

**FINANCIAL INDUSTRY REGULATORY AUTHORITY
LETTER OF ACCEPTANCE, WAIVER AND CONSENT
NO. 2017054755201**

TO: Department of Enforcement
Financial Industry Regulatory Authority (“FINRA”)

RE: Victor Michel, Respondent
Former General Securities Representative
CRD No. 2689456

Pursuant to FINRA Rule 9216 of FINRA’s Code of Procedure, I submit this Letter of Acceptance, Waiver and Consent (“AWC”) for the purpose of proposing a settlement of the alleged rule violations described below. This AWC is submitted on the condition that, if accepted, FINRA will not bring any future actions against me alleging violations based on the same factual findings described herein.

I.

ACCEPTANCE AND CONSENT

- A. I hereby accept and consent, without admitting or denying the findings, and solely for the purposes of this proceeding and any other proceeding brought by or on behalf of FINRA, or to which FINRA is a party, prior to a hearing and without an adjudication of any issue of law or fact, to the entry of the following findings by FINRA:

BACKGROUND

Victor Michel entered the securities industry in 1995 when he registered as a General Securities Representative (“GSR”) through a FINRA member firm. Subsequently, he was associated with several member firms where he was registered with FINRA as a GSR. From January 2014 until February 2016, Michel was registered as a GSR with FINRA through Financial West Group (“FWG”).

Although Michel is no longer registered or associated with a FINRA member, he remains subject to FINRA’s jurisdiction pursuant to Article V, Section 4 of FINRA’s By-Laws.

RELEVANT DISCIPLINARY HISTORY

In July 2016, Michel consented to an AWC imposing a two-month, all-capacities suspension and a \$7,500 fine for violating FINRA Rule 2010 by using an

unapproved email address to communicate firm-related business with a firm customer and by settling away a customer complaint.

OVERVIEW

During the course of an ongoing examination, Michel stated that he will not appear for on-the-record testimony requested by FINRA pursuant to FINRA Rule 8210. As a result, Michel violated FINRA Rules 8210 and 2010.

FACTS AND VIOLATIVE CONDUCT

In June 2017, FINRA began an examination into possible sales practice violations committed by Michel while he was registered with FWG.

On July 12, 2017, FINRA staff sent a request to Michel for him to appear for on-the-record testimony pursuant to FINRA Rule 8210. Although it was scheduled for September 7, 2017, Michel did not appear for on-the-record testimony.

As stated in his counsel's letter to FINRA staff on August 10, 2017, and by this agreement, Michel acknowledges that he received FINRA's July 12, 2017 request and will not appear for the on-the-record testimony at any time. By refusing to appear for on-the-record testimony as requested pursuant to FINRA Rule 8210, Michel violates FINRA Rules 8210 and 2010.

By virtue of the foregoing, Michel violated FINRA Rules 8210 and 2010.

B. I also consent to the imposition of the following sanctions:

- A bar from association with any FINRA member in any capacity.

The sanctions imposed herein shall be effective on a date set by FINRA staff. A bar or expulsion shall become effective upon approval or acceptance of this AWC.

I understand that if I am barred or suspended from associating with any FINRA member, I become subject to a statutory disqualification as that term is defined in Article III, Section 4 of FINRA's By-Laws, incorporating Section 3(a)(39) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934. Accordingly, I may not be associated with any FINRA member in any capacity, including clerical or ministerial functions, during the period of the bar or suspension (see FINRA Rules 8310 and 8311).

II.

WAIVER OF PROCEDURAL RIGHTS

I specifically and voluntarily waive the following rights granted under FINRA's Code of Procedure:

- A. To have a Complaint issued specifying the allegations against me;
- B. To be notified of the Complaint and have the opportunity to answer the allegations in writing;
- C. To defend against the allegations in a disciplinary hearing before a hearing panel, to have a written record of the hearing made and to have a written decision issued; and
- D. To appeal any such decision to the National Adjudicatory Council ("NAC") and then to the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission and a U.S. Court of Appeals.

Further, I specifically and voluntarily waive any right to claim bias or prejudgment of the Chief Legal Officer, the NAC, or any member of the NAC, in connection with such person's or body's participation in discussions regarding the terms and conditions of this AWC, or other consideration of this AWC, including acceptance or rejection of this AWC.

I further specifically and voluntarily waive any right to claim that a person violated the ex parte prohibitions of FINRA Rule 9143 or the separation of functions prohibitions of FINRA Rule 9144, in connection with such person's or body's participation in discussions regarding the terms and conditions of this AWC, or other consideration of this AWC, including its acceptance or rejection.

III.

OTHER MATTERS

I understand that:

- A. Submission of this AWC is voluntary and will not resolve this matter unless and until it has been reviewed and accepted by the NAC, a Review Subcommittee of the NAC, or the Office of Disciplinary Affairs ("ODA"), pursuant to FINRA Rule 9216;
- B. If this AWC is not accepted, its submission will not be used as evidence to prove any of the allegations against me; and
- C. If accepted:

1. this AWC will become part of my permanent disciplinary record and may be considered in any future actions brought by FINRA or any other regulator against me;
2. this AWC will be made available through FINRA's public disclosure program in accordance with FINRA Rule 8313;
3. FINRA may make a public announcement concerning this agreement and the subject matter thereof in accordance with FINRA Rule 8313; and
4. I may not ~~take~~ any action or make or permit to be made any public statement, including in regulatory filings or otherwise, denying, directly or indirectly, any finding in this AWC or create the impression that the AWC is without factual basis. I may not take any position in any proceeding brought by or on behalf of FINRA, or to which FINRA is a party, that is inconsistent with any part of this AWC. Nothing in this provision affects my: (i) testimonial obligations; or (ii) right to take legal or factual positions in litigation or other legal proceedings in which FINRA is not a party.

I certify that I have read and understand all of the provisions of this AWC and have been given a full opportunity to ask questions about it; that I have agreed to its provisions voluntarily; and that no offer, threat, inducement, or promise of any kind, other than the terms set forth herein and the prospect of avoiding the issuance of a Complaint, has been made to induce me to submit it.

9/25/17

Date (mm/dd/yyyy)


Victor Michel
Respondent

Reviewed by:



Brandon S. Reif, Esq.
Counsel for Respondent
Winget, Spadafora, Schwartzberg LLP
1900 Avenue of the Stars, Suite 450
Los Angeles, CA 90067
Tel: 310.836.4800
Reif:b@WSSLLP.com
ArbsLA@WSSLLP.com

Accepted by FINRA:

11/03/2017

Date

Signed on behalf of the
Director of ODA, by delegated authority



Jill L. Jablonow
Senior Regional Counsel
FINRA Department of Enforcement
300 South Grand, Suite 1600
Los Angeles, California 90071-3126
Phone Number (213) 613-2659
E-Fax Number (202) 721-6517
jill.jablonow@finra.org