

# Form ADV Part 2A Firm Brochure



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**March 2017**

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Phone: 781-278-9488. Fax: 781-278-9489. [www.proficientwealth.com](http://www.proficientwealth.com).**

**Firm Contact:  
Gerald Loftin, Chief Compliance Officer**

This brochure provides information about the qualifications and business practices of Proficient Wealth Counselors, LLC. If you have any questions about the contents of this brochure, please contact by telephone at 781-278-9488 or email at [info@proficientwealth.com](mailto:info@proficientwealth.com). The information in this brochure has not been approved or verified by the United States Securities and Exchange Commission or by any State Securities Authority.

Additional information about Proficient Wealth Counselors, LLC also is available on the SEC's website at [www.adviserinfo.sec.gov](http://www.adviserinfo.sec.gov).

Please note that the use of the term "registered investment adviser" and description of Proficient Wealth Counselors, LLC and/or our associates as "registered" does not imply a certain level of skill or training. You are encouraged to review this Brochure and Brochure Supplements for our firm's associates who advise you for more information on the qualifications of our firm and our employees.

## **Item 2: Material Changes**

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Proficient Wealth Counselors, LLC is required to advise you of any material changes to our Firm Brochure ("Brochure") from our last annual update, identify those changes on the cover page of our Brochure or on the page immediately following the cover page, or in a separate communication accompanying our Brochure. We must state clearly that we are discussing only material changes since the last annual update of our Brochure, and we must provide the date of the last annual update of our Brochure.

Please note that we do not have to provide this information to a client or prospective client who has not received a previous version of our brochure.

As of our last annual amendment filed on February 26, 2016, we have no material changes to disclose.

### Item 3: Table of Contents

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## **Item 4: Advisory Business**

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We specialize in the following types of services: asset management, financial planning and consulting.

We are dedicated to providing individuals and other types of clients with a wide array of investment advisory services. Our firm is a limited liability company formed in the State of Massachusetts. Our firm has been in business as an investment adviser since 2011 and is wholly owned by Gerald Loftin, Principal and Chief Compliance Officer.

### **Description of the Types of Advisory Services We Offer**

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#### **Asset Management:**

We emphasize continuous and regular account supervision. As part of our asset management service, we generally create a portfolio, consisting of individual stocks or bonds, exchange traded funds ("ETFs"), options, mutual funds and other public and private securities or investments. The client's individual investment strategy is tailored to their specific needs and may include some or all of the previously mentioned securities. Each portfolio will be initially designed to meet a particular investment goal, which we determine to be suitable to the client's circumstances. Once the appropriate portfolio has been determined, we review the portfolio at least quarterly and if necessary, rebalance the portfolio based upon the client's individual needs, stated goals and objectives. Each client has the opportunity to place reasonable restrictions on the types of investments to be held in the portfolio.

#### **Financial Planning and Consulting:**

We provide a variety of financial planning and consulting services to individuals, families and other clients regarding the management of their financial resources based upon an analysis of the client's current situation, goals, and objectives. Generally, such financial planning services will involve preparing a financial plan or rendering a financial consultation for clients based on the client's financial goals and objectives. This planning or consulting may encompass one or more of the following areas: Investment Planning, Retirement Planning, Estate Planning, Charitable Planning, Education Planning, Corporate and Personal Tax Planning, Cost Segregation Study, Corporate Structure, Real Estate Analysis, Mortgage/Debt Analysis, Insurance Analysis, Lines of Credit Evaluation, Business and Personal Financial Planning.

Our written financial plans or financial consultations rendered to clients usually include general recommendations for a course of activity or specific actions to be taken by the clients. For example, recommendations may be made that the clients begin or revise investment programs, create or revise wills or trusts, obtain or revise insurance coverage, commence or alter retirement savings, or establish education or charitable giving programs. It should also be noted that we refer clients to an accountant, attorney or other specialist, as necessary for non-advisory related services. For written financial planning engagements, we provide our clients with a written summary of their financial situation, observations, and recommendations. For financial consulting engagements, we usually do not provide our clients with a written summary of our observations and recommendations as the process is less formal than our planning service. Plans or consultations are typically completed within six (6) months of the client signing a contract with us, assuming that all the information and documents we request from the client are provided to us promptly. Implementation of the recommendations will be at the discretion of the client.

