



ADVISORY GROUP , INC.

Balanced Money, Balanced Life™

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February 19, 2024

**FORM ADV PART 2A
BROCHURE**

This brochure provides information about the qualifications and business practices of Cone Advisory Group, Inc. If you have any questions about the contents of this brochure, contact us at 252-746-6785. The information in this brochure has not been approved or verified by the United States Securities and Exchange Commission or by any state securities authority.

Additional information about Cone Advisory Group, Inc CRD# 316457 is available on the SEC's website at www.adviserinfo.sec.gov.

Cone Advisory Group, Inc is a registered investment adviser. Registration with the United States Securities and Exchange Commission or any state securities authority does not imply a certain level of skill or training.

Item 2 Summary of Material Changes

Form ADV Part 2 requires registered investment advisers to amend their brochure when information becomes materially inaccurate. If there are any material changes to an adviser's disclosure brochure, the adviser is required to notify you and provide you with a description of the material changes.

Cone Advisory Group became registered with the state of North Carolina on April 10, 2023. The following material changes have been made since the last update on March 15, 2023:

- None.

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Item 4 Advisory Business

Description of Firm

Cone Advisory Group, Inc. is a registered investment adviser primarily based in Ayden, North Carolina. We are organized as a corporation under the laws of the State of North Carolina and registered as an investment adviser through the State of North Carolina. We are owned by Curtis "Dean" Cone.

The following paragraphs describe our services and fees. Refer to the description of each investment advisory service listed below for information on how we tailor our advisory services to your individual needs. As used in this brochure, the words "we," "our," and "us" refer to Cone Advisory Group, Inc and the words "you," "your," and "client" refer to you as either a client or prospective client of our firm.

Portfolio Management Services

We offer discretionary and non-discretionary portfolio management services. Our investment advice is tailored to meet our clients' needs and investment objectives. If you retain our firm for portfolio management services, we will meet with you to determine your investment objectives, risk tolerance, and other relevant information at the beginning of our advisory relationship. We will use the information we gather to develop a strategy that enables our firm to give you continuous and focused investment advice and/or to make investments on your behalf. As part of our portfolio management services, we may customize an investment portfolio for you according to your risk tolerance and investing objectives. Once we construct an investment portfolio for you, we will monitor your portfolio's performance on an ongoing basis and will rebalance the portfolio as required by changes in market conditions and in your financial circumstances.

If you participate in our discretionary portfolio management services, we require you to grant our firm discretionary authority to manage your account. Discretionary authorization will allow us to determine the specific securities, and the amount of securities, to be purchased or sold for your account without your approval prior to each transaction. Discretionary authority is granted in the investment advisory agreement you sign with our firm and the appropriate trading authorization forms. You may limit our discretionary authority (for example, limiting the types of securities that can be purchased or sold for your account) by providing our firm with your restrictions and guidelines in writing.

We may also offer non-discretionary portfolio management services. If you enter into non-discretionary arrangements with our firm, we must obtain your approval prior to executing any transactions on behalf of your account. You have an unrestricted right to decline to implement any advice provided by our firm on a non-discretionary basis.

As part of our portfolio management services, we may use one or more sub-advisers to manage a portion of your account on a non-discretionary basis. The sub-adviser(s) may use one or more of their model portfolios to manage your account. We will regularly monitor the performance of your accounts managed by sub-adviser(s). We may pay a portion of our advisory fee to the sub-adviser(s) we use; however, you will not pay our firm a higher advisory fee as a result of any sub-advisory relationships.

As part of our portfolio management services, in addition to other types of investments (see disclosures below in this section), we may invest your assets according to one or more model portfolios developed by an unaffiliated investment manager. These models are designed for investors with varying degrees of risk tolerance ranging from a more aggressive investment strategy to a more conservative investment approach. Clients whose assets are invested in model portfolios may not set restrictions on the specific holdings or allocations within the model, nor the types of securities

that can be purchased in the model. Nonetheless, clients may impose restrictions on investing in certain securities or types of securities in their account. In such cases, this may prevent a client from investing in certain models that are managed by our firm.

Financial Planning Services

We offer financial planning services which typically involve providing a variety of advisory services to clients regarding the management of their financial resources based upon an analysis of their individual needs. These services can range from broad-based financial planning to consultative or single subject planning. If you retain our firm for financial planning services, we will meet with you to gather information about your financial circumstances and objectives. We may also use financial planning software to determine your current financial position and to define and quantify your long-term goals and objectives. Once we specify those long-term objectives (both financial and non-financial), we will develop shorter-term, targeted objectives. Once we review and analyze the information you provide to our firm and the data derived from our financial planning software, we will deliver a written plan to you, designed to help you achieve your stated financial goals and objectives.

Financial plans are based on your financial situation at the time we present the plan to you, and on the financial information you provide to us. You must promptly notify our firm if your financial situation, goals, objectives, or needs change.

You are under no obligation to act on our financial planning recommendations. Should you choose to act on any of our recommendations, you are not obligated to implement the financial plan through any of our other investment advisory services. Moreover, you may act on our recommendations by placing securities transactions with any brokerage firm.

Financial Consulting Services

We may also provide investment and non-investment related consulting services, whereby we provide a professional opinion on specific financial or related areas. Consulting services may include, but are not limited to: advice on existing or potential investments, education funding, account re-balancing, asset allocation, income tax planning, debt management, understanding credit reports, child care, insurance needs, risk assessment/management, budget and cash flow analysis.

