

January 18, 2024

GN-3200-24-001

Rules Bulletin > Guidance Note

Contact:

Member Regulation Policy

e-mail: memberpolicymailbox@iiroc.ca

Distribute internally to:

Legal and Compliance, Operations, Retail

Rule Connection: IDPC Rules

Division: Investment Dealer

Derivatives Risk Disclosure Statement

1. Executive Summary

Investment Dealer and Partially Consolidated Rules Rule section 3254 provides that a member who is registered as an investment dealer (an **Investment Dealer Member**) must provide each client with the most recent derivatives risk disclosure statement approved by the Corporation before accepting an initial derivatives order from a client. The text of the new derivatives risk disclosure statement approved by the Corporation is found in Attachment A. The text does not purport to contain disclosures on every applicable risk but sets out the minimum disclosures expected from an Investment Dealer Member.

This guidance is effective September 28, 2024

2. Applicable rules

IDPC Rules this Guidance Note relates to:

- section 3254

3. Previous guidance notes

This Guidance Note replaces the following:

- GN-3500-21-004

4. Related documents

This Guidance Note was published under Bulletin **XX-XXXX**.

5. Attachment

Attachment A – Risk Disclosure Statement

Attachment A – Risk Disclosure Statement

This risk disclosure statement does not disclose all of the risks and other significant considerations associated with trading in derivatives. In light of the variety of risks involved, you should undertake such transactions only if you understand the nature of the contracts, the contractual relationships into which you are entering and the extent of your exposure to risk. Trading in derivatives is not suitable for everyone and often entails a high level of risk. Trading in derivatives should be made with caution and you should carefully consider whether such transactions are appropriate for you in light of your personal and financial circumstances, investment needs and objectives, investment knowledge, risk profile, investment time horizon, and other relevant circumstances. You should consult with your own business, legal, tax and account advisers before engaging into such transactions.

You may lose more than the amount of funds deposited

A characteristic of many derivatives is that you are only required to deposit funds that correspond to a portion of your total potential obligations and yet your profits or losses are based on changes in the total value of the derivative. This inherent leverage characteristic means that losses incurred can greatly exceed the amount of funds deposited. A relatively small market movement will have a proportionately larger impact on the funds you have deposited or will have to deposit. Your dealer may require you to deposit additional funds on short notice to maintain your position as the value of the derivative changes. If you fail to deposit these funds, your dealer may close out your position at a loss without warning and you will be liable for any resulting deficit in your account.

Using borrowed funds carries greater risk

Using borrowed funds to finance a derivatives transaction involves greater risk than using cash resources only. If you borrow money, your responsibility to repay the loan and pay interest as required by its terms remains the same even if the value of the derivative declines.

Deposited cash and property

You should familiarize yourself with the protections accorded to money or other property you deposit for domestic and foreign transactions, particularly in the event of a firm insolvency or bankruptcy. The extent to which you may recover your money or property may be governed by specific legislation or local rules.

Commission and other charges

Before you begin to trade, you should obtain a clear explanation of all commission, fees and other charges for which you will be liable. These charges will affect your net profit (if any) or increase your loss.

Fluctuations in price or value

The price and value of derivatives can be adversely affected by volatile market conditions and such occurrences may significantly increase your risk exposure. There are a variety of market factors and conditions which can directly or indirectly affect derivatives such as market demand and supply, interest rate, foreign currency exchange rate, indices, commodity prices, equity prices, investor perception and other political or economic factors. Since derivatives are linked to one or multiple underlying interests, the price or value of the derivatives may also be subject to considerable fluctuations due to the risks associated with the underlying interest. The level of sensitivity of an underlying interest with specific market conditions can have wide implications on the value of derivatives linked to that underlying interest. For example, when two or more factors are affecting one or more underlying interests of a derivative, its value may become unpredictable. A small movement in the price of one underlying interest can cause a sudden and large fluctuation in a derivative's value.

Hedging and risk management strategies

Hedging transactions may require constant monitoring. A failure to adjust your hedging transaction in light of changing market conditions may result in the position becoming either under-hedged or over-hedged and losses can ensue.

The placing of certain orders (e.g. "stop-loss" or "stop-limit" orders) which are intended to limit losses to certain amounts may not be effective because market conditions may make it impossible to execute such orders. Strategies using combinations of positions, such as "spread" and "straddle" positions may be as risky as taking simple "long" or "short" positions.

Listed derivatives

Under certain market conditions, you may find it difficult or impossible to liquidate or offset an existing position on a marketplace (e.g. buy-to-close or sell-to-close order). This can occur, for example, when the market reaches a daily price fluctuation limit ("daily price limit" or "circuit breakers").

You should ask your dealer about the terms and conditions of the specific derivatives which you are trading and associated obligations. Under certain circumstances the specifications of outstanding contracts may be modified by the marketplace or clearing house to reflect changes in the underlying interest.

Over-the-counter derivatives

Over-the-counter derivatives (OTC derivatives) trading is not done on a marketplace. Your dealer is your trading counterparty. When you sell, your dealer is the buyer and when you buy, your dealer is the seller. As a result, when you lose money trading, your dealer may be making money on such trades, in addition to any fees, commissions, or spreads it may charge.

An electronic trading platform for trading OTC derivatives such as contracts for difference and foreign exchange contracts is not a marketplace. It is an electronic connection for accessing your dealer. You are accessing that trading platform only to transact with your dealer. You are not trading with any other entities or clients of the dealer by accessing such platform. The availability and operation of any such platform, including the consequences of the unavailability of the trading platform for any reason, is governed only by the terms of your account agreement with the dealer.

You are limited to your dealer to offset or liquidate any trading positions since the transactions are not made on a marketplace. As such, it may be difficult or impossible to liquidate an existing position. The customized nature of certain OTC derivatives may also add to illiquidity.

The terms of OTC derivative contracts are generally not standardized, and the prices and characteristics are often individually negotiated with your dealer. A central source to obtain or compare prices may not exist. It may be difficult to assess the value, to determine a fair price or to assess the exposure to risk. You should ask your dealer about the terms and conditions of the OTC derivative contracts you are trading and understand the related rights and obligations.