## **Tailoring of Advisory Services**

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We offer individualized investment advice to clients utilizing the following services offered by our firm: Asset Management. Additionally, we offer general investment advice to clients utilizing the following services offered by our firm: Financial Planning and Consulting.

We usually do not allow clients to impose restrictions on investing in certain securities or types of securities due to the level of difficulty this would entail in managing their account. In the rare instance that we would allow restrictions, it would be limited to the following services: Asset Management. We do not manage assets through our other services.

## **Participation in Wrap Fee Programs**

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We do not offer wrap fee programs.

## **Regulatory Assets Under Management**

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As of December 31, 2016, we manage \$13,314,929 on a discretionary basis and \$42,341,010 on a non-discretionary basis.

## **Item 5: Fees & Compensation**

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We are required to describe our brokerage, custody, fees and fund expenses so you will know how much you are charged and by whom for our advisory services provided to you. Our fees are generally not negotiable.

### **How We Are Compensated for Our Advisory Services**

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#### **Asset Management:**

<u>Assets under management</u>	<u>Annual Percentage of assets charge*:</u>
\$0 to \$249,999	1.25%
\$250,000 to \$499,999	1.10%
\$500,000 to \$999,999	0.95%
\$1,000,000 to \$2,499,999	0.80%
\$2,500,000 to 4,999,999	0.65%
\$5,000,000 to 9,999,999	0.50%
\$10,000,000 or more	0.35%

\*Our firm's fees are billed on a pro-rata annualized basis quarterly in advance based on the value of your account on the last day of the previous quarter.

Our firm's fees are billed on a pro-rata annualized basis quarterly in advance based on the value of your account on the last day of the previous quarter. Fee adjustments are made for deposits and withdrawals in client accounts. Fees will generally be automatically deducted from your managed account\*. As part of this process, you understand and acknowledge the following:

- a) Your independent custodian sends statements at least quarterly to You showing all disbursements for your account, including the amount of the advisory fees paid to us;
- b) You provide authorization permitting us to be directly paid by these terms;
- c) We send a copy of our invoice to the independent custodian at the same time we send the invoice to You;
- d) Our invoice includes a legend that urges the client to compare information provided in their statements with those from the qualified custodian in account opening notices and subsequent statements sent to the client for whom the adviser opens custodial accounts with the qualified custodian.

\*We do not offer direct billing as an option to our Asset Management clients.

### **Financial Planning and Consulting:**

We charge on an hourly or flat fee basis for financial planning and consulting services. The total estimated fee, as well as the ultimate fee that we charge you, is based on the scope and complexity of our engagement with you. Our hourly fees range from \$200 to \$250 for financial advisors. Flat fees generally range from \$2,500 to \$3,500.

For flat fee planning/consulting services we require a retainer of fifty percent (50 %) of the estimated total financial planning or consulting fee with the remainder of the fee directly billed to you and due to us within thirty (30) days of your financial plan being delivered or consultation rendered to you. In all cases, we will not require a retainer exceeding \$500 when services cannot be rendered within six (6) months.

### **Other Types of Fees and Expenses**

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Our clients will incur transaction charges for trades executed in their accounts. These transaction fees are separate from our fees and will be disclosed by the firm that the trades are executed through. Also, clients will pay the following separately incurred expenses, which we do not receive any part of: charges imposed directly by a mutual fund, index fund, or exchange traded fund which shall be disclosed in the fund's prospectus (i.e., fund management fees and other fund expenses).

