



# ALTMAN

## A D V I S O R S

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**Item 1: Cover Page**  
**Part 2A of Form ADV: Firm Brochure | November 2016**

This brochure provides information about the qualifications and business practices of Altman Advisors. If clients have any questions about the contents of this brochure, please contact us at (312) 759-7810. The information in this brochure has not been approved or verified by the United States Securities and Exchange Commission or by any State Securities Authority. Additional information about our firm is also available on the SEC's website at [www.adviserinfo.sec.gov](http://www.adviserinfo.sec.gov). Please note that the use of the term "registered investment adviser" and description of our firm and/or our associates as "registered" does not imply a certain level of skill or training. Clients are encouraged to review this Brochure and Brochure Supplements for our firm's associates who advise clients for more information on the qualifications of our firm and our employees.

## Item 2: Material Changes

Altman Advisors is required to make clients aware of information that has changed since the last annual update to the Firm Brochure (“Brochure”) and that may be important to them. Clients can then determine whether to review the brochure in its entirety or to contact us with questions about the changes.

Since our firm’s initial SEC registration we have added information into Item 14 of this Brochure regarding the Additional Services provided to our firm by TD Ameritrade, Inc. We have changed our Comprehensive Portfolio Management service to a Portfolio Management service, which will allow our firm to also offer standalone asset management services to clients. Benjamin Altman will not be acting as our Chief Compliance Officer.

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## **Item 4: Advisory Business**

Our firm is dedicated to providing individuals and other types of clients with a wide array of investment advisory services. Our firm is a corporation formed under the laws of the State of Delaware in 2016 and has been in business as an investment adviser since that time. Our firm is wholly owned by Benjamin M. Altman.

Our firm provides asset management and investment consulting services for many different types of clients to help meet their financial goals while remaining sensitive to risk tolerance and time horizons. As a fiduciary it is our duty to always act in the client's best interest. This is accomplished in part by knowing the client. Our firm has established a service-oriented advisory practice with open lines of communication. Working with clients to understand their investment objectives while educating them about our process, facilitates the kind of working relationship we value.

### **Types of Advisory Services Offered**

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#### **Portfolio Management:**

As part of our Portfolio Management services, Clients may be provided with standalone asset management or a combination of asset management and financial planning or consulting services. This service is designed to assist clients in meeting their financial goals. Our firm conducts client meetings to understand their current financial situation, existing resources, financial goals, and tolerance for risk. Based on what is learned, an investment approach is presented to the client, consisting of individual stocks, bonds, exchange traded funds ("ETFs"), options, mutual funds and other public and private securities or investments. Once the appropriate portfolio has been determined, portfolios are continuously and regularly monitored, and if necessary, rebalanced based upon the client's individual needs, stated goals and objectives. Upon client request, our firm provides a summary of observations and recommendations for the planning or consulting aspects of this service.

#### **Financial Planning & Consulting:**

Our firm provides a variety of standalone financial planning and consulting services to clients for the management of financial resources based upon an analysis of current situation, goals, and objectives. Financial planning services will typically involve preparing a financial plan or rendering a financial consultation for clients based on the client's financial goals and objectives. This planning or consulting may encompass Investment Planning, Retirement Planning, Estate Planning, Charitable Planning, Education Planning, Corporate and Personal Tax Planning, Cost Segregation Study, Corporate Structure, Real Estate Analysis, Mortgage/Debt Analysis, Insurance Analysis, Lines of Credit Evaluation, or Business and Personal Financial Planning. Written financial plans or financial consultations rendered to clients usually include general recommendations for a course of activity or specific actions to be taken by the clients. Implementation of the recommendations will be at the discretion of the client. Our firm provides clients with a summary of their financial situation, and observations for financial planning engagements. Financial consultations are not typically accompanied by a written summary of observations and recommendations, as the process is less formal than the planning service. Assuming that all the information and documents requested from the client are provided promptly, plans or consultations are typically completed within 6 months of the client signing a contract with our firm.

## **Retirement Plan Consulting:**

Our firm provides retirement plan consulting services to employer plan sponsors on an ongoing basis. Generally, such consulting services consist of assisting employer plan sponsors in establishing, monitoring and reviewing their company's participant-directed retirement plan. As the needs of the plan sponsor dictate, areas of advising could include: investment options, plan structure and participant education. Retirement Plan Consulting services typically include:

- Establishing an Investment Policy Statement – Our firm will assist in the development a statement that summarizes the investment goals and objectives along with the broad strategies to be employed to meet the objectives.
- Investment Options – Our firm will work with the Plan Sponsor to evaluate existing investment options and make recommendations for appropriate changes.
- Asset Allocation and Portfolio Construction – Our firm will develop strategic asset allocation models to aid Participants in developing strategies to meet their investment objectives, time horizon, financial situation and tolerance for risk.
- Investment Monitoring – Our firm will monitor the performance of the investments and notify the client in the event of over/underperformance and in times of market volatility.

