March 2018, there have been no materials changes made to the Disclosure Brochure.

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## Item 4 – Advisory Business

### Description of Advisory Firm

Sikich Capital Management LLC, doing business as Sikich Financial (“Sikich Financial”, the “**Firm**”, “**we**”, “**our**” or “**us**”), is an investment advisor currently registered with the SEC which allows us to offer you investment advisory products and services.

- Sikich Financial has been registered as an investment advisor with the SEC since March 24, 2017. Sikich Financial had previously been registered with various states since February 26, 2007. The Firm currently oversees approximately \$826 million in client assets.
- Sikich Financial is wholly-owned by Sikich LLP, an Illinois limited liability partnership.
- We provide fee-based investment advisory services through Sikich Financial. The nature and extent of the specific services provided to clients, including you, will always depend on each client’s financial status, objectives and needs, time horizons, concerns, expectations and risk tolerance.
- Certain investment advisor representatives (“**IAR(s)**”) of Sikich Financial are also licensed as registered representatives with Triad Advisors, LLC, a registered broker/dealer and member of FINRA and SIPC (“**Triad Advisors**”). Additionally, the Firm’s IARs may also be independent insurance agents. Triad Advisors and Sikich Financial are not affiliated. When acting in these capacities, our advisor representatives will earn commissions. These arrangements and potential conflict of interest situations are discussed in more detail at Items 5, 10, 12, and 14 of the Brochure.
- When providing advisory services, we are able to use wrap fee programs sponsored by Triad Advisors in its separate capacity as an investment adviser registered with the SEC.
- More information about our IARs’ business and education background can be found in their respective ADV Part 2B Brochure Supplements. You will be provided with a copy of the Brochure Supplement for the IAR working with you.
- Sikich Financial offers personalized investment management services and financial planning services. When provided together, we refer to our services as “Wealth Management”. Wealth Management services are designed to provide for both financial planning and active management of a client’s assets. Because we almost always provide these services in conjunction, we generally do not charge a separate fee for our financial planning services, except as noted in Item 5 of the Brochure.
- Clients are advised that the investment recommendations and advice offered by Sikich Financial do not constitute legal or accounting advice. Therefore, you should coordinate and discuss the impact of financial advice with your attorney and/or accountant.
- As our parent company, Sikich LLP provides our Firm with office space, resources and other benefits a parent company typically provides to its subsidiaries. The supervised persons of Sikich Financial are also employees of Sikich LLP.
- Sikich Financial clients seeking certain accounting and other consulting services offered by Sikich LLP may be referred to Sikich LLP.

- For Sikich Financial clients utilizing our retirement plan consulting services (“**RPS Services**”), we also recommend engaging Sikich LLP for its third-party administrator (“**TPA**”) services (as more fully described below).
- Clients should be aware that services provided by Sikich LLP are not independent because of the arrangements described above. Although, we do not compensate Sikich LLP for referrals they send to the Firm, and conversely, Sikich LLP does not compensate the Firm for client referrals we make to them, we have an economic incentive (that in some instances can be viewed as a conflict of interest) to recommend Sikich LLP over other firms providing similar services. Depending on the engagement, Sikich LLP may charge fees for its services that are separate and in addition to fees charged by Sikich Financial. You will be provided with an engagement letter or agreement that details the fees and by whom you will be billed for the services. Any clients (or potential clients) of Sikich Financial are never obligated to use the accounting and other consulting services provided by Sikich LLP.
- Clients are encouraged to inform Sikich Financial promptly with respect to any changes in their financial situation, investment goals and objectives. Failure to notify Sikich Financial of any such changes could result in investment recommendations not meeting the needs of the client.

### **Description of Advisory Services**

#### ***Financial Planning Services***

Financial planning services do not involve the active management of client accounts, but instead focus on a client's overall financial situation. Financial planning can be described as helping individuals determine and set their long-term financial goals, through investments, asset allocation, risk management, retirement planning, and other areas. The role of a financial planner is to find ways to help the client understand his/her overall financial situation and help the client set financial objectives.

We provide financial planning services in the form of written financial plans and consultations. As stated above, most of our wealth management clients receive financial planning services in connection with our investment management services and therefore we may not charge a separate fee. However, we are willing to provide financial planning services on a one-time basis and on an on-going basis for investment management only or non-clients of the Firm. Clients must execute a financial planning agreement prior to us commencing stand-alone, one-time services or on-going services. The exact financial planning objectives and the entities involved in completing the plan (Sikich Financial or Sikich LLP) will be determined on an individual basis with each client and summarized in the financial planning agreement.

Financial planning services may be specific or modular in their preparation (unique to each client in their depth of preparation). They may take into consideration factors such as the client's objectives, risks that they are willing to undertake, investment knowledge, net worth, income, age, projected retirement, unusual or material funding requirements, inheritance possibilities, pensions, social security, children/relative funding issues, estate issues, and living expenses expressed in today's dollars requested for retirement.

Topics covered in financial planning services include, but are not necessarily limited to:

- Goal setting
- Investment planning
- Estate planning
- Stock option planning

- Insurance planning
- Cash flow planning
- Real estate planning
- Education planning
- Retirement planning
- Long-term care planning

See Item 5 of this Brochure for fee descriptions of the Firm's financial planning services.

### ***Investment Management Services***

#### Triad Advisors Sponsored Wrap Fee Programs

We provide investment management services through wrap fee programs sponsored by Triad Advisors. Triad wrap fee programs allow us to provide investment advisory services and also provide for execution of client transactions. Costs for execution of client transactions may be included in the overall advisory fee charged to the client or billed separately on a per-execution basis.

We will assist clients selecting this service with establishing one or more accounts with National Financial Services LLC ("**NFS**") or Pershing Advisor Solutions LLC ("**Pershing**"). All brokerage transactions will be processed by Triad Advisors in its capacity as an introducing broker/dealer and then cleared through either NFS or Pershing, pursuant to a clearing arrangement established by Triad Advisors with those firms (please refer to *Item 12 – Brokerage Practices* for more information). Triad Advisors has also entered into agreements with various insurance companies that allow for the management and valuation of client variable annuity accounts within Triad Advisors accounts. NFS, Pershing, insurance companies or other custodians will maintain physical custody of all funds and securities. Please note Sikich Financial and Triad Advisors do not serve as qualified custodians (please refer to *Item 15 – Custody* for more information).

If you decide to hire us for this service, we will develop an individualized investment program for your account(s). Various investment strategies are provided through this service; however, a specific investment strategy and investment policy is crafted for each client to focus on the specific client's goals and objectives. In some cases, we will serve as the sole investment manager and will be responsible for recommending all investments and trading.

#### *Pinnacle Account Wrap Fee Program*

Pinnacle Accounts are designed to assist clients, both individuals and institutions (such as pension and profit sharing plans, trusts, estates, charitable organizations, and corporations).

Clients who wish to participate in the Triad sponsored Pinnacle Program will be required to enter into a Pinnacle Account agreement with Triad Advisors and Sikich Financial, as advisor to the client. A complete description of the Pinnacle Account will be disclosed in the Pinnacle Account Wrap Fee Program Brochure, which will be provided to clients prior to account establishment.

*Private Managed Account (“PMA”) Wrap Fee Program*

PMA's are designed to assist clients, both individuals and institutions (such as pension and profit sharing plans, trusts, estates, charitable organizations, and corporations), to clarify their investment needs and to obtain professional asset management for a convenient wrap fee.

PMA accounts are managed by third-party managers (“**Managers**”) made available through Triad Advisors. You will sign a separate agreement with each Manager selected and your selection of a Manager will not be effective until you are accepted by the Manager. Your PMA agreement with the Manager sets forth the terms and conditions under which your account is managed by the Manager.

Triad Advisors selects the Managers that are available to be selected by clients. Managers are evaluated on both performance and risk, using data and information from several sources, including the Manager and, if available, independent databases.

A complete description of services and arrangements will be disclosed in the PMA Wrap Fee Program Brochure which will be provided to clients prior to account establishment. We will also provide the selected Manager(s) Form ADV Disclosure Brochure at the time of account opening.

*Ladenburg Asset Management Program (“LAMP”)*

LAMP is designed to assist clients, both individuals and institutions (such as pension and profit sharing plans, trusts, estates, charitable organizations, and corporations), to clarify their investment needs and to obtain professional asset management for a convenient ‘wrap’ fee.

LAMP accounts are managed by Ladenburg Thalmann Asset Management Inc. (“**LTAM**”). LTAM is a wholly-owned subsidiary of Ladenburg Thalmann Financial Services Inc. (“**LTFS**”), owner of Triad Advisors.

Clients must sign a separate agreement with LTAM and your selection of a Manager will not be effective until accepted by the Manager. Your agreement with the Manager sets forth the terms and conditions under which your account is managed by the Manager.

LTAM selects the Managers and risk-based strategies that are available to be selected by clients. Managers are evaluated on both performance and risk, using data and information from several sources, including the Manager and, if available, independent databases.

