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SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20549
Form 19b-4

File No. * SR 2021 - * 49

Amendment No. (req. for Amendments *)

Filing by NYSE American LLC

Pursuant to Rule 19b-4 under the Securities Exchange Act of 1934

Initial * <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Amendment * <input type="checkbox"/>	Withdrawal <input type="checkbox"/>	Section 19(b)(2) * <input type="checkbox"/>	Section 19(b)(3)(A) * <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Section 19(b)(3)(B) * <input type="checkbox"/>
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Pilot <input type="checkbox"/>	Extension of Time Period for Commission Action * <input type="checkbox"/>	Date Expires * <input type="text"/>	Rule		
			<input type="checkbox"/> 19b-4(f)(1)	<input type="checkbox"/> 19b-4(f)(4)	
			<input type="checkbox"/> 19b-4(f)(2)	<input type="checkbox"/> 19b-4(f)(5)	
			<input type="checkbox"/> 19b-4(f)(3)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 19b-4(f)(6)	

Notice of proposed change pursuant to the Payment, Clearing, and Settlement Act of 2010
Section 806(e)(1) *

Section 806(e)(2) *

Security-Based Swap Submission pursuant to the Securities Exchange Act of 1934
Section 3C(b)(2) *

Exhibit 2 Sent As Paper Document

Exhibit 3 Sent As Paper Document

Description

Provide a brief description of the action (limit 250 characters, required when Initial is checked *).

Proposes extending the expiration date of the temporary amendments to Rules 9261 and 9830

Contact Information

Provide the name, telephone number, and e-mail address of the person on the staff of the self-regulatory organization prepared to respond to questions and comments on the action.

First Name * David Last Name * De Gregorio

Title * Associate General Counsel, NYSE Group, Inc.

E-mail * David.DeGregorio@ice.com

Telephone * (212) 656-4166 Fax (212) 656-8101

Signature

Pursuant to the requirements of the Securities Exchange of 1934, NYSE American LLC has duty caused this filing to be signed on its behalf by the undersigned thereunto duty authorized.

Date 12/27/2021

(Title *)

By Martha Redding
(Name *)

Assistant Secretary

NOTE: Clicking the signature block at right will initiate digitally signing the form. A digital signature is as legally binding as a physical signature, and once signed, this form cannot be changed.

Martha Redding
Digitally signed by Martha Redding
Date: 2021.12.27 17:09:15 -05'00'

Required fields are shown with yellow backgrounds and astericks.

SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20549

For complete Form 19b-4 instructions please refer to the EFFS website.

Form 19b-4 Information *

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SEC Sub of NYSE American COVID T

The self-regulatory organization must provide all required information, presented in a clear and comprehensible manner, to enable the public to provide meaningful comment on the proposal and for the Commission to determine whether the proposal is consistent with the Act and applicable rules and regulations under the Act.

Exhibit 1 - Notice of Proposed Rule Change *

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Ex. 1 SEC Sub of NYSE American CC

The Notice section of this Form 19b-4 must comply with the guidelines for publication in the Federal Register as well as any requirements for electronic filing as published by the Commission (if applicable). The Office of the Federal Register (OFR) offers guidance on Federal Register publication requirements in the Federal Register Document Drafting Handbook, October 1998 Revision. For example, all references to the federal securities laws must include the corresponding cite to the United States Code in a footnote. All references to SEC rules must include the corresponding cite to the Code of Federal Regulations in a footnote. All references to Securities Exchange Act Releases must include the release number, release date, Federal Register cite, Federal Register date, and corresponding file number (e.g., SR-[SRO]-xx-xx). A material failure to comply with these guidelines will result in the proposed rule change being deemed not properly filed. See also Rule 0-3 under the Act (17 CFR 240.0-3)

Exhibit 1A - Notice of Proposed Rule Change, Security-Based Swap Submission, or Advanced Notice by Clearing Agencies *

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The Notice section of this Form 19b-4 must comply with the guidelines for publication in the Federal Register as well as any requirements for electronic filing as published by the Commission (if applicable). The Office of the Federal Register (OFR) offers guidance on Federal Register publication requirements in the Federal Register Document Drafting Handbook, October 1998 Revision. For example, all references to the federal securities laws must include the corresponding cite to the United States Code in a footnote. All references to SEC rules must include the corresponding cite to the Code of Federal Regulations in a footnote. All references to Securities Exchange Act Releases must include the release number, release date, Federal Register cite, Federal Register date, and corresponding file number (e.g., SR-[SRO]-xx-xx). A material failure to comply with these guidelines will result in the proposed rule change being deemed not properly filed. See also Rule 0-3 under the Act (17 CFR 240.0-3)

Exhibit 2- Notices, Written Comments, Transcripts, Other Communications

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Copies of notices, written comments, transcripts, other communications. If such documents cannot be filed electronically in accordance with Instruction F, they shall be filed in accordance with Instruction G.