In providing services for retirement plan consulting, our firm does not provide any advisory services with respect to the following types of assets: employer securities, real estate (excluding real estate funds and publicly traded REITS), participant loans, non-publicly traded securities or assets, other illiquid investments, or brokerage window programs (collectively, “Excluded Assets”). All retirement plan consulting services shall be in compliance with the applicable state laws regulating retirement consulting services. This applies to client accounts that are retirement or other employee benefit plans (“Plan”) governed by the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974, as amended (“ERISA”). If the client accounts are part of a Plan, and our firm accepts appointment to provide services to such accounts, our firm acknowledges its fiduciary standard within the meaning of Section 3(21) of ERISA as designated by the Retirement Plan Consulting Agreement with respect to the provision of services described therein.

## **Tailoring of Advisory Services**

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Our firm offers individualized investment advice to our Portfolio Management clients. General investment advice will be offered to our Financial Planning & Consulting and Retirement Plan Consulting clients. Each Comprehensive Portfolio Management client has the opportunity to place reasonable restrictions on the types of investments to be held in the portfolio. Restrictions on investments in certain securities or types of securities may not be possible due to the level of difficulty this would entail in managing the account.

## **Participation in Wrap Fee Programs**

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Our firm offers a wrap fee program as further described in Part 2A, Appendix 1 (the “Wrap Fee Program Brochure”). Our firm does not manage wrap fee accounts in a different fashion than non-wrap fee accounts. All accounts are managed on an individualized basis according to the client’s investment objectives, financial goals, risk tolerance, etc.

## **Regulatory Assets Under Management**

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As of August 2016, our firm manages \$106,7000,000 in discretionary assets under management.



## **Item 5: Fees & Compensation**

### **Compensation for Our Advisory Services**

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#### **Portfolio Management:**

The maximum annual fee charged for this service will not exceed 1.50%. Options not billed an advisory fee in accordance with the table above will be assessed a fee of \$10 per contract to be billed in arrears at the end of the quarter. Fees to be assessed will be outlined in the advisory agreement to be signed by the client. Annualized fees are billed on a pro-rata basis quarterly in advance based on the value of the account(s) on the last day of the previous quarter. Fees are negotiable and will be deducted from client account(s). In rare cases, our firm will agree to directly invoice. As part of this process, Clients understand the following:

- a) The client's independent custodian sends statements at least quarterly showing the market values for each security included in the Assets and all account disbursements, including the amount of the advisory fees paid to our firm;
- b) Clients will provide authorization permitting our firm to be directly paid by these terms. Our firm will send an invoice directly to the custodian; and
- c) If our firm sends a copy of our invoice to the client, a legend urging the comparison of information provided in our statement with those from the qualified custodian will be included.

#### **Financial Planning & Consulting:**

Our firm charges on an hourly or flat fee basis for financial planning and consulting services. The total estimated fee, as well as the ultimate fee charged, is based on the scope and complexity of our engagement with the client. The maximum hourly fee to be charged will not exceed \$500. Flat fees range from \$3,000 to \$10,000. Our firm may require a retainer of 50% of the ultimate financial planning or consulting fee at the time of signing. If a retainer is required, the remainder of the fee will be directly billed to the client and due within 30 days of a financial plan being delivered or consultation rendered. Our firm will not require a retainer exceeding \$1,200 when services cannot be rendered within 6 months.

#### **Retirement Plan Consulting:**

Our Retirement Plan Consulting services are billed on fee based on a percentage of Plan assets under management. The total estimated fee, as well as the ultimate fee charged, is based on the scope and complexity of our engagement with the client. Fees based on a percentage of managed Plan assets will not exceed 1.00%. The fee-paying arrangements for Retirement Plan Consulting service will be determined on a case-by-case basis and will be detailed in the signed consulting agreement. Clients will be invoiced directly for the fees.

### **Other Types of Fees & Expenses**

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Non-Wrap fee clients will incur transaction charges for trades executed in their accounts. These transaction fees are separate from our firm's advisory fees and will be disclosed by the chosen custodian. Clients may also pay charges imposed directly by a mutual fund, index fund, or exchange traded fund, which shall be disclosed in the fund's prospectus (i.e., fund management fees, initial or deferred sales charges, mutual fund sales loads, 12b-1 fees, surrender charges, variable annuity

fees, IRA and qualified retirement plan fees, and other fund expenses). Our firm does not receive a portion of these fees.

Wrap fee clients will not incur transaction costs for trades. More information about this can be found in our separate Wrap Fee Program Brochure.