Our recommendations are based on your stated goals, objectives, time horizon, and financial information you provide to our firm. You have the right to accept or reject our recommendations, and you may choose any firm to assist you with implementing our recommendations. While we endeavor at all times to offer our clients specialized services at reasonable costs, the fees charged by other advisers for comparable services may be lower than the fees charged by our firm. The consulting fee is directly dependent on the scope and complexity of the engagement.

Selection of Other Advisers

We may recommend that you use the services of a third party money manager ("TPMM") to manage all, or a portion of, your investment portfolio. After gathering information about your financial situation and objectives, we may recommend that you engage a specific TPMM or investment program. Factors that we take into consideration when making our recommendation(s) include, but are not limited to, the following: the TPMM's performance, methods of analysis, fees, your financial needs, investment goals, risk tolerance, and investment objectives. We will monitor the TPMM(s)' performance to ensure its management and investment style remains aligned with your investment goals and objectives.

We have engaged Symmetry Partners, LLC (CRD# 120982) in a co-advisory relationship to provide portfolio management services. We will, based on a client's individual circumstances and needs, and if the portfolio management style of Symmetry Partners is appropriate for client, establish a client account.

We do not directly recommend specific securities products to clients rather recommend portfolios constructed by Symmetry Partners based upon the client's risk tolerance and financial situation. Clients will grant discretionary authority solely to Symmetry Partners and all client assets will be managed by Symmetry Partners.

We will meet with the client on a regular basis, or as determined by the client, to review the account. We will, when needed, suggest changes in the client's portfolio, to more effectively address each client's goals. The client may then instruct Symmetry Partners to make any or all of the changes we recommend. These recommendations are our own and are neither recommended nor approved by Symmetry Partners.

Wrap Fee Programs

We do not participate in any wrap fee program.

Types of Investments

We primarily offer advice on mutual funds. Additionally, we may advise you on various types of investments such as stocks and exchange traded funds ("ETFs") based on your stated goals and objectives. We may also provide advice on any type of investment held in your portfolio at the inception of our advisory relationship.

Since our investment strategies and advice are based on each client's specific financial situation, the investment advice we provide to you may be different or conflicting with the advice we give to other clients regarding the same security or investment.

Refer to the *Methods of Analysis, Investment Strategies and Risk of Loss* below for additional disclosures on this topic.

Assets Under Management

As of February 6, 2024, the firm has the following assets under management: Discretionary AUM: \$6,126,735 and Non-Discretionary AUM: \$195,265.

Item 5 Fees and Compensation

Portfolio Management Services

Our fee for portfolio management services is based on a percentage of the assets in your account and is set forth in the following annual fee schedule:

Annual Fee Schedule

Assets Under Management	Annual Fee
0 - \$1,000,000	1.15%
\$1,000,001 - \$2,500,000	0.50%
Over \$2,500,001	0.35%

Our annual portfolio management fee is billed and payable, quarterly in arrears, based on the balance at the end of the billing period. If the portfolio management agreement is executed at any time other than the first day of a calendar quarter, our fees will apply on a pro rata basis, which means that the advisory fee is payable in proportion to the number of days in the quarter for which you are a client. Our advisory fee is negotiable, depending on individual client circumstances.

At our discretion, we may combine the account values of family members living in the same household to determine the applicable advisory fee. For example, we may combine account values for you and your minor children, joint accounts with your spouse, and other types of related accounts. Combining account values may increase the asset total, which may result in your paying a reduced advisory fee based on the available breakpoints in our fee schedule stated above.

We will deduct our fee directly from your account through the qualified custodian holding your funds and securities. We will deduct our advisory fee only when the following requirements are met:

- You provide our firm with written authorization permitting the fees to be paid directly from your account held by the qualified custodian;
- We send you an invoice showing the amount of the fee, the value of the assets on which the fee is based, the time period covered by the fee, and the specific manner in which the fee was calculated; and
- The qualified custodian agrees to send you a statement, at least quarterly, indicating all amounts disbursed from your account including the amount of the advisory fee paid directly to our firm.

We encourage you to reconcile our invoices with the statement(s) you receive from the qualified custodian. If you find any inconsistent information between our invoice and the statement(s) you receive from the qualified custodian call our main office number located on the cover page of this brochure.

You may terminate the portfolio management agreement upon 30 days written notice. You will incur a pro rata charge for services rendered prior to the termination of the portfolio management agreement, which means you will incur advisory fees only in proportion to the number of days in the quarter for which you are a client. If you have pre-paid advisory fees that we have not yet earned, you will receive a prorated refund of those fees.

Financial Planning Services

We charge an hourly fee of \$250 and/or a fixed fee ranging between \$500 and \$5000. Our fees are negotiable depending upon the complexity and scope of the services rendered. We will provide you with an estimate of the total time/cost at the start of the advisory relationship. In limited circumstances, the cost/time could potentially exceed the initial estimate. In such cases, we will notify you and request that you approve the additional fee. The fees are due upon completion of services rendered. All terms of our engagement will be evidenced in the agreement that you sign with our firm. Under no circumstances will we require prepayment of a fee in excess of \$500 for services not performed within six months of the advanced payment.

At our discretion, we may offset our financial planning fees to the extent you implement the financial plan through our Portfolio Management Service. We also offer advice on single subject financial planning/general consulting services at the same hourly rate.