Exhibit Sent As Paper Document

Exhibit 3 - Form, Report, or Questionnaire

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Copies of any form, report, or questionnaire that the self-regulatory organization proposes to use to help implement or operate the proposed rule change, or that is referred to by the proposed rule change.

Exhibit Sent As Paper Document

Exhibit 4 - Marked Copies

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The full text shall be marked, in any convenient manner, to indicate additions to and deletions from the immediately preceding filing. The purpose of Exhibit 4 is to permit the staff to identify immediately the changes made from the text of the rule with which it has been working.

Exhibit 5 - Proposed Rule Text

Add Remove View

The self-regulatory organization may choose to attach as Exhibit 5 proposed changes to rule text in place of providing it in Item I and which may otherwise be more easily readable if provided separately from Form 19b-4. Exhibit 5 shall be considered part of the proposed rule change

Partial Amendment

Add Remove View

If the self-regulatory organization is amending only part of the text of a lengthy proposed rule change, it may, with the Commission's permission, file only those portions of the text of the proposed rule change in which changes are being made if the filing (i.e. partial amendment) is clearly understandable on its face. Such partial amendment shall be clearly identified and marked to show deletions and additions.

1. Text of the Proposed Rule Change

- (a) Pursuant to the provisions of Section 19(b)(1) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 (“Act”)¹ and Rule 19b-4 thereunder,² NYSE American LLC (“NYSE American” or the “Exchange”) proposes extending the expiration date of the temporary amendments to Rules 9261 and 9830 as set forth in SR-NYSEAMER-2020-69 from December 31, 2021 to March 31, 2022, in conformity with recent changes by the Financial Industry Regulatory Authority, Inc. (“FINRA”). The proposed rule change would not make any changes to the text of NYSE American Rules 9261 and 9830.

A notice of the proposed rule change for publication in the Federal Register is attached hereto as Exhibit 1.

- (b) The Exchange does not believe that the proposed rule change will have any direct effect, or any significant indirect effect, on any other Exchange rule in effect at the time of this filing.
- (c) Not applicable.

2. Procedures of the Self-Regulatory Organization

Senior management has approved the proposed rule change pursuant to authority delegated to it by the Board of the Exchange. No further action is required under the Exchange’s governing documents. Therefore, the Exchange’s internal procedures with respect to the proposed rule change are complete.

The person on the Exchange staff prepared to respond to questions and comments on the proposed rule change is:

David De Gregorio
Associate General Counsel
NYSE Group, Inc.
(212) 656-4166

3. Self-Regulatory Organization’s Statement of the Purpose of, and Statutory Basis for, the Proposed Rule Change

- (a) Purpose

The Exchange proposes extending the expiration date of the temporary

¹ 15 U.S.C. 78s(b)(1).

² 17 CFR 240.19b-4.

amendments as set forth in SR-NYSEAMER-2020-69³ to Rules 9261 (Evidence and Procedure in Hearing) and 9830 (Hearing) from December 31, 2021 to March 31, 2022, to harmonize with recent changes by FINRA to extend the expiration date of the temporary amendments to its Rules 9261 and 9830. SR-NYSEAMER-2020-69 temporarily granted to the Chief or Deputy Chief Hearing Officer the authority to order that hearings be conducted by video conference if warranted by public health risks posed by in-person hearings during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. The proposed rule change would not make any changes to the text of Exchange Rules 9261 and 9830.⁴

Background

In 2016, NYSE American (then known as NYSE MKT LLC) adopted disciplinary rules that are, with certain exceptions, substantially the same as the Rule 8000 Series and Rule 9000 Series of FINRA and its affiliate the New York Stock Exchange LLC (“NYSE”), and which set forth rules for conducting investigations and enforcement actions.⁵ The NYSE American disciplinary rules were implemented on April 15, 2016.⁶