### **Termination & Refunds**

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Either party may terminate the advisory agreement signed with our firm for Portfolio Management services in writing at any time. Upon notice of termination our firm will process a pro-rata refund of the unearned portion of the advisory fees charged in advance at the beginning of the quarter.

Financial Planning & Consulting clients may terminate their agreement at any time before the delivery of a financial plan by providing written notice. For purposes of calculating refunds, all work performed by us up to the point of termination shall be calculated at the hourly fee currently in effect. Clients will receive a pro-rata refund of unearned fees based on the time and effort expended by our firm.

Either party to a Retirement Plan Consulting Agreement may terminate at any time by providing written notice to the other party. Full refunds will only be made in cases where cancellation occurs within 5 business days of signing an agreement. After 5 business days from initial signing, either party must provide the other party 30 days' written notice to terminate billing. Billing will terminate 30 days after receipt of termination notice. Clients will be charged on a pro-rata basis, which takes into account work completed by our firm on behalf of the client. Clients will incur charges for bona fide advisory services rendered up to the point of termination (determined as 30 days from receipt of said written notice) and such fees will be due and payable.

### **Commissionable Securities Sales**

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Representatives of our firm are registered representatives of Purshe Kaplan Sterling Investments, Inc ("PKS"), member FINRA/SIPC. As such they are able to accept compensation for the sale of securities or other investment products, including distribution or service ("trail") fees from the sale of mutual funds. Clients should be aware that the practice of accepting commissions for the sale of securities presents a conflict of interest and gives our firm and/or our representatives an incentive to recommend investment products based on the compensation received. Our firm generally addresses commissionable sales conflicts that arise when explaining to clients these sales create an incentive to recommend based on the compensation to be earned and/or when recommending commissionable mutual funds, explaining that "no-load" funds are also available. Our firm does not prohibit clients from purchasing recommended investment products through other unaffiliated brokers or agents.

### **Item 6: Performance-Based Fees & Side-By-Side Management**

Our firm does not charge performance-based fees.

## Item 7: Types of Clients & Account Requirements

Our firm has the following types of clients:

- Individuals and High Net Worth Individuals;
- Trusts, Estates or Charitable Organizations;
- Pension and Profit Sharing Plans;
- Corporations, Limited Liability Companies and/or Other Business Types.

Our firm requires a minimum household balance of \$3,000,000 for our Portfolio Management service. Generally, this minimum household balance would be required throughout the course of the client's relationship with our firm, but may be waived in certain instances.

## Item 8: Methods of Analysis, Investment Strategies & Risk of Loss

### Methods of Analysis

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We use the following methods of analysis in formulating our investment advice and/or managing client assets:

**Fundamental Analysis:** We attempt to measure the intrinsic value of a security by looking at economic and financial factors (including the overall economy, industry conditions, and the financial condition and management of the company itself) to determine if the company is underpriced (indicating it may be a good time to buy) or overpriced (indicating it may be time to sell). Fundamental analysis does not attempt to anticipate market movements. This presents a potential risk, as the price of a security can move up or down along with the overall market regardless of the economic and financial factors considered in evaluating the stock.

**Asset Allocation:** Rather than focusing primarily on securities selection, we attempt to identify an appropriate ratio of securities, fixed income, and cash suitable to the client's investment goals and risk tolerance. A risk of asset allocation is that the client may not participate in sharp increases in a particular security, industry or market sector. Another risk is that the ratio of securities, fixed income, and cash will change over time due to stock and market movements and, if not corrected, will no longer be appropriate for the client's goals.

### Investment Strategies We Use

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We use the following strategies in managing client accounts, provided that such strategies are appropriate to the needs of the client and consistent with the client's investment objectives, risk tolerance, and time horizons, among other considerations:

**Long-Term Purchases:** When utilizing this strategy, we may purchase securities with the idea of holding them for a relatively long time (typically held for at least a year). A risk in a long-term purchase strategy is that by holding the security for this length of time, we may not take advantages of short-term gains that could be profitable to a client. Moreover, if our predictions are incorrect, a security may decline sharply in value before we make the decision to sell. We typically employ this sub-strategy when we believe the securities to be well valued; and/or we want exposure to a particular asset class over time, regardless of the current projection for this class. The potential risks associated with this investment strategy involve a lower than expected return, for many years in a row. Lower-than-expected returns that last for a long time and/or that are severe in nature



would have the impact of dramatically lowering the ending value of your portfolio, and thus could significantly threaten your ability to meet financial goals.

**Short-Term Purchases:** When utilizing this strategy, we may also purchase securities with the idea of selling them within a relatively short time (typically a year or less). We do this in an attempt to take advantage of conditions that we believe will soon result in a price swing in the securities we purchase. The potential risk associated with this investment strategy is associated with the currency or exchange rate. Currency or exchange rate risk is a form of risk that arises from the change in price of one currency against another. The constant fluctuations in the foreign currency in which an investment is denominated vis-à-vis one's home currency may add risk to the value of a security. Currency risk is greater for shorter term investments, which do not have time to level off like longer term foreign investments.

