

BrokerCheck Report

STEPHEN J SMOLA

CRD# 1156520

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When communicating online or investing with any professional, make sure you know who you're dealing with. [Imposters](#) might link to sites like BrokerCheck from [phishing](#) or similar scam websites, or through [social media](#), trying to steal your personal information or your money.

Please contact FINRA with any concerns.

About BrokerCheck®

BrokerCheck offers information on all current, and many former, registered securities brokers, and all current and former registered securities firms. FINRA strongly encourages investors to use BrokerCheck to check the background of securities brokers and brokerage firms before deciding to conduct, or continue to conduct, business with them.

- **What is included in a BrokerCheck report?**

- BrokerCheck reports for individual brokers include information such as employment history, professional qualifications, disciplinary actions, criminal convictions, civil judgments and arbitration awards. BrokerCheck reports for brokerage firms include information on a firm's profile, history, and operations, as well as many of the same disclosure events mentioned above.
- Please note that the information contained in a BrokerCheck report may include pending actions or allegations that may be contested, unresolved or unproven. In the end, these actions or allegations may be resolved in favor of the broker or brokerage firm, or concluded through a negotiated settlement with no admission or finding of wrongdoing.

- **Where did this information come from?**

- The information contained in BrokerCheck comes from FINRA's Central Registration Depository, or CRD® and is a combination of:
 - information FINRA and/or the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) require brokers and brokerage firms to submit as part of the registration and licensing process, and
 - information that regulators report regarding disciplinary actions or allegations against firms or brokers.

- **How current is this information?**

- Generally, active brokerage firms and brokers are required to update their professional and disciplinary information in CRD within 30 days. Under most circumstances, information reported by brokerage firms, brokers and regulators is available in BrokerCheck the next business day.

- **What if I want to check the background of an investment adviser firm or investment adviser representative?**

- To check the background of an investment adviser firm or representative, you can search for the firm or individual in BrokerCheck. If your search is successful, click on the link provided to view the available licensing and registration information in the SEC's Investment Adviser Public Disclosure (IAPD) website at <https://www.adviserinfo.sec.gov>. In the alternative, you may search the IAPD website directly or contact your state securities regulator at <http://www.finra.org/Investors/ToolsCalculators/BrokerCheck/P455414>.

- **Are there other resources I can use to check the background of investment professionals?**

- FINRA recommends that you learn as much as possible about an investment professional before deciding to work with them. Your state securities regulator can help you research brokers and investment adviser representatives doing business in your state.

Thank you for using FINRA BrokerCheck.



Using this site/information means that you accept the FINRA BrokerCheck Terms and Conditions. A complete list of Terms and Conditions can be found at

brokercheck.finra.org



For additional information about the contents of this report, please refer to the User Guidance or www.finra.org/brokercheck. It provides a glossary of terms and a list of frequently asked questions, as well as additional resources.

For more information about FINRA, visit www.finra.org.

STEPHEN J. SMOLA

CRD# 1156520

This broker is not currently registered.

Report Summary for this Broker



This report summary provides an overview of the broker's professional background and conduct. Additional information can be found in the detailed report.

Broker Qualifications

This broker is not currently registered.

This broker has passed:

- 1 Principal/Supervisory Exam
- 4 General Industry/Product Exams
- 2 State Securities Law Exams

Registration History

This broker was previously registered with the following securities firm(s):

- B** **WELLS FARGO CLEARING SERVICES, LLC**
CRD# 19616
AKRON, OH
11/2008 - 01/2025
- B** **MERRILL LYNCH, PIERCE, FENNER & SMITH INCORPORATED**
CRD# 7691
BRECKSVILLE, OH
09/1983 - 12/2008
- B** **FIRST INVESTORS CORPORATION**
CRD# 305
07/1983 - 11/1983

Disclosure Events

All individuals registered to sell securities or provide investment advice are required to disclose customer complaints and arbitrations, regulatory actions, employment terminations, bankruptcy filings, and criminal or civil judicial proceedings.

Are there events disclosed about this broker? **Yes**

The following types of disclosures have been reported:

Type	Count
Regulatory Event	1
Customer Dispute	1

Investment Adviser Representative Information

The information below represents the individual's record as a broker. For details on this individual's record as an investment adviser representative, visit the SEC's Investment Adviser Public Disclosure website at

<https://www.adviserinfo.sec.gov>

Broker Qualifications



Registrations

This section provides the self-regulatory organizations (SROs) and U.S. states/territories the broker is currently registered and licensed with, the category of each license, and the date on which it became effective. This section also provides, for every brokerage firm with which the broker is currently employed, the address of each branch where the broker works.

