

80A.691 BROKER-DEALERS; AGENTS; DISHONEST OR UNETHICAL BUSINESS PRACTICES.

Subdivision 1. **Broker-dealers; standards and principles.** A broker-dealer must observe high standards of commercial honor and just and equitable principles of trade when conducting the broker-dealer's business. An act or practice that is contrary to the standards constitutes grounds for the administrator to deny, suspend, or revoke the broker-dealer's registration or to take other action authorized by statute. For purposes of this subdivision, an act or practice that is contrary to the standards includes:

(1) engaging in a pattern of unreasonable and unjustifiable delays with respect to: (i) delivering securities purchased by a customer; or (ii) upon request, paying free credit balances reflecting a customer's completed transactions;

(2) inducing trading in a customer's account that is excessive in size or frequency considering the account's financial resources and character;

(3) recommending that a customer purchase, sell, or exchange a security without reasonable grounds to believe the transaction or recommendation is suitable for the customer, based on: (i) a reasonable inquiry regarding the customer's investment objectives, financial situation, and needs; and (ii) other relevant information known by the broker-dealer;

(4) recommending a security transaction or investment strategy involving securities, including account recommendations, to a retail customer if the recommendation does not comply with the obligations set forth in Code of Federal Regulations, title 17, section 240.151-1;

(5) executing a transaction on behalf of a customer without the customer's authorization;

(6) exercising discretionary power to effect a transaction for a customer's account without first obtaining written discretionary authority from the customer, unless the discretionary power relates solely to the time the order is executed or the order's price;

(7) executing a transaction in a margin account without securing from the customer a properly executed written margin agreement promptly after the account's initial transaction;

(8) failing to segregate customers' free securities or securities held in safekeeping;

(9) hypothecating a customer's securities without having a lien on the customer's securities, unless the broker-dealer secures the customer's properly executed written consent promptly after the initial transaction, except as permitted by Securities and Exchange Commission regulations;

(10) entering into a transaction with or for a customer at a price that is not reasonably related to the security's current market price, or receiving an unreasonable commission or profit;

(11) failing to furnish to a customer purchasing securities in an offering, no later than the due date for the transaction's confirmation: (i) a final prospectus; or (ii) a preliminary prospectus and an additional document that, when combined with the preliminary prospectus, includes all of the information included in the final prospectus;

(12) charging an unreasonable or inequitable fee for services performed, including: (i) miscellaneous services that include but are not limited to collecting money due for principal, dividends or interest, exchanging or transferring securities, appraisals, safekeeping, or maintaining custody of securities; and (ii) other services related to the broker-dealer's securities business;

(13) offering to buy or sell a security at a stated price if the broker-dealer is not prepared to purchase or sell at the stated price and under the stated conditions at the time the offer to buy or sell is made;

(14) representing that a security is being offered to a customer "at the market" or at a price relevant to the market price, unless the broker-dealer knows or has reasonable grounds to believe a market for the security exists other than the market made, created, or controlled by: (i) the broker-dealer; (ii) a person for whom the broker-dealer is acting or with whom the broker-dealer is associated with respect to the security's distribution; or (iii) a person controlled by, controlling, or under common control with the broker-dealer;

(15) effecting a transaction in, or inducing the purchase or sale of, a security using a manipulative, deceptive, or fraudulent device, practice, plan, program, design, or contrivance, which includes but is not limited to:

(i) effecting a transaction in a security that involves no change in the security's beneficial ownership;

(ii) entering an order to purchase or sell a security with the knowledge that at least one other order for the same security that is substantially the same size, entered at substantially the same time, and for substantially the same price as the order has been or will be entered by or for the same or a different party to create (A) a false or misleading appearance of active trading in the security, or (B) a false or misleading appearance with respect to the market for the security. This item does not prohibit a broker-dealer from entering bona fide agency cross transactions for the broker-dealer's customers; or

(iii) effecting, alone or with another person, a series of transactions in a security that creates actual or apparent active trading in the security, or raises or reduces the price of the security, to induce others to purchase or sell the security;

(16) guaranteeing a customer against loss in: (i) a securities account the broker-dealer carries for the customer; (ii) a securities transaction effected by the broker-dealer; or (iii) a securities transaction effected by the broker-dealer with or for the customer;

(17) publishing or circulating, or causing to be published or circulated, a notice, circular, advertisement, newspaper article, investment service, or communication of any kind that purports to: (i) report a transaction as a purchase or sale of a security, unless the broker-dealer believes that the transaction was a bona fide purchase or sale of the security; or (ii) quote the bid price or asked price for a security, unless the broker-dealer believes the quote represents a bona fide bid for or offer of the security;

(18) using an advertising or sales presentation in a manner that is deceptive or misleading, including but not limited to distributing: (i) nonfactual data, material, or a presentation based on conjecture, unfounded claims, or unrealistic claims; or (ii) assertions in a brochure, flyer, or display using words, pictures, graphs, or other representations that are designed to supplement, detract from, supersede, or defeat a prospectus' or disclosure's purpose or effect;

