

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
1997 SESSION

SESSION LAW 1997-462
SENATE BILL 438

AN ACT TO AMEND THE ENFORCEMENT PROCEDURES RELATED TO THE
REGISTRATION OF SECURITIES AND TO INVESTMENT ADVISERS AND
TO ESTABLISH THE CONFIDENTIALITY OF RECORDS RELATING TO
CRIMINAL INVESTIGATIONS AND ENFORCEMENT PROCEEDINGS.

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

Section 1. G.S. 78A-39(a)(2) reads as rewritten:

- "(2) That the applicant or registrant or, in the case of a dealer, any partner, officer, or director, any person occupying a similar status or performing similar functions, or any person directly or indirectly controlling the dealer:
- a. Has filed an application for registration which as of its effective date, or as of any date after filing in the case of an order denying effectiveness, was incomplete in any material respect or contained any statement which was, in light of the circumstances under which it was made, false or misleading with respect to any material fact; or
 - b. Has willfully violated or willfully failed to comply with any provision of this Chapter or a predecessor law or any rule or order under this Chapter or a predecessor law or any provision of the Securities Act of 1933, the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, the Investment Advisors Act of 1940, or the Commodity Exchange Act; or
 - c. Has been convicted, within the past 10 years, of any misdemeanor involving a security or any aspect of the securities business, or any felony; or
 - d. Is permanently or temporarily enjoined by any court of competent jurisdiction from engaging in or continuing any conduct or practice involving any aspect of the securities business; or
 - e. Is the subject of an order of the Administrator denying, suspending, or revoking registration as a dealer or salesman; or
 - f. Is the subject of an order entered within the past five years by the securities administrator of any state or by the Securities and

Exchange Commission denying or revoking registration as a dealer or salesman, or the substantial equivalent of those terms as defined in this Chapter, or is the subject of ~~an~~ a final order of the Securities and Exchange Commission suspending or expelling him from a national securities exchange or national securities association registered under the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, or is the subject of a United States post office fraud order; but (i) the Administrator may not institute a revocation or suspension proceeding under subdivision (2)f of subsection (a) more than one year from the date of the order relied on, and (ii) ~~he the Administrator~~ may not enter an order under subdivision (2)f of subsection (a) on the basis of an order under another state act unless that order was based on facts which would currently constitute a ground for an order under this section; or

- g. Has engaged in dishonest or unethical practices in the securities business; or
- h. Is insolvent, either in the sense that his liabilities exceed his assets or in the sense that he cannot meet his obligations as they mature; but the Administrator may not enter an order against a dealer under this paragraph without a finding of insolvency as to the dealer; or
- i. Is not qualified on the basis of such factors as training, experience, and knowledge of the securities business, except as otherwise provided in subsection (b)."

Section 2. G.S. 78A-39(c) reads as rewritten:

"(c) The Administrator may by order summarily postpone or suspend registration pending final determination of any proceeding under this section. Upon the entry of the order, the Administrator shall promptly notify the applicant or registrant, as well as the employer or prospective employer if the applicant or registrant is a salesman, that it has been entered and of the reasons therefor and that within 15 days after the receipt of a written request the matter will be set down for hearing. If ~~no hearing is requested~~ request for a hearing, other responsive pleading, or submission is received by the Administrator within 30 business days of receipt of service of notice of the order upon the applicant or registrant and none no hearing is ordered by the Administrator, the order ~~will~~ shall become final and remain in effect until unless it is modified or vacated by the Administrator. If a hearing is requested or ordered, the Administrator, after notice of and opportunity for hearing, may modify or vacate the order or extend it until final determination."

Section 3. G.S. 78A-46(a)(1) reads as rewritten:

- "(1) May make ~~such public or private investigations~~ any investigation within or outside of this State as ~~he the Administrator~~ deems necessary to determine whether any person has violated or is about to violate any

provision of this Chapter or any rule or order hereunder, or to aid in the enforcement of this Chapter or in the prescribing of rules and forms hereunder,".

Section 4. G.S. 78A-47(b)(2) reads as rewritten:

"(2) If the Administrator makes written findings of fact that the public interest will be irreparably harmed by delay in issuing an order under G.S. 78A-47(b)(1), the Administrator may issue a temporary cease and desist order. Upon the entry of a temporary cease and desist order, the Administrator shall promptly notify in writing the person subject to the order that such order has been entered, the reasons therefor, and that within 20 days after the receipt of a written request from such person the matter shall be set down for hearing to determine whether or not the order shall become permanent and final. If no hearing is requested request for a hearing, other responsive pleading, or submission is received by the Administrator within 30 business days of receipt of service of notice of the order upon the person subject to the order and ~~none~~ no hearing is ordered by the Administrator, the order shall become final and remain in effect until unless it is modified or vacated by the Administrator. If a hearing is requested or ordered, the Administrator, after giving notice of an opportunity for a hearing to the person subject to the order, shall by written findings of fact and conclusion of law, vacate, modify, or make permanent the order."

Section 5. G.S. 78A-50 reads as rewritten:

"§ 78A-50. Administrative files and opinions.

(a) A document is filed when it is received by the Administrator.
(b) The Administrator shall keep a register of all applications for registration and registration statements which are or have been effective under this Chapter and all denial, suspension, or revocation orders which have been entered under this chapter. The register shall be open for public inspection.

(c) The information contained in or filed with any registration statement, application, or report may be made available to the public under such rules as the Administrator prescribes.

(c1) The files and records of the Administrator relating to criminal investigations and enforcement proceedings undertaken pursuant to this Chapter are subject to the provisions of G.S. 132-1.4.

(c2) The files and records of the Administrator relating to noncriminal investigations and enforcement proceedings undertaken pursuant to this Chapter shall not be subject to inspection and examination pursuant to G.S. 132-6 until the investigations and proceedings are completed and cease to be active.