You may terminate the financial planning agreement upon 30 days written notice to our firm. If you have pre-paid financial planning fees that we have not yet earned, you will receive a prorated refund of those fees. If financial planning fees are payable in arrears, you will be responsible for a prorated fee based on services performed prior to termination of the financial planning agreement.

Financial Consulting Services

We charge an hourly fee of \$250 and/or a fixed fee ranging between \$500 and \$5000. Our fees are negotiable depending on the scope and complexity of services rendered. Our consulting fee is payable as invoiced.

You may terminate the financial planning agreement upon 30 days written notice to our firm. If you have pre-paid financial planning fees that we have not yet earned, you will receive a prorated refund of those fees. If financial planning fees are payable in arrears, you will be responsible for a prorated fee based on services performed prior to termination of the financial consulting agreement.

Selection of Other Advisers (Co-Advisors)

You may be required to sign an agreement directly with the recommended TPMM(s). You may terminate your advisory relationship with the TPMM according to the terms of your agreement with the TPMM. You should review each TPMM's brochure for specific information on how you may terminate your advisory relationship with the TPMM and how you may receive a refund, if applicable. You should contact the TPMM directly for questions regarding your advisory agreement with the TPMM.

We may direct clients to third party money managers such as Symmetry Partners (CRD# 120982). We will be compensated in this arrangement via a separate fee from that charged by Symmetry Partners to which it directs those clients. Symmetry Partners will calculate and collect the total fee, then remit our portion of the fee to us. The combined advisory fee for Cone Advisory Group and Symmetry Partners will not exceed the industry standard of excessive fees, which is 3%. This relationship will be disclosed in the Co-Advisory Agreement between our firm and Symmetry Partners.

Clients should refer to Symmetry Partners' disclosure document for additional information regarding its fees, billing practices, minimum required investments and termination of advisory agreements located at <https://adviserinfo.sec.gov/firm/summary/120982>.

Additional Fees and Expenses

As part of our investment advisory services to you, we may invest, or recommend that you invest, in mutual funds and exchange traded funds. The fees that you pay to our firm for investment advisory services are separate and distinct from the fees and expenses charged by mutual funds or exchange traded funds (described in each fund's prospectus) to their shareholders. These fees will generally include a management fee and other fund expenses. You will also incur transaction charges and/or brokerage fees when purchasing or selling securities. These charges and fees are typically imposed by the broker-dealer or custodian through whom your account transactions are executed. We do not share in any portion of the brokerage fees/transaction charges imposed by the broker-dealer or custodian. To fully understand the total cost you will incur, you should review all the fees charged by mutual funds, exchange traded funds, our firm, and others. For information on our brokerage practices, refer to the *Brokerage Practices* section of this brochure.

Compensation for the Sale of Securities or Other Investment Products

Persons providing investment advice on behalf of our firm are licensed as independent insurance agents. These persons will earn commission-based compensation for selling insurance products, including insurance products they sell to you. Insurance commissions earned by these persons are separate and in addition to our advisory fees. This practice presents a conflict of interest because persons providing investment advice on behalf of our firm who are insurance agents have an incentive to recommend insurance products to you for the purpose of generating commissions rather than solely based on your needs. You are under no obligation, contractually or otherwise, to purchase insurance products through any person affiliated with our firm.

Item 6 Performance-Based Fees and Side-By-Side Management

We do not accept performance-based fees or participate in side-by-side management. Performance-

based fees are fees that are based on a share of a capital gains or capital appreciation of a client's account. Side-by-side management refers to the practice of managing accounts that are charged performance-based fees while at the same time managing accounts that are not charged performance-based fees. Our fees are calculated as described in the *Fees and Compensation* section above and are not charged on the basis of a share of capital gains upon, or capital appreciation of, the funds in your advisory account.

Item 7 Types of Clients

We offer investment advisory services to individuals, high net worth individuals, and pension and profit-sharing plans. In general, we do not require a minimum dollar amount to open and maintain an advisory account.

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

We may use one or more of the following methods of analysis or investment strategies when providing investment advice to you:

Fundamental Analysis - involves analyzing individual companies and their industry groups, such as a company's financial statements, details regarding the company's product line, the experience and expertise of the company's management, and the outlook for the company and its industry. The resulting data is used to measure the true value of the company's stock compared to the current market value.

Risk: The risk of fundamental analysis is that information obtained may be incorrect and the analysis may not provide an accurate estimate of earnings, which may be the basis for a stock's value. If securities prices adjust rapidly to new information, utilizing fundamental analysis may not result in favorable performance.

Long-Term Purchases - securities purchased with the expectation that the value of those securities will grow over a relatively long period of time, generally greater than one year.

Risk: Using a long-term purchase strategy generally assumes the financial markets will go up in the long-term which may not be the case. There is also the risk that the segment of the market that you are invested in or perhaps just your particular investment will go down over time even if the overall financial markets advance. Purchasing investments long-term may create an opportunity cost - "locking-up" assets that may be better utilized in the short-term in other investments.

Our investment strategies and advice may vary depending upon each client's specific financial situation. As such, we determine investments and allocations based upon your predefined objectives, risk tolerance, time horizon, financial information, liquidity needs and other various suitability factors.

Your restrictions and guidelines may affect the composition of your portfolio. **It is important that you notify us immediately with respect to any material changes to your financial circumstances, including for example, a change in your current or expected income level, tax circumstances, or employment status.**

We will not perform quantitative or qualitative analysis of individual securities. Instead, we will advise you on how to allocate your assets among various classes of securities or third party money

managers. We primarily rely on investment model portfolios and strategies developed by the third party money managers and their portfolio managers. We may replace/recommend replacing a third party money manager if there is a significant deviation in characteristics or performance from the stated strategy and/or benchmark.

