

# **J. F. WILLIAMS CO., INC.**

## **FIRM BROCHURE**

**JANUARY 19, 2018**

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This brochure provides information about the qualifications and business practices of J. F. Williams Co., Inc. If you have any questions about the contents of this brochure, please contact us at (303) 753-4506. The information in this brochure has not been approved or verified by the United States Securities and Exchange Commission.

J. F. Williams Co., Inc. is a registered investment adviser. Registration of an Investment Adviser does not imply any level of skill or training. The written communications of an Adviser provide you with information about which you determine to hire or retain an Adviser.

Additional information about J. F. Williams Co., Inc. is available on the SEC's website [www.adviserinfo.sec.gov](http://www.adviserinfo.sec.gov). You can search this site by a unique identifying number, known as a CRD number. The CRD number for the Adviser is 113569.

## **ITEM 2 MATERIAL CHANGES**

### ANNUAL UPDATE

This section of our brochure will be updated annually when material changes occur. The previous release of our brochure is dated March 31, 2017.

### MATERIAL CHANGES SINCE THE LAST UPDATE

Since the last update, there has been a change in ownership percentage between CCO/CEO Matthew A. Elliott and Treasurer/Secretary James F. Williams. Mr. Elliott is now the majority stockholder owning approximately 65% of the shares (previously held 13% ownership) and Mr. Williams now owns 35% of the shares of the firm (previously held 87% ownership).

Additionally, Matthew A. Elliott has been named CEO of J.F. Williams Co., Inc., and James F. Williams now holds the titles of Treasurer and Secretary.

### FULL BROCHURE AVAILABLE

If you would like to receive a complete copy of our most recent brochure, please contact us at (303) 753-4506, or visit our website ([www.jfwco.com](http://www.jfwco.com)) to download a copy.

### ITEM 3 TABLE OF CONTENTS

Item 2 Material Changes.....	2
Item 3 Table of Contents .....	3
Item 4 Advisory Business.....	4
Item 5 Fees and Compensation.....	5
Item 6 Performance-Based Fees and Side by Side Management .....	6
Item 7 Types of Clients.....	6
Item 8 Methods of Analysis, Investment Strategies and Risk of Loss .....	6
Item 9 Disciplinary Information .....	7
item 10 Other Financial Industry Activities and Affiliations .....	7
Item 11 Code of Ethics .....	7
Item 12 Brokerage Practices .....	8
Item 13 Review of Accounts .....	9
Item 14 Client Referrals and Other Compensation.....	9
Item 15 Custody.....	10
Item 16 Investment Discretion.....	10
Item 17 Voting Client Securities .....	10
Item 18 Financial Information .....	10

## **ITEM 4 ADVISORY BUSINESS**

### OWNERSHIP/ADVISOR HISTORY

J. F. Williams Co., Inc. was founded in 1995. James F. Williams is the founder, Treasurer and Secretary of the firm. He is a minority stockholder owning approximately 35% of the shares. Additional information about Mr. Williams is available in the ADV Part 2B – Supplemental Brochure. Matthew A. Elliott is the CCO/CEO. He is a majority stockholder owning approximately 65% of the shares. Additional information about Mr. Elliott is available in the ADV Part 2B – Supplemental Brochure. Juan J. Guevara is an Associate Financial Planner. Additional information about Mr. Guevara is available in the ADV Part 2B – Supplemental Brochure.

### ADVISORY SERVICES OFFERED

J. F. Williams Co., Inc. provides financial planning and investment management to individuals, profit sharing plans, trusts, estates, charitable organizations, and small businesses. Advice is tailor made for each client based on ongoing consultation with each client. Areas of advice may include: determination of financial objectives, identification of financial problems, cash flow management, tax planning, insurance review, investment management, education funding, retirement planning, and estate planning.

J. F. Williams Co., Inc. is a fee-only financial planning and investment management firm. The firm does not sell annuities, insurance, stocks, bonds, mutual funds, limited partnerships, or other commissioned products. The firm is not affiliated with entities that sell financial products or securities. No commissions in any form are accepted. No finder's fees are accepted.

