Text only Print

2000. BUSINESS CONDUCT

2100. GENERAL STANDARDS

IM-2110-1. Reserved

2200. COMMUNICATIONS WITH CUSTOMERS AND THE PUBLIC

IM-2210-2. Communications with the Public About Variable Life Insurance and Variable Annuities

The standards governing communications with the public are set forth in Rule 2210. In addition to those standards, the following guidelines must be considered in preparing advertisements and sales literature about variable life insurance and variable annuities. The guidelines are applicable to advertisements and sales literature as defined in Rule 2210, as well as individualized communications such as personalized letters and computer generated illustrations, whether printed or made available on-screen.

(a) General Considerations

(1) Product Identification

In order to assure that investors understand exactly what security is being discussed, all communications must clearly describe the product as either a variable life insurance policy or a variable annuity, as applicable. Member firms may use proprietary names in addition to this description. In cases where the proprietary name includes a description of the type of security being offered, there is no requirement to include a generalized description. For example, if the material includes a name such as the "XYZ Variable Life Insurance Policy," it is not necessary to include a statement indicating that the security is a variable life insurance policy. Considering the significant differences between mutual funds and variable products, the presentation must not represent or imply that the product being offered or its underlying account is a mutual fund.

(2) Liquidity

Considering that variable life insurance and variable annuities frequently involve substantial charges and/or tax penalties for early withdrawals, there must be no representation or implication that these are short-term, liquid investments. Presentations regarding liquidity or ease of access to investment values must be balanced by clear language describing the negative impact of early redemptions. Examples of this negative impact may be the payment of contingent deferred sales loads and tax penalties, and the fact that the investor may receive less than the original invested amount. With respect to variable life insurance, discussions of loans and withdrawals must explain their impact on cash values and death benefits.

(3) Claims About Guarantees

Insurance companies issuing variable life insurance and variable annuities provide a number of specific guarantees. For example, an insurance company may guarantee a minimum death benefit for a variable life insurance policy or the company may guarantee a schedule of payments to a variable annuity owner. Variable life insurance policies and variable annuities may also offer a fixed investment account which is guaranteed by the insurance company. The relative safety resulting from such a guarantee must not be overemphasized or exaggerated as it depends on the claims-paying ability of the issuing insurance company. There must be no representation or implication that a guarantee applies to the investment return or principal value of the separate account. Similarly, it must not be represented or implied that an insurance company's financial ratings apply to the separate account.

(b) Specific Considerations

(1) Fund Performance Predating Inclusion in the Variable Product

In order to show how an existing fund would have performed had it been an investment option within a variable life insurance policy or variable annuity, communications may contain the fund's historical performance that predates its inclusion in the policy or annuity. Such performance may only be used provided that no significant changes occurred to the fund at the time or after it became part of the variable product. However, communications may not include the performance of an existing fund for the purposes of promoting investment in a similar, but new, investment option (i.e., clone fund or model fund) available in a variable contract. The presentation of historical performance must conform to applicable NASD and SEC standards. Particular attention must be given to including all elements of return and deducting applicable charges and expenses.

(2) Product Comparisons

A comparison of investment products may be used provided the comparison complies with applicable requirements set forth under Rule 2210. Particular attention must be paid to the specific standards regarding "comparisons" set forth in Rule 2210(d)(2)(B).

(3) Use of Rankings

A ranking which reflects the relative performance of the separate account or the underlying investment option may be included in advertisements and sales literature provided its use is consistent with the standards contained in IM-2210-3.

(4) Discussions Regarding Insurance and Investment Features of Variable Life Insurance

Communications on behalf of single premium variable life insurance may emphasize the investment features of the product provided an adequate explanation of the life insurance features is given. Sales material for other types of variable life insurance must provide a balanced discussion of these features.

(5) Hypothetical Illustrations of Rates of Return in Variable Life Insurance Sales Literature and Personalized Illustrations

(A)(i) Hypothetical illustrations using assumed rates of return may be used to demonstrate the way a variable life insurance policy operates. The illustrations show how the performance of the underlying investment accounts could affect the policy cash value and death benefit. These illustrations may not be used to project or predict investment results as such forecasts are strictly prohibited by the Rules. The methodology and format of hypothetical illustrations must be modeled after the required illustrations in the prospectus.

(ii) An illustration may use any combination of assumed investment returns up to and including a gross rate of 12%, provided that one of the returns is a 0% gross rate. Although the maximum assumed rate of 12% may be acceptable, members are urged to assure that the maximum rate illustrated is reasonable considering market conditions and the available investment options. The purpose of the required 0% rate of return is to demonstrate how a lack of growth in the underlying investment accounts may affect policy values and to reinforce the hypothetical nature of the illustration.

(iii) The illustrations must reflect the maximum (guaranteed) mortality and expense charges associated with the policy for each assumed rate of return. Current charges may be illustrated in addition to the maximum charges.

(iv) Preceding any illustration there must be a prominent explanation that the purpose of the illustration is to show how the performance of the underlying investment accounts could affect the policy cash value and death benefit. The explanation must also state that the illustration is hypothetical and may not be used to project or predict investment results.

(B) In sales literature which includes hypothetical illustrations, member firms may provide a personalized illustration which reflects factors relating to the individual customer's circumstances. A personalized illustration may not contain a rate of return greater than 12% and must follow all of the standards set forth in subparagraph (A), above.

(C) In general, it is inappropriate to compare a variable life insurance policy with another product based on hypothetical performance as this type of presentation goes beyond the singular purpose of illustrating how the performance of the underlying investment accounts could affect the policy cash value and death benefit. It is

permissible, however, to use a hypothetical illustration in order to compare a variable life insurance policy to a term policy with the difference in cost invested in a side product. The sole purpose of this type of illustration would be to demonstrate the concept of tax-deferred growth as a result of investing in the variable product. The following conditions must be met in order to make this type of comparison balanced and complete:

(i) the comparative illustration must be accompanied by an illustration which reflects the standards outlined in subparagraph (A), above;

(ii) the rate of return used in the comparative illustration must be no greater than 12%;

(iii) the rate of return assumed for the side product and the variable life policy must be the same;

(iv) the same fees deducted from the required prospectus illustration must be deducted from the comparative illustration;

(v) the side product must be illustrated using gross values which do not reflect the deduction of any fees; and,

(vi) the side product must not be identified or characterized as any specific investment or investment type.

Amended by SR-NASD-2004-176 eff. Jan. 1, 2005.
Amended by SR-NASD-2000-12 eff. Nov. 3, 2003.
Adopted by SR-NASD-94-02 eff. Mar. 21, 1994.

Selected Notice: 03-38.

2300. TRANSACTIONS WITH CUSTOMERS

2330. Customers' Securities or Funds

SR-FINRA-2013-035 has been approved by the SEC. Effective May 1, 2014, this rule will no longer be applicable. Please consult the appropriate FINRA rule.

(a) Reserved.

(b) General Provisions

Every member in the conduct of its business shall adhere to the provisions of SEC Rule 15c3-3 under the Act with respect to obtaining possession and control of securities, and the maintenance of appropriate cash reserves. For the purposes of this Rule, the definitions contained in Rule 15c3-3 shall apply.

(c) Authorization to Lend

No member shall lend, either to himself or to others, securities carried for the account of any customer, which are eligible to be pledged or loaned unless such member shall first have obtained from the customer a written authorization permitting the lending of securities thus carried by such member.

(d) Segregation and Identification of Securities

No member shall hold securities carried for the account of any customer which have been fully paid for or which are excess margin securities unless such securities are segregated and identified by a method which clearly indicates the interest of such customer in those securities.

Cross Reference–
"Hypothecation of Customers' Securities" — See SEC Rules and Regulation T Tab

(e) Reserved.

(f) Reserved.

Amended by SR-FINRA-2009-014 eff. Dec. 14, 2009.
Amended by SR-NASD-84-33 eff. Feb. 7, 1985.

Selected Notices: 83-74, 09-60.

IM-2330. Segregation of Customers' Securities

SR-FINRA-2013-035 has been approved by the SEC. Effective May 1, 2014, this rule will no longer be applicable. Please consult the appropriate FINRA rule.

(a) Rule 2330(d) requires members to segregate and identify by customers both fully paid and "excess margin" securities. With regard to a customer's account which contains only stocks, it is general practice for firms to segregate that portion of the stocks having a market value in excess of 140% of the debit balance therein. When a customer's account contains bonds, the basis upon which the member is borrowing or can borrow on such bonds should be taken into consideration in determining the amount of securities to be segregated.

(b) Following are three general types of segregation of customers' securities currently in use by many firms:

(1) Physical segregation of securities by issue, with a separate list showing ownership of the securities by each customer. The listing, on cards or other records, should reflect all changes in ownership interest. This method is for securities in street name (not in individual customers' names), but the proportionate interests of the individual customers are indicated by the records.

(2) Physical segregation of securities by issue, affixing to each certificate a tab or other identification showing the name of the beneficial owner of the certificate. This may be used for shares in street name or in the customer's name.

(3) Specific segregation of all certificates of each customer in separate envelopes or folders, identified by customer, or by clipping the certificates together and identifying the customer by tab or other notation affixed to the segregated certificates.

(c) In the methods enumerated in paragraph (b), the records should note the dates when the securities are segregated. When such securities are not in the actual custody of the member, for instance, when they are in the physical possession of a correspondent firm, their location and the means by which they may be identified as belonging to each customer should be indicated on the books of the member carrying the customers' accounts.

2340. Customer Account Statements

(a) General

Except as otherwise provided by paragraph (b), each general securities member shall, with a frequency of not less than once every calendar quarter, send a statement of account ("account statement") containing a description of any securities positions, money balances, or account activity to each customer whose account had a security position, money balance, or account activity during the period since the last such statement was sent to the customer. In addition, each general securities member shall include in the account statement a statement that advises the customer to report promptly any inaccuracy or discrepancy in that person's account to his or her brokerage firm. (In cases where the customer's account is serviced by both an introducing and clearing firm, each general securities member must include in the advisory a reference that such reports be made to both firms.) Such statement also shall advise the customer that any oral communications should be re-confirmed in writing to further protect the customer's rights, including rights under the Securities Investor Protection Act (SIPA).

(b) Delivery Versus Payment/Receive Versus Payment (DVP/RVP) Accounts

Quarterly account statements need not be sent to a customer pursuant to paragraph (a) of this Rule if:

(1) the customer's account is carried solely for the purpose of execution on a DVP/RVP basis;

(2) all transactions effected for the account are done on a DVP/RVP basis in conformity with Rule 11860;

(3) the account does not show security or money positions at the end of the quarter (provided, however that positions of a temporary nature, such as those arising from fails to receive or deliver, errors, questioned trades, dividend or bond interest entries and other similar transactions, shall not be deemed security or money positions for the purpose of this paragraph (b));

(4) the customer consents to the suspension of such statements in writing. The member must maintain such consents in a manner consistent with Rule 3110 and SEC Rule 17a-4;

(5) the member undertakes to provide any particular statement or statements to the customer promptly upon request; and

(6) the member undertakes to promptly reinstate the delivery of such statements to the customer upon request.

Nothing in this Rule shall be seen to qualify or condition the obligations of a member under SEC Rule 15c3-2 concerning quarterly notices of free credit balances on statements.

(c) DPP/REIT Securities

(1)(A) Voluntary Estimated Value

A general securities member may provide a per share estimated value for a direct participation program ("DPP") or real estate investment trust ("REIT") security on an account statement, provided the member meets the conditions of paragraphs (b)(2) and (3) below.

(B) Mandatory Estimated Value

If the annual report of a DPP or REIT includes a per share estimated value for a DPP or REIT security that is held in the customer's account or included on the customer's account statement, a general securities member must include an estimated value from the annual report, an independent valuation service, or any other source, in the first account statement issued by the member thereafter, provided that the member meets the conditions of paragraphs (b)(2) and (3) below.

