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Title 12 – Banks and Banking

Chapter I – Comptroller of the Currency, Department of the Treasury

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PART 1—INVESTMENT SECURITIES

Authority: 12 U.S.C. 1 *et seq.*, 24 (Seventh), and 93a.

Source: 61 FR 63982, Dec. 2, 1996, unless otherwise noted.

§ 1.1 Authority, purpose, scope, and reservation of authority.

- (a) **Authority.** This part is issued pursuant to 12 U.S.C. 1 *et seq.*, 12 U.S.C. 24 (Seventh), and 12 U.S.C. 93a.
- (b) **Purpose** This part prescribes standards under which national banks may purchase, sell, deal in, underwrite, and hold securities, consistent with the authority contained in 12 U.S.C. 24 (Seventh) and safe and sound banking practices.
- (c) **Scope.** The standards set forth in this part apply to national banks and Federal branches of foreign banks. Further, pursuant to 12 U.S.C. 335, State banks that are members of the Federal Reserve System are subject to the same limitations and conditions that apply to national banks in connection with purchasing, selling, dealing in, and underwriting securities and stock. In addition to activities authorized under this part, foreign branches of national banks are authorized to conduct international activities and invest in securities pursuant to 12 CFR part 211.

- (d) **Reservation of authority.** The OCC may determine, on a case-by-case basis, that a national bank may acquire an investment security other than an investment security of a type set forth in this part, provided the OCC determines that the bank's investment is consistent with 12 U.S.C. section 24 (Seventh) and with safe and sound banking practices. The OCC will consider all relevant factors, including the risk characteristics of the particular investment in comparison with the risk characteristics of investments that the OCC has previously authorized, and the bank's ability effectively to manage such risks. The OCC may impose limits or conditions in connection with approval of an investment security under this subsection. Investment securities that the OCC determines are permissible in accordance with this paragraph constitute eligible investments for purposes of 12 U.S.C. 24.

[61 FR 63982, Dec. 2, 1996, as amended at 73 FR 22235, Apr. 24, 2008]

§ 1.2 Definitions.

- (a) **Capital and surplus** means:

- (1) For qualifying community banking organizations that have elected to use the community bank leverage ratio framework, as set forth under the OCC's Capital Adequacy Standards at part 3 of this chapter:

(i) A qualifying community banking organization's tier 1 capital, as used under § 3.12 of this chapter; plus

(ii) A qualifying community banking organization's allowance for loan and lease losses or adjusted allowances for credit losses, as applicable, as reported in the bank's Consolidated Report of Condition and Income (Call Report); or

- (2) For all other banks:

(i) A bank's tier 1 and tier 2 capital calculated under the OCC's risk-based capital standards set forth in part 3 of this chapter, as applicable (or comparable capital guidelines of the appropriate Federal banking agency), as reported in the bank's Call Report; plus

(ii) The balance of a bank's allowance for loan and lease losses or adjusted allowances for credit losses, as applicable, not included in the bank's tier 2 capital, for purposes of the calculation of risk-based capital described in paragraph (a)(2)(i) of this section, as reported in the bank's Call Report.

- (b) **General obligation of a State or political subdivision** means:

(1) An obligation supported by the full faith and credit of an obligor possessing general powers of taxation, including property taxation; or

(2) An obligation payable from a special fund or by an obligor not possessing general powers of taxation, when an obligor possessing general powers of taxation, including property taxation, has unconditionally promised to make payments into the fund or otherwise provide funds to cover all required payments on the obligation.

- (c) **Investment company** means an investment company, including a mutual fund, registered under section 8 of the Investment Company Act of 1940, 15 U.S.C. 80a-8.

