

# Brown Financial Management Group, LLC

## **ADV Part 2A, Firm Brochure Dated: March 22, 2016**

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This brochure provides information about the qualifications and business practices of Brown Financial Management Group, LLC. If you have any questions about the contents of this brochure, please contact us at 518-464-9974 or [tom@thomasjbrown.com](mailto:tom@thomasjbrown.com). 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 Thomas James Brown also is available on the SEC's website at [www.adviserinfo.sec.gov](http://www.adviserinfo.sec.gov).

References herein to Brown Financial Management Group, LLC as a "registered investment adviser" or any reference to being "registered" does not imply a certain level of skill or training

## **Item 2           Material Changes**

This is Brown Financial Management Group's initial ADV. Thomas James Brown succeeded to Brown Financial Management Group, LLC on January 1, 2016. However, the services provided by Brown Financial Management Group and the individuals providing those services remain unchanged. Chief Compliance Officer, Thomas J. Brown, remains available to address any questions that a client or prospective client may have regarding the succession.

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#### Item 4            **Advisory Business**

- A. Brown Financial Management Group, LLC (the “Registrant”) is a limited liability company located in the State of New York. Thomas James Brown, a predecessor SEC registered firm, succeeded to the Registrant in January 2016. Thomas James Brown became a registered investment adviser in 2003.
- B. As discussed below, the Registrant offers to its clients (individuals, businesses, pension and profit sharing plans, trusts, estates, charitable organizations, corporations and various other business entities) discretionary investment management services and, to the extent specifically requested by a client, financial planning and related consulting services on a *fee* basis.

#### **INVESTMENT MANAGEMENT SERVICES**

The Registrant provides discretionary investment advisory services on a *fee* basis. The Registrant’s annual investment advisory fee is based upon a percentage (%) of the market value of the assets placed under the Registrant’s management. Prior to engaging the Registrant to provide investment advisory services, clients are required to enter into an *Investment Advisory Agreement* with Registrant setting forth the terms and conditions of the engagement (including termination), describing the scope of the services to be provided, and the fee that is due from the client.

Registrant's annual investment advisory fee shall include investment advisory services, and, to the **extent specifically requested** by the client, financial planning and consulting services. In the event that the client requires extraordinary planning and/or consultation services (to be determined in the sole discretion of the Registrant), the Registrant may determine to charge for such additional services, the dollar amount of which shall be set forth in a separate written notice to the client.

#### **FINANCIAL PLANNING AND CONSULTING SERVICES (STAND-ALONE)**

To the extent specifically requested by a client, the Registrant *may* determine to provide financial planning and/or consulting services (including investment and non-investment related matters, including estate planning, insurance planning, etc.) on a stand-alone separate fee basis. Registrant’s planning and consulting fees are negotiable. The Registrant provides financial planning and consulting services for an hourly fee of \$195. Fixed fee engagements generally range from \$500 to \$2,500, depending upon the level and scope of the service(s) required. Prior to engaging the Registrant to provide planning or consulting services, clients are generally required to enter into a *Financial Planning and Consulting Agreement* with Registrant setting forth the terms and conditions of the engagement (including termination), describing the scope of the services to be provided, and the portion of the fee that is due from the client prior to Registrant commencing services. If requested by the client, Registrant may recommend the services of other professionals for implementation purposes, including Thomas J. Brown in his individual capacity as registered representatives of Cambridge Investment Research (“*Cambridge*”). (*See* disclosure below at Items 10.C below). The client is under no obligation to engage the services of any such recommended professionals. The client retains absolute discretion over all such implementation decisions and is free to accept or reject any

recommendation from the Registrant. **Please Note:** If the client engages any such recommended professional, and a dispute arises thereafter relative to such engagement, the client agrees to seek recourse exclusively from and against the engaged professional. **Please Also Note:** It remains the client's responsibility to promptly notify the Registrant if there is ever any change in his/her/its financial situation or investment objectives for the purpose of reviewing/evaluating/revising Registrant's previous recommendations and/or services.