**Option Writing:** We may use options as an investment strategy. An option is a contract that gives the buyer the right, but not the obligation, to buy or sell an asset (such as a share of stock) at a specific price on or before a certain date. An option, just like a stock or bond, is a security. An option is also a derivative, because it derives its value from an underlying asset. The two types of options are calls and puts. A call gives us the right to buy an asset at a certain price within a specific period of time. We will buy a call if we have determined that the stock will increase substantially before the option expires. A put gives us the holder the right to sell an asset at a certain price within a specific period of time. We will buy a put if we have determined that the price of the stock will fall before the option expires. We will use options to "hedge" a purchase of the underlying security; in other words, we will use an option purchase to limit the potential upside and downside of a security we have purchased for your portfolio. We use "covered calls", in which we sell an option on security you own. In this strategy, you receive a fee for making the option available, and the person purchasing the option has the right to buy the security from you at an agreed-upon price. We use a "spreading strategy", in which we purchase two or more option contracts (for example, a call option that you buy and a call option that you sell) for the same underlying security. This effectively puts you on both sides of the market, but with the ability to vary price, time and other factors. The potential risks associated with these transactions are that (1) all options expire. The closer the option gets to expiration, the quicker the premium in the option deteriorates; and (2) Prices can move very quickly. Depending on factors such as time until expiration and the relationship of the stock price to the option's strike price, small movements in a stock can translate into big movements in the underlying options.

There are special risks associated with uncovered option writing, which exposes the investor to potentially significant loss. Therefore, this type of strategy may not be suitable for all customers approved for options transactions.

- The potential loss of uncovered call writing is unlimited. The writer of an uncovered call is in an extremely risky position, and may incur large losses if the value of the underlying instrument increases above the exercise price.
- As with writing uncovered calls, the risk of writing uncovered put options is substantial. The writer of an uncovered put option bears a risk of loss if the value of the underlying instrument declines below the exercise price. Such loss could be substantial if there is a significant decline in the value of the underlying instrument.
- Uncovered option writing is thus suitable only for the knowledgeable investor who understands the risks, has the financial capacity and willingness to incur potentially substantial losses, and has sufficient liquid assets to meet applicable margin requirements. In this regard, if the value of the underlying instrument moves against an uncovered

writer's options position, the investor's broker may request significant additional margin payments. If an investor does not make such margin payments, the broker may liquidate stock of options positions in the investor's account with little or no prior notice in accordance with the investor's margin agreement.

- For combination writing, where the investor writes both a put and a call on the same underlying instrument, the potential risk is unlimited.
- If a secondary market in options were to become unavailable, investors could not engage in closing transactions, and an option writer would remain obligated until expiration of assignment.
- The writer of an American-style option is subject to being assigned an exercise at any time after he has written the option until the option expires. By contrast, the writer of a European-style option is subject to exercise assignment only during the exercise period.

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### **Risk of Loss**

Investing in securities involves risk of loss that clients should be prepared to bear. While the stock market may increase and the account(s) could enjoy a gain, it is also possible that the stock market may decrease and the account(s) could suffer a loss. It is important that clients understand the risks associated with investing in the stock market, are appropriately diversified in investments, and ask any questions.

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### **Additional Information**

Our firm generally invests client cash balances in money market funds, FDIC Insured Certificates of Deposit, high-grade commercial paper and/or government backed debt instruments. Ultimately, our firm tries to achieve the highest return on client cash balances through relatively low-risk conservative investments. In most cases, at least a partial cash balance will be maintained in a money market account so that our firm may debit advisory fees for our services related to our Portfolio Management service, as applicable.

### **Item 9: Disciplinary Information**

There are no legal or disciplinary events that are material to the evaluation of our advisory business or the integrity of our management.

### **Item 10: Other Financial Industry Activities & Affiliations**

Representatives of our firm are registered representatives of PKS, member FINRA/SIPC, and licensed insurance agents. As a result of these transactions, they receive normal and customary commissions. A conflict of interest exists as these commissionable sales create an incentive to recommend products based on the compensation earned. To mitigate this potential conflict, our firm will act in the client's best interest.

