



For Immediate Release

Joint press release

Treat Customers Fairly Charter for Private Wealth Management Industry

Hong Kong, 8 June 2017 – The Hong Kong Monetary Authority (HKMA) and the Private Wealth Management Association (PWMA) today announced the PWMA’s adoption of the Treat Customers Fairly Charter for Private Wealth Management Industry (the Charter).

Developed through joint efforts of the HKMA and the PWMA, the Charter is aimed at private wealth management customers, and marks a milestone as a strong commitment by private wealth management institutions in Hong Kong to support and implement the principle of treating customers fairly. A copy of the Charter can be found in Annex 1.

The Charter incorporates five high-level principles together with examples of measures to guide PWMA members in their implementation. Private wealth management institutions are expected to consistently demonstrate that fair treatment of customers is at the heart of their business models, further inspiring customers’ confidence and trust in the private wealth management industry.

Mr Norman Chan, Chief Executive of the HKMA, said, “To remain competitive as the premier private wealth management hub in Asia, Hong Kong’s private wealth management institutions need to have a strong corporate culture that offers highly professional services as well as fair treatment of customers. I am pleased to see the PWMA’s full support in promoting Treat Customers Fairly principle by promulgating the Charter today.”

The HKMA has issued a circular (<http://www.hkma.gov.hk/media/eng/doc/key-information/guidelines-and-circular/2017/20170608e1.pdf>) to articulate its expectation that all private banks should follow the Treat Customers Fairly principles enshrined in the Charter. Senior management and boards of directors of private banks should ensure that their institutions and relevant staff abide by these principles.



“The unanimous support for adopting the Charter at our recent Annual General Meeting (AGM) demonstrates a strong commitment on the part of our members to put clients’ interests at the heart of everything we do,” said Amy Lo, Chairman of the PWMA. “PWMA member firms understand that this commitment is key to nurturing clients’ trust and building a sound foundation for the continued growth of Hong Kong as a private wealth management hub.”

The PWMA approved the Charter’s adoption at its AGM on 28 April 2017. Following this approval, the Charter now applies to all members of the PWMA (Annex 2), currently 47 firms in total.

“The recently launched Pilot Apprenticeship Programme for Private Wealth Management, which is co-organised by the HKMA and the PWMA, is a good example of putting the principles of the Charter into action,” said Peter Stein, PWMA’s Managing Director. The Pilot Apprenticeship Programme offers full-time students at institutions funded by the University Grants Committee a multi-year experience dedicated to training in private wealth management, including exposure to areas such as compliance, risk management, conduct and ethics. “The Pilot Apprenticeship Programme underscores strong commitment to ensuring the next generation of talent is provided training at an early stage to maintain high standards of professional competence and integrity,” Mr. Stein said.

To implement the TCF Charter, PWM institutions also support the setting of clear policies and procedures to promote transparency, reasonableness and efficiency in the execution of customer due diligence processes and joining international efforts for anti-money laundering and counter-terrorist financing work. Further, implementation of the Charter is also demonstrated in the collective efforts of the PWMA with the Hong Kong Association of Banks and the HKMA in developing a fact sheet on the automatic exchange of financial account information, commonly known as AEOI, an important part of global efforts supported by Hong Kong to enhance tax transparency and combat cross-border tax evasion . The factsheet helps address the commonly asked questions by bank customers on the new development, and seeks to help customers and prospective customers understand their reporting obligations (<http://www.pwma.org.hk/Uploads/5915798601a50.pdf>).



HONG KONG MONETARY AUTHORITY
香港金融管理局



In line with the spirit of the Charter, the PWMA has also enhanced its Code of Ethics and Conduct recently to elaborate certain guidelines about upholding client information confidentiality and selling of in-house investment products (<http://www.pwma.org.hk/Uploads/5913e0f461ecd.pdf>).

The Treat Customers Fairly Charter for Private Wealth Management Industry has been compiled drawing on good practices locally and overseas and from the G20 High-Level Principles on Financial Consumer Protection. It is designed to complement, not change, current law or regulations or the existing terms and conditions between banks and their customers.