A complete description of services and arrangements will be disclosed in the LAMP Account Brochure which will be provided to clients prior to account establishment.

Regardless of the type of wrap account you may choose, we will need to obtain certain information from you to determine your financial situation and investment objectives. Accounts are therefore managed on the basis of your individual financial situation and investment objectives. At least annually, Sikich Financial contacts individual clients to determine whether (i) their financial situation or investment objectives have changed, or (ii) if the client wants to impose and/or modify any reasonable restrictions on the management of their accounts. Sikich Financial's IARs are available to consult with individual clients relative to the status of their accounts. Clients have the ability to impose reasonable restrictions on the management of your accounts, including the ability to instruct us not to purchase certain securities. Your beneficial interest in a security does not represent an undivided interest in all the securities held by the custodian, but rather

represents a direct and beneficial interest in the securities which comprise the account. A separate account is maintained for each client with the custodian and clients retain right of ownership of the account (e. g. right to withdraw securities or cash, exercise or delegate proxy voting, and receive transaction confirmations).

Sikich Financial manages investments for other clients and may give them advice or take actions for them or for our personal accounts that is different from the advice we provide to you or actions we take for you. Sikich Financial's IARs are not obligated to buy, sell or recommend to you any security or other investment that they may buy, sell or recommend for any other clients or for their own accounts.

Conflicts may arise in the allocation of investment opportunities among accounts that we manage. We strive to allocate investment opportunities believed appropriate for your account(s) and other accounts advised by our Firm among such accounts equitably and consistent with the best interests of all accounts involved. However, there can be no assurance that a particular investment opportunity that comes to our attention will be allocated in any particular manner. If we obtain material, non-public information about a security or its issuer that we may not lawfully use or disclose, we have absolutely no obligation to disclose the information to any client or use it for any client's benefit.

Please know this section is intended to be a summary (or general description) of the Triad Advisors wrap fee programs.

Please refer to Item 5 for information regarding fees and compensation.

*Recommendation of Unaffiliated Sub-Manager: Envestnet Asset Management, Inc.*

By using the Triad Advisors wrap fee programs, we are able to utilize the platforms and administrative services of Envestnet Asset Management, Inc. ("**Envestnet**"), an SEC registered investment advisor, to provide certain investment advisory services. Envestnet allows clients to select one or more money managers ("**Sub-Manager(s)**") with the assistance of their Sikich Financial IAR. Selected Sub-Managers are responsible for managing the client's investment portfolio on a discretionary basis. In addition to performing our own due diligence prior to recommending a Sub-Manager, we may rely on Envestnet's own evaluations of Sub-Managers.

The recommendation of a Sub-Manager is performed on a non-discretionary basis and is based on each client's individual needs. For example, we will recommend Envestnet when we believe the client will benefit from investment strategies developed and utilized by Envestnet that we do not offer internally.

A complete description of Envestnet's services and arrangements will be disclosed in the Envestnet Form ADV Disclosure Brochure which will be provided to clients at the time an account is established through the Envestnet platform. We will also provide the Form ADV Disclosure Brochure for all Sub-Managers selected by the client.

Clients are advised and should understand that:

- A Sub-Manager's past performance is no guarantee of future results;
- There is a certain market and/or interest rate risk which may adversely affect any Sub-Manager's objectives and strategies, and could cause a loss in client account(s); and
- Client risk parameters or comparative index selections provided to Sikich Financial are guidelines only and there is no guarantee that they will be met or not be exceeded.



The Firm is available to answer questions you may have regarding the portion of your account managed by Sub-Managers and act as the communication conduit between you and each Sub-Manager. Envestnet (in addition to Sikich Financial) and other selected Sub-Managers will be listed as an investment advisor on the account in order to render investment advice to Sikich Financial, including recommending an appropriate asset allocation for each client and specific investment managers or individual investment products. Information collected by our Firm regarding Sub-Managers is believed to be reliable and accurate but Sikich Financial does not necessarily independently review or verify it on all occasions. All performance reporting will be the responsibility of the respective Sub-Manager. Such performance reports will be provided directly to you and Sikich Financial. Sikich Financial does not audit or verify that these results are calculated on a uniform or consistent basis as provided by a Sub-Manager directly to Sikich Financial or through the consulting service utilized by the Sub-Manager.

#### Other Investment Management Programs Offered Through Triad Advisors

Triad Advisors also offers investment management programs allowing Sikich Financial to manage clients on a non-wrap fee basis. For these programs, all ticket charges and execution fees are billed directly to the client's account separately from the management fee charged by Sikich Financial. Based on consultations with the client, Sikich Financial determines the client's investment goals and risk tolerance. These accounts give Sikich Financial the ability to customize asset allocation and investment strategies to meet each client's individual financial situation and investment objectives as described more fully below:

##### Apex Account

The Apex Account is designed to permit Sikich Financial to manage mutual funds, stocks, bonds, options and insurance products (including variable annuity sub-accounts) pursuant to investment objectives chosen by the client. The Apex Account may be suitable for accounts that prefer the diversification offered through mutual fund investments. There is no minimum account size and fees are negotiable.

Brokerage commissions may be charged by Triad Advisors to effect these securities transactions and, thereafter, a portion of these commissions will be paid by Triad Advisors to the Firm's employee as a registered representative of Triad Advisors. Prior to effecting any transactions, the client will be required to enter into a new account agreement with Triad Advisors. The brokerage commissions charged by Triad Advisors may be higher or lower than those charged by other broker/dealers. In addition, our employee serving as the registered representative may also receive additional ongoing 12b-1 fees for mutual fund purchases from the mutual fund company during the period that the client maintains the mutual fund investment. Clients should be aware that these 12b-1 fees come from fund assets, and thus, indirectly from client assets. Receipt of these fees could represent an incentive for registered representatives to recommend funds with 12b-1 fees or higher 12b-1 fees over funds with no fees or lower fees, therefore creating a potential conflict of interest.

Depending on the type of Triad Advisors account that could be used to implement an investment strategy, such compensation may include (but is not limited to) commissions; mark-ups and mark-downs; transaction charges; confirmation charges; small account fees; mutual fund 12b-1 fees; mutual fund sub-transfer agency fees; and variable annuity investor servicing fees; retirement plan fees; administrative services fees for trust accounts; compensation for directing order flow; and bonuses, awards or other things of value offered by Triad Advisors.

#### ***SEI Sponsored Wrap Fee Program***

We may also provide investment management services through the SEI Sponsored Wrap Fee Program. Through the SEI Sponsored Wrap Fee Program, we are able to provide investment advisory services and

also arrange for execution of client transactions for one specified fee (or fees). In other words, execution fees are not billed on a per-transaction basis to the client's account.

We will assist clients selecting this service with establishing one or more accounts with SEI Trust Company ("SEI"). All brokerage transactions will be processed by SEI.

Through this service we provide individualized investment programs for each client's account(s). Various investment strategies are provided through this service; however, a specific investment strategy and investment policy is crafted for each client to focus on the specific client's goals and objectives.

Although we may manage all or at least a portion of the client's assets in this program, we will routinely recommend the sub-manager services of SEI ("**SEI Sub-Advisors**") for evaluations of Investment Managers used in the program. These SEI Sub-Advisors are affiliated investment advisors that are available through the SEI Wrap Fee Program.

We are always available to answer questions you may have regarding the portion of your account managed by the SEI Sub-Advisors and act as the communication conduit between you and the SEI Sub-Advisor. SEI will be listed as an investment advisor on the account in order to render investment advice to Sikich Financial, including recommending an appropriate asset allocation for each client and specific investment managers or individual investment products.

Please refer to *Item 5 – Fees and Compensation* for information regarding fees and compensation.

### ***Retirement Plan Consulting Services***

Clients may engage Sikich Financial to provide retirement plan consulting services ("**RPS Services**"). RPS Services may include, but are not necessarily limited to, establishing a qualified plan, fiduciary consulting, recommendations regarding investment selection, investment monitoring, fee and performance analysis, vendor search and selection and employee education presentations to plan participants (as more fully described below). Typically Sikich Financial provides its clients RPS Services on a continuous and on-going basis; however, in certain circumstances we will offer one-time or as-needed RPS Services.

*Establishing a Qualified Plan.* If needed, Sikich Financial can assist clients with the establishment of a qualified plan by working with the client and a selected Third-Party Administrator and third-party custodian.

- When a client, its 401(k) plan or other employee plan ("**Plan**") has not already selected a TPA, Sikich Financial can assist the client with the review and selection of a TPA for the Plan. A division of the Firm's parent company, Sikich LLP ("**Sikich TPA**"), can serve as a TPA and when doing so will receive fees in addition to Sikich Financial's standard advisory fees. A conflict of interest exists when recommending Sikich TPA because of our affiliation and therefore have an economic incentive to recommend them over other TPAs. If we recommend Sikich TPA as your TPA, clients are **not** required to use Sikich TPA's services. Clients can select any other TPA and concurrently engaged Sikich Financial for the provision of RPS Services. In certain cases, the fees and expenses charged by Sikich TPA may be more expensive than other qualified custodians Sikich Financial does not recommend. Please refer to previous information at *Item 4* of the Brochure for more details regarding Sikich TPA.
- When establishing a new Plan or transferring an existing Plan to a new custodian, we may recommend a variety of 401(k) vendors depending on the client's goals and objectives for the plan.