(2) A member may only provide a per share estimated value for a DPP or REIT security on an account statement if the estimated value has been developed from data that is as of a date no more than 18 months prior to the date that the statement is issued.

(3) If an account statement provides an estimated value for a DPP or REIT security, it must include:

(A) a brief description of the estimated value, its source, and the method by which it was developed; and

(B) disclosure that DPP or REIT securities are generally illiquid, and that the estimated value may not be realized when the investor seeks to liquidate the security.

(4) Notwithstanding the requirement in paragraph (b)(1)(B), a member must refrain from including a per share estimated value for a DPP or REIT security on an account statement if the member can demonstrate the value was inaccurate as of the date of the valuation or is no longer accurate as a result of a material change in the operations or assets of the program or trust.

(5) If an account statement does not provide an estimated value for a DPP or REIT security, it must include disclosure that:

(A) DPP or REIT securities are generally illiquid;

(B) the value of the security will be different than its purchase price; and

(C) if applicable, that accurate valuation information is not available.

(d) Definitions

For purposes of this Rule, the following terms will have the stated meanings:

(1) "account activity" includes, but is not limited to, purchases, sales, interest credits or debits, charges or credits, dividend payments, transfer activity, securities receipts or deliveries, and/or journal entries relating to securities or funds in the possession or control of the member.

(2) a "general securities member" refers to any member that conducts a general securities business and is required to calculate its net capital pursuant to the provisions of SEC Rule 15c3-1(a). Notwithstanding the foregoing definition, a member that does not carry customer accounts and does not hold customer funds or securities is exempt from the provisions of this section.

(3) "direct participation program" or "direct participation program security" refers to the publicly issued equity securities of a direct participation program as defined in Rule 2810 (including limited liability companies), but does not include securities on deposit in a registered securities depository and settled regular way, securities listed on a

national securities exchange, or any program registered as a commodity pool with the Commodities Futures Trading Commission.

(4) "real estate investment trust" or "real estate investment trust security" refers to the publicly issued equity securities of a real estate investment trust as defined in Section 856 of the Internal Revenue Code, but does not include securities on deposit in a registered securities depository and settled regular way or securities listed on a national securities exchange.

(5) "annual report" means the most recent annual report of the DPP or REIT distributed to investors pursuant Section 13(a) of the Act.

(6) a "DVP/RVP account" is an arrangement whereby payment for securities purchased is made to the selling customer's agent and/or delivery of securities sold is made to the buying customer's agent in exchange for payment at time of settlement, usually in the form of cash.

(e) Exemptions

Pursuant to the Rule 9600 Series, NASD may exempt any member from the provisions of this Rule for good cause shown.

Amended by SR-NASD-2004-171 eff. May 31, 2007.
Amended by SR-NASD-2006-128 eff. Dec. 5, 2006.
Amended by SR-NASD-2006-066 eff. Nov. 22, 2006.
Amended by SR-NASD-2005-087 eff. Aug. 1, 2006.
Amended by SR-NASD-2003-36 eff. March 12, 2003.
Amended by SR-NASD-2000-13 eff. April 16, 2001.
Adopted by SR-NASD-92-29 eff. Jan. 31, 1993.

Selected Notices: 92-30, 92-60, 94-96, 97-14, 01-08, 06-60.

2400. COMMISSIONS, MARK-UPS AND CHARGES

2410. Net Prices to Persons Not in Investment Banking or Securities Business

No member shall offer any security or confirm any purchase or sale of any security, from or to any person not actually engaged in the investment banking or securities business at any price which shows a concession, discount, or other allowance, but shall offer such security and confirm such purchase or sale at a net dollar or basis price.

Cross Reference–

IM-2420-1, Transactions Between Members and Non-Members

2420. Dealing with Non-Members

(a) No member shall deal with any non-member broker or dealer except at the same prices, for the same commissions or fees, and on the same terms and conditions as are by such member accorded to the general public.

(b) Without limiting the generality of the foregoing, no member shall:

(1) in any transaction with any non-member broker or dealer, allow or grant to such non-member broker or dealer any selling concession, discount or other allowance allowed by such member to a member of a registered securities association and not allowed to a member of the general public;

(2) join with any non-member broker or dealer in any syndicate or group contemplating the distribution to the public of any issue of securities or any part thereof; or

(3) sell any security to or buy any security from any non-member broker or dealer except at the same price at which at the time of such transaction such member would buy or sell such security, as the case may be, from or to a person who is a member of the general public not engaged in the investment banking or securities business.

(c) Transaction with Foreign Non-Members

The provisions of paragraphs (a) and (b) of this Rule shall not apply to any non-member broker or dealer in a foreign

country who is not eligible for membership in a registered securities association, but in any transaction with any such foreign non-member broker or dealer, where a selling concession, discount, or other allowance is allowed, a member shall as a condition of such transaction secure from such foreign broker or dealer an agreement that, in making any sales to purchasers within the United States of securities acquired as a result of such transactions, he will conform to the provisions of paragraphs (a) and (b) of this Rule to the same extent as though he were a member of the Association.

(d) "Non-Member Broker or Dealer"

For the purpose of this Rule, the term "non-member broker or dealer" shall include any broker or dealer who makes use of the mails or of any means or instrumentality of interstate commerce to effect any transaction in, or to induce the purchase or sale of, any security, otherwise than on a national securities exchange, who is not a member of any securities association registered with the Commission pursuant to Section 15A of the Act, except a broker or dealer who deals exclusively in commercial paper, bankers' acceptances or commercial bills.

(e) Nothing in this Rule shall be so construed or applied as to prevent any member of the Association from granting to any other member of any registered securities association any dealer's discount, allowance, commission, or special terms.

IM-2420-1. Transactions Between Members and Non-Members*

(a) Non-members of the Association

(1) "Member"

Rule 0120(i) defines a "member" as any individual, partnership, corporation or other legal entity admitted to membership in the Association. All other persons, firms or corporations, whether or not they are brokers or dealers, are therefore to be regarded as non-members of the Association.

(2) Expelled Dealer

A dealer who has been expelled from the Association by order either of the Commission or the Association becomes a non-member of the Association from the effective date of such order.

(3) Suspended Dealer

A dealer who has been suspended from membership in the Association by order either of the Commission or the Association is to be treated as a non-member of the Association from the effective date of such order and during the period of such suspension. At the termination of the suspension period, such dealer is automatically reinstated to membership in the Association.

(4) Broker or Dealer Registration Revoked by SEC

Revocation by the Commission of an Association member's registration as a broker or dealer automatically terminates the membership of such broker or dealer in the Association as of the effective date of such order. Under Article III, Section 4 of the By-Laws of the Corporation, a firm whose registration as a broker or dealer is revoked is thereby disqualified for membership in the Association, and from the effective date of such order, the membership of such broker or dealer in the Association is discontinued. Thereafter such broker or dealer is a non-member of the Association.

(5) Membership Resigned or Canceled

The membership of a broker or dealer in the Association is automatically terminated when the Association accepts the resignation of such member or cancels its membership in the Association under the provisions of Article III, Section 3; Article IV, Section 5; or Article XIII, Section 1, of the By-Laws. After the date of acceptance by the Association of the resignation of such member or the date of cancellation of membership by the Association, such broker or dealer is a non-member of the Association.

(b) Transactions in "Exempted Securities"

Rule 2420 shall not apply to "exempted securities," which are defined by Section 3(a)(12) of the Act. The Rule therefore does not apply to transactions in government or municipal securities if within the definition of "exempted securities." Members may join with non-members or with banks in a joint account, syndicate or group to purchase and distribute an issue of "exempted securities" and may trade such securities with non-members or with banks at different prices or on different terms and conditions than are accorded to members of the general public.

(c) Transactions on an Exchange

(1) An Association member may pay a commission to a member of a national securities exchange for executing an order upon an exchange even though the exchange member is not a member of the Association. Rule 2420 does not apply to transactions upon an exchange and, therefore, does not prohibit such transactions.

(2) Where an Association member is also a member of an exchange, an order of the Commission or of the Association expelling or suspending the firm from membership in the Association will not directly affect the business of the firm as a member of an exchange because Rule 2420 does not apply to transactions on the floor of an exchange. While an order of suspension or expulsion is in effect, the firm may continue to conduct its normal business on an exchange and participate in special offerings on an exchange without involving any violation by an Association member of Rule 2420.

(d) Over-the-Counter Transactions in Securities Other than "Exempted Securities"

(1) Participation in Underwriting or Selling Groups

An Association member may not enter into a joint account, underwriting or selling group, or join a syndicate or group, with any non-member broker or dealer or with a member of a national securities exchange, who is not also a member of the Association, for the purpose of acquiring and distributing an issue of securities. Rule 2420, paragraphs (a) and (b) would be applicable and such exchange member would be a "non-member broker or dealer" within the definition of paragraph (d) of that Rule.

(2) Sale to Bank or Trust Company

An Association member, participating in the distribution of an issue of securities as an underwriter or in a selling group, may not allow any selling concession, discount or other allowance in connection with the sale of such securities to any bank or trust company. Under Article I, paragraphs (e) and (h), of the By-Laws a bank or trust company is excluded from the definition of a broker or dealer and therefore may not receive selling concessions, discounts or other allowances from an Association member under Rule 2740.

(3) Suspended or Expelled Dealer — Group Contemplating Distribution

An Association member may not join any underwriting or selling group with a dealer who has been and is suspended from membership in the Association by order of the Commission or of the Association if at the time such group was organized, it was contemplating the distribution of an issue of securities to the public. A dealer who has been suspended from membership in the Association is to be treated as a non-member during the suspension period and Rule 2420(b)(2) prohibits members from joining with non-members in a group "contemplating the distribution to the public of any issue of securities." Even though the suspension period had terminated before the time when the securities were to be distributed, the Rule prohibits a member from joining with a non-member in a group which is contemplating the distribution of an issue of securities at a future time.

(4) Dealer Suspended or Expelled After Underwriting Group Formed

Where a dealer is suspended or expelled from membership in the Association by an order of the Commission or of the Association which became effective after such dealer had joined an underwriting group under which each underwriter had severally purchased securities from the issuer, such dealer could thereafter during the period of suspension or expulsion accept delivery from the issuer of the securities which it had underwritten prior to the effective date of such order and pay to the issuer its commitment therefor without involving any violation of the Rules by members. After the effective date of such order and during the period of suspension or expulsion, Association members could only buy the securities from or sell the securities to the dealer, who was suspended or expelled, at the public offering price, regardless of whether the Association members were also members of the underwriting or selling group for the particular issue. Rule 2420 prohibits an Association member from dealing with any non-member broker or dealer except at the same prices, for the same commissions or fees, and on the same terms and conditions as the member would deal with a member of the general public at the same time. Delivery of the securities by the issuer to the particular dealer suspended or expelled and payment therefor by such dealer would not involve a violation of Rule 2420 in this situation.

(5) Dealer Suspended or Expelled After Selling Group Formed

Where a dealer is suspended or expelled from the Association by an order of the Commission or of the Association which became effective after such dealer had joined a selling group, members of the Association, including the underwriters and other selling group members, would be prohibited by Rule 2420 from selling the

securities to, or buying the securities from, such dealer at any price different from the public offering price. Members would not violate Rule 2420 by accepting from such dealer, during the period such order of suspension or expulsion was in effect, payment of the full public offering price for the securities allotted to such dealer. After the effective date of such order, Rule 2420 prohibits Association members from granting or allowing to the dealer suspended or expelled any selling concession, discount or other allowance for the securities distributed by such dealer. While such order is in effect, Association members could only deal with such dealer at the same prices, for the same commissions, fees, concessions, discounts or other allowances as the Association members would deal at the time of the transaction with a member of the general public.