In adopting disciplinary rules modeled on FINRA’s rules, NYSE American adopted the hearing and evidentiary processes set forth in Rule 9261 and in Rule 9830 for hearings in matters involving temporary and permanent cease and desist orders under the Rule 9800 Series. As adopted, the text of Rule 9261 and Rule 9830 are substantially the same as the FINRA rules with certain modifications.⁷

In response to the COVID-19 global health crisis and the corresponding need to restrict in-person activities, on August 31, 2020, FINRA filed with the Commission a proposed rule change for immediate effectiveness, SR-FINRA-2020-027, which allowed FINRA’s Office of Hearing Officers (“OHO”) to conduct hearings, on a temporary basis, by video conference, if warranted by the current COVID-19-related public health risks posed by an in-person hearing.

³ See Securities Exchange Act Release No. 90085 (October 2, 2020), 85 FR 63603 (October 8, 2020) (SR-NYSEAMER-2020-69) (“SR-NYSEAMER-2020-69”).

⁴ The Exchange may submit a separate rule filing to extend the expiration date of the proposed extension beyond March 31, 2022 if the Exchange requires additional temporary relief from the rule requirements identified in SR-NYSEAMER-2020-69. The amended NYSE American rules will revert back to their original state at the conclusion of the temporary relief period and any extension thereof.

⁵ See Securities Exchange Act Release Nos. 77241 (February 26, 2016), 81 FR 11311 (March 3, 2016) (SR-NYSEMKT-2016-30) (“2016 Notice”).

⁶ See NYSE MKT Information Memorandum 16-02 (March 14, 2016).

⁷ See 2016 Notice, 81 FR at 11327 & 11332.

Among the rules FINRA amended were Rules 9261 and 9830.⁸

Given that FINRA and OHO administers disciplinary hearings on the Exchange's behalf, and that the public health concerns addressed by FINRA's amendments apply equally to Exchange disciplinary hearings, on September 15, 2020, the Exchange filed to temporarily amend Rule 9261 and Rule 9830 to permit FINRA to conduct virtual hearings on its behalf.⁹ In December 2020, FINRA filed a proposed rule change, SR-FINRA-2020-042, to extend the expiration date of the temporary amendments in SR-FINRA-2020-027 from December 31, 2020, to April 30, 2021.¹⁰ On December 22, 2020, the Exchange similarly filed to extend the temporary amendments to Rule 9261 and Rule 9830 to April 30, 2021.¹¹ On April 1, 2021, FINRA filed a proposed rule change, SR-FINRA-2021-006, to extend the expiration date of the temporary rule amendments to, among other rules, FINRA Rule 9261 and 9830 from April 30, 2021, to August 31, 2021.¹² On April 20, 2021, the Exchange filed to extend the temporary amendments to Rule 9261 and Rule 9830 to August 31, 2021.¹³ On August 13, 2021, FINRA filed a proposed rule change, SR-FINRA-2021-019, to extend the expiration date of the temporary amendments to, among other rules, FINRA Rule 9261 and 9830 from August 31, 2021, to December 31, 2021.¹⁴ On August 27, 2021, the Exchange filed to extend the temporary amendments to Rule 9261 and Rule 9830 to December 31, 2021, after which the temporary amendments will expire absent another proposed rule change filing by the Exchange.¹⁵

While there are signs of improvement, FINRA has determined that much uncertainty remains for the coming months. The presence of the Delta variant, dissimilar vaccination rates throughout the United States, and the uptick in transmissions in many locations indicate that COVID-19 remains an active and

⁸ See Securities Exchange Act Release No. 89737 (September 2, 2020), 85 FR 55712 (September 9, 2020) (SR-FINRA-2020-027) (“SR-FINRA-2020-027”).

⁹ See note 3, *supra*.

¹⁰ See Securities Exchange Act Release No. 90619 (December 9, 2020), 85 FR 81250 (December 15, 2020) (SR-FINRA-2020-042).

¹¹ See Securities Exchange Act Release No. 90823 (December 30, 2020), 86 FR 650 (January 6, 2021) (SR-NYSEAMER-2020-88).

¹² See Securities Exchange Act Release No. 91495 (April 7, 2021), 86 FR 19306 (April 13, 2021) (SR-FINRA-2021-006).

¹³ See Securities Exchange Act Release No. 91631 (April 22, 2021), 86 FR 22471 (April 28, 2021) (SR-NYSEAMER-2021-23).

