

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
Before the
SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION

SECURITIES EXCHANGE ACT OF 1934
Release No. 72951 / September 2, 2014

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEEDING
File No. 3-16048

<p>In the Matter of</p> <p>DOUGLAS L. BATES,</p> <p>Respondent.</p>
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**ORDER OF FORTHWITH SUSPENSION
PURSUANT TO RULE 102(e)(2) OF THE
COMMISSION'S RULES OF PRACTICE**

I.

The Securities and Exchange Commission deems it appropriate to issue an order of forthwith suspension of Douglas L. Bates (“Bates”) pursuant to Rule 102(e)(2) of the Commission’s Rules of Practice [17 C.F.R. § 201.102(e)(2)].¹

II.

The Commission finds that:

1. Bates was an attorney admitted to practice law in Florida in 1987.
2. On May 1, 2014, a judgment of conviction was entered against Bates in United States v. Bates, Case No. 13-60219-CR-MIDDLEBROOKS (S.D. Fla. 2014). As a result of this conviction, Bates was sentenced to five years imprisonment, followed by two years of supervised release, and ordered to pay a \$20,000 fine. On February 20, 2014, Bates entered into a plea agreement in U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Florida to one count of conspiracy to commit wire fraud in violation of 18 U.S.C. § 371 based on his conduct described herein.

¹ Rule 102(e)(2) provides in pertinent part: “Any attorney who has been suspended or disbarred by a court of the United States or of any State; or ... person who has been convicted of a felony or a misdemeanor involving moral turpitude shall be forthwith suspended from appearing or practicing before the Commission.”

3. As a result of this conviction, on May 29, 2014, Bates was disbarred from practicing law in the State of Florida by the Florida Supreme Court. The Florida Bar v. Bates, Case No. SC14-659 (Fla. 2014).

4. These proceedings arise out of Bates's criminal plea for his involvement in a Ponzi scheme orchestrated by former Florida attorney Scott Rothstein ("Rothstein"). Bates represented to investors that his firm had referred clients to Rothstein and by providing opinion letters asserting the legitimacy of Rothstein's settlement agreements. On December 29, 2008, Bates arranged for an attorney at his firm to meet with a representative of an investment group and falsely inform the representative that their firm then known as the Law Offices of Koppel and Bates had referred numerous cases to Rothstein's firm over an extended period of time. Moreover, in March and August 2009, Bates provided opinion letters to Rothstein falsely asserted that he had reviewed certain documentation and materials when he had not done so and vouched for the legality and propriety of the investments being offered by Rothstein.

III.

In view of the foregoing, the Commission finds that Bates has been convicted of a felony and has been disbarred within the meaning of Rule 102(e)(2) of the Commission's Rules of Practice.

Accordingly, it is ORDERED, that Bates is forthwith suspended from appearing or practicing before the Commission pursuant to Rule 102(e)(2) of the Commission's Rules of Practice.

By the Commission.

Jill M. Peterson
Assistant Secretary