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

As a fiduciary, it is an investment adviser's responsibility to provide fair and full disclosure of all material facts and to act solely in the best interest of each of our clients at all times. Our fiduciary duty is the underlying principle for our firm's Code of Ethics, which includes procedures for personal securities transaction and insider trading. Our firm requires all representatives to conduct business

with the highest level of ethical standards and to comply with all federal and state securities laws at all times. Upon employment with our firm, and at least annually thereafter, all representatives of our firm will acknowledge receipt, understanding and compliance with our firm's Code of Ethics. Our firm and representatives must conduct business in an honest, ethical, and fair manner and avoid all circumstances that might negatively affect or appear to affect our duty of complete loyalty to all clients. This disclosure is provided to give all clients a summary of our Code of Ethics. If a client or a potential client wishes to review our Code of Ethics in its entirety, a copy will be provided promptly upon request.

Our firm recognizes that the personal investment transactions of our representatives demands the application of a Code of Ethics with high standards and requires that all such transactions be carried out in a way that does not endanger the interest of any client. At the same time, our firm also believes that if investment goals are similar for clients and for our representatives, it is logical, and even desirable, that there be common ownership of some securities.

In order to prevent conflicts of interest, our firm has established procedures for transactions effected by our representatives for their personal accounts<sup>1</sup>. In order to monitor compliance with our personal trading policy, our firm has pre-clearance requirements and a quarterly securities transaction reporting system for all of our representatives.

Neither our firm nor a related person recommends, buys or sells for client accounts, securities in which our firm or a related person has a material financial interest without prior disclosure to the client.

Related persons of our firm may buy or sell securities and other investments that are also recommended to clients. In order to minimize this conflict of interest, our related persons will place client interests ahead of their own interests and adhere to our firm's Code of Ethics, a copy of which is available upon request.

Likewise, related persons of our firm buy or sell securities for themselves at or about the same time they buy or sell the same securities for client accounts. In order to minimize this conflict of interest, our related persons will place client interests ahead of their own interests and adhere to our firm's Code of Ethics, a copy of which is available upon request. Further, our related persons will refrain from buying or selling the same securities prior to buying or selling for our clients in the same day unless included in a block trade.

## **Item 12: Brokerage Practices**

### **Selecting a Brokerage Firm**

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Our firm does not maintain custody of client assets. Client assets must be maintained by a qualified custodian. Our firm seeks to recommend a custodian who will hold client assets and execute transactions on terms that are overall most advantageous when compared to other available providers and their services. The factors considered, among others, are these:

- Timeliness of execution
- Timeliness and accuracy of trade confirmations

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<sup>1</sup> For purposes of the policy, our associate's personal account generally includes any account (a) in the name of our associate, his/her spouse, his/her minor children or other dependents residing in the same household, (b) for which our associate is a trustee or executor, or (c) which our associate controls, including our client accounts which our associate controls and/or a member of his/her household has a direct or indirect beneficial interest in.

- Research services provided
- Ability to provide investment ideas
- Execution facilitation services provided
- Record keeping services provided
- Custody services provided
- Frequency and correction of trading errors
- Ability to access a variety of market venues
- Expertise as it relates to specific securities
- Financial condition
- Business reputation
- Quality of services

With this in consideration, our firm has an arrangement with TD Ameritrade Institutional, a division of TD Ameritrade, Inc. ("TD Ameritrade"), member FINRA/SIPC. TD Ameritrade is an independent and unaffiliated SEC-registered broker-dealer. TD Ameritrade offers services to independent investment advisers which includes custody of securities, trade execution, clearance and settlement of transactions. TD Ameritrade enables us to obtain many no-load mutual funds without transaction charges and other no-load funds at nominal transaction charges. TD Ameritrade does not charge client accounts separately for custodial services. Client accounts will be charged transaction fees, commissions or other fees on trades that are executed or settle into the client's custodial account. Transaction fees are negotiated with TD Ameritrade and are generally discounted from customary retail commission rates. This benefits clients because the overall fee paid is often lower than would be otherwise.

TD Ameritrade may make certain research and brokerage services available at no additional cost to our firm. Research products and services provided by TD Ameritrade may include: research reports on recommendations or other information about particular companies or industries; economic surveys, data and analyses; financial publications; portfolio evaluation services; financial database software and services; computerized news and pricing services; quotation equipment for use in running software used in investment decision-making; and other products or services that provide lawful and appropriate assistance by TD Ameritrade to our firm in the performance of our investment decision-making responsibilities. The aforementioned research and brokerage services qualify for the safe harbor exemption defined in Section 28(e) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934.

TD Ameritrade does not make client brokerage commissions generated by client transactions available for our firm's use. The aforementioned research and brokerage services are used by our firm to manage accounts. Without this arrangement, our firm might be compelled to purchase the same or similar services at our own expense.

As part of our fiduciary duty to our clients, our firm will endeavor at all times to put the interests of our clients first. Clients should be aware, however, that the receipt of economic benefits by our firm or our related persons creates a potential conflict of interest and may indirectly influence our firm's choice of TD Ameritrade as a custodial recommendation. Our firm examined this potential conflict of interest when our firm chose to recommend TD Ameritrade and have determined that the recommendation is in the best interest of our firm's clients and satisfies our fiduciary obligations, including our duty to seek best execution.