## **MISCELLANEOUS**

**Non-Investment Consulting/Implementation Services.** To the extent requested by the client, the Registrant *may* provide consulting services regarding non-investment related matters, such as estate planning, insurance, etc. Neither the Registrant, nor any of its representatives, serves as an attorney or accountant and no portion of the Registrant's services should be construed as same. To the extent requested by a client, the Registrant may recommend the services of other professionals for certain non-investment implementation purposes (i.e. attorneys, accountants, insurance, etc.), including the Registrant's representative in his individual capacities as a registered representative of a broker dealer and/or a licensed insurance agent as described below. The client is under no obligation to engage the services of any such recommended professional. The client retains absolute discretion over all such implementation decisions and is free to accept or reject any recommendation from the Registrant. **Please Note:** If the client engages any such recommended professional, and a dispute arises thereafter relative to such engagement, the client agrees to seek recourse exclusively from and against the engaged professional. **Please Also Note:** It remains the client's responsibility to promptly notify the Registrant if there is ever any change in his/her/its financial situation or investment objectives for the purpose of reviewing/evaluating/revising Registrant's previous recommendations and/or services.

**Independent Managers.** The Registrant may allocate (and/or recommend that the client allocate) a portion of a client's investment assets among unaffiliated independent investment managers in accordance with the client's designated investment objective(s). In such situations, the *Independent Manager[s]* shall have day-to-day responsibility for the active discretionary management of the allocated assets. The Registrant shall continue to render investment advisory services to the client relative to the ongoing monitoring and review of account performance, asset allocation and client investment objectives. Factors which the Registrant shall consider in recommending *Independent Manager[s]* include the client's designated investment objective(s), management style, performance, reputation, financial strength, reporting, pricing, and research.

**Use of Mutual Funds:** Most mutual funds are available directly to the public. Thus, a client or prospective client can obtain many of the mutual funds that may be recommended and/or utilized by Registrant independent of engaging Registrant as an investment advisor. However, if a client or prospective client determines to do so, he/she/it will not receive Registrant's initial and ongoing investment advisory services.

**Client Obligations.** In performing its services, Registrant shall not be required to verify any information received from the client or from the client's other professionals, and is expressly authorized to rely thereon. Moreover, each client is advised that it remains his/her/its responsibility to promptly notify the Registrant if there is ever any change in

his/her/its financial situation or investment objectives for the purpose of reviewing/evaluating/revising Registrant's previous recommendations and/or services.

**Disclosure Statement.** A copy of the Registrant's written Brochure as set forth on Part 2 of Form ADV shall be provided to each client prior to, or contemporaneously with, the execution of the applicable form of client agreement.

- C. The Registrant provides investment advisory services specific to the needs of each client. Before providing investment advisory services, an investment adviser representative will ascertain each client's investment objective(s) based upon a review of personal benchmarks. Thereafter, the Registrant will allocate investment assets, consistent with the designated investment objective(s), primarily among mutual funds, but may also recommend allocations among various individual equities (stocks).
- D. Registrant does not offer a wrap fee program for its investment advisory services.
- E. As of December 31, 2014 the Registrant had \$36,386,677 in discretionary assets under management.

## **Item 5            Fees and Compensation**

### **A.                            INVESTMENT MANAGEMENT SERVICES**

The Registrant's annual investment advisory fee shall be based upon a percentage (%) of the market value of the assets placed under the Registrant's management, generally between negotiable and 1.25% as follows:

<u>Market Value of Portfolio</u>	<u>Annual Fee %</u>
Up to \$1,000,000	1.25%
Above \$1,000,000	1.00%

### **FINANCIAL PLANNING AND CONSULTING SERVICES (STAND-ALONE)**

To the extent specifically requested by a client, the Registrant *may* determine to provide financial planning and/or consulting services (including investment and non-investment related matters, including estate planning, insurance planning, etc.) on a stand-alone fee basis. Registrant's planning and consulting fees are negotiable. The Registrant provides financial planning and consulting services for an hourly fee of \$195. Fixed fee engagements generally range from \$500 to \$2,500, depending upon the level and scope of the service(s) required.

