

**SUPPORTING STATEMENT**  
**For the Paperwork Reduction Act Information Collection Submission for**  
**Form ADV-E**

**A. JUSTIFICATION**

**1. Necessity for the Information Collection**

Rule 206(4)-2, adopted under Section 206(4) (15 U.S.C. 80b-6(4)) of the Investment Advisers Act of 1940 (the “Advisers Act”), requires certain SEC-registered investment advisers that have custody of client assets to have an independent public accountant conduct an annual surprise examination of the custodied assets.<sup>1</sup> The rule further requires that the independent public accountant file a certificate on Form ADV-E with the Commission within 120 days of the time chosen by the public accountant for the surprise examination.<sup>2</sup> Form ADV-E is required by the rule as a cover sheet for the certificate of accounting to facilitate the process by which the accountant files the certificate with the Commission. The rule further requires that within four business days of the resignation, dismissal, removal, or other termination of the engagement, the public accountant file a Form ADV-E and accompanying statement.<sup>3</sup> Form ADV-E and the accompanying accountant’s certificate must be filed electronically with the Commission.

The requirement for a Form ADV-E as the accounting certificate cover page is a “collection of information” within the meaning of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44

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<sup>1</sup> Rule 206(4)-2(a)(4) (17 CFR 275.206(4)-(2)(a)(4)).

<sup>2</sup> Rule 206(4)-2(a)(4)(i).

<sup>3</sup> Rule 206(4)-2(a)(4)(iii).

U.S.C. 3510 to 3520).<sup>4</sup> Form ADV-E is necessary to facilitate the filing process for the accountant's examination certificate. It is found at 17 CFR 279.8 and is mandatory. Responses provided to the Commission are not kept confidential.

The title for the collection of information is "Form ADV-E, cover sheet for each certificate of accounting of client securities and funds in the custody of an investment adviser." The current OMB control number for this collection of information is 3235-0361. The respondents to the information collection through Form ADV-E are SEC-registered investment advisers that have custody of client funds or securities and are subject to an annual surprise examination requirement under rule 206(4)-2.

## **2. Purpose and Use of the Information Collection**

The purpose of the collection of information is to provide information for use by staff of the Commission in its examination and oversight program. Some advisory clients also may find the information useful. The accountant, upon completing the examination, must certify the results of that examination directly to the Commission. Because Form ADV-E serves as the cover page of the accounting certificate, it facilitates the filing of the certificate and increases the accessibility of the certificate to the Commission's staff and to advisory clients.

## **3. Consideration Given to Information Technology**

Respondents will file Form ADV-E electronically through the Investment Adviser Registration Depository ("IARD") system and the form will be available to the public.

## **4. Duplication**

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<sup>4</sup> This collection of information pertains only to the Form ADV-E filing certificate itself. The paperwork burden of obtaining the examination is separately covered by "Rule 206(4)-2 under the Investment Advisers Act of 1940 – Custody of Funds or Securities of Clients by Investment Advisers" under the OMB control number 3235-0241.

The information required is not available elsewhere.

#### **5. Effect on Small Entities**

Form ADV-E does not significantly increase the regulatory burden on any investment adviser, including small entities for purposes of OMB Form 83-I.

#### **6. Consequences of Not Conducting Collection**

Form ADV-E must be filed (i) within 120 days of the time chosen by the accountant for the surprise examination and (ii) upon the resignation, dismissal, removal, or other termination of the accountant conducting the surprise examination. Less frequent collection would inhibit the dissemination of timely information to the Commission's staff.

#### **7. Inconsistencies with Guidelines in 5 CFR 1320.5(d)(2)**

The collection of information imposes no additional requirements regarding record retention.

#### **8. Consultation Outside the Agency**

The Commission requested public comment on the collection of information requirements of Form ADV-E before it submitted this request for extension and approval to the Office of Management and Budget. The Commission received no comments in response to these requests.

In addition, the Commission and the staff of the Division of Investment Management participate in an ongoing dialogue with representatives of the investment adviser industry through public conferences, meetings, and informal exchanges. These various forums provide the Commission and the staff with a means of ascertaining and acting upon paperwork burdens confronting the industry.

**9. Payment or Gift**

Not applicable.

**10. Confidentiality**

Not applicable.