(6) Commissions in Over-the-Counter Transactions with Non-Members

An Association member may not pay a commission to any non-member broker or dealer for executing a brokerage order for the Association member in the over-the-counter market. Rule 2420 requires an Association member to deal with non-members only on the same terms and conditions as are accorded by such Association member to members of the general public. On the other hand, Rule 2420 does not prohibit an Association member from executing over-the-counter an order for a non-member and charging such non-member a commission therefore. Rule 2420 merely requires that in transactions with a non-member, such non-member must be dealt with at the same prices, for the same commissions or fees and on the same terms and conditions as are by such member accorded to the general public.

(7) Members of a National Securities Exchange

In over-the-counter transactions in either listed or unlisted securities an Association member may not buy from or sell to a member of a national securities exchange who is not also a member of the Association at different prices or on different terms or conditions that are accorded by such Association member to members of the general public. Such exchange member, with respect to such over-the-counter transactions, comes within the definition of a "non-member broker or dealer" in Rule 2420(d), and Rule 2420 is therefore applicable. For the same reason an Association member may not pay a commission to an exchange member, who is not also a member of the Association, for executing a brokerage order over-the-counter.

When a dealer has been and is suspended or expelled from membership in the Association by order of the Commission or of the Association, under Rule 2420, during the period of such suspension or expulsion, an Association member may only deal with such dealer at the same prices, for the same commissions, fees, concessions, discounts or other allowances as the Association member would deal at the time of the transaction with a member of the general public.

(8) Investment Advisory Fee

When an Association member has rendered an investment advisory service for a fee to other members and thereafter is suspended or expelled from membership in the Association by order of the Commission or of the Association, another Association member may continue to pay the fee to such investment adviser provided that over-the-counter transactions in securities with such investment adviser are made only at the same price and on the same terms as the member would deal with the public and the fee for acting as investment adviser is not used as a method of avoiding the provisions of Rule 2420.

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* "The reader should be aware of the decision of the Commission in what is commonly called the *Aetna* proceeding partially abrogating former Article III, Section 25, Securities Exchange Act Release No. 9632 (June 7, 1972), as well as the Commission's decision in the *Plaza Securities Corporation* case. Securities Exchange Act Release No. 10643 (February 14, 1974) setting aside Association disciplinary action under former Section 25. The Commission's order in first case reads, in pertinent part, that Section 25 is partially abrogated "... to the extent that it permits or has been construed to permit the Association to bar a member's receipt of commissions, concessions, discounts, or other allowances from nonmember brokers or dealers...."

Amended by SR-NASD-98-86 eff. Nov. 19, 1998.
Amended by SR-NASD-95-39 eff Aug 30, 1996.

IM-2420-2. Continuing Commissions Policy

The Board of Governors has held that the payment of continuing commissions in connection with the sale of securities is not improper so long as the person receiving the commissions remains a registered representative of a member of the Association.

However, payment of compensation to registered representatives after they cease to be employed by a member of the Association — or payment to their widows or other beneficiaries — will not be deemed in violation of Association Rules, provided bona fide contracts call for such payment.

Also, a dealer-member may enter into a bona fide contract with another dealer-member to take over and service his accounts and, after he ceases to be a member, to pay to him or to his widow or other beneficiary continuing commissions generated on such accounts.

An arrangement for the payment of continuing commissions shall not under any circumstances be deemed to permit the solicitation of new business or the opening of new accounts by persons who are not registered. Any arrangement for payment of continuing commissions must, of course, conform with any applicable laws or regulations.

This policy recognizes the validity of contracts entered into in good faith between employers and employees at the time the employees are registered representatives of the employing members. Such a contract may vest in an employee the right to receive continuing compensation on business done in the event the employee retires and the right to designate such payments to his widow or other beneficiary.

It is not to be implied that the Board suggests that members must enter into contracts with registered representatives for continuing compensation. Nor will the Board specify or rule on the terms of such contracts.

The Board has also considered the question as to whether Rule 2830(c) requires that a sales agreement be in effect in order for a dealer-member to receive continuing commissions. The Board has concluded that the sales agreement requirement is intended to apply to new business, such as the sale of a new plan or a "wire order." It is not intended that a sales agreement be required in order for a dealer to receive commissions on direct payments by existing clients to the fund or its agent, or on automatic dividend reinvestments. (See Notice to Members 74-33, Aug. 9, 1974).

Under no circumstances shall payment of any kind be made by a member to any person who is not eligible for membership in the Association or eligible to be associated with a member because of any disqualification, as set forth in Article III of the Association's By-Laws, such as revocation, expulsion, or suspension still in effect.

Amended by SR-NASD-98-86 eff. Nov. 19, 1998.

2430. Charges for Services Performed

Charges, if any, for services performed, including miscellaneous services such as collection of moneys due for principal, dividends, or interest; exchange or transfer of securities; appraisals, safe-keeping or custody of securities, and other services, shall be reasonable and not unfairly discriminatory between customers.

2440. Fair Prices and Commissions

In securities transactions, whether in "listed" or "unlisted" securities, if a member buys for his own account from his customer, or sells for his own account to his customer, he shall buy or sell at a price which is fair, taking into consideration all relevant circumstances, including market conditions with respect to such security at the time of the transaction, the expense involved, and the fact that he is entitled to a profit; and if he acts as agent for his customer in any such transaction, he shall not charge his customer more than a fair commission or service charge, taking into consideration all relevant circumstances, including market conditions with respect to such security at the time of the transaction, the expense of executing the order and the value of any service he may have rendered by reason of his experience in and knowledge of such security and the market therefor.

Amended by SR-NASD-2006-005 eff. June 13, 2008.

Selected Notice to Members: 08-36.

IM-2440-1. Mark-Up Policy

The question of fair mark-ups or spreads is one which has been raised from the earliest days of the Association. No definitive answer can be given and no interpretation can be all-inclusive for the obvious reason that what might be considered fair in one transaction could be unfair in another transaction because of different circumstances. In 1943, the Association's Board adopted what has become known as the "5% Policy" to be applied to transactions executed for customers. It was based upon studies demonstrating that the large majority of customer transactions were effected at a

mark-up of 5% or less. The Policy has been reviewed by the Board of Governors on numerous occasions and each time the Board has reaffirmed the philosophy expressed in 1943. Pursuant thereto, and in accordance with Article VII, Section 1(a)(ii) of the By-Laws, the Board has adopted the following interpretation under Rule 2440.

It shall be deemed a violation of Rule 2110 and Rule 2440 for a member to enter into any transaction with a customer in any security at any price not reasonably related to the current market price of the security or to charge a commission which is not reasonable.

(a) General Considerations

Since the adoption of the "5% Policy" the Board has determined that:

(1) The "5% Policy" is a guide, not a rule.

(2) A member may not justify mark-ups on the basis of expenses which are excessive.

(3) The mark-up over the prevailing market price is the significant spread from the point of view of fairness of dealings with customers in principal transactions. In the absence of other bona fide evidence of the prevailing market, a member's own contemporaneous cost is the best indication of the prevailing market price of a security.

(4) A mark-up pattern of 5% or even less may be considered unfair or unreasonable under the "5% Policy."

(5) Determination of the fairness of mark-ups must be based on a consideration of all the relevant factors, of which the percentage of mark-up is only one.

(b) Relevant Factors

Some of the factors which the Board believes that members and the Association's committees should take into consideration in determining the fairness of a mark-up are as follows:

(1) The Type of Security Involved

Some securities customarily carry a higher mark-up than others. For example, a higher percentage of mark-up customarily applies to a common stock transaction than to a bond transaction of the same size. Likewise, a higher percentage applies to sales of units of direct participation programs and condominium securities than to sales of common stock.

(2) The Availability of the Security in the Market

In the case of an inactive security the effort and cost of buying or selling the security, or any other unusual circumstances connected with its acquisition or sale, may have a bearing on the amount of mark-up justified.

(3) The Price of the Security

While there is no direct correlation, the percentage of mark-up or rate of commission generally increases as the price of the security decreases. Even where the amount of money is substantial, transactions in lower priced securities may require more handling and expense and may warrant a wider spread.

(4) The Amount of Money Involved in a Transaction

A transaction which involves a small amount of money may warrant a higher percentage of mark-up to cover the expenses of handling.

(5) Disclosure

Any disclosure to the customer, before the transaction is effected, of information which would indicate (A) the amount of commission charged in an agency transaction or (B) mark-up made in a principal transaction is a factor to be considered. Disclosure itself, however, does not justify a commission or mark-up which is unfair or excessive in light of all other relevant circumstances.

(6) The Pattern of Mark-Ups

While each transaction must meet the test of fairness, the Board believes that particular attention should be given to the pattern of a member's mark-ups.

(7) The Nature of the Member's Business

The Board is aware of the differences in the services and facilities which are needed by, and provided for, customers of members. If not excessive, the cost of providing such services and facilities, particularly when they are of a continuing nature, may properly be considered in determining the fairness of a member's mark-ups.

(c) Transactions to Which the Policy is Applicable

The Policy applies to all securities, whether oil royalties or any other security, in the following types of transactions:

(1) A transaction in which a member buys a security to fill an order for the same security previously received from a customer. This transaction would include the so-called "riskless" or "simultaneous" transaction.

(2) A transaction in which the member sells a security to a customer from inventory. In such a case the amount of the mark-up would be determined on the basis of the mark-up over the bona fide representative current market. The amount of profit or loss to the member from market appreciation or depreciation before, or after, the date of the transaction with the customer would not ordinarily enter into the determination of the amount or fairness of the mark-up.

(3) A transaction in which a member purchases a security from a customer. The price paid to the customer or the mark-down applied by the member must be reasonably related to the prevailing market price of the security.

(4) A transaction in which the member acts as agent. In such a case, the commission charged the customer must be fair in light of all relevant circumstances.

(5) Transactions wherein a customer sells securities to, or through, a broker/dealer, the proceeds from which are utilized to pay for other securities purchased from, or through, the broker/dealer at or about the same time. In such instances, the mark-up shall be computed in the same way as if the customer had purchased for cash and in computing the mark-up there shall be included any profit or commission realized by the dealer on the securities being liquidated, the proceeds of which are used to pay for securities being purchased.

(d) Transactions to Which the Policy is Not Applicable

The Mark-Up Policy is not applicable to the sale of securities where a prospectus or offering circular is required to be delivered and the securities are sold at the specific public offering price.

Amended by SR-NASD-2006-005 eff. June 13, 2008.
Amended by SR-NASD-2003-141 eff. July 5, 2007.
Amended by SR-NASD-98-86 eff. Nov. 19, 1998.
Adopted eff. Oct. 31, 1943, see SEC Release No. 3574 (June 1, 1944) and SEC Release No. 3623 (Nov. 25, 1944).

Selected Notices to Members: 75-65, 89-20, 91-69, 92-16, 93-81, 94-62, 08-36.

IM-2440-2. Additional Mark-Up Policy For Transactions in Debt Securities, Except Municipal Securities[1]

(a) Scope

(1) IM-2440-1 applies to debt securities transactions, and this IM-2440-2 supplements the guidance provided in IM-2440-1.

(b) Prevailing Market Price

(1) A dealer that is acting in a principal capacity in a transaction with a customer and is charging a mark-up or mark-down must mark-up or mark-down the transaction from the prevailing market price. Presumptively for purposes of this IM-2440-2, the prevailing market price for a debt security is established by referring to the dealer's contemporaneous cost as incurred, or contemporaneous proceeds as obtained, consistent with NASD pricing rules. (*See, e.g.,* Rule 2320).

(2) When the dealer is *selling* the security to a customer, countervailing evidence of the prevailing market price may be considered only where the dealer made no *contemporaneous purchases* in the security or can show that in the particular circumstances the dealer's *contemporaneous cost* is not indicative of the prevailing market price. When the

dealer is *buying* the security from a customer, countervailing evidence of the prevailing market price may be considered only where the dealer made no *contemporaneous sales* in the security or can show that in the particular circumstances the dealer's *contemporaneous proceeds* are not indicative of the prevailing market price.