- (d) **Investment grade** means the issuer of a security has an adequate capacity to meet financial commitments under the security for the projected life of the asset or exposure. An issuer has an adequate capacity to meet financial commitments if the risk of default by the obligor is low and the full and timely repayment of principal and interest is expected.
- (e) **Investment security** means a marketable debt obligation that is investment grade and not predominately speculative in nature.
- (f) **Marketable** means that the security:
 - (1) Is registered under the Securities Act of 1933, 15 U.S.C. 77a et seq.;
 - (2) Is a municipal revenue bond exempt from registration under the Securities Act of 1933, 15 U.S.C. 77c(a)(2);
 - (3) Is offered and sold pursuant to Securities and Exchange Commission Rule 144A, 17 CFR 230.144A, and investment grade; or
 - (4) Can be sold with reasonable promptness at a price that corresponds reasonably to its fair value.
- (g) **Municipal bonds** means obligations of a State or political subdivision other than general obligations, and includes limited obligation bonds, revenue bonds, and obligations that satisfy the requirements of section 142(b)(1) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 issued by or on behalf of any State or political subdivision of a State, including any municipal corporate instrumentality of 1 or more States, or any public agency or authority of any State or political subdivision of a State.
- (h) [Reserved]
- (i) **Political subdivision** means a county, city, town, or other municipal corporation, a public authority, and generally any publicly-owned entity that is an instrumentality of a State or of a municipal corporation.
- (j) **Type I security** means:
 - (1) Obligations of the United States;
 - (2) Obligations issued, insured, or guaranteed by a department or an agency of the United States Government, if the obligation, insurance, or guarantee commits the full faith and credit of the United States for the repayment of the obligation;
 - (3) Obligations issued by a department or agency of the United States, or an agency or political subdivision of a State of the United States, that represent an interest in a loan or a pool of loans made to third parties, if the full faith and credit of the United States has been validly pledged for the full and timely payment of interest on, and principal of, the loans in the event of non-payment by the third party obligor(s);
 - (4) General obligations of a State of the United States or any political subdivision thereof; and municipal bonds if the national bank is well capitalized as defined in 12 CFR 6.4;
 - (5) Obligations authorized under 12 U.S.C. 24 (Seventh) as permissible for a national bank to deal in, underwrite, purchase, and sell for the bank's own account, including qualified Canadian government obligations; and
 - (6) Other securities the OCC determines to be eligible as Type I securities under 12 U.S.C. 24 (Seventh).
- (k) **Type II security** means an investment security that represents:

- (1) Obligations issued by a State, or a political subdivision or agency of a State, for housing, university, or dormitory purposes that would not satisfy the definition of Type I securities pursuant to paragraph (j) of § 1.2;
 - (2) Obligations of international and multilateral development banks and organizations listed in 12 U.S.C. 24 (Seventh);
 - (3) Other obligations listed in 12 U.S.C. 24 (Seventh) as permissible for a bank to deal in, underwrite, purchase, and sell for the bank's own account, subject to a limitation per obligor of 10 percent of the bank's capital and surplus; and
 - (4) Other securities the OCC determines to be eligible as Type II securities under 12 U.S.C. 24 (Seventh).
- (l) **Type III security** means an investment security that does not qualify as a Type I, II, IV, or V security. Examples of Type III securities include corporate bonds and municipal bonds that do not satisfy the definition of Type I securities pursuant to paragraph (j) of § 1.2 or the definition of Type II securities pursuant to paragraph (k) of § 1.2.
- (m) **Type IV security** means:
- (1) A small business-related security as defined in section 3(a)(53)(A) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, 15 U.S.C. 78c(a)(53)(A), that is fully secured by interests in a pool of loans to numerous obligors.
 - (2) A commercial mortgage-related security that is offered or sold pursuant to section 4(5) of the Securities Act of 1933, 15 U.S.C. 77d(5), that is investment grade, or a commercial mortgage-related security as described in section 3(a)(41) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, 15 U.S.C. 78c(a)(41), that represents ownership of a promissory note or certificate of interest or participation that is directly secured by a first lien on one or more parcels of real estate upon which one or more commercial structures are located and that is fully secured by interests in a pool of loans to numerous obligors.
 - (3) A residential mortgage-related security that is offered and sold pursuant to section 4(5) of the Securities Act of 1933, 15 U.S.C. 77d(5), that is investment grade, or a residential mortgage-related security as described in section 3(a)(41) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, 15 U.S.C. 78c(a)(41)) that does not otherwise qualify as a Type I security.
- (n) **Type V security** means a security that is:
- (1) Investment grade;
 - (2) Marketable;
 - (3) Not a Type IV security; and
 - (4) Fully secured by interests in a pool of loans to numerous obligors and in which a national bank could invest directly.