All clients engaged for investment management services obtain a formal investment policy statement. This investment policy statement (IPS) sets forth the guidelines by which all the client's funds will be invested. This document is generated through a formalized process which helps to access the client's risk tolerance and goals. The IPS document is monitored over time and updated as warranted by the client's circumstances.

Clients may opt for a written financial plan. The financial plan may include any or all of the following:

- Net Worth Summary
- Retirement Planning
- Debt Management
- Budgeting
- Education Funding
- Income Tax Review
- Estate Tax & Net to Heirs Calculation
- Lifetime Cash Flow Projection
- Retirement Cash Flow
- Long Term Care Planning
- Life & Disability Needs Analysis
- Cash Management
- Estate Planning Document Review

All of our clients' accounts are held at a custodian. Charles Schwab & Co., Inc. is the custodian for most our clients' accounts. We provide investment services for accounts, such as 401(k) plans, held at other custodians. J. F. Williams Co., Inc. has a limited power of attorney to places trades in our clients' accounts, and in some cases, withdraw our investment management fees when authorized by the client.

### TAILORED SERVICES

We tailor our services to a client's needs, goals and objectives. Clients can restrict the types of securities and/or investment classes that we use in their portfolios. All restrictions must be provided to us in writing.

## CLIENT ASSETS MANAGED

As of 12/31/2017, J. F. Williams Co., Inc. managed approximately \$152,659,647 in assets for approximately 129 clients. 100% of these assets are managed on a non-discretionary basis. That is, all trades are authorized by our clients prior to being placed.

## **ITEM 5 FEES AND COMPENSATION**

J. F. Williams Co., Inc. is compensated in the following ways:

Fees for establishing an investment policy statement and preparing a written financial plan are billed on a flat fee basis. The standard flat fee rate for each service is as follows:

1. Establishing an Investment Policy Statement: \$1,000.
2. Preparing a Financial Plan: \$2,500.

Some non-standard services may be billed on an hourly basis. Current advisor/planner rate is \$200 per hour; associate planner rate is \$100 per hour; administrative assistant rate is \$25 per hour. Clients will be notified if they will be charged an hourly fee.

Investment management fees based on a percentage of the investable assets per the following schedule:

<u>Account Balance Portion</u>	<u>Annual Retainer Percent</u>	<u>Cumulative Effective Rate</u>
up to \$100,000	1.00%	1.00%
\$100,001 to 250,000	.90%	.94%
\$250,001 to \$500,000	.80%	.87%
\$500,001 to \$1,000,000	.70%	.785%
\$1,000,001 to \$2,500,000	.60%	.674%
\$2,500,001 to \$5,000,000	.50%	.587%
\$5,000,001 to \$7,500,000	.40%	.525%
\$7,500,001 to \$10,000,000	.30%	.469%
\$10,000,001 and above	.20%	-

## BILLING FREQUENCY AND PAYMENT METHODS

Fees for establishing an investment policy statement or developing a written financial plan are generally payable at the end of the consultation. In some cases, these fees are payable on a quarterly basis. These fees are payable by check.

Investment management fees are paid quarterly, in arrears, i.e., at the end of each calendar quarter. Clients may choose to pay this fee by check or have it withdrawn from their account(s). Generally, our fees are not negotiable but we retain the right to modify our fee schedule for specific clients under certain circumstances.

## OTHER FEES CLIENTS PAY

The primary vehicles we recommend to our clients are “no-load” mutual funds. Mutual funds generally charge a management fee for their services as investment managers. The management fee is called an expense ratio. For example, an expense ratio of 0.50 means that the mutual fund company charges 0.5% of the asset value per year for their services.

Performance figures quoted by mutual fund companies in various publications are after their fees have been deducted.

Charles Schwab & Co., Inc. charges a transaction fee each time we trade the mutual funds in our clients' accounts. Virtually all of the mutual funds we use are subject to these transaction fees. The transaction fee schedule from Charles Schwab & Co., Inc. is below:

<u>Transaction Amount</u>	<u>Fee Percentage</u>	<u>Minimum Fee</u>	<u>Maximum Fee</u>
\$0 - \$15,000	0.24%	\$20.00	\$36.00
>\$15,000	0.12%	\$36.00	\$49.00

#### AVAILABILITY OF INVESTMENT PRODUCTS

Depending on each specific fund, the mutual funds we recommend may be available through other advisors, other brokers, or in some cases, directly through the mutual fund companies themselves.