¹⁴ See Securities Exchange Act Release No. 92685 (August 17, 2021), 86 FR 47169 (August 23, 2021) (SR-FINRA-2021-019).

¹⁵ See Securities Exchange Act Release No. 92910 (September 9, 2021), 86 FR 51418 (September 15, 2021) (SR-NYSEAMER-2021-37).

real public health concern.¹⁶ Due to the uncertainty and the lack of a clear timeframe for a sustained and widespread abatement of COVID-19-related health concerns and corresponding restrictions,¹⁷ FINRA believes that there is a continued need for temporary relief beyond December 31, 2021.¹⁸ On December 7, 2021, FINRA accordingly filed to extend the expiration date of the temporary rule amendments to, among other rules, FINRA Rule 9261 and 9830 from

¹⁶ See Securities Exchange Act Release No. 93758 (December 13, 2021), 86 FR 71695 (December 17, 2021) (SR-FINRA-2021-031) (“SR-FINRA-2021-031”). FINRA noted that, for example, President Joe Biden on July 29, 2021, announced several measures to increase the number of people vaccinated against COVID-19 and to slow the spread of the Delta variant, including strengthening safety protocols for federal government employees and contractors. See <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2021/07/29/factsheet-president-biden-to-announce-new-actions-to-get-more-americansvaccinated-and-slow-the-spread-of-the-delta-variant/>. Thereafter, the Biden Administration announced on November 4, 2021, details of two major vaccination policies to further help fight COVID-19. See <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2021/11/04/factsheet-biden-administration-announces-details-of-two-major-vaccination-policies/>. Most recently, President Biden announced several new actions to help protect Americans against the Delta and Omicron variants. See <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2021/12/02/factsheet-president-biden-announces-new-actions-to-protect-americans-against-thedelta-and-omicron-variants-as-we-battle-covid-19-this-winter/>. See SR-FINRA-2021-031, 86 FR at 71695, n. 6.

¹⁷ For instance, FINRA noted that the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (“CDC”) recently announced that the first confirmed case of COVID-19 caused by the Omicron variant was detected in the United States. See <https://www.cdc.gov/media/releases/2021/s1201-omicron-variant.html>. The CDC also recommends that fully vaccinated people wear a mask in public indoor settings in areas of substantial or high transmission and noted that fully vaccinated people might choose to wear a mask regardless of the level of transmission, particularly if they are immunocompromised or at increased risk for severe disease from COVID-19. See <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/fully-vaccinated-guidance.html>. Furthermore, as FINRA also noted, numerous states currently have COVID-19 restrictions in place. Six states (Hawaii, Illinois, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, and Washington) require most people to wear masks in indoor public places regardless of vaccination status, and three states (California, Connecticut, and New York) have mask mandates in indoor public places for those individuals who are unvaccinated. Several other states have mask mandates in certain settings, such as healthcare facilities, schools, and correctional facilities. See SR-FINRA-2021-031, 86 FR at 71696, n. 7.

¹⁸ See SR-FINRA-2021-031, 86 FR at 71695-96.

December 31, 2021, to March 31, 2022.¹⁹

Proposed Rule Change

Consistent with FINRA's recent proposal, the Exchange proposes to extend the expiration date of the temporary rule amendments to NYSE American Rules 9261 and 9830 as set forth in SR-NYSEAMER-2020-69 from December 31, 2021, to March 31, 2022.

As set forth in SR-FINRA-2021-031, while there are signs of improvement, much uncertainty remains for the coming months. The presence of the Delta variant, dissimilar vaccination rates throughout the United States, and the uptick in transmissions in many locations indicate that COVID-19 remains an active and real public health concern.²⁰ Due to the uncertainty and the lack of a clear timeframe for a sustained and widespread abatement of COVID-19-related health concerns and corresponding restrictions,²¹ FINRA believes that there is a continued need for temporary relief beyond March 31, 2022.²² FINRA accordingly proposed to extend the expiration date of the temporary rule amendments from December 31, 2021, to March 31, 2022.