[61 FR 63982, Dec. 2, 1996, as amended at 66 FR 34791, July 2, 2001; 77 FR 35257, June 13, 2012; 79 FR 11309, Feb. 28, 2014; 84 FR 4237, Feb. 14, 2019; 84 FR 61792, Nov. 13, 2019; 84 FR 69297, Dec. 18, 2019]

§ 1.3 Limitations on dealing in, underwriting, and purchase and sale of securities.

- (a) **Type I securities.** A national bank may deal in, underwrite, purchase, and sell Type I securities for its own account. The amount of Type I securities that the bank may deal in, underwrite, purchase, and sell is not limited to a specified percentage of the bank's capital and surplus.
- (b) **Type II securities.** A national bank may deal in, underwrite, purchase, and sell Type II securities for its own account, provided the aggregate par value of Type II securities issued by any one obligor held by the bank does not exceed 10 percent of the bank's capital and surplus. In applying this limitation, a national bank shall take account of Type II securities that the bank is legally committed to purchase or to sell in addition to the bank's existing holdings.
- (c) **Type III securities.** A national bank may purchase and sell Type III securities for its own account, provided the aggregate par value of Type III securities issued by any one obligor held by the bank does not exceed 10 percent of the bank's capital and surplus. In applying this limitation, a national bank shall take account of Type III securities that the bank is legally committed to purchase or to sell in addition to the bank's existing holdings.
- (d) **Type II and III securities; other investment securities limitations.** A national bank may not hold Type II and III securities issued by any one obligor with an aggregate par value exceeding 10 percent of the bank's capital and surplus. However, if the proceeds of each issue are to be used to acquire and lease real estate and related facilities to economically and legally separate industrial tenants, and if each issue is payable solely from and secured by a first lien on the revenues to be derived from rentals paid by the lessee under net noncancellable leases, the bank may apply the 10 percent investment limitation separately to each issue of a single obligor.
- (e) **Type IV securities.** A national bank may purchase and sell Type IV securities for its own account. The amount of the Type IV securities that a bank may purchase and sell is not limited to a specified percentage of the bank's capital and surplus.
- (f) **Type V securities.** A national bank may purchase and sell Type V securities for its own account provided that the aggregate par value of Type V securities issued by any one issuer held by the bank does not exceed 25 percent of the bank's capital and surplus. In applying this limitation, a national bank shall take account of Type V securities that the bank is legally committed to purchase or to sell in addition to the bank's existing holdings.
- (g) **Securitization.** A national bank may securitize and sell assets that it holds, as a part of its banking business. The amount of securitized loans and obligations that a bank may sell is not limited to a specified percentage of the bank's capital and surplus.
- (h) **Pooled investments** –
 - (1) **General.** A national bank may purchase and sell for its own account investment company shares provided that:
 - (i) The portfolio of the investment company consists exclusively of assets that the national bank may purchase and sell for its own account; and
 - (ii) The bank's holdings of investment company shares do not exceed the limitations in § 1.4(e).

(2) **Other issuers.** The OCC may determine that a national bank may invest in an entity that is exempt from registration as an investment company under section 3(c)(1) of the Investment Company Act of 1940, provided that the portfolio of the entity consists exclusively of assets that a national bank may purchase and sell for its own account.

(3) Investments made under this paragraph (h) must comply with § 1.5 of this part, conform with applicable published OCC precedent, and must be:

(i) Marketable and investment grade, or

(ii) Satisfy the requirements of § 1.3(i).

(i) **Securities held based on estimates of obligor's performance.**

(1) Notwithstanding § 1.2(d) and (e), a national bank may treat a debt security as an investment security for purposes of this part if the security is marketable and the bank concludes, on the basis of estimates that the bank reasonably believes are reliable, that the obligor will be able to satisfy its obligations under that security.