- B. Clients may elect to have the Registrant's advisory fees deducted from their custodial account. Both Registrant's *Investment Advisory Agreement* and the custodial/clearing agreement may authorize the custodian to debit the account for the amount of the Registrant's investment advisory fee and to directly remit that advisory fee to the Registrant in compliance with regulatory procedures. In the limited event that the Registrant bills the client directly, payment is due upon receipt of the Registrant's invoice. The Registrant shall deduct fees and/or bill clients quarterly in advance, based upon the account balance as of the last business day of the previous quarter.

- C. As discussed below, unless the client directs otherwise or an individual client's circumstances require, the Registrant shall generally recommend that National Financial Services, LLC, ("*National Financial*") serve as the broker-dealer/custodian for client investment advisory assets. Broker-dealers such as *National Financial* charge brokerage commissions and/or transaction fees for effecting certain securities transactions (i.e. transaction fees are charged for certain no-load mutual funds, commissions are charged for individual equity and fixed income securities transactions). In addition to Registrant's investment advisory fee, brokerage commissions and/or transaction fees, clients will also incur, relative to all mutual fund and exchange traded fund purchases, charges imposed at the fund level (e.g. advisory fees and other fund expenses).
- D. The *Investment Advisory Agreement* between the Registrant and the client will continue in effect until terminated by either party by written notice in accordance with the terms of the *Investment Advisory Agreement*. Upon termination, the Registrant shall refund a pro-rated portion of the advanced advisory fee paid based upon the number of days remaining in the billing quarter.
- E. **Securities Commission Transactions.** In the event that the client desires, the client can engage Thomas J. Brown, in his individual capacity, as a registered representative of Cambridge Investment Research ("*Cambridge*"), a FINRA member broker-dealer, to implement investment recommendations on a commission basis. In the event the client chooses to purchase investment products through *Cambridge*, *Cambridge* will charge brokerage commissions to effect securities transactions, a portion of which commissions *Cambridge* shall pay to Thomas J. Brown, as applicable. The brokerage commissions charged by *Cambridge* may be higher or lower than those charged by other broker-dealers. In addition, *Cambridge*, as well as Registrant's Representative, relative to commission mutual fund purchases, may also receive additional ongoing 12b-1 trailing commission compensation directly from the mutual fund company during the period that the client maintains the mutual fund investment.
1. **Conflict of Interest:** The recommendation that a client purchase a commission product from *Cambridge* presents a conflict of interest, as the receipt of commissions may provide an incentive to recommend investment products based on commissions to be received, rather than on a particular client's need. No client is under any obligation to purchase any commission products from Thomas J. Brown. **The Registrant's Chief Compliance Officer, Thomas J. Brown, remains available to address any questions that a client or prospective client may have regarding the above conflict of interest.**
  2. **Please Note:** Clients may purchase investment products recommended by Registrant through other, non-affiliated broker dealers or agents.
  3. The Registrant does not receive more than 50% of its revenue from advisory clients as a result of commissions or other compensation for the sale of investment products the Registrant recommends to its clients.
  4. When Thomas J. Brown sells an investment product on a commission basis, the Registrant does not charge an advisory fee in addition to the commissions paid by the client for such product. When providing services on an advisory fee basis, the Registrant's representatives do not also receive commission compensation for such advisory services (except for any ongoing 12b-1 trailing commission

compensation that may be received as previously discussed). **However**, a client may engage the Registrant to provide investment management services on an advisory fee basis and separate from such advisory services purchase an investment product from Thomas J. Brown on a separate commission basis. Please Note: When managing accounts, the Registrant shall offset its management fee charged by the amount of 12(b)1 fees received by Thomas J. Brown, in his separate capacity as a registered representative of a *Cambridge*.