Tax Considerations

Our strategies and investments may have unique and significant tax implications. However, unless we specifically agree otherwise, and in writing, tax efficiency is not our primary consideration in the management of your assets. Regardless of your account size or any other factors, we strongly recommend that you consult with a tax professional regarding the investing of your assets.

Custodians and broker-dealers must report the cost basis of equities acquired in client accounts. Your custodian will default to the First-In First-Out ("FIFO") accounting method for calculating the cost basis of your investments. You are responsible for contacting your tax advisor to determine if this accounting method is the right choice for you. If your tax advisor believes another accounting method is more advantageous, provide written notice to our firm immediately and we will alert your account custodian of your individually selected accounting method. Decisions about cost basis accounting methods will need to be made before trades settle, as the cost basis method cannot be changed after settlement.

Risk of Loss

Investing in securities involves risk of loss that you should be prepared to bear. We do not represent or guarantee that our services or methods of analysis can or will predict future results, successfully identify market tops or bottoms, or insulate clients from losses due to market corrections or declines. We cannot offer any guarantees or promises that your financial goals and objectives will be met. Past performance is in no way an indication of future performance.

Other Risk Considerations

When evaluating risk, financial loss may be viewed differently by each client and may depend on many different risks, each of which may affect the probability and magnitude of any potential losses. The following risks may not be all-inclusive, but should be considered carefully by a prospective client before retaining our services.

Liquidity Risk: The risk of being unable to sell your investment at a fair price at a given time due to high volatility or lack of active liquid markets. You may receive a lower price or it may not be possible to sell the investment at all.

Credit Risk: Credit risk typically applies to debt investments such as corporate, municipal, and sovereign fixed income or bonds. A bond issuing entity can experience a credit event that could impair or erase the value of an issuer's securities held by a client.

Inflation and Interest Rate Risk: Security prices and portfolio returns will likely vary in response to changes in inflation and interest rates. Inflation causes the value of future dollars to be worth less and may reduce the purchasing power of a client's future interest payments and principal. Inflation also generally leads to higher interest rates which may cause the value of many types of fixed income investments to decline.

Horizon and Longevity Risk: The risk that your investment horizon is shortened because of an unforeseen event, for example, the loss of your job. This may force you to sell investments that you were expecting to hold for the long term. If you must sell at a time that the markets are down, you may

lose money. Longevity Risk is the risk of outliving your savings. This risk is particularly relevant for people who are retired, or are nearing retirement.

Recommendation of Particular Types of Securities

We primarily recommend mutual funds. However, we may advise on other types of investments as appropriate for you since each client has different needs and different tolerance for risk. Each type of security has its own unique set of risks associated with it and it would not be possible to list here all of the specific risks of every type of investment. Even within the same type of investment, risks can vary widely. However, in very general terms, the higher the anticipated return of an investment, the higher the risk of loss associated with the investment.

Stocks: There are numerous ways of measuring the risk of equity securities (also known simply as "equities" or "stock"). In very broad terms, the value of a stock depends on the financial health of the company issuing it. However, stock prices can be affected by many other factors including, but not limited to the class of stock (for example, preferred or common); the health of the market sector of the issuing company; and, the overall health of the economy. In general, larger, better established companies ("large cap") tend to be safer than smaller start-up companies ("small cap") are but the mere size of an issuer is not, by itself, an indicator of the safety of the investment.

Mutual Funds and Exchange Traded Funds: Mutual funds and exchange traded funds ("ETF") are professionally managed collective investment systems that pool money from many investors and invest in stocks, bonds, short-term money market instruments, other mutual funds, other securities, or any combination thereof. The fund will have a manager that trades the fund's investments in accordance with the fund's investment objective. While mutual funds and ETFs generally provide diversification, risks can be significantly increased if the fund is concentrated in a particular sector of the market, primarily invests in small cap or speculative companies, uses leverage (i.e., borrows money) to a significant degree, or concentrates in a particular type of security (i.e., equities) rather than balancing the fund with different types of securities. ETFs differ from mutual funds since they can be bought and sold throughout the day like stock and their price can fluctuate throughout the day. The returns on mutual funds and ETFs can be reduced by the costs to manage the funds. Also, while some mutual funds are "no load" and charge no fee to buy into, or sell out of, the fund, other types of mutual funds do charge such fees which can also reduce returns. Mutual funds can also be "closed end" or "open end". So-called "open end" mutual funds continue to allow in new investors indefinitely whereas "closed end" funds have a fixed number of shares to sell which can limit their availability to new investors.

ETFs may have tracking error risks. For example, the ETF investment adviser may not be able to cause the ETF's performance to match that of its Underlying Index or other benchmark, which may negatively affect the ETF's performance. In addition, for leveraged and inverse ETFs that seek to track the performance of their Underlying Indices or benchmarks on a daily basis, mathematical compounding may prevent the ETF from correlating with performance of its benchmark. In addition, an ETF may not have investment exposure to all of the securities included in its Underlying Index, or its weighting of investment exposure to such securities may vary from that of the Underlying Index. Some ETFs may invest in securities or financial instruments that are not included in the Underlying Index, but which are expected to yield similar performance.