(2) The aggregate par value of securities treated as investment securities under paragraph (i)(1) of this section may not exceed 5 percent of the bank's capital and surplus.

[61 FR 63982, Dec. 2, 1996, as amended at 64 FR 60098, Nov. 4, 1999; 73 FR 22235, Apr. 24, 2008; 77 FR 35257, June 13, 2012]

§ 1.4 Calculation of limits.

(a) **Calculation date.** For purposes of determining compliance with 12 U.S.C. 24 (Seventh) and this part, a bank shall determine its investment limitations as of the most recent of the following dates:

(1) The last day of the preceding calendar quarter; or

(2) The date on which there is a change in the bank's capital category for purposes of 12 U.S.C. 1831o and 12 CFR 6.3.

(b) **Effective date.**

(1) A bank's investment limit calculated in accordance with paragraph (a)(1) of this section will be effective on the earlier of the following dates:

(i) The date on which the bank's Consolidated Report of Condition and Income (Call Report) is submitted; or

(ii) The date on which the bank's Consolidated Report of Condition and Income is required to be submitted.

(2) A bank's investment limit calculated in accordance with paragraph (a)(2) of this section will be effective on the date that the limit is to be calculated.

(c) **Authority of OCC to require more frequent calculations.** If the OCC determines for safety and soundness reasons that a bank should calculate its investment limits more frequently than required by paragraph (a) of this section, the OCC may provide written notice to the bank directing the bank to calculate its investment limitations at a more frequent interval. The bank shall thereafter calculate its investment limits at that interval until further notice.

(d) **Calculation of Type III and Type V securities holdings –**

- (1) **General.** In calculating the amount of its investment in Type III or Type V securities issued by any one obligor, a bank shall aggregate:
 - (i) Obligations issued by obligors that are related directly or indirectly through common control; and
 - (ii) Securities that are credit enhanced by the same entity.
- (2) **Aggregation by type.** The aggregation requirement in paragraph (d)(1) of this section applies separately to the Type III and Type V securities held by a bank.

(e) **Limit on investment company holdings –**

- (1) **General.** In calculating the amount of its investment in investment company shares under this part, a bank shall use reasonable efforts to calculate and combine its pro rata share of a particular security in the portfolio of each investment company with the bank's direct holdings of that security. The bank's direct holdings of the particular security and the bank's pro rata interest in the same security in the investment company's portfolio may not, in the aggregate, exceed the investment limitation that would apply to that security.
- (2) **Alternate limit for diversified investment companies.** A national bank may elect not to combine its pro rata interest in a particular security in an investment company with the bank's direct holdings of that security if:
 - (i) The investment company's holdings of the securities of any one issuer do not exceed 5 percent of its total portfolio; and
 - (ii) The bank's total holdings of the investment company's shares do not exceed the most stringent investment limitation that would apply to any of the securities in the company's portfolio if those securities were purchased directly by the bank.

§ 1.5 Safe and sound banking practices; credit information required.

- (a) A national bank shall adhere to safe and sound banking practices and the specific requirements of this part in conducting the activities described in § 1.3. The bank shall consider, as appropriate, the interest rate, credit, liquidity, price, foreign exchange, transaction, compliance, strategic, and reputation risks presented by a proposed activity, and the particular activities undertaken by the bank must be appropriate for that bank.
- (b) In conducting these activities, the bank shall determine that there is adequate evidence that an obligor possesses resources sufficient to provide for all required payments on its obligations, or, in the case of securities deemed to be investment securities on the basis of reliable estimates of an obligor's performance, that the bank reasonably believes that the obligor will be able to satisfy the obligation.
- (c) Each bank shall maintain records available for examination purposes adequate to demonstrate that it meets the requirements of this part. The bank may store the information in any manner that can be readily retrieved and reproduced in a readable form.

§ 1.6 Convertible securities.

A national bank may not purchase securities convertible into stock at the option of the issuer.

§ 1.7 Securities held in satisfaction of debts previously contracted; holding period; disposal; accounting treatment; non-speculative purpose.

