

**Item 1 – Cover Page**



**Stanhouse Financial Planning  
and Management, LLC.**

A State of Georgia Registered Investment Adviser

**Form ADV Part 2**

March 28, 2024

3235 Satellite Blvd., Bldg. 400,  
Suite 300, Duluth, GA 30096  
404 538 0307  
[www.StanhouseFP.com](http://www.StanhouseFP.com)

This brochure provides information about the qualifications and business practices of Stanhouse Financial Planning and Management, LLC. (StanhouseFP) If you have any questions about the contents of this brochure, please contact us at 404 538 0307 or [Jim@StanhouseFP.com](mailto:Jim@StanhouseFP.com). The information in this brochure has not been approved or verified by the United States Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) or by any state securities authority. While the firm and its personnel are registered with the State of Georgia, it does not imply a certain level of skill or training on the part of the firm or its personnel.

Additional information about StanhouseFP is available on the SEC's website at [www.adviserinfo.sec.gov](http://www.adviserinfo.sec.gov). Click on the "Investment Adviser Search" link and then search for "Investment Adviser - Firm" using the firm's IARD number, which is 150494.

*Stanhouse Financial Planning and Management, LLC*  
*Form ADV Part 2- 20240328*

## **Item 2 - Material Changes**

The previous version of this document was dated March 27, 2023.

The following material changes incorporated into the annual updating amendment of this document.

The firm's custodian for asset management accounts has changed due to the acquisition/merger of TD Ameritrade by Charles Schwab & Co., Inc. ("Schwab"). Schwab is now our preferred custodian, as noted in Item 4 - Asset Management Services

The firm's fees for hourly-based work have changed, please see Item 5 – Fees – Planning and Investment Advisory Service Fees for details.

The firm's fees for ongoing retainer relationships have changed, please see Item 5 – Fees – Retainer Fees - for details.

(Note that the firm's ongoing asset management fee schedule has not changed.)

We encourage any client or prospective client to review this document in its entirety.

The firm may at any time update this document and either send a copy of its updated brochure or provide a summary of material changes to its brochure as well as an offer to send an electronic or hard copy form of the updated brochure. Clients are also able to download this brochure from the SEC's Website: [www.advisorinfo.sec.gov](http://www.advisorinfo.sec.gov) or you may contact our firm at (404) 538-0307.

**Item 3 - Table of Contents**

**Item 1 – Cover Page .....1**

**Item 2 - Material Changes .....2**

**Item 3 - Table of Contents .....3**

**Item 4 – Advisory Business .....4**

**Item 5 – Fees and Compensation .....6**

**Item 6 – Performance-Based Fees and Side-By-Side Management .....8**

**Item 7 – Types of Clients .....8**

**Item 8 – Methods of Analysis, Investment Strategies and Risk of Loss.....8**

**Item 9 – Disciplinary Information .....9**

**Item 10 – Other Financial Industry Activities and Affiliations .....9**

**Item 11 – Code of Ethics, Participation or Interest in Client Transactions and Personal Trading .....10**

**Item 12 – Brokerage Practices .....11**

**Item 13 – Review of Accounts.....12**

**Item 14 – Client Referrals and Other Compensation .....12**

**Item 15 – Custody .....12**

**Item 16 – Investment Discretion .....13**

**Item 17 – Voting Client Securities .....13**

**Item 18 – Financial Information .....13**

**Item 19 – ADV Part 2B Advisory Personnel .....14**

## **Item 4 – Advisory Business**

### **About our Firm**

Stanhouse Financial Planning and Management, LLC (“StanhouseFP” or the “Firm”) was organized in 2009 and has been registered with the Office of the Securities Commissioner in the State of Georgia as a Registered Investment Adviser firm since 2009. James Stanhouse is 100% owner and sole principal of the firm.

StanhouseFP provides fee-only, financial planning, investment advisory services, and asset management services to individuals and families from all walks of life. These services may be general in nature or focused on particular areas of interest or need, depending upon each client's unique circumstances. A complimentary interview is conducted by a qualified representative of the Firm to determine if the firm and the perspective client are a good fit and if so, what scope of services is appropriate and the estimated cost for the services is determined.