Item 9 Disciplinary Information

We are required to disclose the facts of any legal or disciplinary events that are material to a client's

evaluation of our advisory business or the integrity of our management. We do not have any required disclosures under this item.

Item 10 Other Financial Industry Activities and Affiliations

Licensed Insurance Agents

Persons providing investment advice on behalf of our firm are licensed as independent insurance agents and may earn commission-based compensation for selling insurance products to you. Insurance commissions earned by these persons are separate from our advisory fees. See the *Fees and Compensation* section in this brochure for more information on the compensation received by insurance agents who are affiliated with our firm. This affiliated firm is otherwise regulated by the professional organizations to which it belongs and must comply with the rules of those organizations. These rules may prohibit paying or receiving referral fees to or from investment advisers that are not members of the same organization.

Referral arrangements with an affiliated entity present a conflict of interest for us because we may have a direct or indirect financial incentive to recommend an affiliated firm's services. While we believe that compensation charged by an affiliated firm is competitive, such compensation may be higher than fees charged by other firms providing the same or similar services. You are under no obligation to use the services of any firm we recommend, whether affiliated or otherwise, and may obtain comparable services and/or lower fees through other firms.

Arrangements with Affiliated Entities

Real Estate Holding Companies

C. Dean Cone is the sole owner of C2 Farms, LLC, a holding entity for a farm. We do not recommend the services of C2 Farms, LLC. Mr. Cone's duties as the owner of C2 Farms, LLC do not create a conflict of interest to his provision of advisory services through Cone Advisory Group, Inc. There is no client involvement. Our advisory services are separate and distinct from the compensation paid to our affiliates for their services.

Additionally, C. Dean Cone is the co-owner of CCGJ, LLC and is also owned by George Pate. CCGJ, LLC is a real estate management company. We do not recommend the services of CCGJ, LLC. Mr. Cone's duties as the managing member of CCGJ, LLC do not create a conflict of interest to his provision of advisory services through Cone Advisory Group, Inc. Our advisory services are separate and distinct from the compensation paid to our affiliates for their services.

Referral arrangements with an affiliated entity present a conflict of interest for us because we may have a direct or indirect financial incentive to recommend an affiliated company's services. While we believe that compensation charged by an affiliated company is competitive, such compensation may be higher than fees charged by other companies providing the same or similar services. You are under no obligation to use the services of any company we recommend, whether affiliated or otherwise, and you may obtain comparable services and/or lower fees through other companies.

Promoter Services

Our firm may engage in promoter arrangements for client referrals. These individual promoters offer our services to the public. The Firm pays a referral fee to the promoter based on a portion of the management fees charged by the Firm and memorialized in a written agreement ("Promoter Agreement"). In all cases, the Firm will comply with the cash solicitation rules established by the SEC, state regulators and the client disclosure requirements. If a referred prospective client enters into an investment advisory agreement

with the Firm, a referral fee is paid to the referring party. The referral relationship will not result in clients being charged any fees over and above the normal advisory fees charged for the advisory services provided. The Firm will pay the promoter their share of the total fee. The Promoter Agreement requires that the promoter be appropriately registered under federal and state securities laws where applicable. Clients receive all related agreements and disclosures prior to or at the time of entering into an Investment Advisory Agreement with the Firm.

Recommendation of Other Advisers

We will recommend that you use a third party money manager ("TPMM") based on your needs and suitability. We will not receive separate compensation, directly or indirectly, from the TPMM for recommending that you use their services. Moreover, we do not have any other business relationships with the recommended TPMM(s). Refer to the *Advisory Business* section above for additional disclosures on this topic.

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

Description of Our Code of Ethics

We strive to comply with applicable laws and regulations governing our practices. Therefore, our Code of Ethics includes guidelines for professional standards of conduct for persons associated with our firm. Our goal is to protect your interests at all times and to demonstrate our commitment to our fiduciary duties of honesty, good faith, and fair dealing with you. All persons associated with our firm are expected to adhere strictly to these guidelines. Persons associated with our firm are also required to report any violations of our Code of Ethics. Additionally, we maintain and enforce written policies reasonably designed to prevent the misuse or dissemination of material, non-public information about you or your account holdings by persons associated with our firm.

Clients or prospective clients may obtain a copy of our Code of Ethics by contacting us at the telephone number on the cover page of this brochure.

Participation or Interest in Client Transactions

Neither our firm nor any persons associated with our firm has any material financial interest in client transactions beyond the provision of investment advisory services as disclosed in this brochure.

Personal Trading Practices

Our firm or persons associated with our firm may buy or sell the same securities that we recommend to you or securities in which you are already invested. A conflict of interest exists in such cases because we have the ability to trade ahead of you and potentially receive more favorable prices than you will receive. To mitigate this conflict of interest, it is our policy that neither our firm nor persons associated with our firm shall have priority over your account in the purchase or sale of securities.

Aggregated Trading

Our firm or persons associated with our firm may buy or sell securities for you at the same time we or persons associated with our firm buy or sell such securities for our own account. We may also combine our orders to purchase securities with your orders to purchase securities ("aggregated trading"). Refer to the *Brokerage Practices* section in this brochure for information on our aggregated trading practices.

A conflict of interest exists in such cases because we have the ability to trade ahead of you and

potentially receive more favorable prices than you will receive. To eliminate this conflict of interest, it is our policy that neither our firm nor persons associated with our firm shall have priority over your account in the purchase or sale of securities.