### **Termination and Refunds**

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We charge our advisory fees quarterly in advance. In the event that you wish to terminate our services, we will refund the unearned portion of our advisory fee to you. You need to contact us in writing and state that you wish to terminate our services. Upon receipt of your letter of termination, we will proceed to close out your account and process a pro-rata refund of unearned advisory fees.

### **Commissionable Securities Sales**

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We do not sell securities for a commission. In order to sell securities for a commission, we would need to have our associated persons registered with a broker-dealer. We have chosen not to do so.

## **Item 6: Performance-Based Fees & Side-By-Side Management**

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We do not charge performance fees to our clients.

## **Item 7: Types of Clients & Account Requirements**

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We have the following types of clients:

- Individuals;
- High Net Worth Individuals; and
- Pension and Profit Sharing Plans.

Our requirements for opening and maintaining accounts or otherwise engaging us:

- We require a minimum account balance of \$250,000 for asset management service. This minimum account balance requirement may be negotiable in certain circumstances and would be required throughout the course of the client's relationship with our firm.

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

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### **Methods of Analysis**

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We use the following methods of analysis in formulating our investment advice and/or managing client assets:

- Charting;
- Fundamental;
- Technical;
- Cyclical.

### **Investment Strategies We Use**

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We use the following strategies in managing client accounts, provided that such strategies are appropriate to the needs of the client and consistent with the client's investment objectives, risk tolerance, and time horizons, among other considerations:

- Long term purchases (securities held at least a year);
- Short term purchases (securities sold within a year);
- Trading (securities sold within 30 days);
- Short sales;
- Margin transactions;
- Option writing, including covered options, uncovered options or spreading strategies.

### **Please note:**

Investing in securities involves risk of loss that clients should be prepared to bear. While the stock market may increase and your account(s) could enjoy a gain, it is also possible that the stock market may decrease and your account(s) could suffer a loss. It is important that you understand

the risks associated with investing in the stock market, are appropriately diversified in your investments, and ask us any questions you may have.

### **Description of Material, Significant or Unusual Risks**

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We generally invest client's cash balances in money market funds, FDIC Insured Certificates of Deposit, high-grade commercial paper and/or government backed debt instruments. Ultimately, we try to achieve the highest return on our client's cash balances through relatively low-risk conservative investments. In most cases, at least a partial cash balance will be maintained in a money market account so that our firm may debit advisory fees for our services related to asset management service.

### **Item 9: Disciplinary Information**

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There are no legal or disciplinary events that are material to the evaluation of our advisory business or the integrity of our management.

### **Item 10: Other Financial Industry Activities & Affiliations**

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Mr. Loftin is a licensed insurance agent through numerous insurance companies. In such a capacity, he may offer insurance products and receive normal and customary commissions as a result of such a purchase. This presents a conflict of interest to the extent that he recommends the purchase of an insurance product which results in a commission being paid to him as an insurance agent. In order to minimize this conflict of interest, Mr. Loftin will place client interests ahead of his own interests and adhere to our firm's Code of Ethics as well as clearly explaining this conflict when recommending any such products to our clients. Clients are not obligated to purchase these products. He spends approximately 5% of his time on this activity.

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

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We recognize that the personal investment transactions of members and employees of our firm demand the application of a high Code of Ethics and require that all such transactions be carried out in a way that does not endanger the interest of any client. At the same time, we believe that if investment goals are similar for clients and for members and employees of our firm, it is logical and even desirable that there be common ownership of some securities.

Therefore, in order to prevent conflicts of interest, we have in place a set of procedures (including a pre-clearing procedure) with respect to transactions effected by our members, officers and employees for their personal accounts<sup>1</sup>. In order to monitor compliance with our personal trading policy, we have a quarterly securities transaction reporting system for all of our associates.

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<sup>1</sup> For purposes of the policy, our associate's personal account generally includes any account (a) in the name of our associate, his/her spouse, his/her minor children or other dependents residing in the same household, (b) for which our associate is a trustee or executor, or (c) which our associate controls, including our client accounts which our associate controls and/or a member of his/her household has a direct or indirect beneficial interest in.



