

**§ 140.98**

Market Oversight under paragraph (a) of this section.

[57 FR 12874, Apr. 14, 1992, as amended at 67 FR 62353, Oct. 7, 2002]

**§ 140.98 Publication of no-action, interpretative and exemption letters and other written communications.**

(a) Except as provided in paragraphs (b) and (c) of this section, and except for applications for orders granting exemptions submitted pursuant to section 4(c) of the Commodity Exchange Act and any written responses thereto, each written response by the Commission or its staff to a letter or other written communication requesting:

(1) Interpretative legal advice with respect to the Commodity Exchange Act or any rule, regulation or order issued or adopted by the Commission thereunder;

(2) A statement that, on the basis of the facts stated in such letter or other communication, the staff would not recommend that the Commission take any enforcement action; or

(3) An exemption, on the basis of the facts stated in such letter or other communication, from the provisions of the Commodity Exchange Act or any rules, or regulations or orders issued or adopted by the Commission thereunder; shall be made available, together with the letter or other written communication making the request, for inspection and copying by any person as soon as practicable after the response has been sent or given to the person requesting it.

(b) Any person submitting a letter or other written communication making such a request may also submit therewith a request that the letter or other written communication, as well as any Commission or staff response thereto, be accorded confidential treatment for a specified period of time, not exceeding 120 days from the date of the response thereto, together with a statement setting forth the considerations upon which the request for such treatment is based. If the staff determines that the request is reasonable and appropriate it will be granted and the letter or other written communication as well as the response thereto will not be made available for public inspection or copying until the expiration of the

specified period. If it appears to the staff that the request for confidential treatment should be denied, the staff shall so advise the person making the request and such person may withdraw the letter or other written communication within 30 days thereafter. In such case, no response will be sent or given and the letter or other written communication shall remain in the Commission's files but will not be made public pursuant to this section. If such letter or other written communication is not so withdrawn, it shall be deemed to be available for public inspection and copying together with any written response thereto.

(c) Notwithstanding the provisions of paragraphs (a) and (b) of this section, no portion of a letter or other written communication received by the Commission or its staff of the type described in paragraph (a) of this section, or any written response thereto, shall be made available for inspection and copying or otherwise published which would separately disclose the business transactions or market positions of any person and trade secrets or names of customers, except in accordance with the provisions of section 8 of the Commodity Exchange Act.

[57 FR 61291, Dec. 24, 1992]

**§ 140.99 Requests for exemptive, no-action and interpretative letters.**

(a) *Definitions.* For the purpose of this section:

(1) *Exemptive letter* means a written grant of relief issued by the staff of a Division of the Commission from the applicability of a specific provision of the Act or of a rule, regulation or order issued thereunder by the Commission. An exemptive letter may only be issued by staff of a Division when the Commission itself has exemptive authority and that authority has been delegated by the Commission to the Division in question. An exemptive letter binds the Commission and its staff with respect to the relief provided therein. Only the Beneficiary may rely upon the exemptive letter.

(2) *No-action letter* means a written statement issued by the staff of a Division of the Commission or of the Office of the General Counsel that it will not recommend enforcement action to the

## Commodity Futures Trading Commission

## § 140.99

Commission for failure to comply with a specific provision of the Act or of a Commission rule, regulation or order if a proposed transaction is completed or a proposed activity is conducted by the Beneficiary. A no-action letter represents the position only of the Division that issued it, or the Office of the General Counsel if issued thereby. A no-action letter binds only the issuing Division or the Office of the General Counsel, as applicable, and not the Commission or other Commission staff. Only the Beneficiary may rely upon the no-action letter.

(3) *Interpretative letter* means written advice or guidance issued by the staff of a Division of the Commission or the Office of the General Counsel. An interpretative letter binds only the issuing Division or the Office of the General Counsel, as applicable, and does not bind the Commission or other Commission staff. An interpretative letter may be relied upon by persons in addition to the Beneficiary.

(4) *Letter* means an exemptive, no-action or interpretative letter.

(5) *Division* means the Division of Clearing and Intermediary Oversight or the Division of Market Oversight.

(b) *General requirements.* (1) Issuance of a Letter is entirely within the discretion of Commission staff.

(2) Each request for a Letter must comply with the requirements of this section. Commission staff may reject or decline to respond to a request that does not comply with the requirements of this section.