- Assist client in communicating with investment managers and funds, custodians, banks, trustees, third party administrators and legal counsel.

*Fiduciary Consulting.* Sikich Financial can assist the retirement plan committee with fiduciary training to ensure the committee is aware of their fiduciary responsibilities as defined by the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974, as amended (“**ERISA**”). Sikich Financial can also provide a one-time plan assessment which may include a review of the plan’s investment selections, fees, educational process and overall plan effectiveness.

*Investment Selection and Monitoring Services.* Sikich Financial can assist clients with fund selection and ongoing monitoring to ensure the plan’s investment options are prudent selections for plan participants. Based on the client’s goals and objectives, this service can encompass one or more of the following:

- Assist in the review, evaluation, and establishment of the investment policies and objectives of the Plan (the development, monitoring and maintaining of the Plan’s Investment Policy Statement).
- Provide research and advice regarding selection of investment alternatives for the plan, including advice regarding number of alternatives, asset classes and funds within asset classes.
- Provide research and advice regarding selection of a replacement fund within an existing asset class in the plan.
- Provide ongoing review, monitoring and reporting with respect to investment alternatives in the plan, including performance reporting and benchmarking on an annual, or alternative, basis.
- Meet with the client or Plan on a periodic basis to review reports and discuss any questions with respect to reports or investment alternative performance.

*Fee and Performance Analysis, Vendor Search and Selection.* Sikich Financial can assess the current fees and review the performance of the plan’s underlying holdings on behalf of the plan sponsor. This review could also include trust, custodial, and administrative services, and review alternative vendor platforms where desired by the client.

*Employee Education Presentations and Enrollment.* Sikich Financial can provide educational presentations for plan participants. Presentations to participants are informational in nature and intended to provide an overview of the plan and the plan’s investment selections. The nature of the topics to be covered will be determined by Sikich Financial and the client. Unless specifically contracted for, the educational presentations will NOT provide plan participants with individualized, tailored investment advice or individualized, tailored asset allocation recommendations. The education sessions may also include enrollment meetings for plan participants.

The exact suite of services provided to a client will be listed and detailed in their specific retirement plan consulting agreement (“**RPS Agreement**”).

Sikich Financial will never have trading authorization over a Plan’s assets. All recommendations of investment options will be submitted to the client, or the Plan’s trustee, for the ultimate approval or rejection. Therefore, it is always the client’s responsibility to accept Sikich Financial’s investment recommendations and then request the custodian to effect the investment changes to the Plan.

### ***Reporting Services through Envestnet***

Upon discretion and final approval by Sikich Financial some clients may be allowed to establish one or more Reporting Service accounts through Envestnet Asset Management, Inc. ("**Envestnet**") using Pershing as the qualified custodian broker/dealer. Through such an account(s), the client must appoint Sikich Financial as the investment advisor to the account.

Reporting Services are typically for accounts holding money market mutual funds, money market funds, securities that cannot be sold due to tax consequences and other accounts that require long-term buy-and-hold strategies or strategies that differ from those offered through the Envestnet platform. Clients have the ability to direct Sikich Financial to execute a trade by either purchasing or selling individual securities. Sikich Financial will most often implement trades on a non-discretionary basis which means the client will be consulted with prior to making changes.

Clients are required to enter into a written wealth management agreement with Sikich Financial for all Reporting Service accounts and they will be provided a copy of the Brochure prior to establishing an account.

Clients will also enter into a Reporting Services agreement with Envestnet to receive online reporting and administration on accounts. By including reporting accounts in this service, Envestnet is able to combine data and information for the reporting accounts with data and information from other accounts that may be managed by Sikich Financial to present consolidated holdings, transactions and performance on quarterly performance/position reports generated by Envestnet. Envestnet provides no investment advice or management services and has no discretionary authority with respect to reporting accounts.

Please refer to *Item 5 – Fees and Compensation* for fee information related to this service.

### ***RBC Wealth Management Money Manager Program***

Sikich Financial has entered into a referral relationship with RBC Wealth Management, a division of RBC Capital Markets, LLC, a member of FINRA, SPIC and NYSE ("**RBC**") to refer certain Firm clients to RBC for its money manager evaluation and selection service (the "**Money Manager Program**"). Sikich Financial and RBC are not affiliated companies. Sikich Financial offers this program through a legacy arrangement between an acquired investment advisory entity and RBC.

Through this service, RBC conducts a third-party money manager search to identify money managers to implement the client's investment plan. The eligible third-party money managers are selected by RBC and the client from the list of RBC approved managers. RBC is responsible for the selection and monitoring of the third-party managers, along with quarterly performance reporting. Based on a client's investment objectives, circumstances and needs, RBC will present one or more money management firms it believes can meet the client's needs, based on a target asset allocation for the overall portfolio as determined with assistance from a Sikich Financial IAR. Factors including account size, risk tolerance, liquidity needs, time horizon and a client's investment experience, are discussed during an initial consultation meeting (which may include a representative from RBC) with Sikich Financial and the client. After consultation between Sikich Financial and RBC, recommendations of money manager(s) are made. Because of the limited number of managers in this alliance selection pool, clients should be aware that managers, other than those recommended through this program, may have better or worse investment performance histories, and charge higher or lower fees.

After a client has selected a money manager(s) from those presented, the client will enter into an advisory agreement with each individual manager utilized, whereby each manager agrees to accept and manage

the client's assets as directed to them. To the extent there are changes to a client's financial circumstances, objectives, or investment restrictions, the client needs to inform Sikich Financial to determine if changes to the client's investment portfolios or selected money managers are needed.

Each client will need to grant the manager discretionary trading authority so the manager can place transaction orders at will for a client's account. Each client has the opportunity to instruct the manager with respect to investment restrictions imposed on the management of the client's account. Each client's account is a separately managed account and therefore individually owned by the client, separate from the accounts of other clients of the manager.

Each client will have access to confirmations of each securities transaction placed by the manager for the client's account, periodic custodian account statements, as well as a summary of account performance (prepared by RBC) at least annually, but often times on a quarterly basis. Managers and third party manager search program sponsors generally can terminate their services by notice to a client. Clients can also terminate a manager at any time which is done by providing direction to RBC to terminate the manager contract.

While a client's account is being managed by a manager, Sikich Financial and/or RBC counsels the client about the performance of the account and manager and about the content of reports sent to the client. Meetings occur as frequently as mutually agreed between the client, Sikich Financial and RBC.

Again, clients should be aware that Sikich Financial assists in establishing the risk tolerance and asset allocation of the client. RBC currently recommends investment managers presented by RBC, thus it generally will not conduct a search for other managers unless requested to do so. The performance of other managers not recommended by RBC but available to a client in a different third party manager platform may be better or worse than that of the manager recommended, and their fees may be higher or lower. Prospective clients should also be aware that Sikich Financial may rely heavily on third-party manager search program for performance information and account reporting services. Should a sponsor not provide these services to Sikich Financial, Sikich Financial may not be able to independently do so.

Sikich Financial advice in the RBC platform is solely limited to assessing the risk tolerance of the client and recommending the asset allocation.

As part of the wealth management services provided under the Money Manager Program, our clients may also work with Sikich LLP to receive customized tax consulting services. The fee for such tax consulting services will be paid from the portion of the management fee billed by RBC and paid to Sikich Financial. However, in no event will any referral fees be paid to or received from employees of Sikich LLP.

Please refer to *Item 5* of the Brochure for our fee arrangements for this service.

#### Limited Advice to Certain Types of Investments

We provide investment advice on the following types of investments.

- Exchange-listed securities (i.e. stocks)
- Securities traded over-the-counter (i.e. stocks)
- Corporate debt securities (other than commercial paper)
- Certificates of deposit
- Municipal securities
- Variable life insurance
- Variable annuities

- Mutual fund shares
- United States government securities
- Options contracts on securities

We do not provide advice on foreign issuers, warrants, commercial paper, options contracts on commodities, futures contracts on tangibles or intangibles, or interests in partnerships investing in real estate, oil and gas interests.

We may also provide advice about real estate investment trusts (REITs), exchange traded funds (ETFs), and any type of investment held in a client's portfolio at the beginning of the advisory relationship.

When providing investment management services, the Firm will typically construct each client's account holdings using mutual funds and equities to build diversified portfolios. It is not our typical investment strategy to attempt to time the market but we may increase cash holdings modestly as deemed appropriate, based on your risk tolerance and our expectations of market behavior. We may modify our investment strategy to accommodate special situations like: low basis stock, stock options, legacy holdings, inheritances, closely held businesses, collectibles, or special tax situations.