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

Neither the Registrant nor any supervised person of the Registrant accepts performance-based fees.

## **Item 7            Types of Clients**

The Registrant's clients shall generally include individuals, businesses, pension and profit sharing plans, trusts, estates, charitable organizations, corporations and various other business entities. The Registrant does not generally require an annual minimum fee or asset level for investment advisory services. The Registrant, in its sole discretion, may charge a lesser investment management fee based upon certain criteria (i.e. anticipated future earning capacity, anticipated future additional assets, dollar amount of assets to be managed, related accounts, account composition, negotiations with client, etc.).

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

- A. The Registrant may utilize the following methods of security analysis:
- Fundamental - (analysis performed on historical and present data, with the goal of making financial forecasts)
  - Cyclical – (analysis performed on historical relationships between price and market trends, to forecast the direction of prices)

The Registrant may utilize the following investment strategies when implementing investment advice given to clients:

- Long Term Purchases (securities held at least a year)
- Short Term Purchases (securities sold within a year)

**Please Note: Investment Risk.** Investing in securities involves risk of loss that clients should be prepared to bear. Different types of investments involve varying degrees of risk, and it should not be assumed that future performance of any specific investment or investment strategy (including the investments and/or investment strategies recommended or undertaken by the Registrant) will be profitable or equal any specific performance level(s).

- B. The Registrant's methods of analysis and investment strategies do not present any significant or unusual risks. However, every method of analysis has its own inherent risks. To perform an accurate market analysis the Registrant must have access to current/new market information. The Registrant has no control over the dissemination

rate of market information; therefore, unbeknownst to the Registrant, certain analyses may be compiled with outdated market information, limiting the value of the Registrant's analysis. Furthermore, an accurate market analysis can only produce a forecast of the direction of market values. There can be no assurances that a forecasted change in market value will materialize into actionable and/or profitable investment opportunities.

The Registrant's primary investment strategies - Long Term Purchases and Short Term Purchases, are fundamental investment strategies. However, every investment strategy has its own inherent risks and limitations. For example, longer term investment strategies require a longer investment time period to allow for the strategy to potentially develop. Shorter term investment strategies require a shorter investment time period to potentially develop but, as a result of more frequent trading, may incur higher transactional costs when compared to a longer term investment strategy.

- C. Currently, the Registrant allocates client investment management assets primarily among mutual funds and various individual equities (stocks).

## **Item 9           Disciplinary Information**

The Registrant has not been the subject of any disciplinary actions.

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

- A. As disclosed above in Item 5.E, Thomas J. Brown is also a registered representative of Cambridge Investment Research ("*Cambridge*"), a FINRA member broker-dealer.
- B. Neither the Registrant, nor its representatives, are registered or have an application pending to register, as a futures commission merchant, commodity pool operator, a commodity trading advisor, or a representative of the foregoing.
- C. **Registered Representatives of Cambridge** As disclosed above in Item 5.E, Thomas J. Brown, is a registered representative of *Cambridge*, a FINRA member broker-dealer. Clients may therefore choose to engage Mr. Brown in his individual capacity as a registered representative of *Cambridge* to implement investment recommendations on a commission basis. The recommendation that a client purchase a commission product from Mr. Brown presents a conflict of interest, as the receipt of commissions may provide an incentive to recommend investment products based on commissions to be received, rather than on a particular client's need. No client is under any obligation to purchase any commission products from Mr. Brown. **Registrant's Chief Compliance Officer, Thomas J. Brown, remains available to address any questions that a client or prospective client may have regarding the above conflict of interest.**