Hong Kong Monetary Authority
Private Wealth Management Association



Annex 1

Treat Customers Fairly Charter for Private Wealth Management Industry

The Charter is drawn from good banking practices locally and overseas and from the G20 High-Level Principles on Financial Consumer Protection. It is a commitment by private wealth management (PWM) institutions in Hong Kong to support and implement the principle of treating customers fairly. The Charter is designed to complement, not change, current law or regulations or the existing terms and conditions between banks and their customers.

Principles

Members of Private Wealth Management Association agree to support and implement the following principles:

1. Products and client services should be designed to meet the needs of customers. PWM institutions should assess the financial capabilities and needs of customers before offering them products or services. The provision of advice or selling of financial products should take into account the interest of the customers, having regard to their profiles and the complexity of the financial products or client services in question.
2. PWM institutions should set out and explain clearly the key features, risks and terms of the products, including any fees, commissions or charges applicable to customers. Appropriate information should be provided to the customers before, during and after the point of sale.
3. All marketing materials and information designed for customers should be accurate and understandable. Misleading representations or marketing practices should be avoided.
4. Customers should be provided with reasonable channels to submit claims, make complaints, seek redress, and PWM institutions should not impose unreasonable barriers on customers to switch to other PWM institutions.



5. Recognizing that consumers also have their responsibilities, PWM institutions should join force with government, regulatory bodies and other stakeholders in financial education to promote financial literacy.

Examples of measures to implement the principles are set out below.

Principle 1:

Products and client services should be designed to meet the needs of customers. PWM institutions should assess the financial capabilities and needs of customers before offering them products or services. The provision of advice or selling of financial products should take into account the interest of the customers, having regard to their profiles and the complexity of the financial products or client services in question.

Examples:

- Products and client services should be designed to meet the needs of their customers, rather than designing products and services just to maximize profit.
- PWM institutions should not lend amounts to customers which are considered to be beyond their affordability.
- Policies and procedures should be in place to ensure that the customers understand the nature and risks of the investment, and ensure the suitability of the recommendation or solicitation for that customer is reasonable in all the circumstances. In particular, when providing services to a customer in derivative products or any leveraged transactions, PWM institutions should assure themselves that customers have sufficient net worth to be able to assume the risks and bear the potential losses.
- PWM institutions should have policies and procedures in place to help identify and manage any conflicts of interest arising between themselves and their customers in the course of their businesses. These should include policies and procedures related to recommendation or solicitation for



customers in respect of in-house investment products. PWM institutions should try to avoid conflicts of interest and ensure that their customers are fairly treated if conflicts cannot be avoided. For instance, remuneration policies should be designed to ensure that the bonus of sales staff is not calculated solely on financial performance but in such a way as to encourage responsible business conduct with the aim of reducing the risk of conflicts of interest and biased advice, and preventing mis-selling practices, unreasonable risk taking, or other irresponsible practices.

- PWM institutions should endeavour to provide training for staff and develop a talent pool of high ethical standards and professionalism.

Principle 2:

PWM institutions should set out and explain clearly the key features, risks and terms of the products, including any fees, commissions or charges applicable to customers. Appropriate information should be provided to the customers before, during and after the point of sale.

Examples:

- PWM institutions should have policies and procedures to promote transparency, reasonableness and efficiency in the execution of customer due diligence processes and joining international efforts for anti-money laundering and counter-terrorist financing work.
- PWM institutions should highlight to potential customers the key features of a service or product, including interest rates, fees and charges. For instance, for a time deposit, PWM institutions should highlight the fees and charges for early uplift of the deposit, if allowed. For a loan, PWM institutions should highlight the interest rates and any fees, charges for late payment early repayment before entering into contracts with customers. Reasonable advance notice should be given to customers on any changes to the interest rates, fees and charges levied on a service or product. The changes should be highlighted in the notice.



- Adequate disclosure of product features and risks should be made to the customers in the selling process, so that customers understand the associated risks and costs before investing in the products.

Principle 3:

All marketing materials and information designed for customers should be accurate and understandable. Misleading representations or marketing practices should be avoided.