In addition, we may recommend that clients authorize the active discretionary management of a portion of their assets by Envestnet, based upon the stated investment objectives of the client.

In performing its services, Sikich Financial shall not be required to verify any information received from the client or from the client's other professionals (e.g., attorney, accountant, etc.) and is expressly authorized to rely on such information. We may recommend our services, our *Advisory Affiliates* (as such term is defined in Form ADV Part 1A) in their individual capacities as registered representatives of a broker-dealer, and/or other professionals to implement our recommendations. You are advised that a conflict of interest exists if we recommend our own services. The client is under no obligation to act upon any of the recommendations made by us under a financial planning/consulting engagement and/or engage the services of any such recommended professional, including Sikich Financial itself.

The client retains absolute discretion over all such implementation decisions and is free to accept or reject any of our recommendations. Moreover, each client is advised that it remains his/her/its responsibility to promptly notify us if there is ever any change in his/her/its financial situation or investment objectives for the purpose of reviewing, evaluating, or revising our previous recommendations and/or services.

(Please refer to *Item 8 – Methods of Analysis, Investment Strategies and Risk of Loss* for more information.)

#### **BAM Advisor Services Program**

Through its acquisition of BCG Wealth Advisors, LLC (BCG WA) in April 2016, the Firm has certain IARs located in its Akron office whom are contracted with BAM Advisor Services, LLC ("**BAM**"), for services including trade processing, collection of management fees, record maintenance, report preparation, marketing assistance, and research. The Firm pays a fee for BAM services based on management fees paid to Firm accounts that use BAM Advisor Services. The fee paid by the Firm to BAM consists of a portion of the fee paid by clients to the Firm and varies based on the total client assets participating in BAM Advisor Services through the Firm. These fees are not separately charged to advisory clients. For investment management and employee benefit plan services, the Firm will request authority from the client to receive quarterly payments directly from the client's account held by an independent custodian. Clients may provide written limited authorization to the Firm or its designated service provider, BAM, to withdraw fees from the account. Clients will receive custodial statements showing the advisory fees debited from

their account(s). Certain third party administrators will calculate and debit the Firm's fee and remit such fee to the Firm.

Our IARs will work with a client to determine the client's investment objectives and investor risk profile and will design a written investment policy statement and use investment and portfolio allocation software to evaluate alternative portfolio designs. We evaluate the client's existing investments with respect to the client's investment policy statement. The Firm works with new clients to develop a plan to transition from the client's existing portfolio to the portfolio recommended by the Firm. Our IAR will then continuously monitor the client's portfolio holdings and the overall asset allocation strategy and hold review meetings with the client regarding the account as necessary.

The Firm will typically create a portfolio of no-load mutual funds, and may use model portfolios if the models match the client's investment policy and will allocate the client's assets among various investments taking into consideration the overall management style selected by the client. We will generally recommend portfolios consisting of passively managed asset class and index mutual funds and recommends mutual funds offered by Dimensional Fund Advisors (DFA). DFA sponsored mutual funds follow a passive asset class investment philosophy with low holdings turnover. The Firm may also utilize other passively managed mutual funds or exchange traded funds, including funds offered by Vanguard, AQR and Bridgeway.

The Firm manages mutual fund and equity portfolios on a discretionary basis according to the investment policy selected by the client. A client may impose any reasonable restrictions on the Firm's discretionary authority, including restrictions on the types of securities in which the Firm may invest client's assets and on specific securities, which the client may believe to be appropriate.

The Firm may also recommend fixed income portfolios to investment management clients, which consist of managed accounts of individual bonds. We will request discretionary authority from investment management clients to manage fixed income portfolios, including the discretion to retain a third party fixed income manager. The Firm will prepare a fixed income investment policy statement ("**IPS**") for any client qualifying for separate fixed income portfolio services.

Pursuant to its discretionary authority, the Firm will retain a fixed income securities manager. The fixed income securities manager will be provided with the discretionary authority to invest client assets in fixed income securities consistent with the client's fixed income IPS. The manager will also monitor the account for changes in credit ratings, security call provisions, and tax loss harvesting opportunities (to the extent that the manager is provided with cost basis information). The manager will obtain the Firm's consent prior to the sale of any client securities.

On an ongoing basis, the Firm will answer clients' inquiries regarding their accounts and review periodically with clients the performance of their accounts. The Firm will periodically, and at least annually, review clients' investment policy, risk profile and discuss the re-balancing of each client's accounts to the extent appropriate. The Firm will provide to the investment manager any updated client financial information or account restrictions necessary for the investment manager to provide sub-advisory services.

In addition to managing the client's investment portfolio, the Firm may consult with clients on various financial areas including income and estate tax planning, business sale structures, college financial planning, retirement planning, insurance analysis, personal cash flow analysis, establishment and design of retirement plans and trust designs, among other things.

**Participation in Wrap Fee Programs**

As mentioned above, Sikich Financial does offer services through wrap fee programs sponsored by Triad Advisors. A wrap fee program is defined as any advisory program under which a specified fee or fees not based directly upon transactions in a client's account is charged for investment advisory services (which may include portfolio management or advice concerning the selection of other investment advisers) and the execution of client transactions. Whenever a fee is charged to a client for services described in the Brochure (whether wrap fee or non-wrap fee), we will receive all or a portion of the fee charged.

**Tailor Advisory Services to Individual Needs of Clients**

Our services are always provided based on the individual needs of each client. This means, for example, that you are given the ability to impose restrictions on the accounts we manage for you, including specific investment selections and sectors. We work with each client on a one-on-one basis through interviews and questionnaires to determine the client's investment objectives and suitability information.

**Client Assets Managed by Sikich Financial**

Sikich Financial has a total of \$386,885,127.18 of regulatory assets under management (using December 31, 2018 figures). A total of \$361,555,387 of these assets are managed on a discretionary basis and \$25,329,739 of these assets are managed on a non-discretionary basis. In addition, we provide advisory services for approximately \$826 million in assets, including accounts managed by third-party money managers, and retirement and pension plan accounts.

## **Item 5 – Fees and Compensation**

In addition to the information provided in Item 4 – Advisory Business, this section provides details regarding our services along with descriptions of each service's fees and compensation arrangements.

**Fees for Financial Planning**

We may provide you with a broad range of comprehensive financial planning and consulting services (which may include tax-related and other non-investment related matters, including educational services). Typically, we do not charge an additional fee for these services as they are provided along with our investment management program. When doing so we refer to our services as Wealth Management Services.

We are willing to work with clients on a one-time or on-going basis whereby we will assess a separate fee for preparing financial plans and consultations. Sikich Financial can provide financial planning services under an hourly fee arrangement. An hourly fee in the range of \$115 to \$325 per hour (depending upon the IAR working with client) is charged by Sikich Financial for financial planning services provided under this arrangement. Before commencing financial planning services, we will provide an estimate of the approximate hours needed to complete the requested financial planning services. If we anticipate exceeding the estimated amount of hours required, we will contact you to receive authorization to provide additional services. In some cases, we may require that you pay in advance a mutually agreed upon retainer that will be available for Sikich Financial to bill hourly fees against for our financial planning services; however, under no circumstances will Sikich Financial require you to pay fees more than \$500 more than six months in advance. Any unpaid hourly fees are due immediately upon completion and delivery of the financial plan.

Sikich Financial also provides financial planning services under a fixed fee arrangement. A mutually agreed upon fixed fee is charged for financial planning services under this arrangement. There is a range in the



amount of the fixed fee charged by Sikich Financial for financial planning services. The minimum fixed fee is generally \$1,500 and the maximum fixed fee is generally no more than \$20,000. The amount of the fixed fee for your engagement is specified in your financial planning agreement with Sikich Financial. Depending on the scope of services and total fee, we may require that you pay up to fifty percent (50%) of the fixed fee in advance with the remainder due immediately upon presentment of the financial plan and/or completion of the consultations. Under no circumstances will Sikich Financial require you to pay fees more than \$500 more than six months in advance. When advance payment is not required, fixed fees are due and payable upon presentment of the financial plan and/or completion of the consultations.

As previously stated, fees for the financial planning services may be waived by Sikich Financial at our sole discretion.

Prior to engaging Sikich Financial to provide financial planning and/or consulting services, each client is required to enter into a written agreement with us, setting forth the terms and conditions of the engagement and describing the scope of the services to be provided. In some circumstances the fee charged may be shared between Sikich Financial and Sikich LLP as detailed in the financial planning agreement.

### **Fees for Investment Management Services**

In the event you determine to engage Sikich Financial to provide investment management services, Sikich Financial shall do so on a fee basis. If engaged, we shall charge an annual fee based upon a percentage of the market value of the assets being managed by us. Our annual fee shall be prorated and charged quarterly based upon the market value of the assets on the last day of the previous quarter or the day that they are transitioned into the platform (if available). Unless otherwise specifically disclosed by the custodian, our annual fee shall be charged quarterly in advance.

Annual management fees charged for this service will be negotiated with each client.