(3) A dealer's cost is considered contemporaneous if the transaction occurs close enough in time to the subject transaction that it would reasonably be expected to reflect the current market price for the security. (Where a mark-down is being calculated, a dealer's proceeds would be considered contemporaneous if the transaction from which the proceeds result occurs close enough in time to the subject transaction that such proceeds would reasonably be expected to reflect the current market price for the security.)

(4) A dealer that effects a transaction in debt securities with a customer and identifies the prevailing market price using a measure other than the dealer's own contemporaneous cost (or, in a mark-down, the dealer's own proceeds) must be prepared to provide evidence that is sufficient to overcome the presumption that the dealer's contemporaneous cost (or, the dealer's proceeds) provides the best measure of the prevailing market price. A dealer may be able to show that its contemporaneous cost is (or proceeds are) not indicative of prevailing market price, and thus overcome the presumption, in instances where (i) interest rates changed after the dealer's contemporaneous transaction to a degree that such change would reasonably cause a change in debt securities pricing; (ii) the credit quality of the debt security changed significantly after the dealer's contemporaneous transaction; or (iii) news was issued or otherwise distributed and known to the marketplace that had an effect on the perceived value of the debt security after the dealer's contemporaneous transaction.

(5) In instances where the dealer has established that the dealer's cost is (or, in a mark-down, proceeds are) no longer contemporaneous, or where the dealer has presented evidence that is sufficient to overcome the presumption that the dealer's contemporaneous cost (or proceeds) provides the best measure of the prevailing market price, such as those instances described in (b)(4)(i), (ii) and (iii), a member must consider, in the order listed, the following types of pricing information to determine prevailing market price:

(A) Prices of any contemporaneous inter-dealer transactions in the security in question;

(B) In the absence of transactions described in (A), prices of contemporaneous dealer purchases (sales) in the security in question from (to) institutional accounts with which any dealer regularly effects transactions in the same security; or

(C) In the absence of transactions described in (A) and (B), for actively traded securities, contemporaneous bid (offer) quotations for the security in question made through an inter-dealer mechanism, through which transactions generally occur at the displayed quotations.

(A member may consider a succeeding category of pricing information only when the prior category does not generate relevant pricing information (e.g., a member may consider pricing information under (B) only after the member has determined, after applying (A), that there are no contemporaneous inter-dealer transactions in the same security).) In reviewing the pricing information available within each category, the relative weight, for purposes of identifying prevailing market price, of such information (*i.e.*, either a particular transaction price, or, in (C) above, a particular quotation) depends on the facts and circumstances of the comparison transaction or quotation (*i.e.*, such as whether the dealer in the comparison transaction was on the same side of the market as the dealer is in the subject transaction and timeliness of the information).

(6) In the event that, in particular circumstances, the above factors are not available, other factors that may be taken into consideration for the purpose of establishing the price from which a customer mark-up (mark-down) may be calculated, include but are not limited to:

- Prices of contemporaneous inter-dealer transactions in a "similar" security, as defined below, or prices of contemporaneous dealer purchase (sale) transactions in a "similar" security with institutional accounts with which any dealer regularly effects transactions in the "similar" security with respect to customer mark-ups (mark-downs);
- Yields calculated from prices of contemporaneous inter-dealer transactions in "similar" securities;
- Yields calculated from prices of contemporaneous dealer purchase (sale) transactions with institutional accounts with which any dealer regularly effects transactions in "similar" securities with respect to customer mark-ups (mark-downs); and
- Yields calculated from validated contemporaneous inter-dealer bid (offer) quotations in "similar" securities for customer mark-ups (mark-downs).

The relative weight, for purposes of identifying prevailing market price, of the pricing information obtained from the factors set forth above depends on the facts and circumstances surrounding the comparison transaction (*i.e.*, whether the dealer in the comparison transaction was on the same side of the market as the dealer is in the subject transaction, timeliness of the information, and, with respect to the final factor listed above, the relative spread of the quotations in the similar security to the quotations in the subject security).

(7) Finally, if information concerning the prevailing market price of the subject security cannot be obtained by applying any of the above factors, NASD or its members may consider as a factor in assessing the prevailing market price of a debt security the prices or yields derived from economic models (*e.g.*, discounted cash flow models) that take into account measures such as credit quality, interest rates, industry sector, time to maturity, call provisions and any other embedded options, coupon rate, and face value; and consider all applicable pricing terms and conventions (*e.g.*, coupon frequency and accrual methods). Such models currently may be in use by bond dealers or may be specifically developed by regulators for surveillance purposes.

(8) Because the ultimate evidentiary issue is the prevailing market price, isolated transactions or isolated quotations generally will have little or no weight or relevance in establishing prevailing market price. For example, in considering yields of “similar” securities, except in extraordinary circumstances, members may not rely exclusively on isolated transactions or a limited number of transactions that are not fairly representative of the yields of transactions in “similar” securities taken as a whole.

(9) "Customer," for purposes of Rule 2440, IM-2440-1 and this IM-2440-2, shall not include a qualified institutional buyer ("QIB") as defined in Rule 144A under the Securities Act of 1933 that is purchasing or selling a non-investment grade debt security when the dealer has determined, after considering the factors set forth in IM-2310-3, that the QIB has the capacity to evaluate independently the investment risk and in fact is exercising independent judgment in deciding to enter into the transaction. For purposes of Rule 2440, IM-2440-1 and this IM-2440-2, "non-investment grade debt security" means a debt security that: (i) if rated by only one nationally recognized statistical rating organization ("NRSRO"), is rated lower than one of the four highest generic rating categories; (ii) if rated by more than one NRSRO, is rated lower than one of the four highest generic rating categories by any of the NRSROs; or (iii) if unrated, either was analyzed as a non-investment grade debt security by the dealer and the dealer retains credit evaluation documentation and demonstrates to NASD (using credit evaluation or other demonstrable criteria) that the credit quality of the security is, in fact, equivalent to a non-investment grade debt security, or was initially offered and sold and continues to be offered and sold pursuant to an exemption from registration under the Securities Act of 1933.

(c) "Similar" Securities

(1) A "similar" security should be sufficiently similar to the subject security that it would serve as a reasonable alternative investment to the investor. At a minimum, the security or securities should be sufficiently similar that a market yield for the subject security can be fairly estimated from the yields of the "similar" security or securities. Where a security has several components, appropriate consideration may also be given to the prices or yields of the various components of the security.

(2) The degree to which a security is "similar," as that term is used in this IM-2440-2, to the subject security may be determined by factors that include but are not limited to the following:

(A) Credit quality considerations, such as whether the security is issued by the same or similar entity, bears the same or similar credit rating, or is supported by a similarly strong guarantee or collateral as the subject security (to the extent securities of other issuers are designated as “similar” securities, significant recent information of either issuer that is not yet incorporated in credit ratings should be considered (*e.g.*, changes to ratings outlooks));

(B) The extent to which the spread (*i.e.*, the spread over U.S. Treasury securities of a similar duration) at which the “similar” security trades is comparable to the spread at which the subject security trades;

(C) General structural characteristics and provisions of the issue, such as coupon, maturity, duration, complexity or uniqueness of the structure, callability, the likelihood that the security will be called, tendered or exchanged, and other embedded options, as compared with the characteristics of the subject security; and

(D) Technical factors such as the size of the issue, the float and recent turnover of the issue, and legal restrictions on transferability as compared with the subject security.

(3) When a debt security’s value and pricing is based substantially on, and is highly dependent on, the particular circumstances of the issuer, including creditworthiness and the ability and willingness of the issuer to meet the specific obligations of the security, in most cases other securities will not be sufficiently similar, and therefore, other

securities may not be used to establish the prevailing market price.

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[1] The Interpretation does not apply to transactions in municipal securities. Single terms in parentheses within sentences, such as the terms "(sale)" and "(to)" in the phrase, "contemporaneous dealer purchase (sale) transactions with institutional accounts," refer to scenarios where a member is charging a customer a mark-down.

Adopted by SR-NASD-2003-141 eff. July 5, 2007.

Selected Notice: 07-28.

2500. SPECIAL ACCOUNTS

2510. Discretionary Accounts

(a) Excessive Transactions

No member shall effect with or for any customer's account in respect to which such member or his agent or employee is vested with any discretionary power any transactions of purchase or sale which are excessive in size or frequency in view of the financial resources and character of such account.

(b) Authorization and Acceptance of Account

No member or registered representative shall exercise any discretionary power in a customer's account unless such customer has given prior written authorization to a stated individual or individuals and the account has been accepted by the member, as evidenced in writing by the member or the partner, officer or manager, duly designated by the member, in accordance with Rule 3010.

(c) Approval and Review of Transactions

The member or the person duly designated shall approve promptly in writing each discretionary order entered and shall review all discretionary accounts at frequent intervals in order to detect and prevent transactions which are excessive in size or frequency in view of the financial resources and character of the account.

(d) Exceptions

This Rule shall not apply to:

(1) discretion as to the price at which or the time when an order given by a customer for the purchase or sale of a definite amount of a specified security shall be executed, except that the authority to exercise time and price discretion will be considered to be in effect only until the end of the business day on which the customer granted such discretion, absent a specific, written contrary indication signed and dated by the customer. This limitation shall not apply to time and price discretion exercised in an institutional account, as defined in Rule 3110(c)(4), pursuant to valid Good-Till-Cancelled instructions issued on a "not-held" basis. Any exercise of time and price discretion must be reflected on the order ticket;

(2) bulk exchanges at net asset value of money market mutual funds ("funds") utilizing negative response letters provided:

(A) The bulk exchange is limited to situations involving mergers and acquisitions of funds, changes of clearing members and exchanges of funds used in sweep accounts;

(B) The negative response letter contains a tabular comparison of the nature and amount of the fees charged by each fund;

(C) The negative response letter contains a comparative description of the investment objectives of each fund and a prospectus of the fund to be purchased; and

(D) The negative response feature will not be activated until at least 30 days after the date on which the letter was mailed.

Amended by SR-NASD-2002-162 and SR-NASD-2004-116 eff. Jan. 31, 2005.
Amended by SR-NASD-92-14 eff. Dec. 10, 1992.

Selected Notices: 75-33, 76-30, 91-39, 91-80, 92-25, 93-1, 04-71.

2700. SECURITIES DISTRIBUTIONS

2711. Research Analysts and Research Reports

(a) Definitions

For purposes of this rule, the following terms shall be defined as provided.

(1) "Equity security" has the same meaning as defined in Section 3(a)(11) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934.

(2) "Investment banking department" means any department or division, whether or not identified as such, that performs any investment banking service on behalf of a member.

(3) "Investment banking services" include, without limitation, acting as an underwriter or participating in a selling group in an offering for the issuer; acting as a financial adviser in a merger or acquisition; providing venture capital, equity lines of credit, private investment, public equity transactions (PIPEs) or similar investments; or serving as placement agent for the issuer.

(4) "Member of a research analyst's household" means any individual whose principal residence is the same as the research analyst's principal residence. This term does not include an unrelated person who shares the same residence as a research analyst provided that the research analyst and unrelated person are financially independent of one another.

(5) "Public appearance" means any participation in a conference call, seminar, forum (including an interactive electronic forum) or other public speaking activity before 15 or more persons or before one or more representatives of the media, radio, television or print media interview, or the writing of a print media article, in which a research analyst makes a recommendation or offers an opinion concerning an equity security. This term does not include a password protected Webcast, conference call or similar event with 15 or more existing customers, provided that all of the event participants previously received the most current research report or other documentation that contains the required applicable disclosures, and that the research analyst appearing at the event corrects and updates during the public appearance any disclosures in the research report that are inaccurate, misleading or no longer applicable.

(6) "Research analyst" means the associated person who is primarily responsible for, and any associated person who reports directly or indirectly to such a research analyst in connection with, preparation of the substance of a research report, whether or not any such person has the job title of "research analyst."