### **Fiduciary Standard**

We hold ourselves to a fiduciary standard, which means our firm and its associates will act in the utmost good faith and perform in a manner believed to be in the best interest of our clients. As registered investment advisors we are required to put you -- the client first. We feel this sets us apart from other firms that may be held to a perhaps lesser, suitability standard and who may not be required under current regulation to place their client's interest ahead of their own.

### **Planning and Investment Advisory Services**

The primary function of the Firm is providing financial planning and investment advisory services to individuals, small businesses and other entities. Advice is rendered in the areas of cash flow and debt management, risk management, college funding, retirement planning, estate planning, tax planning, asset allocation and investment selection. The Firm employs fundamental, long-term financial planning and investment strategies.

An estimated 35% of our activities involve providing financial advice, which may include advice on income and expense planning, tax planning, insurance planning, estate planning, retirement planning and education planning, and an estimated 65% of our activities involve providing investment advice, which may include advice on asset allocation and investment selection.

We gather information about the client's personal financial situation and then conduct a meeting with the client to clarify the client's personal financial information and determine the client's specific needs, objectives, goals and tolerance for risk.

Regarding the financial advice process, we then analyze the client's current financial situation and possible future scenarios, when appropriate. Next, we present a summary of significant observations, assumptions and recommendations in each area we were engaged to provide advice. The engagement is concluded upon completion of the presentation. The client may re-engage us as needed. Periodic reviews are recommended and it is the client's responsibility to initiate these reviews.

Regarding the investment advice process, we then recommend a proper asset allocation based on the client's personal financial situation. Then, we recommend specific investments to fill out the recommended asset allocation. We recommend that the portfolio be maintained by rebalancing annually and making adjustments as client's goals and circumstances change. The engagement is concluded upon completion of the recommendations. The client may re-engage us as needed, if our capacity allows. If client's situation indicates that future advice will be needed they will be encouraged to enter into a retainer agreement. Client's periodic reviews are recommended and it is the client's responsibility to initiate these reviews.

For those clients with more complex situations requiring regular periodic consultation StanhouseFP offers retainer agreements. Services included in retainer agreements will be customized to each client's needs. Currently less than 10% of our business is structured as retainer relationships.

#### Asset Management Services – (Investment Supervisory Services)

StanhouseFP also provides on-going investment advisory/management services. These investment management services include the joint creation of an investment policy statement, portfolio design, and on-going implementation and monitoring of the investments. In most circumstances StanhouseFP will require an initial financial planning engagement (charged at the standard hourly rate) in order to understand the client's current financial situation, determine investment goals, and establish an asset allocation strategy.

Prior to engaging StanhouseFP to provide these investment advisory services, the client will be required to enter into a formal agreement with the firm setting forth the terms and conditions under which StanhouseFP shall manage the clients investments and a separate agreement for brokerage, custodial or clearing services agreement with Charles Schwab & Co., Inc. ("Schwab"), or other custodians recommended by StanhouseFP.

The investment advisory agreement will continue in effect until terminated by either party via written notice. Either party may terminate an engagement upon written notice within five (5) days of signing the Service Agreement, at which time no fees would be due. Should the client terminate the engagement after this date, the client may be invoiced on a pro-rated basis for the remaining advisory services period.

StanhouseFP generally recommends that clients utilize the brokerage, custodial and clearing services of Schwab for investment management accounts. The client may instead choose to work with a different service provider if the appropriate arrangements can be made with that firm. StanhouseFP does not and will not have custody of client funds or securities.

The Firm has approximately \$29,000,000 of assets under management as of 12/31/2023.

#### Other

StanhouseFP may provide services to clients of other professionals and receive payments (hourly or project based) from that professional.

## **Item 5 – Fees and Compensation**

### **Planning and Investment Advisory Service Fees**

StanhouseFP standard fees for financial planning and one-time investment advisory services are \$340 per hour. Hourly fees are billed in thirty (30) minute increments and are negotiable at the discretion of Firm Principal. Fixed fees are typically quoted for a project, and are based on the anticipated number of hours involved in the project and the standard hourly fee. Services to be provided and the anticipated fee range are detailed in the written Service Agreement. Projects spanning more than three months may be billed quarterly.