For Triad Advisors Wrap Fee Programs (Pinnacle Account and Private Managed Account), Triad Advisors retains up to 20 basis points (0.20%) of the annual management fee. Envestnet will retain up to 35 basis points of the annual management fee when they are selected to serve as a sub-adviser in the account. The custodian of your account will also retain a portion of the overall fee charged to your account.

The basic asset based fee schedule for the Pinnacle Account and Private Managed Account are as follows:

<u>Portfolio Value</u>	<u>Annual Fee</u>
\$0 - \$250,000	2.75%
\$250,001 - \$750,000	2.25%
\$750,001 - \$2,000,000	1.75%
\$2,000,001 +	1.50%

The annual fee shall vary depending upon the market value of the assets under management, the investment adviser representative providing the investment advisory services, and the type of investment management services to be rendered. In certain negotiated circumstances, Sikich Financial may include financial planning along with investment management services, at no additional cost to the client, in an integrated Wealth Management offering.

In some cases, we may impose a minimum quarterly fee. These minimums may create higher than normal management fees during down markets. Under certain circumstances, we may charge less than the minimum advisory fee to the account.

Triad Advisors and/or Envestnet are responsible for collecting all fees paid by our clients through the Triad Advisors sponsored wrap fee program. Triad Advisors will then journal our portion of the advisory fee to Sikich Financial.

Clients will incur certain charges imposed by third parties other than Sikich Financial in connection with investments made through accounts managed by Sikich Financial, including but not limited to, 12b-1 fees and IRA and qualified retirement plan fees. Unless the account is established through a wrap fee program (whereby execution and trading costs are included in the overall management fee), client accounts will also be debited for all applicable transaction costs charged by the broker/dealer and/or custodian. Management fees received by Sikich Financial are separate and distinct from the fees and expenses charged by investment company securities that may be recommended to clients. A description of these fees and expenses are available in each investment company security's prospectus.

#### LAMP Account

The basic management fee schedule for the LAMP Account is as follows:

<u>Portfolio Value</u>	<u>Annual Fee</u>
First \$500,000	40 bps
Next \$250,000	35 bps
Next \$250,000	30 bps
\$1,000,000 +	25 bps

**Specific to the Triad Advisors Wrap Fee Programs and investment management programs offered through Triad Advisors, Sikich Financial's advisor representatives, in their separate capacity as registered representatives of Triad Advisors may retain a portion of the 12b-1 trail fees charged to the client.** If the client owns any mutual funds in qualified accounts and ERISA plans that pay 12b-1 trail fees to the broker/dealer, those fees are credited to the client and are used to reduce the Firm's management fee. When receiving 12b-1 fees in non-retirement and non-qualified accounts, we do not typically reduce our management fee by the amount of 12b-1 fees earned by our advisor representatives in their separate capacity as registered representatives of Triad Advisors.

#### Apex Account

The basic asset-based fee schedule for the Apex Account is as follows:

<u>Portfolio Value</u>	<u>Annual Fee</u>
\$0 - \$250,000	2.75%
\$250,001 - \$750,000	2.25%
\$750,001 - \$2,000,000	1.75%
\$2,000,001 +	1.50%

There is no minimum account size and fees are negotiable. In addition to the advisory fee, accounts are assessed transaction charges. These transaction charges may be higher or lower than transaction charges or commissions the client may pay at other broker/dealers. All transactions are subject to postage and handling fees. A minimum service fee may be charged.

For more details on this account type, please refer to Triad Advisor's ADV, Part 2A as well as its current Appendix 1 of Part 2A.

**Fees for SEI Sponsored Wrap Fee Program**

For the SEI Sponsored Wrap Fee Program, SEI receives a portion of the underlying investment managers' fee selected to help manage the client's accounts. Fees are 1.0% annually.

**Fees for Retirement Plan Consulting Services**

Fees for on-going RPS Services may be calculated and billed quarterly, semi-annual or annual basis. Fees may be billed in advance or in arrears of the billing period, depending upon the agreed upon engagement. Fees may be billed on a fixed basis (not to exceed \$50,000 annually) or based on the average market value of the Plan during the quarter (not to exceed 0.65% annually of assets under advisement or the minimum fixed fee if it is more than .65% of the assets under advisement). Fees are negotiable based on factors such as, but not limited to, the size of the plan, the number of participants, number of locations and the types of services provided. The exact fee billing arrangements and parameters will be determined with the client and Sikich Financial and then detailed in the RPS Services agreement. The minimum annual fee for RPS Services is \$1,500.

Depending on the scope of services and the amount of the fixed fee, we may require that you pay up to fifty percent (50%) of the fixed fee in advance with the remainder due immediately upon completion of the RPS Services. Under no circumstances will Sikich Financial require you to pay fees more than \$500 more than six months in advance. When advance payment is not required, the fee charged will be due upon completion of the service and presentment of a billing invoice.

The actual fee charged to a client will be noted in their RPS Agreement. Fees for on-going services are generally calculated and deducted from the Plan by the custodian and are then paid to Sikich Financial based upon the custodian's receipt of written authorization. In some circumstances, the fees for Sikich TPA will be included in the RPS Agreement and deducted by the custodian and paid to Sikich Financial. Sikich Financial will transfer a portion of the total fee to Sikich TPA for its provision of TPA services. If agreed to in advance and at the discretion of the custodian, clients may be billed directly rather than have fees automatically deducted from the Plan. For clients that are billed directly, fees for Sikich Financial's qualified RPS Services are due upon the client's receipt of the billing notice.

The Plan custodian will send statements to the Plan, at least quarterly, showing all disbursements from the Plan, including the amount of the advisory fee paid and when such fee is deducted directly from the Plan. Upon request, Sikich Financial will send the Plan a fee billing notice showing the amount of the fee that will be deducted, the manner in which the fee was calculated, any adjustments to the fee and an explanation of such adjustments.

In some circumstances, certain expenses incurred by Sikich Financial in order to perform the agreed upon RPS Services will be considered outside of the standard fee for RPS Services described in the clients RPS Agreement and will be billed directly to the client in addition to the agreed upon service fee indicated. Certain expenses will be discussed with the plan sponsor prior to incurring the expenses. Any outside expenses that clients may be responsible for will be billed directly to the Plan sponsor.

In addition to Sikich Financial's compensation, the Client will also incur charges imposed at the mutual fund level (e.g., advisory fees and other fund expenses) and charges imposed by the Plan custodian and TPA (if applicable). Brokerage commissions and/or transaction ticket fees charged by the Plan custodian will be billed directly to the Client by the custodian. Sikich Financial will not receive any portion of such brokerage commissions or transaction fees from the Plan custodian or Client. Service fees charged by Sikich Financial

are separate and distinct from the fees and expenses charged by investment company securities that may be recommended to Clients. A description of these fees and expenses are available in each investment company security's prospectus.

Either the Client's authorized representative or Sikich Financial may terminate the RPS Agreement with 30 days written notice to the other party. A refund of any unearned fees (when fees are billed in advance) or a final billing notice (for fees billed in arrears) will be made based on the time expended by Sikich Financial before termination. If an RPS Agreement is terminated within five business days of execution, a client has the right for a full refund of fees. The RPS Agreement terminates upon failure of the client to timely pay RPS Service fees pursuant to the terms stated in that Agreement.

**Fees for Reporting Services Accounts through Envestnet**

In the event you are approved to open accounts through Reporting Services Accounts through Envestnet, Sikich Financial will charge an annual fee based upon a percentage of the market value of the assets held in the reporting accounts. Our annual fee shall be prorated and charged quarterly based upon the market value of the assets on day they are transitioned to the platform. Our annual fee shall be charged quarterly in advance.

Annual management fees charged for this service will be negotiated with each client. Fees generally range between 0.25% and 1.50%, based on the size of the account.

The annual fee shall vary depending upon the market value of the assets under management, the amount of the client's assets held in other accounts actively managed by Sikich Financial and the investment adviser representative providing the investment advisory services.

In some cases, we may impose a minimum quarterly fee. These minimums may create higher than normal management fees during down markets. Under certain circumstances, we may charge less than the minimum advisory fee to the account.

In addition, Envestnet will charge up to 0.13% on the first \$250,000 and 0.10% on assets over \$250,000. They will also impose a minimum annual per account fee of \$90.

Envestnet is responsible for collecting all fees through our Reporting Services program.

Clients will incur certain charges imposed by third parties other than Sikich Financial in connection with investments made through accounts managed by Sikich Financial, unless the account is established through a wrap fee program (whereby execution and trading costs are included in the overall management fee). Client accounts will also be debited for all applicable transaction costs charged by the broker/dealer and/or custodian.

**Fees for RBC Wealth Management Money Manager Program**

Fees to Sikich Financial for providing risk tolerance and asset allocation services are paid by RBC to Sikich Financial from the asset-based fee paid by a client directly to RBC. The sharing of the asset-based fee is disclosed to the client at the time of engaging each money manager. The specific fee is typically disclosed in advance to each client during the proposal process, before services begin. Based on asset account size, clients receiving similar services may pay higher or lower advisory fees. Typically, total fees charged to clients for this service range between 1.25% and 2.00% for equities and .50% to .60% for fixed income based on the assets under management with an individual money manager. The portion paid to Sikich

Financial generally does not exceed 33% of the total fee for equities and 25% of the total fee for fixed income.