The Exchange proposes to similarly extend the expiration date of the temporary rule amendments to NYSE American Rules 9261 and 9830 as set forth in SR-NYSEAMER-2020-69 from December 31, 2021, to March 31, 2022. The Exchange agrees with FINRA that, while there are signs of improvement, much uncertainty remains for the coming months. The Exchange also agrees that, due to the uncertainty and the lack of a clear timeframe for a sustained and widespread abatement of COVID-19-related health concerns and corresponding restrictions, for the reasons set forth in SR-FINRA-2021-031, there is a continued need for this temporary relief beyond December 31, 2021. The proposed change would permit OHO to continue to assess, based on critical COVID-19 data and criteria and the guidance of health and security consultants, whether an in-person hearing would compromise the health and safety of the hearing participants such that the hearing should proceed by video conference. As noted in SR-FINRA-2021-031, in deciding whether to schedule a hearing by video conference, OHO may consider a variety of other factors in addition to COVID-19 trends. Similarly, as noted in SR-FINRA-2021-031, in SR-FINRA-2020-027, FINRA provided a non-exhaustive list of other factors OHO may take into consideration, including a hearing participant's individual health concerns and access to the connectivity and

¹⁹ See SR-FINRA-2021-031, 86 FR at 71695.

²⁰ See note 16, supra.

²¹ See note 17, supra.

²² See SR-FINRA-2021-031, 86 FR at 71695.

technology necessary to participate in a video conference hearing.²³ The Exchange believes that this is a reasonable procedure to continue to follow for hearings under Rules 9261 and 9830 chaired by a FINRA employee.

As noted below, the Exchange has filed the proposed rule change for immediate effectiveness and has requested that the SEC waive the requirement that the proposed rule change not become operative for 30 days after the date of the filing, so the Exchange can implement the proposed rule change immediately.

(b) Statutory Basis

The proposed rule change is consistent with Section 6(b) of the Act,²⁴ in general, and furthers the objectives of Section 6(b)(5),²⁵ in particular, because it is designed to prevent fraudulent and manipulative acts and practices, to promote just and equitable principles of trade, to foster cooperation and coordination with persons engaged in facilitating transactions in securities, to remove impediments to, and perfect the mechanism of, a free and open market and a national market system and, in general, to protect investors and the public interest. Additionally, the Exchange believes the proposed rule change is designed to provide a fair procedure for the disciplining of members and persons associated with members, consistent with Sections 6(b)(7) and 6(d) of the Act.²⁶

The Exchange believes that the proposed rule change supports the objectives of the Act by providing greater harmonization between Exchange rules and FINRA rules of similar purpose, resulting in less burdensome and more efficient regulatory compliance. As such, the proposed rule change will foster cooperation and coordination with persons engaged in facilitating transactions in securities and will remove impediments to and perfect the mechanism of a free and open market and a national market system.

The proposed rule change, which extends the expiration date of the temporary amendments to Exchange rules consistent with FINRA's extension to its Rules 9261 and 9830 as set forth in SR-FINRA-2021-031, will permit the Exchange to continue to effectively conduct hearings during the COVID-19 pandemic. Given the current and frequently changing COVID-19 conditions and the uncertainty around when those conditions will see meaningful, widespread and sustained improvement, without this relief allowing OHO to proceed by video conference, some or all hearings may have to be postponed. The ability to conduct hearings by video conference will permit the adjudicatory functions of the Exchange's disciplinary rules to continue unabated, thereby avoiding protracted delays. The

²³ See SR-FINRA-2021-031, 86 FR at 71695, n. 13.

²⁴ 15 U.S.C. 78f(b).

²⁵ 15 U.S.C. 78f(b)(5).

²⁶ 15 U.S.C. 78f(b)(7) & 78f(d).

Exchange believes that this is especially important in matters where temporary and permanent cease and desist orders are sought because the proposed rule change would enable those hearings to continue to proceed without delay, thereby enabling the Exchange to continue to take immediate action to stop significant, ongoing customer harm, to the benefit of the investing public.

As set forth in detail in the SR-NYSEAMER-2020-69, the temporary relief to permit hearings to be conducted via video conference maintains fair process and will continue to provide fair process consistent with Sections 6(b)(7) and 6(d) of the Act²⁷ while striking an appropriate balance between providing fair process and enabling the Exchange to fulfill its statutory obligations to protect investors and maintain fair and orderly markets while avoiding the COVID-19-related public health risks for hearing participants. The Exchange notes that this proposal, like SR-NYSEAMER-2020-69, provides only temporary relief. As proposed, the changes would be in place through March 31, 2022. As noted in SR-NYSEAMER-2020-69 and above, the amended rules will revert back to their original state at the conclusion of the temporary relief period and, if applicable, any extension thereof.