(3) The request must relate to a proposed transaction or a proposed activity. Absent extraordinary circumstances, Commission staff will not issue a Letter based upon transactions or activities that have been completed or activities that have been conducted prior to the date upon which the request is filed with the Commission.

(4) The request must be made by or on behalf of the person whose activities or transactions are the subject of the request. Commission staff will not respond to a request for a Letter that is made by or on behalf of an unidentified person.

(5)(i) The request must set forth as completely as possible all material

facts and circumstances giving rise to the request.

(ii) Commission staff will not respond to a request based on a hypothetical situation. However, a requester may set forth one or more alternative structures or fact situations for a proposed transaction or activity; *Provided*, That the request complies with this section with respect to each alternative structure or fact situation.

(c) *Information requirements.* Each request for a Letter must comply with the following information requirements:

(1)(i) A request made by the person on whose behalf the Letter is sought must contain:

(A) The name, main business address, main telephone number and, if applicable, the National Futures Association registration identification number of such person; and

(B) The name and, if applicable, the National Futures Association registration identification number of each other person for whose benefit the person is seeking the Letter.

(ii) When made by a requester other than the person on whose behalf the Letter is sought, the request must contain:

(A) The name, main business address and main business telephone number of the requester;

(B) The name and, if applicable, the National Futures Association registration identification number of the person on whose behalf the Letter is sought; and

(C) The name and, if applicable, the National Futures Association registration identification number of each other person for whose benefit the requester is seeking the Letter.

(iii) The request must provide the name, address and telephone number of a contact person from whom Commission staff may obtain additional information if necessary.

(2) The section number of the particular provision of the Act and/or Commission rules, regulations or orders to which the request relates must be set forth in the upper right-hand corner of the first page of the request.

(3) The request must be accompanied by:

§ 140.99

17 CFR Ch. I (4-1-07 Edition)

(i) A certification by a person with knowledge of the facts that the material facts as represented in the request are true and complete. The following form of certification is sufficient for this purpose:

I hereby certify that the material facts set forth in the attached letter dated \_\_\_\_\_ are true and complete to the best of my knowledge.  
(name and title) \_\_\_\_\_

and

(ii) An undertaking made by the person on whose behalf the Letter is sought or by that person's authorized representative that, if at any time prior to issuance of a Letter, any material representation made in the request ceases to be true and complete, the person who made the undertaking will ensure that Commission staff is informed promptly in writing of all materially changed facts and circumstances. If a material change in facts or circumstances occurs subsequent to issuance of a Letter, the person on whose behalf the Letter is sought (or that person's authorized representative at the time of the change) must promptly so inform Commission staff.

(4) The request must identify the type of relief requested and Letter sought and must clearly state why a Letter is needed. The request must identify all relevant legal and factual issues and discuss the legal and public policy bases supporting issuance of the Letter.

(5) The request must contain references to all relevant authorities, including applicable provisions of the Act, Commission rules, regulations and orders, judicial decisions, administrative decisions, relevant statutory interpretations and policy statements. Adverse authority must be cited and discussed.

(6) The request must identify prior publicly available Letters issued by Commission staff in response to circumstances similar to those surrounding the request (including adverse Letters), and must identify any conditions imposed by prior Letters as prerequisites for the issuance of those Letters. Citation of a representative sample of prior Letters is sufficient where a comprehensive recitation of prior Letters on a given topic would be

repetitious or would not assist the staff in considering the request.

(7) Requests may ask that, if the requested exemptive relief, no-action position or interpretative guidance is denied, the staff consider granting alternative relief or adopting an alternative position.

(d) *Filing requirements.* Each request for a Letter must comply with the following filing requirements:

(1) The request must be in writing and signed.