A complete description of RBC's services, fee schedules and account minimums will be provided in RBC's Form ADV Disclosure Brochure. Clients will also receive copies of the selected money manager(s) Form ADV Disclosure Brochure(s).

As part of the wealth management services provided under the RBC Wealth Management Manager Program, our clients may also work with Sikich LLP to receive customized tax consulting services. The fee for such services will be paid from the portion of the management fee billed by RBC and paid to Sikich Financial. Sikich Financial will then be responsible for transferring Sikich LLP's payment for such services to Sikich LLP and you will not be required to reimburse Sikich Financial for such payments. If you would like to engage Sikich LLP for tax preparation and accounting services provided beyond the basic tax consulting services in connection with our wealth management services, such services will be provided separately for an additional fee(s). To the extent that you personally engage Sikich LLP, you will be responsible for the payment of the fees for the services and Sikich Financial will not be required to reimburse you for such payments. However, in no event will any referral fees be paid to or received from employees of Sikich LLP.

### **Fees for the BAM Program**

The annual fee for investment management services on a balanced portfolio above \$400,000 will be charged as a percentage of assets under management, according to the fee schedule below (tiered pricing):

<b>Portfolio Value</b>	<b>Annual Fee (%)</b>
On the first \$1,000,000	1.00%
On the next \$1,000,000	0.70%
On the next \$1,000,000	0.50%
On the next \$2,000,000	0.40%
On all amounts thereafter	0.35%

Note that certain clients have and will continue to be grandfathered under fee schedules and/or agreements that preceded the client's engagement of Sikich Financial. Sikich Financial has grown through its acquisition of BCG WA. BCG WA could have fee schedules or other fee arrangements with its clients that differ from that set forth above of this Brochure. Upon acquisition, the Firm will generally maintain its pre-existing fee schedule subsequent to the acquisition. As a result, Sikich Financial clients could be subject to various different fee schedules and/or arrangements, including those that may be higher or lower than Sikich Financial's fee schedule set forth above. Any grandfathered fee schedules and/or arrangements shall be confirmed by Sikich Financial in the client agreement executed by the client upon the engagement of Sikich Financial. ANY QUESTIONS: Sikich Financial's Chief Compliance Officer, remains available to address them

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

Sikich Financial does not charge performance-based fees.

## **Item 7 – Types of Clients**

Sikich Financial generally provides investment advice to the following types of clients:

- Individuals
- Pension and profit sharing plans
- Trusts, estates or charitable organizations
- Corporations or business entities other than those listed above

As a condition for starting and maintaining a relationship with Sikich Financial, we shall generally impose a minimum portfolio size of \$250,000. Sikich Financial, in its sole discretion, may waive account minimums in its sole and absolute discretion.

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

Sikich Financial leverages relationships established with its sub-advisors to select, monitor and maintain investment managers selected for client portfolios. Our philosophy is rooted in modern portfolio theory which holds that the goal of an efficient portfolio is to minimize investment risk and maximize return. This is accomplished through diversified portfolios comprised predominantly of investments representing various asset classes. The appropriate mix (or allocation) of asset classes for each portfolio is determined using asset allocation software, and mutual fund and third party manager selection involves rigorous, regular reviews of performance and risk for each asset class.

For all investment programs utilized by Sikich Financial, the client's IAR compiles pertinent financial and demographic information to develop an investment program that will meet the client's goals and objectives. The client's information may be forwarded to the sub-advisors for review or implemented by the IAR in advisor directed programs. If the IAR is utilizing a sub-advisor, the sub-advisor will analyze the information compiled by the advisor and recommend an appropriate strategy based on the client's needs and objectives, investment time horizon, risk tolerance and any other pertinent factors. The sub-advisors selected by Sikich Financial uses a number of proprietary analytical tools and commercially available optimization software applications in developing its asset allocation strategies. Among the factors considered in designing these strategies are historical rates of risk and return for various asset classes, correlation across asset classes and risk premiums. The sub-advisor will then propose an overall strategy that includes asset allocation and investment portfolio recommendations for the asset classes. The IAR will then determine if the portfolio recommendations will meet the goals and objectives of the client, provide further recommendations and implement the investment strategy.

The following are some of the general investment strategies used for accounts managed through Sikich Financial.

- Long term purchases - Investments held at least a year.
- Short term purchases - Investments sold within a year.
- Margin transactions - When an investor buys a stock on margin, the investor pays for part of the purchase and borrows the rest from a brokerage Firm. For example, an investor may buy \$5,000 worth of stock in a margin account by paying for \$2,500 and borrowing \$2,500 from a brokerage Firm. Clients cannot borrow stock from Sikich Financial.

- Option writing including covered options, uncovered options, or spreading strategies - Options are contracts giving the purchaser the right to buy or sell a security, such as stocks, at a fixed price within a specific period of time.

### Risk of Loss

Clients must understand that past performance is not indicative of future results. Therefore, current and prospective clients (including you) should never assume that future performance of any specific investment or investment strategy will be profitable. Investing in securities (including stocks, mutual funds, and bonds) involves risk of loss. Further, depending on the different types of investments there may be varying degrees of risk. Clients and prospective clients should be prepared to bear investment loss including loss of original principal.

Because of the inherent risk of loss associated with investing, our Firm is unable to represent, guarantee, or even imply that our services and methods of analysis can or will predict future results, successfully identify market tops or bottoms, or insulate you from losses due to market corrections or declines. There are certain additional risks associated when investing in securities through our investment management program.

- Market Risk – Either the stock market as a whole, or the value of an individual company, goes down resulting in a decrease in the value of client investments. This is also referred to as systemic risk.
- Equity (Stock) Market Risk – Common stocks are susceptible to general stock market fluctuations and to volatile increases and decreases in value as market confidence in and perceptions of their issuers change. If you held common stock, or common stock equivalents, of any given issuer, you would generally be exposed to greater risk than if you held preferred stocks and debt obligations of the issuer.
- Company Risk – When investing in stock positions, there is always a certain level of company or industry specific risk that is inherent in each investment. This is also referred to as unsystematic risk and can be reduced through appropriate diversification. There is the risk that the company will perform poorly or have its value reduced based on factors specific to the company or its industry. For example, if a company's employees go on strike or the company receives unfavorable media attention for its actions, the value of the company may be reduced.
- Fixed Income Risk – When investing in bonds, there is the risk that issuer will default on the bond and be unable to make payments. Further, individuals who depend on set amounts of periodically paid income face the risk that inflation will erode their spending power. Fixed-income investors receive set, regular payments that face the same inflation risk.
- Options Risk – Options on securities may be subject to greater fluctuations in value than an investment in the underlying securities. Purchasing and writing put and call options are highly specialized activities and entail greater than ordinary investment risks.
- ETF and Mutual Fund Risk – When we invest in an ETF or mutual fund for a client, the client will bear additional expenses based on its pro rata share of the ETFs or mutual fund's operating expenses, including the potential duplication of management fees. The risk of

owning an ETF or mutual fund generally reflects the risks of owning the underlying securities the ETF or mutual fund holds. Clients may also incur brokerage costs when purchasing ETFs or mutual funds.

- *Non-U.S. Securities Risk* – Non-U.S. securities are subject to the risks of foreign currency fluctuations, generally higher volatility and lower liquidity than U.S. securities, less developed securities markets and economic systems and political and economic instability.
- *Emerging Markets Risk* – To the extent that your portfolio invests in issuers located in emerging markets, the risk may be heightened by political changes and changes in taxation or currency controls that could adversely affect the values of these investments. Emerging markets have been more volatile than the markets of developed countries with more mature economies.
- *Currency Risk* – The value of your portfolio's investments may fall as a result of changes in exchange rates.
- *Interest Rate Risk* – The value of fixed income securities rises or falls based on the underlying interest rate environment. If rates rise, the value of most fixed income securities could go down
- *Management Risk* – Your investment with our Firm varies with the success and failure of our investment strategies, research, analysis and determination of portfolio securities. If our investment strategies do not produce the expected returns, the value of the investment will decrease.
- *Margin Risk* – To the extent that you authorize the use of margin, and margin accounts are managed by our Firm, the market value of your account and corresponding fee payable to Sikich Financial will be increased. As a result, in addition to understanding and assuming the additional principal risks associated with the use of margin (see below), clients authorizing margin are advised of the potential conflict of interest whereby the decision to use margin will correspondingly increase the management fee paid to Sikich Financial. Accordingly, the decision as to whether to open a margin account is left totally to the discretion of client.

A margin account will be carried by the broker/dealer of your account. The securities purchased in such an account are the broker/dealer's collateral for its loan to you.