This broker is not currently registered.



Broker Qualifications

Industry Exams this Broker has Passed

This section includes all securities industry exams that the broker has passed. Under limited circumstances, a broker may attain a registration after receiving an exam waiver based on exams the broker has passed and/or qualifying work experience. Any exam waivers that the broker has received are not included below. A passed exam or exam waiver does not permit a broker to do business without an active SRO or state registration.

This individual has passed 1 principal/supervisory exam, 4 general industry/product exams, and 2 state securities law exams.

Principal/Supervisory Exams

Exam	Category	Date
B General Securities Sales Supervisor Examination (Options Module & General Module)	Series 8	03/17/1997

General Industry/Product Exams

Exam	Category	Date
B Securities Industry Essentials Examination	SIE	10/01/2018
B National Commodity Futures Examination	Series 3	12/20/1996
B General Securities Representative Examination	Series 7	09/17/1983
B Investment Company Products/Variable Contracts Representative Examination	Series 6	06/30/1983

State Securities Law Exams

Exam	Category	Date
IA Uniform Investment Adviser Law Examination	Series 65	01/24/1995
B Uniform Securities Agent State Law Examination	Series 63	09/23/1983

Additional information about the above exams or other exams FINRA administers to brokers and other securities professionals can be found at www.finra.org/brokerqualifications/registeredrep/.

Broker Qualifications



Professional Designations

This section details that the representative has reported **0** professional designation(s).

No information reported.



Registration and Employment History

Registration History

The broker previously was registered with the following firms:

Registration Dates	Firm Name	CRD#	Branch Location
B 11/2008 - 01/2025	WELLS FARGO CLEARING SERVICES, LLC	19616	AKRON, OH
B 09/1983 - 12/2008	MERRILL LYNCH, PIERCE, FENNER & SMITH INCORPORATED	7691	BRECKSVILLE, OH
B 07/1983 - 11/1983	FIRST INVESTORS CORPORATION	305	

Employment History

This section provides up to 10 years of an individual broker's employment history as reported by the individual broker on the most recently filed Form U4.

Please note that the broker is required to provide this information only while registered with FINRA or a national securities exchange and the information is not updated via Form U4 after the broker ceases to be registered. Therefore, an employment end date of "Present" may not reflect the broker's current employment status.

Employment	Employer Name	Position	Investment Related	Employer Location
11/2016 - Present	WELLS FARGO CLEARING SERVICES, LLC	REGISTERED REP	Y	AKRON, OH, United States
05/2009 - 11/2016	WELLS FARGO ADVISORS LLC	REGISTERED REP	Y	AKRON, OH, United States

Other Business Activities

This section includes information, if any, as provided by the broker regarding other business activities the broker is currently engaged in either as a proprietor, partner, officer, director, employee, trustee, agent or otherwise. This section does not include non-investment related activity that is exclusively charitable, civic, religious or fraternal and is recognized as tax exempt.

No information reported.

Disclosure Events



What you should know about reported disclosure events:

1. All individuals registered to sell securities or provide investment advice are required to disclose customer complaints and arbitrations, regulatory actions, employment terminations, bankruptcy filings, and criminal or civil judicial proceedings.
2. **Certain thresholds must be met before an event is reported to CRD, for example:**
 - A law enforcement agency must file formal charges before a broker is required to disclose a particular criminal event.
 - A customer dispute must involve allegations that a broker engaged in activity that violates certain rules or conduct governing the industry and that the activity resulted in damages of at least \$5,000.
 -
3. **Disclosure events in BrokerCheck reports come from different sources:**
 - As mentioned at the beginning of this report, information contained in BrokerCheck comes from brokers, brokerage firms and regulators. When more than one of these sources reports information for the same disclosure event, all versions of the event will appear in the BrokerCheck report. The different versions will be separated by a solid line with the reporting source labeled.
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4. **There are different statuses and dispositions for disclosure events:**
 - A disclosure event may have a status of *pending*, *on appeal*, or *final*.
 - A "pending" event involves allegations that have not been proven or formally adjudicated.
 - An event that is "on appeal" involves allegations that have been adjudicated but are currently being appealed.
 - A "final" event has been concluded and its resolution is not subject to change.
 - A final event generally has a disposition of *adjudicated*, *settled* or *otherwise resolved*.
 - An "adjudicated" matter includes a disposition by (1) a court of law in a criminal or civil matter, or (2) an administrative panel in an action brought by a regulator that is contested by the party charged with some alleged wrongdoing.
 - A "settled" matter generally involves an agreement by the parties to resolve the matter. Please note that brokers and brokerage firms may choose to settle customer disputes or regulatory matters for business or other reasons.
 - A "resolved" matter usually involves no payment to the customer and no finding of wrongdoing on the part of the individual broker. Such matters generally involve customer disputes.