(19) failing to disclose to a customer, before entering into a contract with or for a customer to purchase or sell a security, that the broker-dealer is controlled by, controlling, affiliated with, or under common control with the security's issuer. If a disclosure under this clause is not made in writing, the disclosure must be supplemented by giving or sending written disclosure before or at the time the transaction is completed;

(20) failing to make a bona fide public offering of all of the securities allotted to a broker-dealer for distribution, whether the securities are acquired as an underwriter, as a selling group member, or from a member participating in the distribution as an underwriter or selling group member;

(21) failing or refusing to: (i) furnish a customer, upon reasonable request, information the customer is entitled to; or (ii) respond to a formal written request or complaint;

(22) failing to pay and fully satisfy a final judgment or arbitration award resulting from an arbitration or court proceeding relating to an investment and initiated by the customer, unless: (i) the customer and broker-dealer, or broker-dealer's agent, agree in writing to an alternative payment arrangement; and (ii) the broker-dealer or broker-dealer's agent complies with the terms of the alternative payment arrangement;

(23) attempting to avoid paying a final judgment or arbitration award resulting from an arbitration or court proceeding relating to an investment and initiated by the customer, unless: (i) the customer and broker-dealer, or broker-dealer's agent, agree in writing to an alternative payment arrangement; and (ii) the broker-dealer or broker-dealer's agent complies with the terms of the alternative payment arrangement;

(24) failing to pay and fully satisfy a fine, civil penalty, order of restitution, order of disgorgement, or similar monetary payment obligation imposed upon the broker-dealer or broker-dealer's agent by the Securities and Exchange Commission, a state or provincial securities or other financial services regulator, or a self-regulatory organization;

(25) accessing a client's account by using the client's unique identifying information, including but not limited to the client's username and password;

(26) in connection with soliciting a sale or purchase of an over-the-counter non-NASDAQ security, failing to promptly provide the most current prospectus or the most recently filed periodic report filed under Section 13 of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, United States Code, title 15, section 78m, as amended, if the broker-dealer receives a request from a customer;

(27) marking an order ticket or confirmation as unsolicited if the transaction is solicited;

(28) for each month in which activity has occurred in a customer's account and no less frequently than once every three months regardless of whether customer account activity has occurred, failing to provide the customer with an account statement that, with respect to all over-the-counter non-NASDAQ equity securities in the account, contains a value for each security based on the closing market bid on a date certain. This clause applies only if the broker-dealer has been a market maker in the security at any time during the month in which the monthly or quarterly statement is issued; or

(29) failing to comply with an applicable provision of the Financial Industry Regulatory Authority conduct rules or an applicable fair practice or ethical standard promulgated by the Securities and Exchange Commission or a self-regulatory organization approved by the Securities and Exchange Commission.

Subd. 2. Broker-dealer's agents; standards and principles. A broker-dealer's agent must observe high standards of commercial honor and just and equitable principles of trade when conducting the broker-dealer's agent's business. An act or practice that is contrary to the standards constitutes grounds for the administrator to deny, suspend, or revoke the broker-dealer's agent's registration or to take other action authorized by statute. For purposes of this subdivision, an act or practice that is contrary to the standards includes:

(1) lending to or borrowing from a customer money or securities, or acting as a custodian for a customer's money, securities, or executed stock power, unless otherwise permissible under FINRA Rule 3240 or any successor federal law;

(2) effecting securities transactions that are not recorded on the regular books or records maintained by the broker-dealer the broker-dealer's agent represents, unless the transactions are authorized in writing by

the broker-dealer before executing the transaction or exempt as subscription-way transactions under Rule 17a-3 of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 or any successor federal law;

(3) establishing or maintaining an account that contains fictitious information in order to execute transactions that are otherwise prohibited;

(4) sharing directly or indirectly in profits or losses in a customer account without the written authorization from the customer and the broker-dealer the broker-dealer's agent represents;

(5) dividing or otherwise splitting the broker-dealer's agent's commissions, profits, or other compensation from purchasing or selling securities with a person who is not also registered as a broker-dealer's agent for the same broker-dealer or for a broker-dealer under direct or indirect common control or unless otherwise allowed under Securities and Exchange Commission rules, guidance, or authorization; or

(6) engaging in the conduct specified under subdivision 1, clause (2), (3), (4), (5), (6), (7), (10), (11), (15), (16), (17), (18), (22), (23), (24), (25), (26), (27), (28), or (29).

Subd. 3. **Conduct specified not exclusive.** The conduct identified as a violation under subdivisions 1 and 2 is not exclusive. A broker-dealer or broker-dealer's agent that engages in other conduct, including but not limited to forgery, embezzlement, nondisclosure, incomplete disclosure, misstatement of material facts, or manipulative or deceptive practices, is also subject to denial, suspension, or revocation of registration.

History: 2026 c 124 art 2 s 3