Furthermore, our firm has established a Code of Ethics which applies to all of our associated persons. An investment adviser is considered a fiduciary. As a fiduciary, it is an investment adviser's responsibility to provide fair and full disclosure of all material facts and to act solely in the best interest of each of our clients at all times. We have a fiduciary duty to all clients. Our fiduciary duty is considered the core underlying principle for our Code of Ethics which also includes Insider Trading and Personal Securities Transactions Policies and Procedures. We require all of our supervised persons to conduct business with the highest level of ethical standards and to comply with all federal and state securities laws at all times. Upon employment or affiliation and at least annually thereafter, all supervised persons will sign an acknowledgement that they have read, understand, and agree to comply with our Code of Ethics. Our firm and supervised persons must conduct business in an honest, ethical, and fair manner and avoid all circumstances that might negatively affect or appear to affect our duty of complete loyalty to all clients. This disclosure is provided to give all clients a summary of our Code of Ethics. However, if a client or a potential client wishes to review our Code of Ethics in its entirety, a copy will be provided promptly upon request.

Related persons of our firm may buy or sell securities and other investments that are also recommended to clients. In order to minimize this conflict of interest, our related persons will place client interests ahead of their own interests and adhere to our firm's Code of Ethics, a copy of which is available upon request.

Related persons of our firm may buy or sell securities for themselves at or about the same time they buy or sell the same securities for client accounts. In order to minimize this conflict of interest, our related persons will place client interests ahead of their own interests and adhere to our firm's Code of Ethics, a copy of which is available upon request. Further, our related persons will refrain from buying or selling the same securities within 48 hours of buying or selling for our clients. If related persons' accounts are included in a block trade, our related persons will always trade personal accounts last.

## **Item 12: Brokerage Practices**

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Our firm participates in the TD Ameritrade Institutional program. TD Ameritrade Institutional is a division of TD Ameritrade, Inc. ("TD Ameritrade") member FINRA/SIPC/NFA. TD Ameritrade is an independent [and unaffiliated] SEC-registered broker-dealer. TD Ameritrade offers to independent investment Advisors services which include custody of securities, trade execution, clearance and settlement of transactions. We receive some benefits from TD Ameritrade through our participation in the program. (Please see the disclosure under Item 14 of this Brochure.)

As part of the arrangement described in Item 12A1, TD Ameritrade also makes certain research and brokerage services available at no additional cost to our firm. These services include certain research and brokerage services, including research services obtained by TD Ameritrade directly from independent research companies, as selected by our firm (within specific parameters). Research products and services provided by TD Ameritrade to our firm may include research reports on recommendations or other information about, particular companies or industries; economic surveys, data and analyses; financial publications; portfolio evaluation services; financial database software and services; computerized news and pricing services; quotation equipment for use in running software used in investment decision-making; and other products or services that provide lawful and appropriate assistance by TD Ameritrade to our firm in the performance of our investment decision-making responsibilities. The aforementioned research and brokerage services are used by

our firm to manage accounts for which we have investment discretion. Without this arrangement, our firm might be compelled to purchase the same or similar services at our own expense.

As a result of receiving the services discussed above for no additional cost, we may have an incentive to continue to use or expand the use of TD Ameritrade's services. Our firm examined this potential conflict of interest when we chose to enter into the relationship with TD Ameritrade and we have determined that the relationship is in the best interest of our firm's clients and satisfies our client obligations, including our duty to seek best execution.

TD Ameritrade charges brokerage commissions and transaction fees for effecting certain securities transactions (i.e., transaction fees are charged for certain no-load mutual funds, commissions are charged for individual equity and debt securities transactions). TD Ameritrade enables us to obtain many no-load mutual funds without transaction charges and other no-load funds at nominal transaction charges. TD Ameritrade's commission rates are generally discounted from customary retail commission rates. However, the commission and transaction fees charged by TD Ameritrade may be higher or lower than those charged by other custodians and broker-dealers.