(c3) Any information obtained by the Administrator from any law enforcement agency, administrative agency, or regulatory organization on a confidential or otherwise restricted basis in the course of an investigation or proceeding undertaken pursuant to

this Chapter shall be confidential and exempt from G.S 132-6 to the same extent that it is confidential in the possession of the providing agency or organization.

(d) Upon request and at such reasonable charges as ~~he~~the administrator prescribes, the Administrator shall furnish to any person photostatic or other copies (certified under ~~his~~the seal of office if requested) of any entry in the register or any document which is a matter of public record. In any proceeding or prosecution under this Chapter, any copy so certified is prima facie evidence of the contents of the entry or document certified.

(e) The Administrator ~~in his discretion~~ may honor requests from interested persons for interpretative opinions. When an exemption is claimed in writing, cites the section relied upon, and is considered eligible upon the showing made, a 'no action' letter will be furnished upon request and upon the payment of a fee of one hundred fifty dollars (\$150.00)."

Section 6. G.S. 78C-2 is amended by adding a new subdivision to read:

"(5) 'Person' means an individual, a corporation, a partnership, an association, a joint-stock company, a trust where the interests of the beneficiaries are evidenced by a security, an unincorporated organization, a government, or a political subdivision of a government."

Section 7. G.S. 78C-19(c) reads as rewritten:

"(c) The Administrator may by order summarily postpone or suspend registration pending final determination of any proceeding under this section. Upon the entry of the order, the Administrator shall promptly notify the applicant or registrant, as well as the employer or prospective employer if the applicant or registrant is an investment adviser representative, that it has been entered and of the reasons therefor and that within 15 days after the receipt of a written request the matter will be set down for hearing. If ~~no hearing is requested~~request for a hearing, other responsive pleading, or submission is received by the Administrator within 30 business days of receipt of service of notice of the order upon the applicant or registrant and none~~no hearing is ordered by the Administrator, the order will~~shall become final and remain in effect until~~unless~~ it is modified or vacated by the Administrator. If a hearing is requested or ordered, the Administrator, after notice of and opportunity for hearing, may modify or vacate the order or extend it until final determination."

Section 8. G.S. 78C-27(a)(1) reads as rewritten:

"(1) May make ~~such public or private investigations~~any investigation within or outside of this State as ~~he~~the Administrator deems necessary to determine whether any person has violated or is about to violate any provision of this Chapter or any rule or order hereunder, or to aid in the enforcement of this Chapter or in the prescribing of rules and forms hereunder;"

Section 9. G.S. 78C-28(b)(2) reads as rewritten:

"(2) If the Administrator makes written findings of fact that the public interest will be irreparably harmed by delay in issuing an order under

G.S. 78C-28(b)(1), the Administrator may issue a temporary cease and desist order. Upon the entry of a temporary cease and desist order, the Administrator shall promptly notify in writing the person subject to the order that such order has been entered, the reasons therefor, and that within 20 days after the receipt of a written request from such person the matter shall be set down for hearing to determine whether or not the order shall become permanent and final. If no hearing is requested request for a hearing, other responsive pleading, or submission is received by the Administrator within 30 business days of receipt of service of notice of the order upon the person subject to the order and none no hearing is ordered by the Administrator, the order shall become final and remain in effect until unless it is modified or vacated by the Administrator. If a hearing is requested or ordered, the Administrator, after giving notice of an opportunity for a hearing to the person subject to the order, shall by written findings of fact and conclusion of law, vacate, modify, or make permanent the order."

Section 10. G.S. 78C-31 reads as rewritten:

"§ 78C-31. Administrative files and opinions.

- (a) A document is filed when it is received by the Administrator.
- (b) The Administrator shall keep a register of all applications for registration which are or have been effective under this Chapter and all denial, suspension, or revocation orders or similar orders which have been entered under this chapter. The register shall be open for public inspection.
- (c) The information contained in or filed with any registration, application, or report may be made available to the public under such rules as the Administrator prescribes.
 - (c1) The files and records of the Administrator relating to criminal investigations and enforcement proceedings undertaken pursuant to this Chapter are subject to the provisions of G.S. 132-1.4.
 - (c2) The files and records of the Administrator relating to noncriminal investigations and enforcement proceedings undertaken pursuant to this Chapter shall not be subject to inspection and examination pursuant to G.S. 132-6 until the investigations and proceedings are completed and cease to be active.
 - (c3) Any information obtained by the Administrator from any law enforcement agency, administrative agency, or regulatory organization on a confidential or otherwise restricted basis in the course of an investigation or proceeding undertaken pursuant to this Chapter shall be confidential and exempt from G.S. 132-6 to the same extent that it is confidential in the possession of the providing agency or organization.
- (d) Upon request and at such reasonable charges as ~~he~~ the Administrator prescribes, the Administrator shall furnish to any person photostatic or other copies (certified under ~~his~~ the seal of office if requested) of any entry in the register or any document which is a matter of public record. In any proceeding or prosecution under

this Chapter, any copy so certified is prima facie evidence of the contents of the entry or document certified.

(e) The Administrator ~~in his discretion~~ may honor requests from interested persons for interpretative opinions upon the payment of a fee of one hundred fifty dollars (\$150.00)."

Section 11. This act becomes effective October 1, 1997, and applies to administrative proceedings commenced on or after that date.

In the General Assembly read three times and ratified this the 21st day of August, 1997.

s/ Marc Basnight
President Pro Tempore of the Senate

s/ Harold J. Brubaker
Speaker of the House of Representatives

s/ James B. Hunt, Jr.
Governor

Approved 4:05 p.m. this 1st day of September, 1997