**11. Sensitive Questions**

Form ADV-E collects information on the investment adviser's name, SEC file number, state identification number (if applicable), and address of the adviser's principal place of business. Form ADV-E does not collect Social Security Numbers. A System of Records Notice has been published in the Federal Register at (SEC-02) 83 FR 6892 (February 15, 2018).

**12. Burden of Information Collection**

The total annual Form ADV-E compliance burden approved by OMB in 2019 was 89.35 hours for 1,787 responses by investment advisers that the Commission staff then estimated would be subject to the requirement of filing Form ADV-E in connection with the surprise examination and the termination statement.<sup>5</sup> In reaching this estimate, the Commission estimated each respondent would spend 0.05 hour (three minutes) annually to complete Form ADV-E.

Based on current information from advisers registered with the Commission, the Commission staff now estimates that 1,776 responses will be submitted with respect to surprise

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<sup>5</sup> This estimate was based on 1,749 filings submitted with respect to a surprise examination and 38 filings submitted with respect to an accountant's termination. These filings were submitted by 1,447 advisers, some of whom submitted multiple filings.

examinations and termination of accountants pursuant to rule 206(4)-2.<sup>6</sup> The Commission staff continues to estimate the burden on each respondent to be 0.05 hour annually. The total annual Form ADV-E compliance burden is therefore estimated to be 88.80 hours.<sup>7</sup>

The Commission staff expects that Form ADV-E will be filled out by investment advisers' compliance clerks. Based on an average salary including fringe benefits of \$ 72 per hour,<sup>8</sup> the total cost of the information collection requirement of Form ADV-E is estimated to be approximately \$6,393.60.<sup>9</sup>

IC Title	Annual No. of Responses			Annual Time Burden (Hrs.)			Burden Cost Burden (\$)		
	<i>Previously approved</i>	<i>Requested</i>	<i>Change</i>	<i>Previously approved</i>	<i>Requested</i>	<i>Change</i>	<i>Previously approved</i>	<i>Requested</i>	<i>Change</i>
Form ADV-E									
Annual reporting	1787	1776	-11	89.35	88.80	-0.55	\$5,986.45	\$6,393.60	\$407.15

**Table 1: Summary of Revised Annual Responses, Burden Hours, and Burden Hour Costs Estimates for Each Information Collection**

**Estimated Number of Annual Responses: 1,776**

**Estimated Total Annual ICR Burden Hours: 88.80**

### **13. Cost to Respondents**

There is no cost burden other than the cost of the hour burden described above.

### **14. Cost to the Federal Government**

<sup>6</sup> This estimate is based on the number of Form ADV-E filings made with the Commission from January 1, 2020 through December 31, 2020, of which 1,743 filings were submitted with respect to a surprise examination and 33 filings were submitted with respect to an accountant's termination. These filings were submitted by 1,435 advisers, some of whom submitted multiple filings.

<sup>7</sup>  $1,776 \times 0.05 = 88.80$ .

<sup>8</sup> Data from the Securities Industry and Financial Markets Association's Office Salaries in the Securities Industry 2021 (the "SIFMA Report"), modified to account for an 1,800-hour work-year and multiplied by 2.93 to account for bonuses, firm size, employee benefits and overhead, suggest that the cost for a compliance clerk is approximately \$72 per hour.

<sup>9</sup>  $88.80 \text{ hrs.} \times \$72 \text{ hourly wage} = \$6,393.60$ .

Form ADV-E is designed to facilitate the filing of accountant certificates required under rule 206(4)-2. The staff devotes less time in processing accountant certificates as a result. The cost of processing Form ADV-E is insignificant.

**15. Changes in Burden**

As noted above, the decrease in the hour burden is attributable to a decrease in the number of SEC-registered advisers that are subject to the surprise examination requirement. As a result, fewer advisers are required to file Form ADV-E resulting in the estimated annual burden hours decreasing from 89.35 to 88.80 and the number of responses decreasing from 1,787 to 1,776.

**16. Information Collection Planned for Statistical Purposes**

Not applicable.

**17. Approval to Omit OMB Expiration Date**

We request authorization to omit the expiration date on the electronic version of the form, although the OMB control number will be displayed. Including the expiration date on the electronic version of this form will result in increased costs, because the need to make changes to the form may not follow the application's scheduled version release dates.

**18. Exceptions to Certification Statement for Paperwork Reduction Act**

**Submissions**

Not applicable.

**B. COLLECTIONS OF INFORMATION EMPLOYING STATISTICAL METHODS**

Not applicable.