If the securities in a margin account decline in value, the value of the collateral supporting this loan also declines, and, as a result, a brokerage firm is required to take action, such as issue a margin call and/or sell securities or other assets in your accounts, in order to maintain the necessary level of equity in the account.

It is important that you fully understand the risks involved in trading securities on margin, which are applicable to any margin account that you may maintain, including any margin account that may be established as a part of our Investment Management Services and held by your broker/dealer. These risks include the following:

- You can lose more funds than you deposit in your margin account.



- The broker/dealer can force the sale of securities or other assets in your account.
- The broker/dealer can sell your securities or other assets without contacting you.
- You are not entitled to choose which securities or other assets in your margin account that may be liquidated or sold to meet a margin call.
- The broker/dealer may move securities held in your cash account to your margin account and pledge the transferred securities.
- The broker/dealer can increase its “house” maintenance margin requirements at any time and are not required to provide you advance written notice.
- You are not entitled to an extension of time on a margin call.

### **Item 9 – Disciplinary Information**

Sikich Financial does not have any legal, financial or other disciplinary items material to our investment advisory business or executive management to report. We are obligated to disclose any disciplinary event that we believe clients would find material when evaluating us to initiate or continue a client/investment adviser relationship with us.

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

Sikich Financial is **not** and does **not** have a related company that is a (1) investment company or other pooled investment vehicle (including a mutual fund, closed-end investment company, unit investment trust, private investment company or “hedge fund,” and offshore fund), (2) financial planner, (3) futures commission merchant, commodity pool operator, or commodity trading advisor, (4) banking or thrift institution, (5) lawyer or law firm, (6) pension consultant (7) real estate broker or dealer, or (8) sponsor or syndicator of limited partnerships.

#### **Sikich LLP**

As disclosed above, Sikich Financial is wholly-owned by Sikich LLP. Specifically, all equity interest in Sikich Financial is owned by Sikich LLP. We will refer clients to Sikich LLP in the event they may benefit from the accounting, TPA services and other advisory or business consulting services they provide. Please refer to the previous disclosures at *Items 4* and *5* for an explanation of the conflicts of interest this presents and how we control for such conflicts.

#### **Arrangement with Triad Advisors**

Some of our advisor representatives are also registered representatives of Triad Advisors and can provide securities brokerage services under a strictly commission arrangement. You are never obligated to open an account with Triad Advisors and can use any broker/dealer you like. However, if you would like to open an account on a strictly commission basis with one of our IARs in their separate capacities as registered representatives, Triad Advisors is required.

Compensation to Triad Advisors and our employee serving as registered representative at Triad Advisors may be more or less depending on the product or service recommended. Therefore, our IAR may have a financial incentive to recommend that a strategy be implemented using a certain product or service. When our employee recommends securities products offered by Triad Advisors, the IAR will receive normal commissions if products are purchased thus a conflict of interest exists between our employee’s interests and those of clients. Clients are under no obligation to purchase products recommended by our IARs or to purchase products through Triad Advisors.

### **Insurance Activities**

Some of our advisor representatives are licensed as insurance agents and can provide insurance services to clients. These individuals, in their separate capacity, can process certain insurance transactions for which they will receive separate, yet customary compensation. Clients are not under any obligation to engage these individuals when considering implementation of advisory recommendations. The implementation of any or all recommendations is solely at the discretion of the client. While Sikich Financial and these individuals endeavor at all times to put the interest of the clients first as part of our fiduciary duty, clients should be aware that the receipt of additional compensation itself creates a conflict of interest, and may affect the judgment of these individuals when making recommendations.

### **Related Broker/Dealer – Sikich Corporate Finance LLC**

We have an affiliated broker/dealer, Sikich Corporate Finance LLC. All equity interest in Sikich Corporate Finance LLC is owned by Sikich LLP. Sikich Corporate Finance LLC is the investment banking division of Sikich LLP. Sikich Financial has no material arrangements with Sikich Corporate Finance LLC concerning the advisory services we provide and the affiliation has no material impact on our client relationships and services. We do however, both utilize the same employees of Sikich LLP to provide compliance oversight of Sikich Financial and Sikich Corporate Finance LLC.

### **Related Insurance Agency – Sikich Insurance Group LLC**

We have an affiliated insurance agency, Sikich Insurance Group LLC. All equity interest in Sikich Insurance Group LLC is owned by Sikich LLP. Sikich Insurance Group LLC is the insurance services division of Sikich LLP. However, Sikich Insurance Group LLC does not sell securities products (including variable annuities). Sikich Financial has no material arrangements with Sikich Insurance Group LLC concerning the advisory services we provide and the affiliation has no material impact on our client relationships and services. Further, none of our IARs are employed with Sikich Insurance Group LLC.

### **BCG Wealth Advisors, LLC**

Effective June 1, 2016, Sikich LLP acquired substantially all the assets of BCG Wealth Advisors, LLC (“**BCG WA**”), and BCG WA became a part of Sikich Financial.

BCG WA arranges for the execution of securities transactions with the assistance of BAM Advisor Services LLC (“**BAM**”). Through BAM, the BCG WA unit participates in the Schwab Advisor Services (“**Schwab**”) program offered to independent investment advisors by Charles Schwab & Company, Inc. member FINRA/SIPC, the Fidelity Institutional Wealth Services (“**FIWS**”) program offered to independent investment advisors, sponsored by Fidelity Brokerage Services, LLC (“**Fidelity**”), member FINRA/SIPC and TD Ameritrade Institutional (“**TDA**”), a division of TD Ameritrade, Inc. (“**TD Ameritrade**”), member FINRA/SIPC/NFA. Schwab, Fidelity and TD Ameritrade are unaffiliated SEC-registered broker dealers and FINRA members. Schwab, Fidelity and TD Ameritrade offer to independent advisors services which include custody of securities, trade execution, and clearance and settlement transactions.

The Schwab, Fidelity or TD Ameritrade brokerage program will generally be recommended to advisory clients for the execution of mutual fund and equity securities transactions. The BCG WA unit regularly reviews these programs to ensure that its recommendation is consistent with its fiduciary duty. These trading platforms are essential to the service arrangements and capabilities, and we may not accept clients who direct the use of other brokers.

The Firm will not request the discretionary authority to determine the broker dealer to be used or the commission rates to be paid in these situations, clients must direct the Firm as to the broker dealer to be used. In directing the use of a particular broker or dealer, it should be understood that Firm will not have authority to negotiate commissions among various brokers or obtain volume discounts, and best execution may not be achieved. Not all investment advisers require clients to direct the use of specific brokers.

The Firm will not exercise authority to arrange client transactions in fixed income securities. Clients will provide this authority to a fixed income manager retained by the Firm on client's behalf by designating the portfolio manager with trading authority over client's brokerage account. Clients will be provided with the Disclosure Brochure (Form ADV Part 2) of portfolio manager.

Schwab, FIWS and TDA do not generally charge clients a custody fee and are compensated by account holders through commissions or other transaction-related fees for securities trades that are executed through the broker or that settle into the clients' accounts held at the brokers. Trading client accounts through other brokers may result in fees (including mark-ups and mark-downs) being charged by the custodial broker and an additional broker. While the Firm will not arrange transactions through other brokers, the authority of the fixed income portfolio manager includes the ability to trade client fixed income assets through other brokers.

The Firm does not maintain any client trade error gains. The Firm makes client whole with respect to any trade error losses incurred by client caused by the Firm. For clients utilizing TD Ameritrade for brokerage services, TD Ameritrade maintains a policy that any trade error gains will be donated by TD Ameritrade to charity.

The Firm generally does not aggregate any client transactions in mutual fund or other securities. Client accounts are individually reviewed and managed, and transaction costs are not saved by aggregating orders in almost all circumstances in which BCG arranges transactions. BAM, in the management of fixed income portfolios, will aggregate certain transactions among client accounts that it manages, in which case a Firm client's orders may be aggregated with an order for another client of BAM who is not a Firm client. See BAM Advisor Services, LLC Form ADV Part 2.

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

### **Code of Ethics Summary and Personal Trading Policy and Procedures**

It is our policy to permit our employees to personally invest in the same securities recommended and/or owned by our clients. This presents certain conflicts of interest. To help control for these conflicts of interest, we have adopted a code of ethics that sets forth the standards of conduct expected of its associated persons and requires compliance with applicable securities laws ("**Code of Ethics**"). Our Code of Ethics contains written policies reasonably designed to prevent the unlawful use of material non-public information by us or any of our associated persons. The Code of Ethics also requires that employees providing investment advice and/or those that have access to our clients' financial information (our "access persons") report their personal securities holdings and transactions for review and obtain pre-approval of certain investments such as initial public offerings and limited offerings. Further, it is our policy that all personnel must place the interests of our clients ahead of their own when implementing personal investments. You may contact us to request a copy of our Code of Ethics.

## **Item 12 – Brokerage Practices**

This section provides information about our brokerage practices in addition to the information detailed in *Item 5 – Fees and Compensation*.