- (a) **Securities held in satisfaction of debts previously contracted.** The restrictions and limitations of this part, other than those set forth in paragraphs (b),(c), and (d) of this section, do not apply to securities acquired:
 - (1) Through foreclosure on collateral;
 - (2) In good faith by way of compromise of a doubtful claim; or
 - (3) To avoid loss in connection with a debt previously contracted.
- (b) **Holding period.** A national bank holding securities pursuant to paragraph (a) of this section may do so for a period not to exceed five years from the date that ownership of the securities was originally transferred to the bank. The OCC may extend the holding period for up to an additional five years if a bank provides a clearly convincing demonstration as to why an additional holding period is needed.
- (c) **Accounting treatment.** A bank shall account for securities held pursuant to paragraph (a) of this section in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles.
- (d) **Non-speculative purpose.** A bank may not hold securities pursuant to paragraph (a) of this section for speculative purposes.

§ 1.8 Nonconforming investments.

- (a) A national bank's investment in securities that no longer conform to this part but conformed when made will not be deemed in violation but instead will be treated as nonconforming if the reason why the investment no longer conforms to this part is because:
 - (1) The bank's capital declines;
 - (2) Issuers, obligors, or credit-enhancers merge;
 - (3) Issuers become related directly or indirectly through common control;
 - (4) The investment securities rules change;
 - (5) The security no longer qualifies as an investment security; or
 - (6) Other events identified by the OCC occur.
- (b) A bank shall exercise reasonable efforts to bring an investment that is nonconforming as a result of events described in paragraph (a) of this section into conformity with this part unless to do so would be inconsistent with safe and sound banking practices.

INTERPRETATIONS

§ 1.100 Indirect general obligations.

- (a) **Obligation issued by an obligor not possessing general powers of taxation.** Pursuant to § 1.2(b), an obligation issued by an obligor not possessing general powers of taxation qualifies as a general obligation of a State or political subdivision for the purposes of 12 U.S.C. 24 (Seventh), if a party possessing general powers of taxation unconditionally promises to make sufficient funds available for all required payments in connection with the obligation.

- (b) **Indirect commitment of full faith and credit.** The indirect commitment of the full faith and credit of a State or political subdivision (that possesses general powers of taxation) in support of an obligation may be demonstrated by any of the following methods, alone or in combination, when the State or political subdivision pledges its full faith and credit in support of the obligation.
- (1) **Lease/rental agreement.** The lease agreement must be valid and binding on the State or the political subdivision, and the State or political subdivision must unconditionally promise to pay rentals that, together with any other available funds, are sufficient for the timely payment of interest on, and principal of, the obligation. These lease/rental agreement may, for instance, provide support for obligations financing the acquisition or operation of public projects in the areas of education, medical care, transportation, recreation, public buildings, and facilities.
 - (2) **Service/purchase agreement.** The agreement must be valid and binding on the State or the political subdivision, and the State or political subdivision must unconditionally promise in the agreement to make payments for services or resources provided through or by the issuer of the obligation. These payments, together with any other available funds, must be sufficient for the timely payment of interest on, and principal of, the obligation. An agreement to purchase municipal sewer, water, waste disposal, or electric services may, for instance, provide support for obligations financing the construction or acquisition of facilities supplying those services.
 - (3) **Refillable debt service reserve fund.** The reserve fund must at least equal the amount necessary to meet the annual payment of interest on, and principal of, the obligation as required by applicable law. The maintenance of a refillable reserve fund may be provided, for instance, by statutory direction for an appropriation, or by statutory automatic apportionment and payment from the State funds of amounts necessary to restore the fund to the required level.
 - (4) **Other grants or support.** A statutory provision or agreement must unconditionally commit the State or the political subdivision to provide funds which, together with other available funds, are sufficient for the timely payment of interest on, and principal of, the obligation. Those funds may, for instance, be supplied in the form of annual grants or may be advanced whenever the other available revenues are not sufficient for the payment of principal and interest.

§ 1.110 Taxing powers of a State or political subdivision.