Accordingly, the proposed rule change extending this temporary relief is in the public interest and consistent with the Act's purpose.

4. Self-Regulatory Organization's Statement on Burden on Competition

The Exchange does not believe that the proposed temporary rule change will impose any burden on competition that is not necessary or appropriate in furtherance of the purposes of the Act. The proposed rule change is not intended to address competitive issues but is rather intended solely to provide continued temporary relief given the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and the related health and safety risks of conducting in-person activities. The Exchange believes that the proposed rule change will prevent unnecessary impediments to critical adjudicatory processes and its ability to fulfill its statutory obligations to protect investors and maintain fair and orderly markets that would otherwise result if the temporary amendments were to expire on December 31, 2021.

5. Self-Regulatory Organization's Statement on Comments on the Proposed Rule Change Received from Members, Participants or Others

The Exchange has neither solicited nor received written comments on the proposed rule change.

6. Extension of Time Period for Commission Action

Not applicable.

²⁷ 15 U.S.C. 78f(b)(7) & 78f(d).

7. Basis for Summary Effectiveness Pursuant to Section 19(b)(3) or for Accelerated Effectiveness Pursuant to Section 19(b)(2)

The Exchange believes that the proposal qualifies for immediate effectiveness upon filing as a “non-controversial” rule change in accordance with Section 19(b)(3)(A) of the Act²⁸ and Rule 19b-4(f)(6) thereunder.²⁹

The Exchange asserts that the proposed rule change (i) will not significantly affect the protection of investors or the public interest, (ii) will not impose any significant burden on competition, and (iii) by its terms, will not become operative for 30 days after the date of this filing, or such shorter time as the Commission may designate, if consistent with the protection of investors and the public interest. In addition, the Exchange provided the Commission with written notice of its intent to file the proposed rule change, along with a brief description and text of the proposed rule change, at least five business days prior to the date of filing, or such shorter time as the Commission may designate.

The Exchange believes that this filing is non-controversial and eligible to become effective immediately because the proposal promotes uniformity in disciplinary rules across self-regulatory organizations and thereby enables the Exchange to continue conducting disciplinary hearings during the COVID-19 pandemic. The Exchange further believes that the proposed rule change would not significantly affect the protection of investors or the public interest or impose any significant burden on competition because the temporary extension is based on FINRA Rules 9261 and 9830 as set forth in SR-FINRA-2020-027. As noted above, the proposal, like SR-NYSEAMER-2020-69, provides only temporary relief and would be in place through March 31, 2022. As noted in SR-NYSEAMER-2020-69 and above, the amended rules will revert back to their original state at the conclusion of the temporary relief period and, if applicable, any extension thereof. Moreover, the proposed rule change is not intended to address competitive issues but rather is concerned solely with extending temporary relief given the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Exchange requests that the Commission waive the requirement that the proposed rule change, by its terms, not become operative for 30 days after the date of the filing as set forth in Rule 19b-4(f)(6)(iii),³⁰ so that the proposed rule change may become operative immediately. Waiver of the operative delay would allow the proposed changes, which are designed to minimize disruptions to the adjudicatory process in order to maintain fair processes and fulfill its obligations to protect investors and maintain fair and orderly markets, to be operative on the

²⁸ 15 U.S.C. 78s(b)(3)(A).

²⁹ 17 CFR 240.19b-4(f)(6).

³⁰ 17 CFR 240.19b-4(f)(6)(iii).

date of filing. Given that the need for the temporary relief provided originally by FINRA in its previous filings persists, waiving the 30-day operative delay would provide continuation and an uninterrupted extension of this necessary relief.³¹ For the foregoing reasons, the Exchange believes that waiver of the 30-day operative delay is consistent with the protection of investors and the public interest.

For the foregoing reasons, this rule filing qualifies for immediate effectiveness as a “non-controversial” rule change under paragraph (f)(6) of Rule 19b-4.³² At any time within 60 days of the filing of the proposed rule change, the Commission summarily may temporarily suspend such rule change if it appears to the Commission that such action is necessary or appropriate in the public interest, for the protection of investors, or otherwise in furtherance of the purposes of the Act.

8. Proposed Rule Change Based on Rules of Another Self-Regulatory Organization or of the Commission

The proposed rule change is based on the changes to FINRA Rules 9261 and 9830 set forth in SR-FINRA-2021-031.

