

# Code of Ethics

Feb. 1, 2020

The Investment Advisers Act of 1940 requires registered advisers to adopt codes of ethics. The codes of ethics must set forth standards of conduct expected of advisory personnel and address conflicts that arise from personal trading by advisory personnel.

## I. Applicability

A. The provisions of Avantax Advisory Services Code of Ethics (the “Code”) shall apply to employees and advisory representatives of Avantax Advisory Services. Unless otherwise indicated, the term “Employee” as used herein means all officers, directors and home office employees of Avantax Advisory Services. The term “Advisory Representative” as used herein means all investment advisory representatives registered with Avantax Advisory Services.

## II. Compliance with Governing Laws, Regulations and Procedures

A. Each Employee or Advisory Representative shall have and maintain knowledge of and shall comply with all applicable federal and state laws and all rules and regulations of any governmental agency or self-regulatory organization governing his or her actions as an Employee and/or Advisory Representative.

B. Each Employee or Advisory Representative shall comply with all laws and regulations and Avantax Advisory Services’ prohibition against insider trading. Trading on or communicating material nonpublic information, or “inside information,” of any sort — whether obtained in the course of research activities, through a client relationship or otherwise — is strictly prohibited.

C. Each Employee or Advisory Representative shall comply with the procedures and guidelines established by Avantax Advisory Services to ensure compliance with applicable federal and state laws and regulations of governmental agencies and self-regulatory organizations. No employee shall knowingly participate in, assist or condone any act in violation of any statute or regulation governing Avantax Advisory Services or any act that would violate any provision of the Code.

D. Each Employee or Advisory Representative shall have and maintain knowledge of and shall comply with the provisions of the Code of Ethics.

E. Each Employee having supervisory responsibility shall exercise reasonable supervision over employees subject to his or her control with a view to preventing any violation by such individuals of applicable statutes or regulations, Avantax Advisory Services corporate procedures, or the provisions of the Code.

F. Any Employee or Advisory Representative obtaining evidence that an act in violation of applicable statutes, regulations or provisions of the Code adopted hereunder has occurred shall immediately report such evidence to the chief compliance officer of Avantax Advisory Services or to the Compliance Department. Such action by the Employee or Advisory Representative will remain confidential unless the Employee or Advisory Representative waives confidentiality or federal or state authorities compel disclosures. Failure to report such evidence may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination. State and federal laws with relevant provisions prohibit employment and workplace retaliation, a form of unlawful discrimination, against employees for one or more of the following:

1. Reasonably exercising their employee rights under the laws.
2. Reporting alleged employer violations of the laws to the proper authorities, such as to the government offices that enforce the laws or first to their attorneys.
3. Participating in proceedings under the laws as plaintiffs or witnesses.

Retaliation against an Employee or Advisory Representative for reporting a suspected violation will not be tolerated. Individuals found to be retaliating against an Employee or Advisory Representative for the disclosure of a suspected violation will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

### **III. Ethical Standards**

A. Employees and Advisory Representatives shall conduct themselves in manners consistent with the highest ethical and fiduciary standards. They shall avoid any actions, whether for personal profits or otherwise, that result in conflicts of interest with Avantax Advisory Services or its client accounts or that may be otherwise detrimental to the interests of clients of Avantax Advisory Services.<sup>1</sup>

B. Employees and Advisory Representatives shall act in manners consistent with their fiduciary obligation to clients of Avantax Advisory Services and shall not deprive any client accounts of investment opportunities in order to personally benefit from those opportunities.

C. Employees and Advisory Representatives shall not engage in outside business activities without the knowledge and approval of the Avantax Compliance Department.

D. Advisory Representatives, in making investment recommendations or taking any investment actions, shall exercise diligence and thoroughness and shall have reasonable bases for any such recommendation or action.

E. Advisory Representatives shall not attempt to improperly influence, for individual personal benefit, any investment strategies to be followed or investment actions to be taken by Avantax Advisory Services for its client accounts.

F. Employees and Advisory Representatives shall not improperly use, for individual personal benefit, any knowledge, whether obtained through individual relationships with Avantax Advisory Services or otherwise, of any investment recommendation made or to be made or of any investment action taken or to be taken by Avantax Advisory Services.

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<sup>1</sup> Conflicts of interest may result from a situation in which an individual has a personal interest in a matter that is or may be in competition with his or her duties to other individuals or entities or where an individual has or may have competing obligations or responsibilities to two or more individuals or entities. In the case of the relationship between a client account and any Employee or Advisory Representative, such conflict may result from the purchase or sale of securities for a client account and for the personal account of the individual involved or his or her related individuals.

G. Employees and Advisory Representatives shall not disclose any nonpublic information relating to client accounts' portfolios or transactions or to the investment recommendations of Avantax Advisory Services, nor shall any Employee or Advisory Representative disclose any nonpublic information relating to the business or operations of Avantax Advisory Services, unless properly authorized to do so.