We require a deposit for engagements in the amount of the lesser of \$500 or half of the total estimated fee. The balance of fees due is payable immediately upon presentation of the advice to the client. Fees will not be collected in advance in excess of \$500 and for six months or more in advance of services to be performed. For each engagement, proposed services and an estimated fee range are detailed in the written service agreement. Either party may terminate an engagement upon written notice within five days of signing the service agreement, at which time no fees are due. If the client terminates the engagement after this date, the client is responsible for any fees already incurred. Refunds will be available subject to any billable time incurred by the advisor.

Advisors employed by StanhouseFP may also conduct group educational workshops on financial planning topics. The Firm may impose a fee for educational workshops. Generally, the employer, civic or non-profit group sponsoring the workshop pays any fees charged by StanhouseFP. In the event there is a charge to workshop attendees, the fee will be published on the workshop announcement or invitation.

A discount may be provided to certain groups, which is in the sole discretion of the principal of the Firm.

### **Retainer Fees**

Fees for retainer agreements will be based on account size, complexity and anticipated time required. StanhouseFP does not impose an asset or income size minimum for retainer engagements, however, the standard minimum fee is \$3,000 for couples and \$1,750 for individuals. Fees are billed quarterly or monthly depending on client agreement. The retainer agreement will remain in effect until cancelled by either party via written notice.

### Asset Management (Investment Supervisory Services) Fees

Fees for investment advisory services shall vary, generally less than 1% of assets managed, depending on the market value of the assets under management and the type of investment management and financial planning services to be rendered. If compensation is based on a percentage of assets under management, the fee will be based upon the market value of the assets on the last day of the previous quarter. Fees are to be paid quarterly, in arrears. The fee schedule for on-going investment management is as follows:

Account size	Fee
Up to \$250,000 *	0.95 % per year *
\$250K – \$500K	0.90 % per year
\$501K - \$750K	0.85 % per year
\$751K-\$1 million	0.75% per year
\$1 million - \$2 million	0.65% per year
\$2 million +	0.60% per year

(\* minimum fee of \$2,000 USD per year, paid quarterly and in arrears)

At the discretion of a StanhouseFP Principal, the Firm may negotiate or charge a lesser management fee based upon certain criteria (i.e. anticipated future earning capacity, anticipated future additional assets, dollar amounts of assets to be managed, related account, pre-existing client, etc.). StanhouseFP does not impose an account size minimum for on-going investment advisory services, however, the standard minimum fee is \$2,000.

StanhouseFP's investment management Client Services Agreement may authorize the selected custodian to debit the client's account for the amount of StanhouseFP's investment management fee and to directly remit that investment management fee to StanhouseFP in accordance with required SEC procedures as follows: (1) StanhouseFP will simultaneously send to the client and the custodian an invoice showing the amount of the investment management fee, the value of the client's assets in which the fee was based, and the specific manner in which StanhouseFP's management fee was calculated; and (2) the custodian will send to the client a statement or provide online, at least quarterly, indicating all amounts disbursed from the account, including the amount of investment management fees paid directly to StanhouseFP.

### Other Possible Fees

StanhouseFP normally recommends no-load (i.e. no-commission) products. In connection with using our services, the client may also incur separate fees and expenses that are charged by mutual funds and/or exchange traded funds (ETFs). We recommend that the client review the investment prospectus for a complete explanation of these fees and expenses.

In addition, the client may also incur separate transaction costs or administration fees from brokerage firms. We recommend that the client obtain a complete schedule of fees from their brokerage firm. We do not receive any portion of these other fees. We do not receive commissions or third-party payments of any kind. The only compensation we receive is in the form fees paid directly by the client.

### **Item 6 – Performance-Based Fees and Side-By-Side Management**

StanhouseFP does not charge fees based on a share of capital appreciation of the funds of an advisory contract, also known as performance-based fees. Therefore issues related to side-by-side management are not applicable.

### **Item 7 – Types of Clients**

StanhouseFP provides its services primarily to individuals, but may also serve small businesses and trusts. We do not require minimums as to income, assets, net worth, or length of engagement for engaging our services.