**Licensed Insurance Agent.** Thomas J. Brown, in his separate individual capacity, is a licensed insurance agent. As discussed above, clients can choose to engage Mr. Brown to affect the purchase of insurance products on a commission basis. The recommendation by the Registrant that a client purchase an insurance commission product through Mr. Brown presents a conflict of interest. No client is under any obligation to engage the services of Mr. Brown, in his individual capacity as a licensed insurance agent. Furthermore, clients are reminded that they may purchase insurance commission products



recommended by Registrant through other, non-affiliated insurance agents. **The Registrant's Chief Compliance Officer, Thomas J. Brown, remains available to address any questions that a client or prospective client may have regarding the above conflicts of interest.**

- D. The Registrant does not receive, directly or indirectly, compensation from investment advisors that it recommends or selects for its clients.

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

- A. The Registrant maintains an investment policy relative to personal securities transactions. This investment policy is part of Registrant's overall Code of Ethics, which serves to establish a standard of business conduct for all of Registrant's Representatives that is based upon fundamental principles of openness, integrity, honesty and trust, a copy of which is available upon request.

In accordance with Section 204A of the Investment Advisers Act of 1940, the Registrant also maintains and enforces written policies reasonably designed to prevent the misuse of material non-public information by the Registrant or any person associated with the Registrant.

- B. Neither the Registrant nor any related person of Registrant recommends, buys, or sells for client accounts, securities in which the Registrant or any related person of Registrant has a material financial interest.
- C. The Registrant and/or representatives of the Registrant *may* buy or sell securities that are also recommended to clients. This practice may create a situation where the Registrant and/or representatives of the Registrant are in a position to materially benefit from the sale or purchase of those securities. Therefore, this situation creates a potential conflict of interest. Practices such as "scalping" (i.e., a practice whereby the owner of shares of a security recommends that security for investment and then immediately sells it at a profit upon the rise in the market price which follows the recommendation) could take place if the Registrant did not have adequate policies in place to detect such activities. In addition, this requirement can help detect insider trading, "front-running" (i.e., personal trades executed prior to those of the Registrant's clients) and other potentially abusive practices.

The Registrant has a personal securities transaction policy in place to monitor the personal securities transactions and securities holdings of each of the Registrant's "Access Persons". The Registrant's securities transaction policy requires that Access Person of the Registrant must provide the Chief Compliance Officer or his/her designee with a written report of the their current securities holdings within ten (10) days after becoming an Access Person. Additionally, each Access Person must provide the Chief Compliance Officer or his/her designee with a written report of the Access Person's current securities holdings at least once each twelve (12) month period thereafter on a date the Registrant selects; provided, however that at any time that the Registrant has only one Access Person, he or she shall not be required to submit any securities report described above.

- D. The Registrant and/or representatives of the Registrant *may* buy or sell securities, at or around the same time as those securities are recommended to clients. This practice creates a situation where the Registrant and/or representatives of the Registrant are in a position to materially benefit from the sale or purchase of those securities. Therefore, this situation creates a potential conflict of interest. As indicated above in Item 11C, the Registrant has a personal securities transaction policy in place to monitor the personal securities transaction and securities holdings of each of Registrant's Access Persons.

## **Item 12 Brokerage Practices**

- A. In the event that the client requests that the Registrant recommend a broker-dealer/custodian for execution and/or custodial services (exclusive of those clients that may direct the Registrant to use a specific broker-dealer/custodian), Registrant generally recommends that investment advisory accounts be maintained at *National Financial*. Prior to engaging Registrant to provide investment advisory services, the client will be required to enter into a formal *Investment Advisory Agreement* with Registrant setting forth the terms and conditions under which Registrant shall manage the client's assets, and a separate custodial/clearing agreement with each designated broker-dealer/custodian.