H. Employees and Advisory Representatives shall not accept, directly or indirectly, from broker-dealers or other vendors who transact business with Avantax Advisory Services or its client accounts, any gifts, gratuities or entertainment of more than de minimis value or significance that their acceptances might reasonably be expected to interfere with or influence the exercise of independent and objective judgment in carrying out individual duties or otherwise give the appearance of possible improprieties. For this purpose, Employees and Advisory Representatives will be subject to existing policies and procedures contained in the Written Supervisory Procedures of Avantax Advisory Services.

## **IV. Personal Securities Transactions**

A. Under the Code, Avantax Advisory Services has defined two subsets of individuals subject to the personal securities transactions section of the Code of Ethics. The first is "Supervised Persons," and the second is "Access Persons." Supervised persons include the following:

1. All directors and officers of Avantax Advisory Services.
2. All Advisory Representatives or other individuals who provide advice on behalf of Avantax Advisory Services.
3. Home office employees of Avantax Advisory Services.
4. Supervised Persons' immediate family members, including any relative by blood or marriage living in the Supervised Person's household.

B. "Access Persons" include the Supervised Persons above who also qualify as the following:

Are officers, directors or home office employees involved in making securities recommendations to clients through our investment advisor representatives or have access to nonpublic securities recommendations, including investment personnel of Avantax Advisory Services and Compliance personnel.

C. Employees deemed to be "Access Persons" are required to have their personal securities transactions monitored by designated principals of Avantax Investment Services.

D. For all Supervised Persons and Access Persons, certain types of personal securities transactions are prohibited or require specific approval from the chief compliance officer (or designee) of Avantax Advisory Services (which will be permitted only in special circumstances). These transactions include the following:

1. Purchases of initial public offerings (IPOs).
2. Purchases of limited or private offerings.

## **V. Insider Trading**

A. While in possession of material nonpublic information, Employees and Advisory Representatives shall not perform any of the following actions:

1. Buy or sell securities for personal accounts or for accounts in which they have beneficial interests or over which they have the power, directly or indirectly, to make investment decisions while in possession of material nonpublic information.
2. Solicit clients' orders to purchase or sell the securities.

3. Issue research reports, recommendations or comments that could be construed as recommendations.
4. Disclose material nonpublic information or any conclusions based thereon to any individuals other than the chief compliance officer of Avantax Advisory Services.

B. Material nonpublic information is generally defined as information that a reasonable investor would likely consider to be important to making an investment decision and any information that is reasonably certain to have a substantial effect on the price of a company's securities that has not been effectively communicated to the market and that the market has had time to absorb. Examples of material nonpublic information include but are not limited to changes in dividends or dividend policy, earnings estimates or changes in previously released earnings estimates, developments concerning significant merger or acquisition proposals, developments in major litigation, and significant changes in management.

C. In addition, Employees and Advisory Representatives shall be required to certify annually that they understand and will comply with the insider trading provisions contained in the Code of Ethics and Written Supervisory Procedures of Avantax Advisory Services through the annual Compliance Questionnaire/Attestation.

## **VI. Penalties for Violations of the Code**

A. Employees and Advisory Representatives found to have violated the provisions of Avantax Advisory Services' Code of Ethics may be subject to sanctions up to and including restrictions on Employees' or Advisory Representatives' personal securities transactions, letters of reprimand, additional continuing education requirements, fines, suspensions or terminations.

B. Employees and Advisory Representatives may also be required to disgorge any profits realized or losses avoided for transactions in securities that are inconsistent with the provisions of the Code.

C. Employees and Advisory Representatives found to have violated any of the insider trading provisions of the Code may be subject to additional penalties under federal regulatory authorities, including revocation of licenses and registrations, substantial monetary fines, and/or imprisonment.

## **VII. Recordkeeping Requirements**

A. The Avantax Compliance Department is responsible for maintaining the following records for a period of five years:

1. All acknowledgement statements referred to in section VIII.
2. Electronic records of transaction confirmations, brokerage statements and activity in accounts of Employees who are deemed Access Persons.
3. All lists of Employees and Advisory Representatives who are either Supervised Persons and/or Access Persons covered by the Code.
4. A copy of the Code of Ethics as well as any amendments.
5. A written record of each violation of the Code as well as a record of any action taken as a result of the violation.

## **VIII. Distribution of the Code of Ethics**

A. All Employees and Advisory Representatives will be required to sign, either electronically or via written statements, an acknowledgement statement indicating that they have received copies of the Code of Ethics as well as an acknowledgement that all personal brokerage accounts will be maintained through Avantax Investment Services unless an exception has been granted by the Avantax Compliance Department. A copy of Avantax Advisory Services' Code of Ethics is also included in Avantax Advisory Services Written Supervisory Procedures. A summary of the Code of Ethics can also be found on Avantax's public website at [www.avantaxwealthmanagement.com](http://www.avantaxwealthmanagement.com) and in the Part 2A of Form ADV: Firm Brochure of Avantax Advisory Services.

B. In addition, Employees and Advisory Representatives shall be required to certify through the annual Compliance Questionnaire/Attestation that all of their personal brokerage accounts are disclosed to Avantax.