For your convenience, below is a matrix of the number and status of disclosure events involving this broker. Further information regarding these events can be found in the subsequent pages of this report. You also may wish to contact the broker to obtain further information regarding these events.

	Pending	Final	On Appeal
Regulatory Event	0	1	0
Customer Dispute	0	1	N/A



Disclosure Event Details

When evaluating this information, please keep in mind that a disclosure event may be pending or involve allegations that are contested and have not been resolved or proven. The matter may, in the end, be withdrawn, dismissed, resolved in favor of the broker, or concluded through a negotiated settlement for certain business reasons (e.g., to maintain customer relationships or to limit the litigation costs associated with disputing the allegations) with no admission or finding of wrongdoing.

This report provides the information exactly as it was reported to CRD and therefore some of the specific data fields contained in the report may be blank if the information was not provided to CRD.

Regulatory - Final

This type of disclosure event may involve (1) a final, formal proceeding initiated by a regulatory authority (e.g., a state securities agency, self-regulatory organization, federal regulatory such as the Securities and Exchange Commission, foreign financial regulatory body) for a violation of investment-related rules or regulations; or (2) a revocation or suspension of a broker's authority to act as an attorney, accountant, or federal contractor.

Disclosure 1 of 1

Reporting Source:	Regulator
Regulatory Action Initiated By:	STIPULATION AND CONSENT TO PENALTY FILED BY NYSE DI*See FAQ #1*
Sanction(s) Sought:	
Other Sanction(s) Sought:	
Date Initiated:	05/29/1996
Docket/Case Number:	HPD 96-34
Employing firm when activity occurred which led to the regulatory action:	
Product Type:	
Other Product Type(s):	
Allegations:	<p>**2/20/96**, CONSENTED TO FINDINGS: 1) VIOLATED EXCHANGE RULE 408 (a) IN THAT HE ACCEPTED ORDERS FOR A CUSTOMER'S ACCOUNT FROM A PERSON OTHER THAN THE CUSTOMER WITHOUT FIRST OBTAINING WRITTEN AUTHORIZATION OF THE CUSTOMER; 2) VIOLATED EXCHANGE RULE 405 IN THAT HE FAILED TO USE DUE DILIGENCE TO LEARN THE ESSENTIAL FACTS RELATIVE TO A CUSTOMER'S ACCOUNT WHICH WAS CARRIED BY HIS MEMBER FIRM EMPLOYER.</p>



CONSENTED TO AN IMPOSITION OF A CENSURE, A \$5,000 FINE AND A TWO (2) WEEK SUSPENSION.

Current Status:

Final

Resolution:

Stipulation and Consent

Resolution Date:

07/05/1996

Sanctions Ordered:

Censure
Monetary/Fine \$5,000.00
Suspension

Other Sanctions Ordered:

Sanction Details:

****3/28/96****, DECISION ISSUED BY NYSE HEARING PANEL. DECISION: VIOLATED EXCHANGE RULE 408 (a) IN THAT HE ACCEPTED ORDERS FOR A CUSTOMER'S ACCOUNT FROM A PERSON OTHER THAN THE CUSTOMER WITHOUT FIRST OBTAINING WRITTEN AUTHORIZATION OF THE CUSTOMER; VIOLATED EXCHANGE RULE 405 IN THAT HE FAILED TO USE DUE DILIGENCE TO LEARN THE ESSENTIAL FACTS RELATIVE TO A CUSTOMER'S ACCOUNT WHICH WAS CARRIED BY HIS MEMBER FIRM ORGANIZATION -- CONSENT TO CENSURE, \$5,000 FINE, AND TWO WEEK SUSPENSION.

Regulator Statement

THE DECISION IS NOW FINAL AND EFFECTIVE -- AS OF THE CLOSE OF BUSINESS ON JULY 5, 1996. CONTACT: PEGGY GERMINO: 212-656-8450.