(7) "Research analyst account" means any account in which a research analyst or member of the research analyst's household has a financial interest, or over which such analyst has discretion or control, other than an investment company registered under the Investment Company Act of 1940.This term does not include a "blind trust" account that is controlled by a person other than the research analyst or member of the research analyst's household where neither the research analyst nor a member of the research analyst's household knows of the account's investments or investment transactions.

(8) "Research department" means any department or division, whether or not identified as such, that is principally responsible for preparing the substance of a research report on behalf of a member.

(9) "Research Report" means any written (including electronic) communication that includes an analysis of equity securities of individual companies or industries, and that provides information reasonably sufficient upon which to base an investment decision. This term does not include:

(A) communications that are limited to the following:

(i) discussions of broad-based indices;

(ii) commentaries on economic, political or market conditions;

(iii) technical analyses concerning the demand and supply for a sector, index or industry based on trading volume and price;

(iv) statistical summaries of multiple companies' financial data, including listings of current ratings;

(v) recommendations regarding increasing or decreasing holdings in particular industries or sectors; or

(vi) notices of ratings or price target changes, provided that the member simultaneously directs the readers of the notice to the most recent research report on the subject company that includes all current applicable disclosures required by this rule and that such research report does not contain materially misleading disclosure, including disclosures that are outdated or no longer applicable;

(B) the following communications, even if they include an analysis of an individual equity security and information reasonably sufficient upon which to base an investment decision:

(i) any communication distributed to fewer than 15 persons;

(ii) periodic reports or other communications prepared for investment company shareholders or discretionary investment account clients that discuss individual securities in the context of a fund's or account's past performance or the basis for previously made discretionary investment decisions; or

(iii) internal communications that are not given to current or prospective customers; and

(C) communications that constitute statutory prospectuses that are filed as part of the registration statement.

(10) "Subject company" means the company whose equity securities are the subject of a research report or a public appearance.

(11) "Emerging Growth Company" has the same meaning as in Section 3(a)(80) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934.

(b) Restrictions on Relationship with Research Department

(1) No research analyst may be subject to the supervision or control of any employee of the member's investment banking department, and no personnel engaged in investment banking activities may have any influence or control over the compensatory evaluation of a research analyst.

(2) Except as provided in paragraph (b)(3), no employee of the investment banking department or any other employee of the member who is not directly responsible for investment research ("non-research personnel"), other than legal or compliance personnel, may review or approve a research report of the member before its publication.

(3) Non-research personnel may review a research report before its publication as necessary only to verify the factual accuracy of information in the research report or identify any potential conflict of interest, provided that:

(A) any written communication between non-research personnel and research department personnel concerning the content of a research report must be made either through authorized legal or compliance personnel of the member or in a transmission copied to such personnel; and

(B) any oral communication between non-research personnel and research department personnel concerning the content of a research report must be documented and made either through authorized legal or compliance personnel acting as intermediary or in a conversation conducted in the presence of such personnel.

(c) Restrictions on Communications with the Subject Company

(1) Except as provided in paragraphs (c)(2) and (c)(3), a member may not submit a research report to the subject company before its publication.

(2) A member may submit sections of such a research report to the subject company before its publication for review as necessary only to verify the factual accuracy of information in those sections, provided that:

(A) the sections of the research report submitted to the subject company do not contain the research summary, the research rating or the price target;

(B) a complete draft of the research report is provided to legal or compliance personnel before sections of the report are submitted to the subject company; and

(C) if after submitting the sections of the research report to the subject company the research department intends to change the proposed rating or price target, it must first provide written justification to, and receive written authorization from, legal or compliance personnel for the change. The member must retain copies of any draft and the final version of such a research report for three years following its publication.

(3) The member may notify a subject company that the member intends to change its rating of the subject company's securities, provided that the notification occurs on the business day before the member announces the rating change, after the close of trading in the principal market of the subject company's securities.

(4) No research analyst may participate in efforts to solicit investment banking business. Accordingly, no research analyst may, among other things, participate in any "pitches" for investment banking business to prospective investment banking clients, or have other communications with companies for the purpose of soliciting investment banking business. This paragraph shall not prevent a research analyst from attending a pitch meeting in connection with an initial public offering of an Emerging Growth Company that is also attended by investment banking personnel; provided, however, that a research analyst may not engage in otherwise prohibited conduct in such meetings, including efforts to solicit investment banking business.

(5) A research analyst is prohibited from directly or indirectly:

(A) participating in a road show related to an investment banking services transaction; and

(B) engaging in any communication with a current or prospective customer in the presence of investment banking department personnel or company management about an investment banking services transaction.

(6) Investment banking department personnel are prohibited from directly or indirectly:

(A) directing a research analyst to engage in sales or marketing efforts related to an investment banking services transaction; and

(B) directing a research analyst to engage in any communication with a current or prospective customer about an investment banking services transaction.

(7) Any written or oral communication by a research analyst with a current or prospective customer or internal personnel related to an investment banking services transaction must be fair, balanced and not misleading, taking into consideration the overall context in which the communication is made.

(d) Restrictions on Research Analyst Compensation

(1) No member may pay any bonus, salary or other form of compensation to a research analyst that is based upon a specific investment banking services transaction.

(2) The compensation of a research analyst who is primarily responsible for the preparation of the substance of a research report must be reviewed and approved at least annually by a committee that reports to the member's board of

directors, or when the member has no board of directors, to a senior executive officer of the member. This committee may not have representation from the member's investment banking department. The committee must consider the following factors when reviewing such a research analyst's compensation, if applicable:

(A) the research analyst's individual performance, including the analyst's productivity and the quality of the analyst's research;

(B) the correlation between the research analyst's recommendations and the stock price performance; and

(C) the overall ratings received from clients, sales force, and peers independent of the member's investment banking department, and other independent ratings services.

The committee may not consider as a factor in reviewing and approving such a research analyst's compensation his or her contributions to the member's investment banking business. The committee must document the basis upon which each such research analyst's compensation was established. The annual attestation required by Rule 2711(i) must certify that the committee reviewed and approved each such research analyst's compensation and documented the basis upon which this compensation was established.

(e) Prohibition of Promise of Favorable Research

No member may directly or indirectly offer favorable research, a specific rating or a specific price target, or threaten to change research, a rating or a price target, to a company as consideration or inducement for the receipt of business or compensation.

(f) Restrictions on Publishing Research Reports and Public Appearances; Termination of Coverage

(1) No member may publish or otherwise distribute a research report and no research analyst may make a public appearance regarding a subject company for which the member acted as manager or co-manager of:

(A) an initial public offering, for 40 calendar days following the date of the offering; or

(B) a secondary offering, for 10 calendar days following the date of the offering; provided that:

(i) paragraphs (f)(1)(A) and (f)(1)(B) will not prevent a member from publishing or otherwise distributing a research report, or prevent a research analyst from making a public appearance, concerning the effects of significant news or a significant event on the subject company within such 40- and 10-day periods, and provided further that legal or compliance personnel authorize publication of that research report before it is issued or authorize the public appearance before it is made; and

(ii) paragraph (f)(1)(B) will not prevent a member from publishing or otherwise distributing a research report pursuant to SEC Rule 139 regarding a subject company with "actively-traded securities," as defined in Regulation M, 17 CFR 242.101(c)(1), and will not prevent a research analyst from making a public appearance concerning such a company.

(2) No member that has agreed to participate or is participating as an underwriter or dealer (other than as manager or co-manager) of an issuer's initial public offering may publish or otherwise distribute a research report or make a public appearance regarding that issuer for 25 calendar days after the date of the offering.

(3) For purposes of paragraphs (f)(1) and (f)(2), the term "date of the offering" refers to the later of the effective date of the registration statement or the first date on which the security was bona fide offered to the public.

(4) No member that has acted as a manager or co-manager of a securities offering may publish or otherwise distribute a research report or make a public appearance concerning a subject company 15 days prior to and after the

expiration, waiver or termination of a lock-up agreement or any other agreement that the member has entered into with a subject company or its shareholders that restricts or prohibits the sale of securities held by the subject company or its shareholders after the completion of a securities offering. This paragraph will not prevent a member from publishing or otherwise distributing a research report concerning the effects of significant news or a significant event on the subject company within such period, provided legal or compliance personnel authorize publication of that research report before it is issued. In addition, this paragraph shall not apply to the publication or distribution of a research report pursuant to SEC Rule 139 regarding a subject company with "actively traded securities," as defined in Regulation M, 17 CFR 242.101(c)(1), or to a public appearance concerning such a subject company.

(5) Paragraphs (f)(1), (f)(2) and (f)(4) shall not apply to the publication or distribution of a research report or a public appearance following an initial public offering or secondary offering of the securities of an Emerging Growth Company.

(6) If a member intends to terminate its research coverage of a subject company, notice of this termination must be made. The member must make available a final research report on the subject company using the means of dissemination equivalent to those it ordinarily uses to provide the customer with its research reports on the subject company. The report must be comparable in scope and detail to prior research reports and must include a final recommendation or rating, unless it is impracticable for the member to produce a comparable report (e.g., if the research analyst covering the subject company or sector has left the member or if the member terminates coverage of the industry or sector). If it is impracticable to produce a final recommendation or rating, the final research report must disclose the member's rationale for the decision to terminate coverage.

(g) Restrictions on Personal Trading by Research Analysts

(1) No research analyst account may purchase or receive any securities before the issuer's initial public offering if the issuer is principally engaged in the same types of business as companies that the research analyst follows.

(2) No research analyst account may purchase or sell any security issued by a company that the research analyst follows, or any option on or derivative of such security, for a period beginning 30 calendar days before and ending five calendar days after the publication of a research report concerning the company or a change in a rating or price target of the company's securities; provided that:

(A) a member may permit a research analyst account to sell securities held by the account that are issued by a company that the research analyst follows, within 30 calendar days after the research analyst began following the company for the member;

(B) a member may permit a research analyst account to purchase or sell any security issued by a subject company within 30 calendar days before the publication of a research report or change in the rating or price target of the subject company's securities due to significant news or a significant event concerning the subject company, provided that legal or compliance personnel pre-approve the research report and any change in the rating or price target.

(3) No research analyst account may purchase or sell any security or any option on or derivative of such security in a manner inconsistent with the research analyst's recommendation as reflected in the most recent research report published by the member.

(4) Legal or compliance personnel may authorize a transaction otherwise prohibited by paragraphs (g)(2) and (g)(3) based upon an unanticipated significant change in the personal financial circumstances of the beneficial owner of the research analyst account, provided that:

(A) legal or compliance personnel authorize the transaction before it is entered;

(B) each exception is granted in compliance with policies and procedures adopted by the member that are

reasonably designed to ensure that these transactions do not create a conflict of interest between the professional responsibilities of the research analyst and the personal trading activities of a research analyst account; and

(C) the member maintains written records concerning each transaction and the justification for permitting the transaction for three years following the date on which the transaction is approved.

(5) The prohibitions in paragraphs (g)(1) through (g)(3) do not apply to a purchase or sale of the securities of:

(A) any registered diversified investment company as defined under Section (5)(b)(1) of the Investment Company Act of 1940; or

(B) any other investment fund over which neither the research analyst nor a member of the research analyst's household has any investment discretion or control, provided that:

(i) the research analyst accounts collectively own interests representing no more than 1% of the assets of the fund;

(ii) the fund invests no more than 20% of its assets in securities of issuers principally engaged in the same types of business as companies that the research analyst follows; and

(iii) if the investment fund distributes securities in kind to the research analyst or household member before the issuer's initial public offering, the research analyst or household member must either divest those securities immediately or the research analyst must refrain from participating in the preparation of research reports concerning that issuer.

(6) Legal or compliance personnel of the member shall pre-approve all transactions of persons who oversee research analysts to the extent such transactions involve equity securities of subject companies covered by the research analysts that they oversee. This pre-approval requirement shall apply to all persons, such as the director of research, supervisory analyst, or member of a committee, who have direct influence or control with respect to the preparation of the substance of research reports or establishing or changing a rating or price target of a subject company's equity securities.