### **Item 8 – Methods of Analysis, Investment Strategies and Risk of Loss**

#### **Methods of Analysis**

If StanhouseFP is engaged to provide investment advice, first, we gather information about the client's personal financial situation and then conduct a meeting with the client to clarify the client's personal financial information and determine the client's specific needs, objectives, goals and tolerance for risk.

Then, we recommend a proper asset allocation based on the client's personal financial situation. We make asset allocation and investment policy decisions using our best judgment to help the client achieve their overall financial objectives and goals while minimizing risk exposure.

#### **Investment Strategies**

When looking at client's investments we will typically take into account the client's total picture, not just a specific account. In accordance with Modern Portfolio Theory we believe that the appropriate allocation of assets across diverse investment categories (i.e. stock vs. bond, foreign vs. domestic, large cap. vs. small cap., high quality vs. high yield, REITs, etc.) is a primary determinant of portfolio returns and is critical to the long-term success of a client's financial objectives and goals. The most critical of these allocations is the fundamental allocation of stocks vs. bonds. After determining an appropriate allocation to the various asset classes, we recommend specific investments.

For specific investments we generally advise:

- **Mutual funds or Exchange traded funds** over individual securities – for the diversification benefits.

- **No-load funds** over loaded funds – for the lower costs.
- **Funds that do not contain 12b-1 fees** over those that do charge those fees – for the lower costs.
- **Passively managed funds** over actively managed funds – based on unbiased academic research.

However, specific client circumstances or asset class choices may lead us to diverge from the above generalities.

We employ a fundamental, long-term, buy-and-hold (with annual re-balancing) philosophy in regards to investment advice. We generally do not encourage investors to try to “time” the markets and encourage investors to stick with their planned allocation until personal goals or circumstances change.

We encourage investors to be analytical in their investment behavior instead of emotional and to resist acting on the latest media headline of the day.

StanhouseFP’s philosophy is based on academic research, along with the collective wisdom of and insight of many successful investors. Our research and recommendations may be drawn from sources that include financial publications; investment analysis and reporting software; research materials from outside sources; corporate rating services; annual reports, prospectuses and other regulatory filings and company press releases.

**Tax efficiency** of investments and the location of where those investments reside in a client’s portfolio is taken into consideration when possible within our recommendations.

### Risk of Loss

While we believe our investment strategy is designed to potentially produce the highest possible return for a given level of risk, it cannot guarantee that an investment objective or goal will be achieved. Some investment decisions made by us may result in loss, which may include the original principal amount invested. Even bonds, sometimes considered to be a risk-free asset may decline in value in certain situations. The client must be able to bear the various risks involved in investing, which may include market risk, liquidity risk, interest rate risk, currency risk or political risk, among others.

Low-cost, no-load, index investments have the potential to be affected by tracking error risk, which is defined as a deviation from the stated benchmark index.

### Item 9 – Disciplinary Information

Neither StanhouseFP nor any of its personnel have been the subject of a reportable legal or disciplinary event.

### Item 10 – Other Financial Industry Activities and Affiliations

Neither StanhouseFP nor any of its personnel are affiliated with or maintain a material relationship with another financial industry entity. Our policies require that we conduct business

*Stanhouse Financial Planning and Management, LLC*  
*Form ADV Part 2- 20240328*

activities in a manner that avoids actual or potential conflicts of interest between the firm, personnel and the client, or that may otherwise be contrary to law. We will provide disclosure to the client, prior to and throughout the term of an engagement, of any conflicts of interest which will or may reasonably compromise our impartiality or independence.

Jim Stanhouse is a member of the Garrett Planning Network (Garrett), an organization that assists financial planners in fee-only financial planning practices. Garrett is not a registered financial industry participant, nor do its activities require it to be. StanhouseFP pays an annual membership fee to Garrett for extensive services that include training, compliance and operational support to enhance our ability to provide quality service and advice to our clients.

Jim Stanhouse is also a registered member of the National Association of Personal Financial Advisors (NAPFA), and the Certified Financial Planner Board of Standards, Inc. Generally, participation in these entities requires membership fees to be paid, adherence to ethical guidelines, and meeting experiential and educational requirements.