Factors that the Registrant considers in recommending *National Financial* (or any other broker-dealer/custodian to clients) include historical relationship with the Registrant, financial strength, reputation, execution capabilities, pricing, research, and service. Although the commissions and/or transaction fees paid by Registrant's clients shall comply with the Registrant's duty to obtain best execution, a client may pay a commission that is higher than another qualified broker-dealer might charge to effect the same transaction where the Registrant determines, in good faith, that the commission/transaction fee is reasonable in relation to the value of the brokerage and research services received. 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 services, including the value of research provided, execution capability, commission rates, and responsiveness. Accordingly, although Registrant will seek competitive rates, it may not necessarily obtain the lowest possible commission rates for client account transactions. The brokerage commissions or transaction fees charged by the designated broker-dealer/custodian are exclusive of, and in addition to, Registrant's investment advisory fee. The Registrant's best execution responsibility is qualified if securities that it purchases for client accounts are mutual funds that trade at net asset value as determined at the daily market close.

### **1. Research and Additional Benefits**

Although not a material consideration when determining whether to recommend that a client utilize the services of a particular broker-dealer/custodian, Registrant may receive from *National Financial* (or another broker-dealer/custodian, investment platform and/or mutual fund sponsor) without cost (and/or at a discount) support services and/or products, certain of which assist the Registrant to better monitor and service client accounts maintained at such institutions. Included within the support services that may be obtained by the Registrant may be investment-related research, pricing information and market data, software and other technology that provide access to client account data, compliance and/or practice management-related publications, discounted or gratis consulting services, discounted and/or gratis

attendance at conferences, meetings, and other educational and/or social events, marketing support, computer hardware and/or software and/or other products used by Registrant in furtherance of its investment advisory business operations.

As indicated above, certain of the support services and/or products that *may* be received may assist the Registrant in managing and administering client accounts. Others do not directly provide such assistance, but rather assist the Registrant to manage and further develop its business enterprise.

Registrant's clients do not pay more for investment transactions effected and/or assets maintained at *National Financial* as a result of this arrangement. There is no corresponding commitment made by the Registrant to *National Financial* or any other entity to invest any specific amount or percentage of client assets in any specific mutual funds, securities or other investment products as result of the above arrangement.

**The Registrant's Chief Compliance Officer, Thomas J. Brown, remains available to address any questions that a client or prospective client may have regarding the above arrangement and any corresponding perceived conflict of interest such arrangement may create.**

2. The Registrant does not receive referrals from broker-dealers.
3. The Registrant does not generally accept directed brokerage arrangements (when a client requires that account transactions be effected through a specific broker-dealer). In such client directed arrangements, the client will negotiate terms and arrangements for their account with that broker-dealer, and Registrant will not seek better execution services or prices from other broker-dealers or be able to "batch" the client's transactions for execution through other broker-dealers with orders for other accounts managed by Registrant. As a result, client may pay higher commissions or other transaction costs or greater spreads, or receive less favorable net prices, on transactions for the account than would otherwise be the case.

**Please Note:** In the event that the client directs Registrant to effect securities transactions for the client's accounts through a specific broker-dealer, the client correspondingly acknowledges that such direction may cause the accounts to incur higher commissions or transaction costs than the accounts would otherwise incur had the client determined to effect account transactions through alternative clearing arrangements that may be available through Registrant.

**The Registrant's Chief Compliance Officer, Thomas J. Brown, remains available to address any questions that a client or prospective client may have regarding the above arrangement.**

- B. The transactions for each client account generally will be effected independently, unless the Registrant decides to purchase or sell the same securities for several clients at approximately the same time. The Registrant may (but is not obligated to) combine or "bunch" such orders to obtain best execution, to negotiate more favorable commission rates or to allocate equitably among the Registrant's clients differences in prices and commissions or other transaction costs that might have been obtained had such orders been placed independently. Under this procedure, transactions will be averaged as to

price and will be allocated among clients in proportion to the purchase and sale orders placed for each client account on any given day. The Registrant shall not receive any additional compensation or remuneration as a result of such aggregation.