### **ITEM 6 PERFORMANCE-BASED FEES AND SIDE BY SIDE MANAGEMENT**

J. F. Williams Co., Inc. does not charge performance-based fees.

### **ITEM 7 TYPES OF CLIENTS**

J. F. Williams Co., Inc. provides investment advice to individuals, profit sharing plans, trusts, estates, charitable organizations, and business entities.

To commence a relationship with our firm, we require a minimum of \$1 million in investments or cash be placed under our management. We reserve the option to waive or change this minimum for any prospective client. J. F. Williams Co., Inc. does not require any account minimum to maintain our advisory services.

### **ITEM 8 METHODS OF ANALYSIS, INVESTMENT STRATEGIES AND RISK OF LOSS**

#### METHODS OF ANALYSIS

On a quarterly basis, J. F. Williams Co., Inc. reviews the performance objectives for each mutual fund held in our clients' accounts. Fund performance is evaluated in terms of an appropriate market index (e.g. S&P 500/Citigroup Large Value index for a domestic large cap value equity fund) and the relevant peer group (e.g. the large cap value mutual fund universe for a large cap value mutual fund).

#### INVESTMENT STRATEGIES

Financial markets work and they have historically rewarded investors for the capital they supply. Companies compete for this investment capital driving prices to fair value. Our strategy is to develop and implement a disciplined strategy that harvests the returns from these companies in a cost-effective manner. We believe there is no room for guess work when it comes to managing investments, and strategies based on speculation drive down investor returns.

We believe the most important decision our clients make is selecting the amount of their portfolio to allocate into bonds versus stocks. Empirical studies show that the mix of assets in a broadly diversified portfolio is the most important determinant of total return and risk. The decision to allocate a portion of a portfolio into stocks comes with risk, but this risk comes with a reasonable expectation of higher return.

Stock returns come from risk, but not all risks carry a reasonably reliable reward. Risks worth bearing can be summarized in three dimensions: 1) Stocks are riskier than bonds and have higher expected returns. 2) Among stocks, small companies are riskier than large companies therefore they carry

higher expected returns; and 3) lower priced “value” companies are riskier than higher priced “growth” companies therefore they carry higher expected returns.

Bonds serve to mitigate the stock risk in the portfolio. Performance and risk in bonds are largely driven by two dimensions: 1) Bonds that mature farther into the future are subject to the risk of unexpected changes in interest rates. 2) Bonds with lower credit quality are subject to risk of default. By shortening up bond maturities and holding bonds with investment grade credit quality or better we can better stabilize the volatility in the overall portfolio.

With this understanding, we establish a unique investment policy that aligns with the unique risk/return profile of each client. The investment policy is implemented using a strategic allocation of mutual funds that represent broadly diversified and consistent exposure to asset classes worldwide.

#### RISK OF LOSS

All investment programs have certain risks that are borne by the investor. Some types of risk can be greatly mitigated by investing the portfolio in a diversified portfolio. Examples of risk that can be mitigated include concentrating a portfolio into specific securities, sectors, industries, or countries. We refer to this type of risk as non-systematic risk.

On the contrary, risks that cannot be mitigated are the risks associated with investing in a diversified portfolio. Our strategy is to engage these risks intentionally with the expectation that the investor will be rewarded with a long-term rate of return that compensates the investor for bearing these risks. We refer to this type of risk as systematic risk.

We believe that reducing trading activity reduces transaction fees and reduces the tax impact on the performance of our clients’ portfolios. Trading frequency is generally associated with the following activity:

- Annual portfolio rebalancing;
- Year-end tax planning;
- Anytime funds are either being added to or withdrawn from the portfolio; or
- When a mutual fund is being swapped for another mutual fund due to unacceptable performance.

#### **ITEM 9 DISCIPLINARY INFORMATION**

Registered investment advisors are required to disclose all material facts regarding any legal or disciplinary events within the past 10-year period that would be material to your evaluation of the Firm or the integrity of its management.