Examples:

- Marketing materials should present a balanced and adequate disclosure. PWM institutions should not engage in misleading or other unfair sales practice.
- Where benefits are subject to conditions, such conditions should be clearly displayed in the marketing materials wherever practicable. Presentation of benefits and returns should come with associated risks of the products.

Principle 4:

Customers should be provided with reasonable channels to submit claims, make complaints, seek redress, and PWM institutions should not impose unreasonable barriers on customers to switch to other PWM institutions.

Examples:

- PWM institutions should provide customers with clear and understandable information on the complaints submission procedures.
- Procedures should be in place to ensure that customer complaints are fully and promptly investigated and resolved in a satisfactory manner.



- Where a customer decides to switch his/her accounts to another PWM institution, the “original” PWM institution should provide assistance to the customer, for example, by providing the customer with a list of the standing instructions, direct debit authorizations and auto-credits going through his/her account. This would help customers in making appropriate arrangements to avoid the risk of missed payment, rejected transactions and charging of penalty/handling fees.

Principle 5:

Recognizing that consumers also have their responsibilities, PWM institutions should join force with government, regulatory bodies and other stakeholders in financial education to promote financial literacy.

Examples:

- PWM institutions should support the efforts of the Government, regulators, other financial services industry and public bodies in assisting existing and potential customers develop the knowledge, skills and confidence to appropriately understand risks, make informed choices, know where to go for assistance, and take effective action to improve their own financial well-being, where appropriate. For instance, some PWM institutions have offered derivatives training to customers who have no derivatives knowledge, and training on some other wealth management products with special structure, features and risks (e.g.: hedge funds, private equity funds).
- Where there are leaflets from the Hong Kong Deposit Protection Board to educate the public on the Hong Kong Deposit Protection Scheme (DPS), PWM institutions who are also Scheme members of DPS should support and help to send out those leaflets to their customers for information and reference.



Annex 2

List of all 47 PWMA members that support and implement the Charter

1. ABN AMRO Bank N.V., Hong Kong Branch
2. Agricultural Bank of China Hong Kong Branch
3. Australia and New Zealand Banking Group Limited
4. Bank of China (Hong Kong) Limited
5. Bank of China International Limited
6. Bank of Communications Co., Ltd. Hong Kong Branch
7. The Bank of East Asia, Limited
8. Bank J. Safra Sarasin Ltd.
9. Bank Julius Baer & Co. AG
10. Bank of Montreal
11. Bank of New York Mellon
12. Bank of Singapore Limited
13. BNP Paribas Hong Kong Branch
14. BSI Ltd.
15. CA Indosuez (Switzerland) SA, Hong Kong Branch
16. China CITIC Bank International Limited
17. China Construction Bank (Asia) Corporation Ltd
18. China Minsheng Banking Corp., Ltd. Hong Kong Branch
19. Chong Hing Bank Limited
20. CIC Investor Services Limited
21. Citibank, N.A.
22. Citigold Private Client, Citibank (Hong Kong) Limited
23. Credit Suisse AG, Hong Kong Branch
24. CTBC Bank Co., Ltd.
25. Dah Sing Bank, Limited
26. DBS Bank (Hong Kong) Limited
27. Deutsche Bank AG, Hong Kong Branch
28. East West Bank, Hong Kong Branch
29. Edmond de Rothschild (Suisse) S.A., Hong Kong Branch
30. EFG Bank AG
31. Goldman Sachs (Asia) L.L.C.
32. Hang Seng Bank Limited
33. The Hong Kong and Shanghai Banking Corporation Limited



34. Industrial and Commercial Bank of China (Asia) Limited
35. JP Morgan Chase Bank, National Association
36. LGT Bank AG, Hong Kong Branch
37. Morgan Stanley Asia International Limited
38. Nomura International (Hong Kong) Limited
39. OCBC Wing Hang Bank Limited
40. Pictet & Cie (Europe) S.A.
41. RBC Investment Management (Asia) Limited
42. Shanghai Pudong Development Co., Ltd. Hong Kong Branch
43. Standard Chartered Bank (Hong Kong) Limited
44. Union Bancaire Privee, UBP SA Hong Kong Branch
45. UBS AG
46. Vontobel Wealth Management (Hong Kong) Ltd.
47. Wing Lung Bank