Jim Stanhouse adheres to the NAPFA *Fiduciary Oath* that states:

*“The advisor shall exercise his/her best efforts to act in good faith and in the best interests of the client.*

*The advisor shall provide written disclosure to the client prior to the engagement of the advisor and thereafter throughout the term of the engagement, of any conflicts of interest, which will or reasonably may compromise the impartiality or independence of the advisor.*

*The advisor or any party in which the advisor has financial interest, does not receive any compensation that is contingent on any client’s purchase of sale of a financial product.*

*The advisor does not receive a fee or other compensation from another party based on the referral of a client or the client’s business.*

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

### **Code of Ethics**

StanhouseFP has adopted a code of ethics that sets forth the basic policies of ethical conduct for all associated persons of the firm. We accept the obligation not only to comply with the mandates and requirements of all applicable laws and regulation, but also to take responsibility to act in an ethical and professionally responsible manner in all professional services and activities. We will be happy to provide a copy of our code of ethics to any client or prospective client, upon request.

## Privacy Policy

StanhouseFP is committed to safeguarding confidential information of all current, former, and potential clients. All personal information provided to the firm is held in the strictest confidence. We use the information you provide to help you meet your personal financial objectives, while guarding against any real or perceived infringements of your rights to privacy. Our complete privacy policy is provided to all clients.

## Personal Trading

Neither StanhouseFP nor any of its personnel are authorized to recommend or effect a transaction for a client involving any security in which the firm or a related party has a material financial interest, such as in the capacity as an underwriter, advisor to the issuer, etc. Additionally, we are prohibited from borrowing from or lending to a client, unless that client is an approved financial institution or is an immediate family member. In such instances, authorization for the loan must be granted in advance and documented in writing. At times personnel and related parties may hold positions in investments that are also recommended to the client. We may make recommendations or take actions with respect to investments that may differ in the nature or timing from recommendations made to, or actions taken for, other clients or personnel. However, at no time will the personnel or any related party receive preferential treatment over the client.

## **Item 12 – Brokerage Practices**

StanhouseFP is not affiliated with any bank, custodian or brokerage firm. If we are engaged to provide investment advice(non-asset management), we will offer advice based on whom the client's assets are currently maintained. If the client prefers to use a new service provider, we may recommend various providers such as: Schwab, Vanguard, Fidelity, etc. These recommendations are based on the need, overall cost and ease of use for the client.

If we are engaged to provide investment advisory services(ongoing asset management) the client will be recommended to use Charles Schwab & Co., Inc. ("Schwab"), as the custodian. The client will open accounts directly with Schwab and we will assist with the paperwork if needed.

## Soft Dollar Benefits

Our policy is to restrict any non-cash compensation, or soft dollars, that we may receive from a service provider to only that which enhances our ability to render quality advice and service to the client. Although we may recommend one or more service providers to the client, we derive no special benefit from doing so, nor do we "pay up" to receive additional services.

## Client Referrals

The only compensation we receive is in the form of fees paid directly by the client. Therefore, we do not receive any additional compensation when the client engages a recommended brokerage firm or other service provider.

*Stanhouse Financial Planning and Management, LLC  
Form ADV Part 2- 20240328*

We do not require or engage in directed brokerage involving our accounts. We recognize our obligation in seeking best execution for our clients, however, it is our belief that the determinative factor is not always the lowest possible cost, but whether the selected service provider's transactions represent the best qualitative execution while also taking into consideration the full range of services provided. Therefore, we will seek services involving competitive rates, but that may not correlate to the lowest possible rate for every transaction. We periodically review our policies regarding recommending service providers, in light of our duty to seek best execution.

### Trade Aggregation

Transactions for each client will generally be effected independently unless the firm decides to purchase or sell the same securities for several clients at the same time – a practice referred to as aggregation or batching of orders. Due to the size and nature of the Firm it is unlikely that this technique is employed.

### **Item 13 – Review of Accounts**

#### Planning and Investment Advisory Service Agreements

StanhouseFP does not provide continuous monitoring of accounts for hourly/project based financial planning and investment advice service clients. Periodic reviews are recommended, and it is the client's responsibility to initiate these reviews. We remind the client to notify us of any changes to their personal financial situation.

#### Retainer and Asset Management (Investment Supervisory Service) Agreements

StanhouseFP provides periodic, per client agreement, reviews of accounts to retainer and asset management service clients.