(h) Disclosure Requirements

(1) Ownership and Material Conflicts of Interest

A member must disclose in research reports and a research analyst must disclose in public appearances:

(A) if the research analyst or a member of the research analyst's household has a financial interest in the securities of the subject company, and the nature of the financial interest (including, without limitation, whether it consists of any option, right, warrant, future, long or short position);

(B) if, as of the end of the month immediately preceding the date of publication of the research report or the public appearance (or the end of the second most recent month if the publication date is less than 10 calendar days after the end of the most recent month), the member or its affiliates beneficially own 1% or more of any class of common equity securities of the subject company. Computation of beneficial ownership of securities must be based upon the same standards used to compute ownership for purposes of the reporting requirements under Section 13(d) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934;

(C) any other actual, material conflict of interest of the research analyst or member of which the research

analyst knows or has reason to know at the time of publication of the research report or at the time of the public appearance.

(2) Receipt of Compensation

(A) A member must disclose in research reports:

(i) if the research analyst received compensation:

a. based upon (among other factors) the member's investment banking revenues; or

b. from the subject company in the past 12 months.

(ii) the member or affiliate:

a. managed or co-managed a public offering of securities for the subject company in the past 12 months;

b. received compensation for investment banking services from the subject company in the past 12 months; or

c. expects to receive or intends to seek compensation for investment banking services from the subject company in the next 3 months.

(iii) if (1) as of the end of the month immediately preceding the date of publication of the research report (or the end of the second most recent month if the publication date is less than 30 calendar days after the end of the most recent month) or (2) to the extent the research analyst or an employee of the member with the ability to influence the substance of the research knows:

a. the member received any compensation for products or services other than investment banking services from the subject company in the past 12 months; or

b. the subject company currently is, or during the 12-month period preceding the date of distribution of the research report was, a client of the member. In such cases, the member also must disclose the types of services provided to the subject company. For purposes of this Rule 2711(h)(2), the types of services provided to the subject company shall be described as investment banking services, non-investment banking securities-related services, and non-securities services.

(iv) if, to the extent the research analyst or an employee of the member with the ability to influence the substance of the research report knows an affiliate of the member received any compensation for products or services other than investment banking services from the subject company in the past 12 months.

(v) if, to the extent the research analyst or member has reason to know, an affiliate of the member received any compensation for products or services other than investment banking services from the subject company in the past 12 months.

a. This requirement will be deemed satisfied if such compensation is disclosed in research reports within 30 days after completion of the last calendar quarter, provided that the member has taken steps reasonably designed to identify any such compensation during that calendar quarter. This requirement shall not apply to any subject company as to which the member initiated coverage since

the beginning of the current calendar quarter.

b. The research analyst and the member will be presumed not to have reason to know whether an affiliate received any compensation for products or services other than investment banking services from the subject company in the past 12 months if the member maintains and enforces policies and procedures reasonably designed to prevent the research analysts and employees of the member with the ability to influence the substance of research reports from, directly or indirectly, receiving information from the affiliate concerning whether the affiliate received such compensation.

(vi) For the purposes of this Rule 2711(h)(2), an employee of the member with the ability to influence the substance of the research report is an employee who, in the ordinary course of that person's duties, has the authority to review the particular research report and to change that research report prior to publication.

(B) A research analyst must disclose in public appearances:

(i) if, to the extent the research analyst knows or has reason to know, the member or any affiliate received any compensation from the subject company in the past 12 months;

(ii) if the research analyst received any compensation from the subject company in the past 12 months; or

(iii) if, to the extent the research analyst knows or has reason to know, the subject company currently is, or during the 12-month period preceding the date of distribution of the research report, was, a client of the member. In such cases, the research analyst also must disclose the types of services provided to the subject company, if known by the research analyst.

(C) A member or research analyst will not be required to make a disclosure required by paragraphs (h)(2)(A)(ii)(b) and (c), (h)(2)(A)(iii)(b), or (h)(2)(B)(i) and (iii) to the extent such disclosure would reveal material non-public information regarding specific potential future investment banking transactions of the subject company.

(3) Position as Officer or Director

A member must disclose in research reports and a research analyst must disclose in public appearances if the research analyst or a member of the research analyst's household serves as an officer, director or advisory board member of the subject company.

(4) Meaning of Ratings

If a research report contains a rating, the member must define in the research report the meaning of each rating used by the member in its rating system. The definition of each rating must be consistent with its plain meaning.

(5) Distribution of Ratings

(A) Regardless of the rating system that a member employs, a member must disclose in each research report the percentage of all securities rated by the member to which the member would assign a "buy," "hold/neutral," or "sell" rating.

(B) In each research report, the member must disclose the percentage of subject companies within each of these three categories for whom the member has provided investment banking services within the previous twelve months.

(C) The information that is disclosed under paragraphs (h)(5)(A) and (h)(5)(B) must be current as of the end

of the most recent calendar quarter (or the second most recent calendar quarter if the publication date is less than 15 calendar days after the most recent calendar quarter) and must reflect the distribution of the most recent ratings issued by the member for all subject companies, unless the most recent rating was issued more than 12 months ago.

(D) The requirements of paragraph (h)(5) shall not apply to any research report that does not contain a rating.

(6) Price Chart

If a research report contains either a rating or a price target, and the member has assigned a rating or price target to the subject company's securities rating for at least one year, the research report must include a line graph of the security's daily closing prices for the period that the member has assigned any rating or price target or for a three-year period, whichever is shorter. The line graph must:

(A) indicate the dates on which the member assigned or changed each rating or price target;

(B) depict each rating and price target assigned or changed on those dates; and

(C) be current as of the end of the most recent calendar quarter (or the second most recent calendar quarter if the publication date is less than 15 calendar days after the most recent calendar quarter).

(7) Price Targets

If a research report contains a price target, the member must disclose in the research report the valuation methods used to determine the price target. Price targets must have a reasonable basis and must be accompanied by a disclosure concerning the risks that may impede achievement of the price target.

(8) Market Making

A member must disclose in research reports if it was making a market in the subject company's securities at the time that the research report was published.

(9) Disclosure Required by Other Provisions

In addition to the disclosure required by this rule, members and research analysts must provide disclosure in research reports and public appearances that is required by applicable law or regulation, including NASD Rule 2210 and the antifraud provisions of the federal securities laws.

(10) Prominence of Disclosure

The disclosures required by this paragraph (h) must be presented on the front page of research reports or the front page must refer to the page on which disclosures are found. Disclosures and references to disclosures must be clear, comprehensive and prominent.

(11) Disclosures in Research Reports Covering Six or More Companies

When a member distributes a research report covering six or more subject companies (a "compendium report"), for purposes of the disclosures required in paragraph (h), the compendium report may direct the reader in a clear manner as to where they may obtain applicable current disclosures. Electronic compendium reports may include a hyperlink to the required disclosures. Paper-based compendium reports must provide either a toll-free number to call or a postal address to write for the required disclosures and may also include a web address of the member where the disclosures can be found.

(12) Records of Public Appearances

Members must maintain records of public appearances by research analysts sufficient to demonstrate compliance by those research analysts with the applicable disclosure requirements under paragraph (h) of this Rule. Such records must be maintained for three years from the date of the public appearance.

(13) Third-Party Research Reports

(A) Subject to paragraph (h)(13)(B) of this Rule, if a member distributes or makes available any third-party research report, the member must accompany the research report with, or provide a web address that directs the recipient to, the current applicable disclosures, as they pertain to the member, required by paragraphs (h)(1)(B), (h)(1)(C), (h)(2)(A)(ii) and (h)(8) of this Rule. Members must establish written supervisory policies and procedures reasonably designed to ensure the completeness and accuracy of all applicable disclosures.

(B) The requirements of paragraph (h)(13)(A) of this Rule shall not apply to independent third-party research reports made available by a member to its customers:

(i) upon request;

(ii) in connection with a solicited order in which a registered representative has informed the customer, during the solicitation, of the availability of independent research on the solicited equity security, and the customer requests such independent research; or

(iii) through a member-maintained web site.

(C) Subject to paragraph (h)(13)(D) of this Rule, a registered principal (or supervisory analyst approved pursuant to Rule 344 of the New York Stock Exchange) must approve by signature or initial all third-party research reports distributed by a member. The approval of third-party research shall be based on a review by the designated principal (or supervisory analyst approved pursuant to NYSE Rule 344) to determine that the content of the research report, pursuant to Rule 2210(d)(1)(B), contains no untrue statement of material fact or is otherwise not false or misleading. For the purposes of this Rule only, a member's obligation to review a third-party research report pursuant to Rule 2210(d)(1)(B) extends to any untrue statement of material fact or any false or misleading information that:

a. should be known from reading the report; or

b. is known based on information otherwise possessed by the member.

(D) The requirements of paragraph (h)(13)(C) of this Rule shall not apply to independent third-party research reports distributed or made available by a member.

(E) For the purposes of this Rule, “third-party research report” shall mean a research report that is produced by a person or entity other than the member and “independent third-party research report” shall mean a third-party research report, in respect of which the person or entity producing the report:

(i) has no affiliation or business or contractual relationship with the distributing member or that member's affiliates that is reasonably likely to inform the content of its research reports; and

(ii) makes content determinations without any input from the distributing member or that member's affiliates.

(i) Supervisory Procedures

Each member subject to this rule must adopt and implement written supervisory procedures reasonably designed to ensure that the member and its employees comply with the provisions of this rule (including the attestation requirements of Rule 2711(d)(2)), and a senior officer of such a member must attest annually to NASD by April 1 of each year that it has adopted and implemented those procedures.

(j) Prohibition of Retaliation Against Research Analysts

No member and no employee of a member who is involved with the member's investment banking activities may, directly or indirectly, retaliate against or threaten to retaliate against any research analyst employed by the member or its affiliates as a result of an adverse, negative, or otherwise unfavorable research report or public appearance written or made by the research analyst that may adversely affect the member's present or prospective investment banking relationship with

the subject company of a research report. This prohibition shall not limit a member's authority to discipline or terminate a research analyst, in accordance with the member's policies and procedures, for any cause other than the writing of such an unfavorable research report or the making of such an unfavorable public appearance.

(k) Exceptions for Small Firms

The provisions of paragraph (b) shall not apply to members that over the previous three years, on average per year, have participated in 10 or fewer investment banking services transactions as manager or co-manager and generated $5 million or less in gross investment banking services revenues from those transactions. For purposes of this paragraph (k), the term "investment banking services transactions" includes the underwriting of both corporate debt and equity securities but not municipal securities. Members that qualify for this exemption must maintain records for three years of any communication that, but for this exemption, would be subject to paragraph (b) of this Rule.

Amended by SR-FINRA-2012-045 eff. April 5, 2012 and Oct. 11, 2012.
Amended by SR-FINRA-2007-011 eff. April 7, 2008.
Amended by SR-NASD-2006-112 eff. Sep. 27, 2006.
Amended by SR-NASD-2004-141 eff. June 6, 2005.
Amended by SR-NASD-2004-003 eff. April 26, 2004.
Amended by SR-NASD-2002-154 eff. July 29, 2003.
Amended by SR-NASD-2002-74 eff. June 4, 2002.
Adopted by SR-NASD-2002-21 eff. April 24, 2002.

Selected Notices: 02-39, 03-44, 05-34, 12-49.

2800. SPECIAL PRODUCTS

2830. Investment Company Securities

(a) Application

This Rule shall apply exclusively to the activities of members in connection with the securities of companies registered under the Investment Company Act of 1940 ("the 1940 Act"); provided however, that Rule 2820 shall apply, in lieu of this Rule, to members' activities in connection with "variable contracts" as defined therein.