Our clients may pay a commission to TD Ameritrade that is higher than another qualified broker dealer might charge to effect the same transaction where we determine in good faith that the commission is reasonable in relation to the value of the brokerage and research services received. In seeking best execution, the determinative factor is not the lowest possible cost, but whether the transaction represents the best qualitative execution, taking into consideration the full range of a broker-dealer's services, including the value of research provided, execution capability, commission rates, and responsiveness. Accordingly, although we will seek competitive rates, to the benefit of all clients, we may not necessarily obtain the lowest possible commission rates for specific client account transactions.

### **Soft Dollars**

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Although the investment research products and services that may be obtained by our firm will generally be used to service all of our clients, a brokerage commission paid by a specific client may be used to pay for research that is not used in managing that specific client's account.

### **Client Brokerage Commissions**

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We do not acquire client brokerage commissions (or markups or markdowns).

### **Procedures to Direct Client Transactions in Return for Soft Dollars**

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We do not direct client transactions to a particular broker-dealer in return for soft dollar benefits.

### **Brokerage for Client Referrals**

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Our firm does not receive brokerage for client referrals.

## **Directed Brokerage**

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Neither we nor any of our firm's related person have discretionary authority in making the determination of the brokers with whom orders for the purchase or sale of securities are placed for execution, and the commission rates at which such securities transactions are effected.

## **Permissibility of Client-Directed Brokerage**

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We do not allow client-directed brokerage.

## **Special Considerations for ERISA Clients**

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A retirement or ERISA plan client may direct all or part of portfolio transactions for its account through a specific broker or dealer in order to obtain goods or services on behalf of the plan. Such direction is permitted provided that the goods and services provided are reasonable expenses of the plan incurred in the ordinary course of its business for which it otherwise would be obligated and empowered to pay. ERISA prohibits directed brokerage arrangements when the goods or services purchased are not for the exclusive benefit of the plan. Consequently, we will request that plan sponsors who direct plan brokerage provide us with a letter documenting that this arrangement will be for the exclusive benefit of the plan.

## **Aggregation of Purchase or Sale**

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We perform investment management services for various clients. There are occasions on which portfolio transactions may be executed as part of concurrent authorizations to purchase or sell the same security for numerous accounts served by our firm, which involve accounts with similar investment objectives. Although such concurrent authorizations potentially could be either advantageous or disadvantageous to any one or more particular accounts, they are affected only when we believe that to do so will be in the best interest of the effected accounts. When such concurrent authorizations occur, the objective is to allocate the executions in a manner which is deemed equitable to the accounts involved. In any given situation, we attempt to allocate trade executions in the most equitable manner possible, taking into consideration client objectives, current asset allocation and availability of funds using price averaging, proration and consistently non-arbitrary methods of allocation.

## **Item 13: Review of Accounts or Financial Plans**

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We review accounts on at least a quarterly basis for our clients subscribing to our Asset Management service. The nature of these reviews is to learn whether clients' accounts are in line with their investment objectives, appropriately positioned based on market conditions, and investment policies, if applicable. We do not provide written reports to clients, unless asked to do so. Verbal reports to clients take place on at least an annual basis when we meet with clients.

Only our Financial Advisors or Portfolio Managers will conduct reviews of client accounts.

We may review client accounts more frequently than described above. Among the factors which may trigger an off-cycle review are major market or economic events, the client's life events, requests by the client, etc.

Financial planning clients do not receive reviews of their written plans unless they take action to schedule a financial consultation with us. We do not provide ongoing services to financial planning clients, but are willing to meet with such clients upon their request to discuss updates to their plans, changes in their circumstances, etc. Financial planning clients do not receive written or verbal updated reports regarding their financial plans unless they separately contract with us for a post-financial plan meeting or update to their initial written financial plan.