(2) A request for a Letter relating to the provisions of the Act or the Commission's rules, regulations or orders governing designated contract markets, registered derivatives transaction execution facilities, exempt commercial markets, exempt boards of trade, the nature of particular transactions and whether they are exempt or excluded from being required to be traded on one of the foregoing entities, foreign trading terminals, hedging exemptions, and the reporting of market positions shall be filed with the Director, Division of Market Oversight, Commodity Futures Trading Commission, Three Lafayette Centre, 1155 21st Street, NW., Washington, DC 20581. A request for a Letter relating to all other provisions of the Act or Commission rules shall be filed with the Director, Division of Clearing and Intermediary Oversight, Commodity Futures Trading Commission, Three Lafayette Centre, 1155 21st Street, NW., Washington, DC 20581. A request for a Letter relating to all other provisions of the Act or Commission rules shall be filed with the Director, Division of Clearing and Intermediary Oversight, Commodity Futures Trading Commission, Three Lafayette Centre, 1155 21st Street, NW., Washington, DC 20581. The request must be submitted electronically using the e-mail address *dmoletters@cftc.gov* (for request filed with the Division of Market Oversight), or *dcioletters@cftc.gov* (for requests filed with the Division of Clearing and Intermediary Oversight), as appropriate, and a properly signed paper copy of the request must be provided to the Division of Market Oversight or the Division of Clearing and Intermediary Oversight, as appropriate, within ten

days for purposes of verification of the electronic submission.

(e) *Form of staff response.* No response to any request governed by this section is effective unless it is in writing, signed by appropriate Commission staff, and transmitted in final form to the recipient. Failure by Commission staff to respond to a request for a Letter does not constitute approval of the request. Nothing in this section shall preclude Commission staff from responding to a request for a Letter by way of endorsement or any other abbreviated, written form of response.

(f) *Withdrawal of requests.* (1) A request for a Letter may be withdrawn by filing with Commission staff a written request for withdrawal, signed by the person on whose behalf the Letter was sought or by that person's authorized representative, that states whether the person on whose behalf the Letter was sought will proceed with the proposed transaction or activity.

(2) Where a request has been submitted by an authorized representative of the person on whose behalf a Letter is sought, the authorized representative may withdraw from representation at any time without explanation, *Provided*, That Commission staff is promptly so notified.

(g) *Failure to pursue a request.* In the event that Commission staff requests additional information or analysis from a requester and the requester does not provide that information or analysis within thirty calendar days, Commission staff generally will issue a denial of the request; *Provided, however*, that Commission staff in its discretion may issue an extension of time to provide the information and or analysis.

(h) *Confidential treatment.* Confidential treatment of a request for a Letter must be requested separately in accordance with §140.98 or §145.9 of this chapter, as applicable.

(i) *Applicability to other sections.* The provisions of this section shall not affect the requirements of, or otherwise be applicable to:

(1) Notice filings required to be made to claim relief from the Act or from a Commission rule, regulation, or order including, without limitations, §§ 4.5, 4.7(a), 4.7(b), 4.12(b), 4.13(b) and 4.14(a)(8) of this chapter;

(2) Requests for exemption pursuant to section 4(c) of the Act; or

(3) Requests for exemption pursuant to §41.33 of this chapter.

[63 FR 68181, Dec. 10, 1998, as amended at 65 FR 47859, Aug. 4, 2000; 66 FR 44967, Aug. 27, 2001; 67 FR 62353, Oct. 7, 2002; 69 FR 41426, July 9, 2004]

### Subpart C—Regulation Concerning Conduct of Members and Employees and Former Members and Employees of the Commission

AUTHORITY: 7 U.S.C. 4a(f) and (j), 12a(5), and 13, as amended by the Commodity Futures Modernization Act of 2000, Appendix E of Pub. L. 106-554, 114 Stat. 2763 (2000).

SOURCE: 41 FR 27511, July 2, 1976, unless otherwise noted.

#### § 140.735-1 Authority and purpose.

This subpart sets forth specific standards of conduct required of Commission members, employees of the Commission, and special government employees as well as regulations concerning former Commissioners, employees, and special government employees of the Commodity Futures Trading Commission. These rules are separate from and in addition to the Office of Government Ethics' conduct rules, Standards of Ethical Conduct for Employees of the Executive Branch, 5 CFR part 2635. In addition, this subpart contains references to various statutes governing employee conduct in order to aid Commission members, employees of the Commission and others in their understanding of statutory restrictions and requirements.<sup>1</sup> Absent compelling countervailing reasons, all Commission members and employees are subject to all the terms of this section.

[67 FR 5939, Feb. 8, 2002]

<sup>1</sup>These references, however, do not purport to cover all restrictions and requirements, and paraphrased restatements of statutory provisions are not intended to be, and should not be construed as, verbatim quotations of the law. Statutory text should be consulted in any situation in which it might apply.