(b) Definitions

(1) The terms "affiliated member," "compensation," "cash compensation," "non-cash compensation" and "offeror" as used in paragraph (l) of this Rule shall have the following meanings:

(A) "Affiliated Member" shall mean a member which, directly or indirectly, controls, is controlled by, or is under common control with a non-member company.

(B) "Compensation" shall mean cash compensation and non-cash compensation.

(C) "Cash compensation" shall mean any discount, concession, fee, service fee, commission, asset-based sales charge, loan, override or cash employee benefit received in connection with the sale and distribution of investment company securities.

(D) "Non-cash compensation" shall mean any form of compensation received in connection with the sale and distribution of investment company securities that is not cash compensation, including but not limited to merchandise, gifts and prizes, travel expenses, meals and lodging.

(E) "Offeror" shall mean an investment company, an adviser to an investment company, a fund administrator, an underwriter and any affiliated person (as defined in Section 2(a)(3) of the1940 Act) of such entities.

(2) "Brokerage commissions," as used in paragraph (k), shall not be limited to commissions on agency transactions but shall include underwriting discounts or concessions and fees paid to members in connection with tender offers.

(3) "Covered account," as used in paragraph (k), shall mean (A) any other investment company or other account managed by the investment adviser of such investment company, or (B) any other account from which brokerage commissions are received or expected as a result of the request or direction of any principal underwriter of such investment company or of any affiliated person (as defined in the 1940 Act) of such investment company or of such underwriter, or of any affiliated person of an affiliated person of such investment company.

(4) "Person" shall mean "person" as defined in the 1940 Act.

(5) "Prime rate," as used in paragraph (d), shall mean the most preferential interest rate on corporate loans at large U.S. money center commercial banks.

(6) "Public offering price" shall mean a public offering price as set forth in the prospectus of the issuing company.

(7) "Rights of accumulation" as used in paragraph (d), shall mean a scale of reducing sales charges in which the sales charge applicable to the securities being purchased is based upon the aggregate quantity of securities previously purchased or acquired and then owned plus the securities being purchased. The quantity of securities owned shall be based upon:

(A) The current value of such securities (measured by either net asset value or maximum offering price); or

(B) Total purchases of such securities at actual offering prices; or

(C) The higher of the current value or the total purchases of such securities.

The quantity of securities owned may also include redeemable securities of other registered investment companies having the same principal underwriter.

(8) "Sales charge" and "sales charges," as used in paragraph (d), shall mean all charges or fees that are paid to finance sales or sales promotion expenses, including front-end, deferred and asset-based sales charges, excluding charges and fees for ministerial, recordkeeping or administrative activities and investment management fees. For purposes of this Rule, members may rely on the sales-related fees and charges disclosed in the prospectus of an investment company.

(A) An "asset-based sales charge" is a sales charge that is deducted from the net assets of an investment company and does not include a service fee.

(B) A "deferred sales charge" is any amount properly chargeable to sales or promotional expenses that is paid by a shareholder after purchase but before or upon redemption.

(C) A "front-end sales charge" is a sales charge that is included in the public offering price of the shares of an investment company.

(9) "Service fees," as used in paragraph (d), shall mean payments by an investment company for personal service and/or the maintenance of shareholder accounts.

(10) The terms "underwriter," "principal underwriter," "redeemable security," "periodic payment plan," "open-end management investment company," and unit investment trust," shall have the same definitions used in the 1940 Act.

(11) A "fund of funds" is an investment company that acquires securities issued by any other investment company registered under the 1940 Act in excess of the amounts permitted under paragraph (A) of Section 12(d)(1) of the 1940 Act. An "acquiring company" in a fund of funds is the investment company that purchases or otherwise acquires the securities of another investment company, and an "acquired company" is the investment company whose securities are acquired.

(12) "Investment companies in a single complex" are any two or more companies that hold themselves out to investors as related companies for purposes of investment and investor services.

(c) Conditions for Discounts to Dealers

No member who is an underwriter of the securities of an investment company shall sell any such security to any dealer or broker at any price other than a public offering price unless such sale is in conformance with Rule 2420 and, if the security is issued by an open-end management company or by a unit investment trust which invests primarily in securities issued by other investment companies, unless a sales agreement is in effect between the parties as of the date of the transaction, which agreement shall set forth the concessions to be received by the dealer or broker.

(d) Sales Charge

No member shall offer or sell the shares of any open-end investment company, any closed-end investment company that makes periodic repurchase offers pursuant to Rule 23c-3(b) under the 1940 Act and offers its shares on a continuous basis pursuant to Rule 415(a)(1)(xi) under the Securities Act of 1933, or any "single payment" investment plan issued by a unit investment trust (collectively "investment companies") registered under the 1940 Act if the sales charges described in the prospectus are excessive. Aggregate sales charges shall be deemed excessive if they do not conform to the following provisions:

(1) Investment Companies Without an Asset-Based Sales Charge

(A) Aggregate front-end and deferred sales charges described in the prospectus which may be imposed by an investment company without an asset-based sales charge shall not exceed 8.5% of the offering price.

(B)(i) Rights of accumulation (cumulative quantity discounts) may be made available to any person in accordance with one of the alternative quantity discount schedules provided in subparagraph (C)(i) below, as in effect on the date the right is exercised.

(ii) If rights of accumulation are not made available on terms at least as favorable as those specified in subparagraph (C)(i) the maximum aggregate sales charge shall not exceed 8.0% of offering price.

(C)(i) Quantity discounts, if offered, shall be made available on single purchases by any person in accordance with one of the following two alternatives:

a. A maximum aggregate sales charge of 7.75% on purchases of $10,000 or more and a maximum aggregate sales charge of 6.25% on purchases of $25,000 or more; or

b. A maximum aggregate sales charge of 7.50% on purchases of $15,000 or more and a maximum aggregate sales charge of 6.25% on purchases of $25,000 or more.

(ii) If quantity discounts are not made available on terms at least as favorable as those specified in subparagraph (C)(i) the maximum aggregate sales charge shall not exceed:

a. 7.75% of offering price if the provisions of subparagraphs (B) are met.

b. 7.25% of offering price if the provisions of subparagraph (B) are not met.

(D) If an investment company without an asset-based sales charge pays a service fee, the maximum aggregate sales charge shall not exceed 7.25% of the offering price.

(2) Investment Companies with an Asset-Based Sales Charge

(A) Except as provided in subparagraphs (C) and (D), the aggregate asset-based, front-end and deferred sales charges described in the prospectus which may be imposed by an investment company with an asset-based sales charge, if the investment company has adopted a plan under which service fees are paid, shall not exceed 6.25% of total new gross sales (excluding sales from the reinvestment of distributions and exchanges of shares between investment companies in a single complex, between classes of an investment company with multiple classes of shares or between series of a series investment company) plus interest charges on such amount equal to the prime rate plus one percent per annum. The maximum front-end or deferred sales charge resulting from any transaction shall be 6.25% of the amount invested.

(B) Except as provided in subparagraphs (C) and (D), if an investment company with an asset-based sales charge does not pay a service fee, the aggregate asset-based, front-end and deferred sales charges described in the prospectus shall not exceed 7.25% of total new gross sales (excluding sales from the reinvestment of distributions and exchanges of shares between investment companies in a single complex, between classes of an investment company with multiple classes of shares or between series of a series investment company) plus interest charges on such amount equal to the prime rate plus one percent per annum. The maximum front-end or deferred sales charge resulting from any transaction shall be 7.25% of the amount invested.

(C) The maximum aggregate sales charge on total new gross sales set forth in subparagraphs (A) and (B) may be increased by an amount calculated by applying the appropriate percentages of 6.25% or 7.25% to total new gross sales which occurred after an investment company first adopted an asset-based sales charge until July 7, 1993 plus interest charges on such amount equal to the prime rate plus one percent per annum less any front-end, asset-based or deferred sales charges on such sales or net assets resulting from such sales.

(D) The maximum aggregate sales charges of an investment company in a single complex, a class of shares issued by an investment company with multiple classes of shares or a separate series of a series investment company, may be increased to include sales of exchanged shares provided that such increase is deducted from the maximum aggregate sales charges of the investment company, class or series which redeemed the shares for the purpose of such exchanges.

(E) No member shall offer or sell the shares of an investment company with an asset-based sales charge if:

(i) The amount of the asset-based sales charge exceeds .75 of 1% per annum of the average annual net assets of the investment company; or

(ii) Any deferred sales charges deducted from the proceeds of a redemption after the maximum cap described in subparagraphs (A), (B), (C) and (D) hereof, has been attained are not credited to the investment company.

(3) Fund of Funds

(A) If neither an acquiring company nor an acquired company in a fund of funds structure has an asset-based sales charge, the maximum aggregate front-end and deferred sales charges that may be imposed by the acquiring company, the acquired company and those companies in combination, shall not exceed the rates provided in paragraph (d)(1).

(B) Any acquiring company or acquired company in a fund of funds structure that has an asset-based sales charge shall individually comply with the requirements of paragraph (d)(2), provided:

(i) If the acquiring and acquired companies are in a single complex and the acquired fund has an

asset-based sales charge, sales made to the acquiring fund shall be excluded from total gross new sales for purposes of acquired fund's calculations under subparagraphs (d)(2)(A) through (d)(2)(D); and

(ii) If both the acquiring and acquired companies have an asset-based sales charge:

a. the maximum aggregate asset-based sales charge imposed by the acquiring company, the acquired company and those companies in combination, shall not exceed the rate provided in subparagraph (d)(2)(E)(i); and

b. the maximum aggregate front-end or deferred sales charges shall not exceed 7.25% of the amount invested, or 6.25% if either company pays a service fee.

(C) The rates described in subparagraphs (d)(4) and (d)(5) shall apply to the acquiring company, the acquired company and those companies in combination. The limitations of subparagraph (d)(6) shall apply to the acquiring company and the acquired company individually.

(4) No member or person associated with a member shall, either orally or in writing, describe an investment company as being "no load" or as having "no sales charge" if the investment company has a front-end or deferred sales charge or whose total charges against net assets to provide for sales related expenses and/or service fees exceed .25 of 1% of average net assets per annum.

(5) No member or person associated with a member shall offer or sell the securities of an investment company if the service fees paid by the investment company, as disclosed in the prospectus, exceed .25 of 1% of its average annual net assets or if a service fee paid by the investment company, as disclosed in the prospectus, to any person who sells its shares exceeds .25 of 1% of the average annual net asset value of such shares.

(6) No member or person associated with a member shall offer or sell the securities of an investment company if:

(A) The investment company has a deferred sales charge paid upon redemption that declines over the period of a shareholder's investment ("contingent deferred sales load"), unless the contingent deferred sales load is calculated as if the shares or amounts representing shares not subject to the load are redeemed first, and other shares or amounts representing shares are then redeemed in the order purchased, provided that another order of redemption may be used if such order would result in the redeeming shareholder paying a lower contingent deferred sales load; or

(B) The investment company has a front-end or deferred sales charge imposed on shares, or amounts representing shares, that are purchased through the reinvestment of dividends, unless the registration statement registering the investment company's securities under the Securities Act of 1933 became effective prior to April 1, 2000.

(e) Selling Dividends

No member shall, in recommending the purchase of investment company securities, state or imply that the purchase of such securities shortly before an ex-dividend date is advantageous to the purchaser, unless there are specific, clearly described tax or other advantages to the purchaser, and no member shall represent that distributions of long-term capital gains by an investment company are or should be viewed as part of the income yield from an investment in such company's securities.

(f) Withhold Orders

No member shall withhold placing customers' orders for any investment company security so as to profit himself as a

result of such withholding.

(g) Purchase for Existing Orders

No member shall purchase from an underwriter the securities of any open-end investment company and no member who is an underwriter of such securities shall purchase such securities from the issuer, except (1) for the purpose of covering purchase orders previously received or (2) for its own investment. Nothing herein shall be deemed to prohibit any member from purchasing securities of any investment company specifically designed for short-term investment (e.g., money market fund).