### **Item 14 – Client Referrals and Other Compensation**

StanhouseFP does not receive, nor does it pay, any fees for specific client referrals.

### **Item 15 – Custody**

StanhouseFP does not take custody of client cash, bank accounts or securities. The client's cash, bank accounts and securities will be maintained by unaffiliated, qualified custodians, such as banks, brokerage firms, mutual fund companies and transfer agents. The client will receive account statements directly from their service provider. These statements are typically provided on a monthly or quarterly basis or as account transactions occur.

We will not ask for, nor accept, any of the client's account access information, such as username and/or password, even for the accommodation of the client or the client's legal agent. Firm personnel will not act as trustee for, or have full power of attorney over, a client account, unless as a co-trustee of an immediate or incompetent family member.

### **Item 16 – Investment Discretion**

Following client written approval, StanhouseFP may manage client investment accounts on a discretionary basis. Discretionary authority is similar to a limited power of attorney, allowing the Firm to implement investment decisions on behalf of the account without prior client authorization in order to meet the account objectives. This discretionary authority is limited to trades within the account(s) and money cannot be withdrawn except with the client's prior written authorization for payment of investment management fees.

Discretionary authority may be withdrawn in writing by the client at any time. If discretionary authority is withdrawn the advisor will request specific written authorization from client before executing a trade. The Firm will not have custody of client assets or securities under any circumstances.

### **Item 17 – Voting Client Securities**

StanhouseFP does not vote client securities. The client will maintain responsibility for directing the manner in which proxies are voted, as well as all other elections relative to mergers, acquisitions, tender offers or other events pertaining to the client's investments. The client will receive their proxies and other solicitations directly from the custodian or transfer agent for their investments.

### **Item 18 – Financial Information**

Due to the nature of our services, an audited balance sheet is not required, nor included in this disclosure document. StanhouseFP does not have any financial conditions that require further disclosure.

## **Item 19 – ADV Part 2B Advisory Personnel**

### **Managing Member/Firm Principal/Investment Advisor Representative**

Jim Stanhouse, (Born 1959)

### **Educational Background and Business Experience**

#### **Education Background**

CERTIFIED FINANCIAL PLANNER™ Professional (CFP®)<sup>1</sup>  
Certificate - Financial Planning, Emory University (2007)  
MBA, State University of New York at Albany (1985)  
BBA – Accounting, Siena College (1981)

#### **Business Experience**

Manager - Stanhouse Financial Planning and Management, LLC (2009 - Present)  
Technical Manager, PeopleSoft HR Systems - Emory University (1998 - 2008)

#### **Disciplinary Information**

Neither StanhouseFP nor any of its personnel have been the subject of a reportable legal or disciplinary event.

#### **Other Business Activities**

Jim Stanhouse is not engaged in any other business activities.

#### **Additional Compensation**

Neither StanhouseFP nor any of its personnel accept or receive additional economic benefit (i.e. sales awards or other prizes) for providing advisory services to clients.

#### **Supervision**

Jim Stanhouse serves in multiple capacities for StanhouseFP: Managing Member, Principal, Financial Planner and Investment Adviser Representative (IAR). We recognize that the lack of segregation of duties may potentially create conflicts of interest. However, we employ policies and procedures to ensure timely and accurate recordkeeping and supervision, including outsourcing certain functions to qualified entities to assist in these efforts when necessary. Questions about StanhouseFP, its personnel, its services or this document may be posed to Jim Stanhouse at 404 538 0307 or [Jim@StanhouseFP.com](mailto:Jim@StanhouseFP.com).

Additional information about the firm, other advisory firms, or associated investment advisor representatives, including Mr. Stanhouse, is available on the Internet at [www.adviserinfo.sec.gov](http://www.adviserinfo.sec.gov). A search of this site for firms or their associated personnel can be accomplished by name or a unique firm identifier, known as an IARD number, which is 150494. This information can also be found by clicking on the “Investment Adviser Search” link and then search for “Investment Adviser Representative (IAR)” using “James Brian Stanhouse.”

## <sup>1</sup>Professional Designations

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 (as of 2022), more than 95,000 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 Bachelors 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.