Our non-wrap fee clients may pay a transaction fee or commission to TD Ameritrade that is higher than another qualified broker dealer might charge to effect the same transaction where our firm

determines in good faith that the commission is reasonable in relation to the value of the brokerage and research services provided to the client as a whole.

In seeking best execution, the determinative factor is not the lowest possible cost, but whether the transaction represents the best qualitative execution, taking into consideration the full range of a broker-dealer's services, including the value of research provided, execution capability, commission rates, and responsiveness. Although our firm will seek competitive rates, to the benefit of all clients, our firm may not necessarily obtain the lowest possible commission rates for specific client account transactions.

### **Soft Dollars**

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Our firm does not direct client transactions to a particular broker-dealer in return for soft dollar benefits. Our firm does not receive soft dollars in excess of what is allowed by Section 28(e) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934. The safe harbor research products and services obtained by our firm will generally be used to service all of our clients but not necessarily all at any one particular time.

### **Brokerage Commissions**

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TD Ameritrade does not make client brokerage commissions generated by client transactions nor for the referral of clients available for our firm's use.

### **Directed Brokerage**

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Our firm allows clients to direct brokerage outside our recommendation. Our firm may be unable to achieve the most favorable execution of client transactions. Client directed brokerage may cost clients more money. For example, in a directed brokerage account, clients may pay higher brokerage commissions because our firm may not be able to aggregate orders to reduce transaction costs, or clients may receive less favorable prices.

Neither our firm nor any of our firm's representatives have discretionary authority in making the determination of the brokers-dealers and/or custodians with whom orders for the purchase or sale of securities are placed for execution, and the commission rates at which such securities transactions are effected. Our firm routinely recommends that clients direct us to execute through a specified broker-dealer. Our firm recommends the use of TD Ameritrade.

### **Special Considerations for ERISA Clients**

A retirement or ERISA plan client may direct all or part of portfolio transactions for its account through a specific broker or dealer in order to obtain goods or services on behalf of the plan. Such direction is permitted provided that the goods and services provided are reasonable expenses of the plan incurred in the ordinary course of its business for which it otherwise would be obligated and empowered to pay. ERISA prohibits directed brokerage arrangements when the goods or services purchased are not for the exclusive benefit of the plan. Consequently, our firm will request that plan sponsors who direct plan brokerage provide us with a letter documenting that this arrangement will be for the exclusive benefit of the plan.



## **Aggregation of Purchase or Sale**

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Our firm provides investment management services for various clients. There are occasions on which portfolio transactions may be executed as part of concurrent authorizations to purchase or sell the same security for numerous accounts served by our firm, which involve accounts with similar investment objectives. Although such concurrent authorizations potentially could be either advantageous or disadvantageous to any one or more particular accounts, they are affected only when our firm believes that to do so will be in the best interest of the effected accounts. When such concurrent authorizations occur, the objective is to allocate the executions in a manner which is deemed equitable to the accounts involved. In any given situation, our firm attempts to allocate trade executions in the most equitable manner possible, taking into consideration client objectives, current asset allocation and availability of funds using price averaging, proration and consistently non-arbitrary methods of allocation.

### **Item 13: Review of Accounts or Financial Plans**

Our management personnel or financial advisors review accounts on a quarterly basis for our Portfolio Management clients. The nature of these reviews is to learn whether client accounts are in line with their investment objectives, appropriately positioned based on market conditions, and investment policies, if applicable. Our firm may review client accounts more frequently than described above. Among the factors which may trigger an off-cycle review are major market or economic events, the client's life events, requests by the client, etc. Our firm provides written reports to clients, upon request. Verbal reports to clients take place on at least an annual basis when our Portfolio Management clients are contacted.

Financial Planning clients do not receive reviews of their written plans unless they take action to schedule a financial consultation with us. Our firm does not provide ongoing services to financial planning clients, but are willing to meet with such clients upon their request to discuss updates to their plans, changes in their circumstances, etc. Financial Planning clients do not receive written or verbal updated reports regarding their financial plans unless they separately engage our firm for a post-financial plan meeting or update to their initial written financial plan.

Retirement Plan Consulting clients receive reviews of their retirement plans for the duration of the service. Our firm also provides ongoing services where clients are met with upon their request to discuss updates to their plans, changes in their circumstances, etc. Retirement Plan Consulting clients do not receive written or verbal updated reports regarding their plans unless they choose to engage our firm for ongoing services.