Item 12 Brokerage Practices

We recommend the brokerage and custodial services of Charles Schwab & Co., Inc. ("Schwab") (whether one or more "Custodian"). Your assets must be maintained in an account at a "qualified custodian," generally a broker-dealer or bank. In recognition of the value of the services the Custodian provides, you may pay higher commissions and/or trading costs than those that may be available elsewhere. Our selection of custodian is based on many factors, including the level of services provided, the custodian's financial stability, and the cost of services provided by the custodian to our clients, which includes the yield on cash sweep choices, commissions, custody fees and other fees or expenses.

We seek to recommend a custodian/broker that will hold your assets and execute transactions on terms that are, overall, the most favorable compared to other available providers and their services. We consider various factors, including:

- Capability to buy and sell securities for your account itself or to facilitate such services.
- The likelihood that your trades will be executed.
- Availability of investment research and tools.
- Overall quality of services.
- Competitiveness of price.
- Reputation, financial strength, and stability.
- Existing relationship with our firm and our other clients.

Research and Other Soft Dollar Benefits

We do not have any soft dollar arrangements.

Economic Benefits

As a registered investment adviser, we have access to the institutional platform of your account custodian. As such, we will also have access to research products and services from your account custodian and/or other brokerage firm. These products may include financial publications, information about particular companies and industries, research software, and other products or services that provide lawful and appropriate assistance to our firm in the performance of our investment decision-making responsibilities. Such research products and services are provided to all investment advisers that utilize the institutional services platforms of these firms and are not considered to be paid for with soft dollars. However, you should be aware that the commissions charged by a particular broker for a particular transaction or set of transactions may be greater than the amounts another broker who did not provide research services or products might charge.

Charles Schwab Institutional

We participate in the institutional adviser program (the "Program") offered by Charles Schwab & Co., Inc. ("Schwab"), an unaffiliated SEC-registered broker-dealer and FINRA member. Schwab offers to independent investment advisers services which include custody of securities, trade execution, clearance and settlement of transactions. We receive some benefits from Schwab through our participation in the Program.

As disclosed above, we participate in Schwab's institutional customer program and we may recommend Schwab to you for custody and brokerage services. There is no direct link between our participation in the Program and the investment advice we give you, although we receive economic benefits through our participation in the Program that are typically not available to Schwab retail investors. These benefits include the following products and services (provided without cost or at a discount): receipt of duplicate Client statements and confirmations; research related products and tools; consulting services; access to a trading desk serving our participants; access to aggregated trading (which provides the ability to aggregate securities transactions for execution and then allocate the appropriate shares to your accounts); the ability to have advisory fees deducted directly from your accounts; access to an electronic communications network for order entry and account information; access to mutual funds with no transaction fees and to certain institutional money managers; and discounts on compliance, marketing, research, technology, and practice management products or services provided to us by third party vendors. Schwab may also have paid for business consulting and professional services received by our related persons. Some of the products and services made available by Schwab through the Program may benefit us but may not benefit your accounts. These products or services may assist us in managing and administering your accounts, including accounts not maintained at Schwab. Other services made available by Schwab are intended to help us manage and further develop our business enterprise. The benefits received by us or our personnel through participation in the Program do not depend on the amount of brokerage transactions directed to Schwab. As part of our fiduciary duties to you, we endeavor at all times to put your interests first. You should be aware, however, that the receipt of economic benefits by us or our related persons in and of itself creates a potential conflict of interest and may indirectly influence our choice of Schwab for custody and brokerage services.

Brokerage for Client Referrals

We do not receive client referrals from broker-dealers in exchange for cash or other compensation, such as brokerage services or research.

Directed Brokerage

We routinely require that you direct our firm to execute transactions through Schwab. As such, we may be unable to achieve the most favorable execution of your transactions and you may pay higher brokerage commissions than you might otherwise pay through another broker-dealer that offers the same types of services. Not all advisers require their clients to direct brokerage.

Aggregated Trades

We combine multiple orders for shares of the same securities purchased for discretionary advisory accounts we manage (this practice is commonly referred to as "aggregated trading"). We will then distribute a portion of the shares to participating accounts in a fair and equitable manner. Generally, participating accounts will pay a fixed transaction cost regardless of the number of shares transacted. In certain cases, each participating account pays an average price per share for all transactions and pays a proportionate share of all transaction costs on any given day. In the event an order is only partially filled, the shares will be allocated to participating accounts in a fair and equitable manner, typically in proportion to the size of each client's order. Accounts owned by our firm or persons associated with our firm may participate in aggregated trading with your accounts; however, they will not be given preferential treatment.

We do not aggregate trades for non-discretionary accounts. Accordingly, non-discretionary accounts may pay different costs than discretionary accounts pay. If you enter into non-discretionary arrangements with our firm, we may not be able to buy and sell the same quantities of securities for

you and you may pay higher commissions, fees, and/or transaction costs than clients who enter into discretionary arrangements with our firm.

Mutual Fund Share Classes

Mutual funds are sold with different share classes, which carry different cost structures. Each available share class is described in the mutual fund's prospectus. When we purchase, or recommend the purchase of, mutual funds for a client, we select the share class that is deemed to be in the client's best interest, taking into consideration cost, tax implications, and other factors. When the fund is available for purchase at net asset value, we will purchase, or recommend the purchase of, the fund at net asset value. We also review the mutual funds held in accounts that come under our management to determine whether a more beneficial share class is available, considering cost, tax implications, and the impact of contingent deferred sales charges.