### **Advisor Directed Brokerage Arrangement – Triad Advisors**

Clients are under no obligation to act on the recommendations of Sikich Financial. If the Firm assists in the implementation of any recommendations, we are responsible to ensure that the client receives the best

execution possible. If clients wish to have our advisor representatives implement the advice in their capacity as registered representative or through one of the Triad Advisors wrap fee programs detailed in Item 5 – Fees and Compensation, then Triad Advisors will be used.

Factors which we consider in recommending Triad Advisors to clients include their respective financial strength, reputation, execution, pricing, research, and service. Triad Advisors enables us to obtain many mutual funds without transaction charges and other securities at nominal transaction charges. The fees and expenses charged by Triad Advisors may be higher or lower than those charged by other broker-dealers. Therefore our arrangement may be more expensive to clients than other brokerage arrangements.

Not all investment advisors require the use of a particular broker/dealer. Some investment advisors allow their clients to pick which broker/dealer the client uses. However, in order to provide efficient services and based on the arrangement with Triad Advisors, Sikich Financial requires the use of Triad Advisors when opening an account through our Firm's programs. We are limited in the broker/dealer or custodians that we are allowed to use due to our relationship with Triad Advisors. Triad Advisors may limit or restrict the broker/dealer or custodial platforms for its registered representatives that are also independently licensed due to its duty to supervise the transactions implemented by these individuals.

Advisor representatives of Sikich Financial that are registered representatives of Triad Advisors are required to use the services of Triad Advisors and Triad Advisors' approved clearing broker-dealers when acting in their capacity as registered representatives. Triad Advisors serves as the introducing broker-dealer. All accounts established through Triad Advisors will be cleared and held through National Financial Services LLC or Pershing Advisor Solutions. Triad Advisors has a wide range of approved securities products for which Triad Advisors performs due diligence prior to selection. Triad Advisors' registered representatives are required to adhere to these products when implementing securities transactions through Triad Advisors. Commissions charged for these products may be higher or lower than commissions clients may be able to obtain if transactions were implemented through another broker/dealer. Because the advisor representatives of Sikich Financial are also registered representatives of Triad Advisors, Triad Advisors provides compliance and supervision support to the advisor representatives of Sikich Financial. In addition, Triad Advisors also provides the advisor representatives, and therefore Sikich Financial, with back-office operational, technology, and other administrative support.

Economic benefits are provided by Triad Advisors to Sikich Financial that will not be provided if the client selects another broker/dealer or account custodian. These benefits may include: negotiated costs for transaction implementation, a dedicated trade desk that services Triad Advisors participants exclusively, a dedicated service group and an account services manager dedicated to our Firm's accounts, access to a real-time order matching system, electronic download of trades, balances and position information, access, for a fee, to an electronic interface with the account custodian's software, duplicate and batched client statements, confirmations and year-end reports.

### **Trading Policy**

Our trading policy is to implement all client orders on an individual basis. Therefore, we do not aggregate or "block" client transactions. Considering the types of investments we hold in advisory client accounts, we do not believe clients are hindered in any way because we trade accounts individually. This is because we develop individualized investment strategies for clients and holdings will vary. Further, the investments we are responsible for trading in client accounts are typically limited to mutual funds, ETFs, and other broadly traded positions. Our strategies are primarily developed for the long-term and minor differences in price execution are not material to our overall investment strategy.

### **Best Execution**

Trading for discretionary investment management agreements is directed by and is the responsibility of Sikich Financial. The Firm, determines the securities to be bought or sold, the price, the timing, and the selection of broker-dealer it believes is capable of providing best execution of Client transactions. Sikich Financial's IARs will generally direct transactions to Sikich Financial's designated broker/dealers based on their execution capabilities. The use of a designated broker may or may not always allow the Firm and/or sub-advisors to obtain best price and execution of portfolio transactions than could have been obtained outside a directed brokerage arrangement. Transactions in Client accounts for certain asset classes supervised by a sub-advisor may be directed to broker-dealers that the sub-advisor believes are capable of providing better execution of Client orders. While Sikich Financial believes the broker-dealer it has selected will provide best execution and services, it is possible that better execution may be obtained through another broker-dealer. However, Clients should be aware that the directed brokerage arrangement through broker-dealers Sikich Financial selects may be viewed as an incentive for Sikich Financial to utilize that broker-dealer regardless of execution quality in order to avoid incurring the charges that may accompany trading with other broker-dealers.

## **Item 13 – Review of Accounts**

### **Account Reviews and Reviewers**

For those clients to whom we provide investment management services, we monitor portfolios as part of an ongoing process. We review investments held in client accounts at least quarterly and will review accounts on an annual basis. Factors that trigger reviews include, but not necessarily limited to, changes to our investment recommendations, changes in market conditions, and changes to client's investment needs. For those clients to whom we provide financial planning and/or consulting services, reviews are conducted on an "as needed" basis triggered by the client's request. We may also suggest financial planning and/or consulting reviews when triggered by a change in the client's financial situation or investment needs.

Reviews are conducted by one of our IARs. All investment advisory clients are encouraged to discuss their needs, goals, and objectives with us and to keep us informed of any changes thereto. We shall contact ongoing investment advisory clients at least annually to review our previous services and/or recommendations and to discuss the impact resulting from any changes in your financial situation and/or investment objectives.

### **Statements and Reports**

Unless otherwise agreed upon, you are provided with transaction confirmation notices and regular summary account statements directly from the broker-dealer or custodian for your account(s). Those clients to whom we provide investment advisory services may also receive a report from us that may include such relevant account and/or market-related information as an inventory of account holdings and account performance from time to time as requested by you, or otherwise agreed upon in writing by us.

Those clients to whom Sikich Financial provides financial planning and/or consulting services will receive reports from us summarizing our analysis and conclusions as requested by the client or otherwise agreed to in writing by us. Clients will also receive performance and position reports.

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

### **Client Referrals**

Sikich Financial and Sikich LLP may refer clients to one another. However, in no event will any referral fees be paid to or received from employees of Sikich LLP.

If a client is introduced to us by an unaffiliated company, we may pay that solicitor a referral fee in accordance with the requirements of applicable federal and state securities laws. Any such referral fee will be paid solely from our investment management fee and shall not result in any additional charge to the client.

Whenever we pay a referral fee, we require the solicitor to provide the prospective client with a copy of this document (our Brochure) and a separate disclosure statement that includes the following information:

- the solicitor's name and relationship with our firm;
- the fact that the solicitor is being paid a referral fee;
- the amount of the fee; and
- whether the fee paid to Sikich Financial by the client will be increased above our normal fees in order to compensate the solicitor.

As a matter of firm practice, the advisory fees paid to Sikich Financial by clients referred by solicitors are not increased as a result of any referral.

### **Other Compensation**

It is Sikich Financial's policy not to accept or allow our related persons to accept any form of compensation, including cash, sales awards or other prizes, from a non-client in conjunction with the advisory services we provide to clients.

## **Item 15 – Custody**

Although our firm does not have custody of client funds and securities, we have established procedures for all accounts to ensure all funds and securities are held at a qualified custodian (e.g. NFS or Pershing) in a separate account for each client under that client's name. Clients or an independent representative of the client will direct, in writing, the establishment of all accounts and therefore are aware of the qualified custodian's name, address and the manner in which the funds or securities are maintained. Finally, account statements are delivered directly from the qualified custodian to each client, or the client's independent representative, at least quarterly. You should carefully review those statements and are urged to compare the statements against reports received from Sikich Financial. When clients have questions about their account statements, they should contact their Sikich Financial IAR or the qualified custodian preparing the statement.

## **Item 16 – Investment Discretion**

Clients may engage Sikich Financial to provide discretionary and non-discretionary asset management services. Clients give Sikich discretionary authority when they sign a wealth management agreement with Sikich Financial and may in certain circumstances limit or change/amend such limitations by giving Sikich Financial written instructions.

### **Item 17 – Voting Client Securities**

We will not vote proxies on behalf of your account. While there are some investment advisors that will vote proxies and other corporate decisions on behalf of their clients, we have determined that taking on the responsibility for voting client securities does not add enough value+ to the services provided to clients to justify the additional compliance and regulatory costs associated with voting client securities. Therefore, it is your responsibility to vote all proxies for securities held in accounts managed by our Firm.

Clients will receive proxies directly from their custodian or transfer agent and such documents will not be delivered by our Firm. Although we do not vote client proxies, if you have a question about a particular proxy feel free to contact us.

### **Item 18 – Financial Information**

Under no circumstances do we require or solicit payment of fees in excess of \$500 per client more than six months in advance of services rendered. Therefore, we are not required to include a financial statement.

As an advisory firm that maintains discretionary authority for client accounts and may be deemed to have custody, we are also required to disclose any financial condition that is reasonable likely to impair our ability to meet our contractual obligations. Sikich Financial has no additional financial circumstances to report.

Sikich Financial has not been the subject of a bankruptcy petition at any time during the past ten years.

### **Item 19 – Requirements for State-Registered Advisers**

This section is intentionally left blank since the Firm is SEC registered.