### **Item 14: Client Referrals & Other Compensation**

#### **TD Ameritrade Institutional**

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As disclosed under Item 12 of this Brochure, we participate in TD Ameritrade's institutional customer program and we may recommend TD Ameritrade to Clients for custody and brokerage services. There is no direct link between our firm's participation in the program and the investment advice we give to our Clients, although we receive economic benefits through our participation in the program that are typically not available to TD Ameritrade retail investors. These benefits include the following products and services (provided without cost or at a discount): receipt of duplicate Client statements and confirmations; research related products and tools; consulting services; access to a trading desk serving our firm's participants; access to block trading (which

provides the ability to aggregate securities transactions for execution and then allocate the appropriate shares to Client accounts); the ability to have advisory fees deducted directly from Client accounts; access to an electronic communications network for Client order entry and account information; access to mutual funds with no transaction fees and to certain institutional money managers; and discounts on compliance, marketing, research, technology, and practice management products or services provided to us by third party vendors. TD Ameritrade may also have paid for business consulting and professional services received by our firm's related persons. Some of the products and services made available by TD Ameritrade through the program may benefit our firm but may not benefit our Client accounts. These products or services may assist us in managing and administering Client accounts, including accounts not maintained at TD Ameritrade. Other services made available by TD Ameritrade are intended to help us manage and further develop our business enterprise. The benefits received by our firm or our personnel through participation in the program do not depend on the amount of brokerage transactions directed to TD Ameritrade. As part of our fiduciary duties to our clients, we endeavor at all times to put the interests of our clients first. Clients should be aware, however, that the receipt of economic benefits by our firm or our related persons in and of itself creates a potential conflict of interest and may indirectly influence our firm's choice of TD Ameritrade for custody and brokerage services.

Our firm also receives from TD Ameritrade certain additional economic benefits ("Additional Services") that may or may not be offered to any other independent investment Advisors participating in the program. Specifically, the Additional Services include BlackDiamond, FactSet Research Systems, Itegria, MoneyGuide PRO, Morningstar, Salesforce, ThinkPipes, and Value Line Publishing. TD Ameritrade provides the Additional Services to our firm in its sole discretion and at its own expense. Our firm does not pay any fees to TD Ameritrade for the Additional Services. Our firm and TD Ameritrade have entered into a separate agreement ("Additional Services Addendum") to govern the terms of the provision of the Additional Services.

Our firm's receipt of Additional Services raises potential conflicts of interest. In providing Additional Services to our firm, TD Ameritrade most likely considers the amount and profitability to TD Ameritrade of the assets in, and trades placed for, our firm's Client accounts maintained with TD Ameritrade. TD Ameritrade has the right to terminate the Additional Services Addendum with our firm, in its sole discretion, provided certain conditions are met. Consequently, in order to continue to obtain the Additional Services from TD Ameritrade, our firm may have an incentive to recommend to its Clients that the assets under management by our firm be held in custody with TD Ameritrade and to place transactions for Client accounts with TD Ameritrade. Our firm's receipt of Additional Services does not diminish its duty to act in the best interests of its Clients, including to seek best execution of trades for Client accounts.

## **Referral Fees**

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Our firm pays referral fees (non-commission based) to independent solicitors (non-registered representatives) for the referral of their clients to our firm in accordance with Rule 206 (4)-3 of the Investment Advisers Act of 1940. Such referral fee represents a share of our investment advisory fee charged to our clients. This arrangement will not result in higher costs to the referred client. In this regard, our firm maintains Solicitors Agreements in compliance with Rule 206 (4)-3 of the Investment Advisers Act of 1940 and applicable state and federal laws. All clients referred by Solicitors to our firm will be given full written disclosure describing the terms and fee arrangements between our firm and Solicitor(s). In cases where state law requires licensure of solicitors, our firm ensures that no solicitation fees are paid unless the solicitor is registered as an

investment adviser representative of our firm. If our firm is paying solicitation fees to another registered investment adviser, the licensure of individuals is the other firm's responsibility.

### **Item 15: Custody**

Our firm does not have custody of client funds or securities. All of our clients receive account statements directly from their qualified custodians at least quarterly upon opening of an account. If our firm decides to also send account statements to clients, such notice and account statements include a legend that recommends that the client compare the account statements received from the qualified custodian with those received from our firm. Clients are encouraged to raise any questions with us about the custody, safety or security of their assets and our custodial recommendations.

### **Item 16: Investment Discretion**

Clients have the option of providing our firm with investment discretion on their behalf, pursuant to an executed investment advisory client agreement. By granting investment discretion, our firm is authorized to execute securities transactions, determine which securities are bought and sold, and the total amount to be bought and sold. Limitations may be imposed by the client in the form of specific constraints on any of these areas of discretion with our firm's written acknowledgement.