J. F. Williams Co., Inc. has no information applicable to this Item because it has never been the subject of any administrative, civil, criminal, or self-regulatory proceedings.

#### **ITEM 10 OTHER FINANCIAL INDUSTRY ACTIVITIES AND AFFILIATIONS**

J. F. Williams Co. Inc. does not have any other financial industry activities or affiliations. Prior to his employment at J.F. Williams Co., Inc., Mr. Guevara acquired a Series 6, Series 7, and Series 63. However, he no longer engages in any business activity related to any of these licenses, and these licenses will be allowed to lapse.

#### **ITEM 11 CODE OF ETHICS**

##### DESCRIPTION

James F. Williams, Matthew A. Elliott, and Juan J. Guevara are CFP® Practitioners and they have committed to the code of ethics as outlined by Certified Financial Planner Board of Standards, Inc. Our firm has adopted a Code of Ethics which sets forth high ethical standards of business conduct that we require of our employees, including compliance with applicable federal securities laws. All employees of J. F. Williams Co., Inc. sign an attestation to this Code of Ethics and it is available for review by clients and prospective clients upon request.

The firm and our personnel owe a fiduciary duty to our clients, and have an obligation to adhere not only to the specific provisions of the Code of Ethics but to the principles that form the fiduciary standard.

#### MATERIAL INTEREST IN SECURITIES

J. F. Williams Co. Inc. does not have a material interest in any security. This section is not applicable.

#### PARTICIPATION OR INTEREST IN CLIENT TRANSACTIONS

J. F. Williams Co., Inc. and its employees may buy or sell securities that are recommended to, or held by, clients, and this represents a conflict of interest. However, these transactions are insignificant to the market as a whole and exclusively in mutual funds, and therefore, there is virtually no likelihood that this conflict would influence the actions or decisions of J. F. Williams Co., Inc., or its employees. Moreover, J. F. Williams Co., Inc. has a duty to put its clients' interest first. We have implemented safeguards monitoring our employee's personal securities holdings to ensure we are meeting our duties to clients.

#### PERSONAL TRADING

The Chief Compliance Officer of J. F. Williams Co., Inc. is Matthew A. Elliott. He reviews all employee trades each quarter. Since the firm invests client assets solely in widely traded mutual funds, the risk that employee transactions would sway the value of these funds is virtually nil.

Our staff members are permitted to buy or sell securities for their personal accounts that are the same as those recommended to clients. They are permitted to have an interest or position in traded securities that may also be recommended to one or more of our clients.

### **ITEM 12 BROKERAGE PRACTICES**

#### RECOMMENDATION CRITERIA & BEST EXECUTION

In order to provide clients the full benefit of the investment management services we provide, we require that clients establish brokerage accounts with the Schwab Advisor Services division of Charles Schwab & Co., Inc. (Schwab), a FINRA registered broker-dealer, member SIPC, to maintain custody of clients' assets and to effect trades for their accounts. We have selected Schwab based on their very competitive transaction fee costs to clients, their capabilities, dependability, and reputation. Although we may require that clients establish accounts at Schwab, it is the client's decision to utilize our services and to custody assets with Schwab, we are independently owned and operated and not affiliated with Schwab. We provide investment management services for accounts held at other custodians. This typically occurs when we are providing investment management services for our clients' qualified plans, such as a 401(k) or 403(b).

Our clients establish brokerage accounts with Schwab. All trading and other transactions are executed within the established client accounts under a limited power of attorney (LPOA). Our policy is to clear each transaction with the client prior to placing the trade order.

This method of operation does not present a meaningful opportunity for J. F. Williams Co., Inc. to select brokers for individual transactions. Also, J. F. Williams Co., Inc. only recommends open-ended



mutual fund investments for clients, which are priced at the end of each business day and offer little opportunity to improve execution.

#### RESEARCH AND SOFT DOLLARS

We participate in Schwab's Schwab Institutional services program. While there is no direct link between the investment advice we give and our participation in this program, we do receive economic benefits that we would not otherwise receive if we did not utilize their platform to manage our clients' accounts. These benefits include: (i) receipt of duplicate client trade confirmations and bundled duplicate statements; (ii) access to a trading desk; (iii) limited cost mitigation on trade errors (the firm covers trading errors up to a certain amount); (iv) deducting investment advisory fees directly from clients' accounts (with prior authorization); (v) access to an electronic communication network for client order entry and account information; (vi) receipt of compliance publications; and (vii) access to mutual funds that generally require significantly higher minimum initial investments or are generally available only to institutional investors.