Item 13 Review of Accounts

Dean Cone, CCO, will monitor your investments on an ongoing basis and will conduct account reviews at least on an annual basis and upon your request to ensure that the advisory services provided to you and/or the portfolio mix are consistent with your current investment needs and objectives. Additional reviews may be conducted based on various circumstances, including, but not limited to: contributions and withdrawals, year-end tax planning, market moving events, security specific events and/or changes in your risk/return objectives.

We will provide you with additional or regular written reports in conjunction with account reviews. Reports we provide to you will contain relevant account and/or market-related information such as an inventory of account holdings and account performance, etc. You will receive trade confirmations and monthly or quarterly statements from your account custodian(s).

While reviews and updates to the financial plan are not part of the contracted services, at your request we will review your financial plan to determine if the investment advice provided is consistent with your investment needs and objectives. We will also update the financial plan at your request. At our sole discretion, reviews and updates may be subject to our current hourly rate. If you implement the financial planning advice provided by our firm, you will receive trade confirmations and monthly or quarterly statements from relevant custodians.

Item 14 Client Referrals and Other Compensation

Schwab Institutional Customer Program

As disclosed above under *Item 12 Brokerage Practices*, we participate in Schwab's Institutional Customer Program ("Institutional Program") and we may recommend Schwab to clients for custodial and brokerage services. There is no direct link between our participation in the program and the investment advice we give to our clients, although we receive economic benefits through our participation in the program that are typically not available to Schwab retail investors. These benefits include the following products and services (provided without cost or at a discount): receipt of duplicate client statements and confirmations; research related products and tools; consulting services; access to a trading desk serving adviser participants; access to aggregated trading (which provides the ability to aggregate securities transactions for execution and then allocate the appropriate shares to client accounts); the ability to have advisory fees deducted directly from client accounts; access to an electronic communications network for client order entry and account information; access to mutual funds with no transaction fees and to certain institutional money managers; and discounts on

compliance, marketing, research, technology, and practice management products or services provided to our firm by third party vendors. Schwab may also have paid for business consulting and professional services received by our Associated Persons. Some of the products and services made available by Schwab through the program may benefit our firm but may not benefit our Client accounts. These products or services may assist us in managing and administering Client accounts, including accounts not maintained at Schwab. Other services made available by Schwab are intended to help us manage and further develop our business enterprise. The benefits received by our Firm or our Associated Persons through participation in the program do not depend on the amount of brokerage transactions directed to Schwab. As part of our fiduciary duties to our clients, we endeavor at all times to put the interests of our clients first. Clients should be aware, however, that the receipt of economic benefits by our firm or our Associated Persons in and of themselves creates a potential conflict of interest and may indirectly influence our choice of Schwab for custody and brokerage services.

As disclosed under the *Fees and Compensation* section in this brochure, persons providing investment advice on behalf of our firm are licensed insurance agents. For information on the conflicts of interest this presents, and how we address these conflicts, refer to the *Fees and Compensation* section.

Refer to the *Brokerage Practices* section above for disclosures on research and other benefits we may receive resulting from our relationship with your account custodian.

Promoter Services

Our firm may engage in promoter arrangements for client referrals. These individual promoters offer our services to the public. The Firm pays a referral fee to the promoter based on a portion of the management fees charged by the Firm and memorialized in a written agreement ("Promoter Agreement"). In all cases, the Firm will comply with the cash solicitation rules established by the SEC, state regulators and the client disclosure requirements. If a referred prospective client enters into an investment advisory agreement with the Firm, a referral fee is paid to the referring party. The referral relationship will not result in clients being charged any fees over and above the normal advisory fees charged for the advisory services provided. The Firm will pay the promoter their share of the total fee. The Promoter Agreement requires that the promoter be appropriately registered under federal and state securities laws where applicable. Clients receive all related agreements and disclosures prior to or at the time of entering into an Investment Advisory Agreement with the Firm.

Item 15 Custody

As paying agent for our firm, your independent custodian will directly debit your account(s) for the payment of our advisory fees. This ability to deduct our advisory fees from your accounts causes our firm to exercise limited custody over your funds or securities. We do not have physical custody of any of your funds and/or securities. Your funds and securities will be held with a bank, broker-dealer, or other qualified custodian. You will receive account statements from the qualified custodian(s) holding your funds and securities at least quarterly. The account statements from your custodian(s) will indicate the amount of our advisory fees deducted from your account(s) each billing period. You should carefully review account statements for accuracy.

We will also provide statements to you reflecting the amount of the advisory fee deducted from your account. You should compare our statements with the statements from your account custodian(s) to reconcile the information reflected on each statement. If you have a question regarding your account statement, or if you did not receive a statement from your custodian, contact us immediately at the telephone number on the cover page of this brochure.

Item 16 Investment Discretion

Before we can buy or sell securities on your behalf, you must first sign our discretionary management agreement and the appropriate trading authorization forms. You may grant our firm discretion over the selection and amount of securities to be purchased or sold for your account(s) without obtaining your consent or approval prior to each transaction. You may specify investment objectives, guidelines, and/or impose certain conditions or investment parameters for your account(s). For example, you may specify that the investment in any particular stock or industry should not exceed specified percentages of the value of the portfolio and/or restrictions or prohibitions of transactions in the securities of a specific industry or security. Refer to the *Advisory Business* section in this brochure for more information on our discretionary management services.