Reporting Source:

Broker

Regulatory Action Initiated By:

NEW YORK STOCK EXCHANGE

Sanction(s) Sought:

Other Sanction(s) Sought:

Date Initiated:

05/29/1996

Docket/Case Number:

HPD 96-34

Employing firm when activity occurred which led to the regulatory action:

Product Type:


Other Product Type(s):
Allegations:

THE NYSE BEGAN AN INQUIRY CONCERNING REGISTRANT AS A RESULT OF AN ADVERSE ARBITRATION AWARD IN A CASE BROUGHT BY [CUSTOMER'S].

Current Status:

Final

Resolution:

Stipulation and Consent

Resolution Date:

07/05/1996

Sanctions Ordered:

Censure
Monetary/Fine \$5,000.00
Suspension

Other Sanctions Ordered:
Sanction Details:

\$5,000 PENALTY AND 2 WEEK SUSPENSION.

Broker Statement

REGISTRANT, SMOLA FULLY COOPERATED WITH THE EXCHANGE'S INVESTIGATION. REGISTRANT ENTERED INTO A STIPULATION OF FACTS AND CONSENT TO PENALTY IN ORDER TO AVOID THE TIME, UNCERTAINTY AND CONSIDERABLE EXPENSE THAT WOULD HAVE BEEN ENTAILED BY A HEARING.



Customer Dispute - Award / Judgment

This type of disclosure event involves a final, consumer-initiated, investment-related arbitration or civil suit containing allegations of sales practice violations against the broker that resulted in an arbitration award or civil judgment for the customer.

Disclosure 1 of 1

Reporting Source: Regulator

Employing firm when activities occurred which led to the complaint: MERRILL LYNCH PIERCE, FENNER & SMITH, INC.

Allegations: OMISSION OF FACTS; CHURNING; BREACH OF FIDUCIARY DUTY; ACCOUNT RELATED-BREACH OF CONTRACT

Product Type:

Alleged Damages: \$168,457.00

Arbitration Information

Arbitration/Reparation Claim filed with and Docket/Case No.: [NASD - CASE #92-03733](#)

Date Notice/Process Served: 11/23/1992

Arbitration Pending? No

Disposition: Other

Disposition Date: 08/10/1993

Disposition Detail: AWARD AGAINST PARTY
SMOLA IS J&S LIABLE FOR \$70,786.59

Reporting Source: Broker

Employing firm when activities occurred which led to the complaint: MERRILL LYNCH PIERCE, FENNER & SMITH, INC.

Allegations: CLAIMANTS ALLEGED THAT THEY WERE FRAUDULENTLY INDUCED TO MAKE UNSUITABLE INVESTMENTS IN STOCKS, OPTIONS AND MUTUAL FUNDS AND SOUGHT \$168,457.00 IN COMPENSATORY DAMAGES, \$100,000 IN PUNITIVE DAMAGES, INTEREST, ATTORNEYS' FEES AND COSTS. CLAIMANTS ALSO ALLEGED THEY WERE PROMISED 12% RETURN PER YEAR WITH RISK NO MORE THAN 5%.

Product Type:



Alleged Damages: \$168,457.00

Customer Complaint Information

Date Complaint Received:

Complaint Pending? No

Status: Arbitration/Reparation

Status Date: 08/10/1993

Settlement Amount:

Individual Contribution Amount:

Arbitration Information

Arbitration/Reparation Claim filed with and Docket/Case No.: [NASD; 92-03733](#)

Date Notice/Process Served: 11/23/1992

Arbitration Pending? No

Disposition: Award to Customer

Disposition Date: 08/10/1993

Monetary Compensation Amount: \$70,786.59

Individual Contribution Amount:

Broker Statement \$70,786.59
 RESPONDENTS STRONGLY TAKE ISSUE WITH THE ARBITRATORS' DECISION. CLAIMANT [CUSTOMER] ACTIVELY PARTICIPATED IN THE TRADING WHICH WAS THE SUBJECT OF THE COMPLAINT. FURTHER, THE PANEL REFUSED TO ADMIT INTO EVIDENCE A COMPLAINT WITH NEARLY IDENTICAL ALLEGATIONS FILED BY [CUSTOMER] USING THE SAME COUNSEL ONLY TWO YEARS PRIOR IN ANOTHER CASE INVOLVING A FAILED REAL ESTATE INVESTMENT.

End of Report



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