### **Item 13          Review of Accounts**

- A. For those clients to whom Registrant provides investment supervisory services, account reviews are conducted on an ongoing basis by Thomas J. Brown. All investment supervisory clients are advised that it remains their responsibility to advise the Registrant of any changes in their investment objectives and/or financial situation. All clients (in person or via telephone) are encouraged to review their investment objectives and account performance with the Registrant on an annual basis.
- B. The Registrant *may* conduct account reviews on an other than periodic basis upon the occurrence of a triggering event, such as a change in client investment objectives and/or financial situation, market corrections and client request.
- C. Clients are provided, at least quarterly, with written transaction confirmation notices and regular written summary account statements directly from the broker-dealer/custodian and/or program sponsor for the client accounts. The Registrant may also provide a written periodic report summarizing account activity and performance.

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

- A. As referenced in Item 12.A.1 above, the Registrant may receive an indirect economic benefit from *National Financial*. The Registrant, without cost (and/or at a discount), may receive support services and/or products from *Interactive*.

Registrant's clients do not pay more for investment transactions effected and/or assets maintained at *National Financial* as a result of this arrangement. There is no corresponding commitment made by the Registrant to *National Financial* or any other entity to invest any specific amount or percentage of client assets in any specific mutual funds, securities or other investment products as result of the above arrangement.

**The Registrant's Chief Compliance Officer, Thomas J. Brown, remains available to address any questions that a client or prospective client may have regarding the above arrangement and any corresponding perceived conflict of interest any such arrangement may create.**

- B. Neither the Registrant nor any related person of the Registrant directly or indirectly compensates any person for client referrals.

### **Item 15          Custody**

The Registrant shall have the ability to have its advisory fee for each client debited by the custodian on a monthly basis. Clients are provided, at least quarterly, with written transaction confirmation notices and regular written summary account statements directly from the broker-dealer/custodian and/or program sponsor for the client accounts. The

Registrant may also provide a written periodic report summarizing account activity and performance.

**Please Note:** To the extent that the Registrant provides clients with periodic account statements or reports, the client is urged to compare any statement or report provided by the Registrant with the account statements received from the account custodian. **Please**

**Also Note:** The account custodian does not verify the accuracy of the Registrant's advisory fee.

## **Item 16          Investment Discretion**

The client can engage the Registrant to provide investment advisory services on a discretionary basis. Prior to the Registrant assuming discretionary authority over a client's account, client shall be required to execute an *Investment Advisory Agreement*, naming the Registrant as client's attorney and agent in fact, granting the Registrant full authority to buy, sell, or otherwise effect investment transactions involving the assets in the client's name found in the discretionary account.

Clients who engage the Registrant on a discretionary basis may, at any time, impose restrictions, **in writing**, on the Registrant's discretionary authority (i.e. limit the types/amounts of particular securities purchased for their account, exclude the ability to purchase securities with an inverse relationship to the market, limit or proscribe the Registrant's use of margin, etc.).

## **Item 17          Voting Client Securities**

- A. The Registrant does not vote client proxies. Clients maintain exclusive responsibility for: (1) directing the manner in which proxies solicited by issuers of securities beneficially owned by the client shall be voted, and (2) making all elections relative to any mergers, acquisitions, tender offers, bankruptcy proceedings or other type events pertaining to the client's investment assets.
- B. Clients will receive their proxies or other solicitations directly from their custodian. Clients may contact the Registrant to discuss any questions they may have with a particular solicitation.

## **Item 18          Financial Information**

- A. The Registrant does not solicit fees of more than \$1,200 per client, six months or more in advance.
- B. The Registrant is unaware of any financial condition that is reasonably likely to impair its ability to meet its contractual commitments relating to its discretionary authority over certain client accounts.
- C. The Registrant has not been the subject of a bankruptcy petition.

**ANY QUESTIONS: The Registrant's Chief Compliance Officer, Thomas J. Brown, remains available to address any questions that a client or prospective client may have regarding the above disclosures and arrangements.**