### **Item 17: Voting Client Securities**

SEC Rule 206(4)-6 requires investment advisers who have voting authority with respect to securities held in their clients' accounts to monitor corporate actions and vote proxies in their clients' interests. Our firm is required by the SEC to adopt written policies and procedures, make those policies and procedures available to clients, and retain certain records with respect to proxy votes cast. Our firm considers proxy voting an important right of our clients as shareholders and believe that reasonable care and diligence must be taken to ensure that such rights are properly and timely exercised. When our firm has discretion to vote the proxies of our clients, our firm will vote those proxies in the client's best interests and in accordance with these policies and procedures. Clients may request a copy of our written policies and procedures regarding proxy voting and/or information on how particular proxies were voted by contacting our Chief Compliance Officer.

#### **Policy for Voting Proxies**

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All proxies received by our firm will be given to our Chief Compliance Officer or designated person for processing. Our Chief Compliance Officer will determine which accounts managed by our firm hold the security to which the proxy relates. These accounts and their shareholdings will be matched to the proxies received for each security. Missing proxies or significant variances in shares held will be investigated.

A grid of securities being voted will be updated with each proxy being voted. The grid will also contain a list of clients with the security voted upon. Our Chief Compliance Officer will review each item for voting on each proxy. Based on our proxy voting guidelines outlined below, a determination of how our firm votes will be made. Proxies will generally be voted online unless custodian requires mailed forms. In the absence of standing voting guidelines from the client, our firm will vote proxies in the best interest of each particular client.

## Proxies Voting Guidelines

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Where voting authority exists, proxies are voted by our firm according to Board recommendations in categories listed below among others unless not deemed to be in the best interests of the client:

- for directors and for management on routine matters;
- for a limit on or reduction of the number of directors, and for an increase in the number of directors on a case by case basis;
- against the creation of a tiered board;
- for the elimination of cumulative voting;
- for independence of auditors;
- for deferred compensation;
- for profit sharing plans;
- for stock option plans unless the plan could result in material dilution to shares outstanding or is excessive;
- for stock repurchases;
- for an increase in authorized shares unless the authorization effectively results in a blind investment pool for shareholders;
- for reductions in the par value of stock;
- for company name changes;
- for routine appointments of auditors.

Our firm abstains on motions to limit directors' liability. Material issues not addressed above (e.g., mergers, poison pills, social investing and miscellaneous shareholder proposals) are dealt with on a case-by-case basis. Our firm will defer to instruction from clients in all voting matters. Records of all issues and votes are maintained and reported to clients as requested.

Our firm recognizes that under certain circumstances our firm may have a conflict of interest between us and our clients. Such circumstances may include, but are not limited to, situations where our firm or one or more of our affiliates, including officers, directors and employees, has or is seeking a client relationship with the issuer of the security that is the subject of the proxy vote. Our firm shall periodically inform our employees that they are under an obligation to be aware of the potential for conflicts of interest on the part of our firm with respect to voting proxies on behalf of funds, both as a result of our employee's personal relationships and due to circumstances that may arise during the conduct of our business, and to bring conflicts of interest of which they become aware to the attention of the proxy manager. Our firm shall not vote proxies relating to such issuers on behalf of client accounts until our firm has determined that the conflict of interest is not material or a method of resolving such conflict of interest has been agreed upon by our management team. A conflict of interest will be considered material to the extent that it is determined that such conflict has the potential to influence our decision-making in voting a proxy. Materiality determinations will be based upon an assessment of the particular facts and circumstances. If our firm determines that a conflict of interest is not material, our firm may vote proxies notwithstanding the existence of a conflict. If the conflict of interest is determined to be material, the conflict shall be disclosed to our management team and our firm shall follow the instructions of the management team.

Our Chief Compliance Officer will maintain files relating to our proxy voting procedures. Records will be maintained and preserved for five years from the end of the fiscal year during which the last entry was made on a record, with records for the last two years kept on our premises. Records of the following will be included in the files:

- a copy of each proxy statement that our firm receives, provided however that our firm may rely on obtaining a copy of proxy statements from the SEC's EDGAR system for those proxy statements that are available;
- a record of each vote that our firm casts;
- a copy of any document our firm created that was material to making a decision how to vote proxies, or that memorializes that decision;
- a copy of each written client request for information on how our firm voted such client's proxies, and a copy of any written response to any client request for information on how our firm voted their proxies.

Our written policies and procedures regarding proxy voting are disclosed here. Information on how particular proxies were voted may contact our Chief Compliance Officer.

### **Item 18: Financial Information**

Our firm is not required to provide financial information in this Brochure because our firm does not require the prepayment of more than \$1,200 in fees and six or more months in advance, our firm does not take custody of client funds or securities and our firm does not have a financial condition or commitment that impairs our ability to meet contractual and fiduciary obligations to clients.

Our firm has never been the subject of a bankruptcy proceeding.