- (a) An obligation is considered supported by the full faith and credit of a State or political subdivision possessing general powers of taxation when the promise or other commitment of the State or the political subdivision will produce funds, which (together with any other funds available for the purpose) will be sufficient to provide for all required payments on the obligation. In order to evaluate whether a commitment of a State or political subdivision is likely to generate sufficient funds, a bank shall consider the impact of any possible limitations regarding the State's or political subdivision's taxing powers, as well as the availability of funds in view of the projected revenues and expenditures. Quantitative restrictions on the general powers of taxation of the State or political subdivision do not necessarily mean that an obligation is not supported by the full faith and credit of the State or political subdivision. In such case, the bank shall determine the eligibility of obligations by reviewing, on a case-by-case basis, whether tax revenues available under the limited taxing powers are sufficient for the full and timely payment of interest on, and principal of, the obligation. The bank shall use current and reasonable financial projections in calculating the availability of the revenues. An obligation expressly or implicitly dependent upon voter or legislative authorization of appropriations may be considered supported by the full faith and

credit of a State or political subdivision if the bank determines, on the basis of past actions by the voters or legislative body in similar situations involving similar types of projects, that it is reasonably probable that the obligor will obtain all necessary appropriations.

- (b) An obligation supported exclusively by excise taxes or license fees is not a general obligation for the purposes of 12 U.S.C. 24 (Seventh). Nevertheless, an obligation that is primarily payable from a fund consisting of excise taxes or other pledged revenues qualifies as a “general obligation,” if, in the event of a deficiency of those revenues, the obligation is also supported by the general revenues of a State or a political subdivision possessing general powers of taxation.

§ 1.120 Prerefunded or escrowed bonds and obligations secured by Type I securities.

- (a) An obligation qualifies as a Type I security if it is secured by an escrow fund consisting of obligations of the United States or general obligations of a State or a political subdivision, and the escrowed obligations produce interest earnings sufficient for the full and timely payment of interest on, and principal of, the obligation.
- (b) If the interest earnings from the escrowed Type I securities alone are not sufficient to guarantee the full repayment of an obligation, a promise of a State or a political subdivision possessing general powers of taxation to maintain a reserve fund for the timely payment of interest on, and principal of, the obligation may further support a guarantee of the full repayment of an obligation.
- (c) An obligation issued to refund an indirect general obligation may be supported in a number of ways that, in combination, are sufficient at all times to support the obligation with the full faith and credit of the United States or a State or a political subdivision possessing general powers of taxation. During the period following its issuance, the proceeds of the refunding obligation may be invested in U.S. obligations or municipal general obligations that will produce sufficient interest income for payment of principal and interest. Upon the retirement of the outstanding indirect general obligation bonds, the same indirect commitment, such as a lease agreement or a reserve fund, that supported the prior issue, may support the refunding obligation.

§ 1.130 Type II securities; guidelines for obligations issued for university and housing purposes.

- (a) **Investment quality.** An obligation issued for housing, university, or dormitory purposes is a Type II security only if it:
 - (1) Qualifies as an investment security, as defined in § 1.2(e); and
 - (2) Is issued for the appropriate purpose and by a qualifying issuer.
- (b) **Obligation issued for university purposes.**
 - (1) An obligation issued by a State or political subdivision or agency of a State or political subdivision for the purpose of financing the construction or improvement of facilities at or used by a university or a degree-granting college-level institution, or financing loans for studies at such institutions, qualifies as a Type II security. Facilities financed in this manner may include student buildings, classrooms, university utility buildings, cafeterias, stadiums, and university parking lots.
 - (2) An obligation that finances the construction or improvement of facilities used by a hospital may be eligible as a Type II security, if the hospital is a department or a division of a university, or otherwise provides a nexus with university purposes, such as an affiliation agreement between the university and the hospital, faculty positions of the hospital staff, and training of medical students, interns, residents, and nurses (e.g., a “teaching hospital”).

- (c) *Obligation issued for housing purposes.* An obligation issued for housing purposes may qualify as a Type II security if the security otherwise meets the criteria for a Type II security.