If you enter into non-discretionary arrangements with our firm, we will obtain your approval prior to the execution of any transactions for your account(s). You have an unrestricted right to decline to implement any advice provided by our firm on a non-discretionary basis.

Item 17 Voting Client Securities

We will not vote proxies on behalf of your advisory accounts. At your request, we may offer you advice regarding corporate actions and the exercise of your proxy voting rights. If you own shares of applicable securities, you are responsible for exercising your right to vote as a shareholder.

In most cases, you will receive proxy materials directly from the account custodian. However, in the event we were to receive any written or electronic proxy materials, we would forward them directly to you by mail, unless you have authorized our firm to contact you by electronic mail, in which case, we would forward any electronic solicitations to vote proxies.

Item 18 Financial Information

Our firm does not have any financial condition or impairment that would prevent us from meeting our contractual commitments to you. We do not take physical custody of client funds or securities, or serve as trustee or signatory for client accounts, and we do not require the prepayment of more than \$500 in fees six or more months in advance. Therefore, we are not required to include a financial statement with this brochure.

We have not filed a bankruptcy petition at any time in the past ten years.

Item 19 Requirements for State-Registered Advisers

Refer to the Part(s) 2B for background information about our principal executive officers, management personnel and those giving advice on behalf of our firm.

Our firm is not actively engaged in any business other than giving investment advice that is not already disclosed above.

Neither our firm, nor any persons associated with our firm are compensated for advisory services with performance-based fees. Refer to the *Performance-Based Fees and Side-By-Side Management*

section above for additional information on this topic.

Neither our firm, nor any of our management persons have any reportable arbitration claims, civil, self-regulatory organization proceedings, or administrative proceedings.

Neither our firm nor any of our management persons have a material relationship or arrangement with any issuer of securities.

Item 20 Additional Information

Trade Errors

In the event a trading error occurs in your account, our policy is to restore your account to the position it should have been in had the trading error not occurred. Depending on the circumstances, corrective actions may include canceling the trade, adjusting an allocation, and/or reimbursing the account.

Class Action Lawsuits

We do not determine if securities held by you are the subject of a class action lawsuit or whether you are eligible to participate in class action settlements or litigation nor do we initiate or participate in litigation to recover damages on your behalf for injuries as a result of actions, misconduct, or negligence by issuers of securities held by you.

IRA Rollover Considerations

As part of our investment advisory services to you, we may recommend that you withdraw the assets from your employer's retirement plan and roll the assets over to an individual retirement account ("IRA") that we will manage on your behalf. If you elect to roll the assets to an IRA that is subject to our management, we will charge you an asset based fee as set forth in the agreement you executed with our firm. This practice presents a conflict of interest because persons providing investment advice on our behalf have an incentive to recommend a rollover to you for the purpose of generating fee based compensation rather than solely based on your needs. You are under no obligation, contractually or otherwise, to complete the rollover. Moreover, if you do complete the rollover, you are under no obligation to have the assets in an IRA managed by our firm.

Many employers permit former employees to keep their retirement assets in their company plan. Also, current employees can sometimes move assets out of their company plan before they retire or change jobs. In determining whether to complete the rollover to an IRA, and to the extent the following options are available, you should consider the costs and benefits of:

1. Leaving the funds in your employer's (former employer's) plan.
2. Moving the funds to a new employer's retirement plan.
3. Cashing out and taking a taxable distribution from the plan.
4. Rolling the funds into an IRA rollover account.

Each of these options has advantages and disadvantages and before making a change we encourage you to speak with your CPA and/or tax attorney.

If you are considering rolling over your retirement funds to an IRA for us to manage here are a few points to consider before you do so:

1. Determine whether the investment options in your employer's retirement plan address your needs or whether you might want to consider other types of investments.

- a. Employer retirement plans generally have a more limited investment menu than IRAs.
- b. Employer retirement plans may have unique investment options not available to the public such as employer securities, or previously closed funds.
- 2. Your current plan may have lower fees than our fees.
 - a. If you are interested in investing only in mutual funds, you should understand the cost structure of the share classes available in your employer's retirement plan and how the costs of those share classes compare with those available in an IRA.
 - b. You should understand the various products and services you might take advantage of at an IRA provider and the potential costs of those products and services.
- 3. Our strategy may have higher risk than the option(s) provided to you in your plan.
- 4. Your current plan may also offer financial advice.
- 5. If you keep your assets titled in a 401k or retirement account, you could potentially delay your required minimum distribution beyond age 73.
- 6. Your 401k may offer more liability protection than a rollover IRA; each state may vary.
 - a. Generally, federal law protects assets in qualified plans from creditors. Since 2005, IRA assets have been generally protected from creditors in bankruptcies. However, there can be some exceptions to the general rules so you should consult with an attorney if you are concerned about protecting your retirement plan assets from creditors.
- 7. You may be able to take out a loan on your 401k, but not from an IRA.
- 8. IRA assets can be accessed any time; however, distributions are subject to ordinary income tax and may also be subject to a 10% early distribution penalty unless they qualify for an exception such as disability, higher education expenses or the purchase of a home.
- 9. If you own company stock in your plan, you may be able to liquidate those shares at a lower capital gains tax rate.
- 10. Your plan may allow you to hire us as the manager and keep the assets titled in the plan name.

It is important that you understand the differences between these types of accounts and to decide whether a rollover is best for you. Prior to proceeding, if you have questions contact your investment adviser representative, or call our main number as listed on the cover page of this brochure.