(h) Refund of Sales Charge

If any security issued by an open-end management investment company is repurchased by the issuer, or by the underwriter for the account of the issuer, or is tendered for redemption within seven business days after the date of the transaction, (1) the dealer or broker shall forthwith refund to the underwriter the full concession allowed to the dealer or broker on the original sale and (2) the underwriter shall forthwith pay to the issuer the underwriter's share of the sales charge on the original sale by the underwriter and shall also pay to the issuer the refund which he received under subparagraph (1) when he receives it. The dealer or broker shall be notified by the underwriter of such repurchase or redemption within ten days of the date on which the certificate or written request for redemption is delivered to the underwriter or issuer. If the original sale was made directly to the investor by the principal underwriter, the entire sales charge shall be paid to the issuer by the principal underwriter.

(i) Purchases as Principal

No member who is a party to a sales agreement referred to in paragraph (c) shall, as principal, purchase any security issued by an open-end management investment company or unit investment trust from a record holder at a price lower than the bid price next quoted by or for the issuer.

(j) Repurchase from Dealer

No member who is a principal underwriter of a security issued by an open-end investment company or a closed-end investment company that makes periodic repurchase offers pursuant to Rule 23c-3(b) under the 1940 Act and offers its shares on a continuous basis pursuant to Rule 415(a)(1)(xi) under the Securities Act of 1933 shall repurchase such security, either as principal or as agent for the issuer, from a dealer acting as principal who is not a party to a sales agreement with a principal underwriter, nor from any investor, unless such dealer or investor is the record owner of the security so tendered for repurchase. No member who is a principal underwriter shall participate in the offering or in the sale of any such security if the issuer voluntarily redeems or repurchases its securities from a dealer acting as principal who is not a party to such a sales agreement nor from any investor, unless such dealer or investor is the record owner of the security so tendered for repurchase. Nothing in this paragraph shall relate to the compulsory redemption of any security upon presentation to the issuer pursuant to the terms of the security.

Nothing in this Rule shall prevent any member, whether or not a party to a sales agreement, from selling any such security for the account of a record owner to the underwriter or issuer at the bid price next quoted by or for the issuer and charging the investor to a reasonable charge for handling the transaction, provided that such member discloses to such record owner that direct redemption of the security can be accomplished by the record owner without incurring such charges.

(k) Execution of Investment Company Portfolio Transactions

(1) No member shall, directly or indirectly, favor or disfavor the sale or distribution of shares of any particular investment company or group of investment companies on the basis of brokerage commissions received or expected by such member from any source, including such investment company, or any covered account.

(2) No member shall sell shares of, or act as underwriter for, an investment company, if the member knows or has reason to know that such investment company, or an investment adviser or principal underwriter of the company, has a written or oral agreement or understanding under which the company directs or is expected to direct portfolio securities transactions (or any commission, markup or other remuneration resulting from any such transaction) to a broker or a dealer in consideration for the promotion or sale of shares issued by the company or any other registered

investment company.

(3) No member shall, directly or indirectly, demand or require brokerage commissions or solicit a promise of such commissions from any source as a condition to the sale or distribution of shares of an investment company.

(4) No member shall, directly or indirectly, offer or promise to another member, brokerage commissions from any source as a condition to the sale or distribution of shares of an investment company and no member shall request or arrange for the direction to any member of a specific amount or percentage of brokerage commissions conditioned upon that member's sales or promise of sales of shares of an investment company.

(5) No member shall circulate any information regarding the amount or level of brokerage commissions received by the member from any investment company or covered account to other than management personnel who are required, in the overall management of the member's business, to have access to such information.

(6) No member shall, with respect to such member's activities as underwriter of investment company shares, suggest, encourage, or sponsor any incentive campaign or special sales effort of another member with respect to the shares of any investment company which incentive or sales effort is, to the knowledge or understanding of such underwriter-member, to be based upon, or financed by, brokerage commissions directed or arranged by the underwriter-member.

(7) No member shall, with respect to such member's retail sales or distribution of investment company shares:

(A) provide to salesmen, branch managers or other sales personnel any incentive or additional compensation for the sale of shares of specific investment companies based on the amount of brokerage commissions received or expected from any source, including such investment companies or any covered account. Included in this prohibition are bonuses, preferred compensation lists, sales incentive campaign or contests, or any other method of compensation which provides an incentive to sales personnel to favor or disfavor any investment company or group of investment companies based on brokerage commissions;

(B) recommend specific investment companies to sales personnel, or establish "recommended," "selected," or "preferred" lists of investment companies, regardless of the existence of any special compensation or incentives to favor or disfavor the shares of such company or companies in sales efforts, if such companies are recommended or selected on the basis of brokerage commissions received or expected from any source;

(C) grant to salesmen, branch managers or other sales personnel any participation in brokerage commissions received by such member from portfolio transactions of an investment company whose shares are sold by such member, or from any covered account, if such commissions are directed by, or identified with, such investment company or any covered account; or

(D) use sales of shares of any investment company as a factor in negotiating the price of, or the amount of brokerage commissions to be paid on, a portfolio transaction of an investment company or of any covered account, whether such transaction is executed in the over-the-counter market or elsewhere.

(8) Provided that the member does not violate any of the specific provisions of this paragraph (k), nothing herein shall be deemed to prohibit:

(A) the execution of portfolio transactions of any investment company or covered account by members who also sell shares of the investment company; or

(B) a member from compensating its salesmen and managers based on total sales of investment company shares attributable to such salesmen or managers, whether by use of overrides, accounting credits, or other compensation methods, provided that such compensation is not designed to favor or disfavor sales of

shares of particular investment companies on a basis prohibited by this paragraph (k).

(l) Member Compensation

In connection with the sale and distribution of investment company securities:

(1) Except as described below, no associated person of a member shall accept any compensation from anyone other than the member with which the person is associated. This requirement will not prohibit arrangements where a non-member company pays compensation directly to associated persons of the member, provided that:

(A) the arrangement is agreed to by the member;

(B) the member relies on an appropriate rule, regulation, interpretive release, interpretive letter, or "no-action" letter issued by the Commission or its staff that applies to the specific fact situation of the arrangement;

(C) the receipt by associated persons of such compensation is treated as compensation received by the member for purposes of the Rules of the Association; and

(D) the record keeping requirement in paragraph (l)(3) is satisfied.

(2) No member or person associated with a member shall accept any compensation from an offeror which is in the form of securities of any kind.

(3) Except for items described in subparagraphs (l)(5)(A) and (B), a member shall maintain records of all compensation received by the member or its associated persons from offerors. The records shall include the names of the offerors, the names of the associated persons, the amount of cash, the nature and, if known, the value of non-cash compensation received.

(4) No member shall accept any cash compensation from an offeror unless such compensation is described in a current prospectus of the investment company. When special cash compensation arrangements are made available by an offeror to a member, which arrangements are not made available on the same terms to all members who distribute the investment company securities of the offeror, a member shall not enter into such arrangements unless the name of the member and the details of the arrangements are disclosed in the prospectus. Prospectus disclosure requirements shall not apply to cash compensation arrangements between:

(A) principal underwriters of the same security; and

(B) the principal underwriter of a security and the sponsor of a unit investment trust which utilizes such security as its underlying investment.

(5) No member or person associated with a member shall directly or indirectly accept or make payments or offers of payments of any non-cash compensation, except as provided in this provision. Notwithstanding the provisions of subparagraph (l)(1), the following non-cash compensation arrangements are permitted:

(A) Gifts that do not exceed an annual amount per person fixed periodically by the Association[1] and are not preconditioned on achievement of a sales target.

(B) An occasional meal, a ticket to a sporting event or the theater, or comparable entertainment which is neither so frequent nor so extensive as to raise any question of propriety and is not preconditioned on achievement of a sales target.

(C) Payment or reimbursement by offerors in connection with meetings held by an offeror or by a member for the purpose of training or education of associated persons of a member, provided that:

(i) the record keeping requirement in paragraph (l)(3) is satisfied;

(ii) associated persons obtain the member's prior approval to attend the meeting and attendance by a member's associated persons is not preconditioned by the member on the achievement of a sales target or any other incentives pursuant to a non-cash compensation arrangement permitted by paragraph (l)(5)(D);

(iii) the location is appropriate to the purpose of the meeting, which shall mean an office of the offeror or the member, or a facility located in the vicinity of such office, or a regional location with respect to regional meetings;

(iv) the payment or reimbursement is not applied to the expenses of guests of the associated person; and

(v) the payment or reimbursement by the offeror is not preconditioned by the offeror on the achievement of a sales target or any other non-cash compensation arrangement permitted by paragraph (l)(5)(D).

(D) Non-cash compensation arrangements between a member and its associated persons or a non-member company and its sales personnel who are associated persons of an affiliated member, provided that:

(i) the member's or non-member's non-cash compensation arrangement, if it includes investment company securities, is based on the total production of associated persons with respect to all investment company securities distributed by the member;

(ii) the non-cash compensation arrangement requires that the credit received for each investment company security is equally weighted;

(iii) no unaffiliated non-member company or other unaffiliated member directly or indirectly participates in the member's or non-member's organization of a permissible non-cash compensation arrangement; and

(iv) the record keeping requirement in paragraph (l)(3) is satisfied

(E) Contributions by a non-member company or other member to a non-cash compensation arrangement between a member and its associated persons, provided that the arrangement meets the criteria in paragraph (l)(5)(D).

(m) Prompt Payment for Investment Company Shares

(1) Members (including underwriters) that engage in direct retail transactions for investment company shares shall transmit payments received from customers for such shares, which such members have sold to customers, to payees (i.e., underwriters, investment companies or their designated agents) by (A) the end of the third business day following a receipt of a customer's order to purchase such shares or by (B) the end of one business day following receipt of a customer's payment for such shares, whichever is the later date.

(2) Members that are underwriters and that engage in wholesale transactions for investment company shares shall transmit payments for investment company shares, which such members have received from other members, to investment company issuers or their designated agents by the end of two business days following receipt of such

payments.

(n) Disclosure of Deferred Sales Charges

In addition to the requirements for disclosure on written confirmations of transactions contained in Rule 2230, if the transaction involves the purchase of shares of an investment company that imposes a deferred sales charge on redemption, such written confirmation shall also include the following legend: "On selling your shares, you may pay a sales charge. For the charge and other fees, see the prospectus." The legend shall appear on the front of a confirmation and in, at least, 8-point type.

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1 The current annual amount fixed by the Association is $100.

Amended by SR-NASD-2004-027 eff. Feb. 14, 2005.
Amended by SR-NASD-99-74 eff. June 20, 2000.
Amended by SR-NASD-98-14 eff. April 1, 2000.
Amended by SR-NASD-97-35 eff. Jan. 1, 1999.
Amended by SR-NASD-94-56 eff. June 7, 1995.
Amended by SR-NASD-93-42 eff. Feb. 24, 1994.
Amended by SR-NASD-90-69 eff. July 7, 1993.
Amended by SR-NASD-90-56 eff. Oct. 1, 1991.
Amended by SR-NASD-86-34 eff. Oct. 31, 1988.
Amended by SR-NASD-84-51 eff. July 10, 1984.
Amended by SR-NASD-80-21 eff. Mar. 4, 1981.
Amended by SR-NASD-75-13 eff. May 1, 1976.
Amended by SEC Release No. 10147 eff. July 15, 1973.
Amended eff. Feb. 8, 1971.
Adopted by SEC Release No. 2866 eff. June 1, 1941.

Selected Notices to Members: 73-42, 75-68, 75-70, 80-07, 80-13, 80-43, 81-08, 84-40, 85-86, 88-96, 89-51, 91-40, 91-68, 92-41, 93-12, 93-52, 93-82, 94-13, 94-14, 94-16, 94-41, 94-67, 95-36, 95-56, 97-48, 97-50, 98-75; 99-55, 99-103, 00-53, 05-04.

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