## **Item 14: Client Referrals & Other Compensation**

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### **TD Ameritrade**

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As disclosed above, our firm participates in TD Ameritrade's institutional customer program and our firm may recommend TD Ameritrade to Clients for custody and brokerage services. There is no direct link between our firm's participation in the program and the investment advice it gives to its Clients, although we receive economic benefits through its participation in the program that are typically not available to TD Ameritrade 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 firm's participants; access to block 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. TD Ameritrade may also have paid for business consulting and professional services received by our firm's related persons. Some of the products and services made available by TD Ameritrade through the program may benefit us by may not benefit its Client accounts. These products or services may assist our firm in managing and administering Client accounts, including accounts not maintained at TD Ameritrade. Other services made available by TD Ameritrade are intended to help us manage and further develop its business enterprise. The benefits received by our firm or our personnel through participation in the program do not depend on the amount of brokerage transactions directed to TD Ameritrade. As part of our fiduciary duties to clients, the firm endeavors at all times to put the interests of its clients first. Clients should be aware, however, that the receipt of economic benefits by our firm or our related persons in and of itself creates a potential conflict of interest and may indirectly influence our firm's choice of TD Ameritrade for custody and brokerage services.

### **Referral Fees**

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We do not pay referral fees (non-commission based) to independent solicitors (non-registered representatives) for the referral of their clients to our firm.

## **Item 15: Custody**

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State Securities Bureaus, or their equivalent, generally take the position that any arrangement under which a registered investment adviser is authorized or permitted to withdraw client funds or securities maintained with a custodian upon the adviser's instruction to the custodian is deemed to have custody of client funds and securities.

As such, we have adopted the following safeguarding procedures:

- (1) Our clients must provide us with written authorization permitting direct payment to us of our advisory fees from their account(s) maintained by a custodian who is independent of our firm;
- (2) We must send a statement to our clients showing the amount of our fee, the value of your assets upon which our fee was based, and the specific manner in which our fee was calculated;
- (3) We must disclose to you that it is your responsibility to verify the accuracy of our fee calculation, and that the custodian will not determine whether the fee is properly calculated; and
- (4) Your account custodian must agree to send you a statement, at least quarterly, showing all disbursements from your account, including advisory fees.

We encourage our clients to raise any questions with us about the custody, safety or security of their assets. The custodians we do business with will send you independent account statements listing your account balance(s), transaction history and any fee debits or other fees taken out of your account.

## **Item 16: Investment Discretion**

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Our clients need to sign a discretionary investment advisory agreement with our firm for the management of their account. This type of agreement only applies to our Asset Management clients. We do not take or exercise discretion with respect to our other clients.

## **Item 17: Voting Client Securities**

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We do not and will not accept the proxy authority to vote client securities. Clients will receive proxies or other solicitations directly from their custodian or a transfer agent. In the event that proxies are sent to our firm, we will forward them on to you and ask the party who sent them to mail them directly to you in the future. Clients may call, write or email us to discuss questions they may have about particular proxy votes or other solicitations.

## **Item 18: Financial Information**

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We are not required to provide financial information in this Brochure because:

- We do not require the prepayment of more than \$500 in fees and six or more months in advance.
- We do not take custody of client funds or securities.
- We do not have a financial condition or commitment that impairs our ability to meet contractual and fiduciary obligations to clients.

We have never been the subject of a bankruptcy proceeding.

## **Item 19: Requirements for State-Registered Advisers**

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### **Gerald Loftin**

Year of Birth: 1969

#### **Formal Education after high school:**

- 09/1988 to 6/1993; Northeastern University; Bachelor of Science in Finance
- 01/2010 to 11/2013; Massachusetts School of Law; Juris Doctorate

#### **Business Background:**

- 10/2000 to present; Proficient Wealth Counselors, LLC; Principal
- 10/2000 to 7/2011; Commonwealth Financial Network; Advisor