The benefits we receive through participation in this program are not dependent on the amount of transactions directed to Schwab. Further, the benefits we receive through this relationship are used generally for the benefit of all our clients.

Given that the value of limited trade error mitigation is immaterial and given that all of the other benefits accrue to our clients, we do not regard these benefits as soft dollar arrangements.

#### BROKERAGE FOR CLIENT REFERRALS

We do not receive client referrals in exchange for brokerage services from Schwab.

#### DIRECTED BROKERAGE

We do not allow clients to direct us to a specific broker-dealer to execute securities transactions for their accounts. All clients' transactions are executed at Schwab.

#### TRADE AGGREGATION

J. F. Williams Co., Inc. does not participate in any order aggregation trading activity.

### **ITEM 13 REVIEW OF ACCOUNTS**

#### REVIEWS

J. F. Williams Co., Inc., with the cooperation of each client, conducts an annual review to formally review their portfolio, and written financial plan (if applicable). We may also intermittently review a client's account when there is a changing circumstance or decision that affects our client's life (e.g. marriage, divorce, major purchase, inheritance, business purchase or succession, change of employment, birth of child, etc.).

#### REPORTS

J. F. Williams Co., Inc. provides each client with a quarterly performance report.

### **ITEM 14 CLIENT REFERRALS AND OTHER COMPENSATION**

J. F. Williams Co., Inc. has been fortunate to receive many client referrals over the years. The referrals came from current clients, estate planning attorneys, accountants, employees, personal friends of employees and other similar sources. The firm does not compensate referring parties for these referrals and we are neither obligated to, nor do we necessarily, reciprocate by making referrals to such referral sources.

## **ITEM 15 CUSTODY**

In cases where our clients have authorized us to withdraw our advisory fees from their accounts, we do so on a quarterly basis which constitutes constructive custody. As such, we follow the procedures below:

- The client has provided written authorization for us to withdraw the fee.
- The fee calculation is described in the client's quarterly invoice each time we withdraw the fee.
- Clients can reconcile the amount of the fee withdrawn by comparing our invoice to the statements received from Charles Schwab & Co., Inc.

See Fees & Compensation above for details on our fees.

Also, clients are urged to compare the account statements received directly from Charles Schwab & Co., Inc. to the performance report statements provided quarterly by the J. F. Williams Co., Inc.

## **ITEM 16 INVESTMENT DISCRETION**

J. F. Williams Co., Inc. does not accept discretionary authority to manage assets on behalf of our clients. See Advisory Business above for details.

## **ITEM 17 VOTING CLIENT SECURITIES**

We do not vote proxies on behalf of our clients. Proxy solicitation materials will be forwarded to clients for response and voting. In the event a client has a question or would like a recommendation about a proxy solicitation, the client may contact his/her investment advisor representative.

## **ITEM 18 FINANCIAL INFORMATION**

We do not have any financial impairment that will preclude us from meeting contractual commitments to clients.

A balance sheet is not required to be provided because we do not serve as a custodian for client funds or securities, and do not require prepayment of fees of more than \$1,200 per client, and six months or more in advance.

### OTHER BUSINESS ACTIVITY

We and our executive officers do not have any other business activity. Prior to his employment at J.F. Williams Co., Inc., Mr. Guevara acquired a Series 6, Series 7, and Series 63. However, he no longer engages in any business activity related to any of these licenses, and these licenses will be allowed to lapse.

### PERFORMANCE BASED COMPENSATION

We and our executive officers do not receive performance-based compensation.

### DISCIPLINARY HISTORY

Registered investment advisers are required to disclose all material facts regarding any legal or disciplinary events that would be material to a client's evaluation of each supervised person providing investment advice. No information is applicable to this Item.

### ADDITIONAL RELATIONSHIPS WITH ISSUERS OF SECURITIES

We do not have a relationship with an issuer of securities.