#### **Professional Designations, Exams and Licenses:**

- 03/2010 – Certified Financial Planner™
- 10/2009 – Accredited Investment Fiduciary®
- 07/2002 – FINRA Series 65
- 05/1994 – Massachusetts Insurance License
- 08/2001 – New York Insurance License
- 04/2002 – Texas Insurance Licenses
- 11/2006 – New Hampshire Insurance License
- 11/2006 – Florida Insurance License
- 03/2007 – Connecticut Insurance License
- 02/2008 – Colorado Insurance License
- 03/2009 – Illinois Insurance License
- 09/2009 – Maryland Insurance License
- 10/2011 – Alabama Insurance License
- 11/2011 – North Carolina Insurance License

We may list any professional designations held by Mr. Loftin. We must provide you with a sufficient explanation of the minimum qualifications required for each designation to allow you to understand the value of the designation.

## CFP®:

The CERTIFIED FINANCIAL PLANNER™, CFP® and federally registered CFP (with flame design) marks (collectively, the “CFP® marks”) are professional certification marks granted in the United States by Certified Financial Planner Board of Standards, Inc. (“CFP Board”).

The CFP® certification is a voluntary certification; no federal or state law or regulation requires financial planners to hold CFP® certification. It is recognized in the United States and a number of other countries for its (1) high standard of professional education; (2) stringent code of conduct and standards of practice; and (3) ethical requirements that govern professional engagements with clients. Currently, more than 62,000 individuals have obtained CFP® certification in the United States.

To attain the right to use the CFP® marks, an individual must satisfactorily fulfill the following requirements:

- Education – Complete an advanced college-level course of study addressing the financial planning subject areas that CFP Board’s studies have determined as necessary for the competent and professional delivery of financial planning services, and attain a Bachelor’s Degree from a regionally accredited United States college or university (or its equivalent from a foreign university). CFP Board’s financial planning subject areas include insurance planning and risk management, employee benefits planning, investment planning, income tax planning, retirement planning, and estate planning;
- Examination – Pass the comprehensive CFP® Certification Examination. The examination, administered in 10 hours over a two-day period, includes case studies and client scenarios designed to test one’s ability to correctly diagnose financial planning issues and apply one’s knowledge of financial planning to real world circumstances;
- Experience – Complete at least three years of full-time financial planning-related experience (or the equivalent, measured as 2,000 hours per year); and
- Ethics – Agree to be bound by CFP Board’s *Standards of Professional Conduct*, a set of documents outlining the ethical and practice standards for CFP® professionals.

Individuals who become certified must complete the following ongoing education and ethics requirements in order to maintain the right to continue to use the CFP® marks:

- Continuing Education – Complete 30 hours of continuing education hours every two years, including two hours on the *Code of Ethics* and other parts of the *Standards of Professional Conduct*, to maintain competence and keep up with developments in the financial planning field; and
- Ethics – Renew an agreement to be bound by the *Standards of Professional Conduct*. The Standards prominently require that CFP® professionals provide financial planning services at a fiduciary standard of care. This means CFP® professionals must provide financial planning services in the best interests of their clients.

CFP® professionals who fail to comply with the above standards and requirements may be subject to CFP Board’s enforcement process, which could result in suspension or permanent revocation of their CFP® certification.

### **Accredited Investment Fiduciary® (AIF®)**

The AIF designation certifies that the recipient has specialized knowledge of fiduciary standards of care and their application to the investment management process. To receive the AIF designation, individuals must complete a training program, successfully pass a comprehensive, closed-book final examination under the supervision of a proctor and agree to abide by the AIF Code of Ethics. In order to maintain the AIF designation, the individual must annually renew their affirmation of the AIF Code of Ethics and complete six hours of continuing education credits. The certification is administered by the Center for Fiduciary Studies, LLC (a Fiduciary360 (fi360) company).

Mr. Loftin is actively engaged in Other Business Activities, which could be referred to in Item 10 of this Firm Brochure. Our firm does not charge performance-based fees. Our firm and management persons have not been involved in any arbitration awards, found liable in any civil, self-regulatory organization or administrative proceedings or have any relationships with issuers or securities apart from what is disclosed above.