9. Security-Based Swap Submissions Filed Pursuant to Section 3C of the Act

Not applicable.

10. Advance Notices Filed Pursuant to Section 806(e) of the Payment, Clearing and Settlement Supervision Act

Not applicable.

11. Exhibits

Exhibit 1 – Form of Notice of Proposed Rule Change for Federal Register.

³¹ The Exchange notes waiver of the 30-day operative period is consistent with previous extensions of this temporary relief. See, e.g., SR-NYSEAMER-2021-37, supra note 15.

³² 17 CFR 240.19b-4(f)(6).

SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION
(Release No. 34- ; File No. SR-NYSEAMER-2021-49)

[Date]

Self-Regulatory Organizations; NYSE American LLC; Notice of Filing and Immediate Effectiveness of Proposed Rule Change Extending the Expiration Date of the Temporary Amendments to Rules 9261 and 9830

Pursuant to Section 19(b)(1)¹ of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 (the “Act”)² and Rule 19b-4 thereunder,³ notice is hereby given that on December 27, 2021, NYSE American LLC (“NYSE American” or the “Exchange”) filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission (the “Commission”) the proposed rule change as described in Items I, II, and III below, which Items have been prepared by the self-regulatory organization. The Commission is publishing this notice to solicit comments on the proposed rule change from interested persons.

I. Self-Regulatory Organization’s Statement of the Terms of Substance of the Proposed Rule Change

The Exchange proposes extending the expiration date of the temporary amendments to Rules 9261 and 9830 as set forth in SR-NYSEAMER-2020-69 from December 31, 2021 to March 31, 2022, in conformity with recent changes by the Financial Industry Regulatory Authority, Inc. (“FINRA”). The proposed rule change would not make any changes to the text of NYSE American Rules 9261 and 9830. The proposed rule change is available on the Exchange’s website at www.nyse.com, at the

¹ 15 U.S.C. 78s(b)(1).

² 15 U.S.C. 78a.

³ 17 CFR 240.19b-4.

principal office of the Exchange, and at the Commission's Public Reference Room.

II. Self-Regulatory Organization's Statement of the Purpose of, and Statutory Basis for, the Proposed Rule Change

In its filing with the Commission, the self-regulatory organization included statements concerning the purpose of, and basis for, the proposed rule change and discussed any comments it received on the proposed rule change. The text of those statements may be examined at the places specified in Item IV below. The Exchange has prepared summaries, set forth in sections A, B, and C below, of the most significant parts of such statements.

A. Self-Regulatory Organization's Statement of the Purpose of, and the Statutory Basis for, the Proposed Rule Change

1. Purpose

The Exchange proposes extending the expiration date of the temporary amendments as set forth in SR-NYSEAMER-2020-69⁴ to Rules 9261 (Evidence and Procedure in Hearing) and 9830 (Hearing) from December 31, 2021 to March 31, 2022, to harmonize with recent changes by FINRA to extend the expiration date of the temporary amendments to its Rules 9261 and 9830. SR-NYSEAMER-2020-69 temporarily granted to the Chief or Deputy Chief Hearing Officer the authority to order that hearings be conducted by video conference if warranted by public health risks posed by in-person hearings during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. The proposed rule change would not make any changes to the text of Exchange Rules 9261 and 9830.⁵

⁴ See Securities Exchange Act Release No. 90085 (October 2, 2020), 85 FR 63603 (October 8, 2020) (SR-NYSEAMER-2020-69) ("SR-NYSEAMER-2020-69").

⁵ The Exchange may submit a separate rule filing to extend the expiration date of the proposed extension beyond March 31, 2022 if the Exchange requires additional temporary relief from the rule requirements identified in SR-

Background

In 2016, NYSE American (then known as NYSE MKT LLC) adopted disciplinary rules that are, with certain exceptions, substantially the same as the Rule 8000 Series and Rule 9000 Series of FINRA and its affiliate the New York Stock Exchange LLC (“NYSE”), and which set forth rules for conducting investigations and enforcement actions.⁶ The NYSE American disciplinary rules were implemented on April 15, 2016.⁷

In adopting disciplinary rules modeled on FINRA’s rules, NYSE American adopted the hearing and evidentiary processes set forth in Rule 9261 and in Rule 9830 for hearings in matters involving temporary and permanent cease and desist orders under the Rule 9800 Series. As adopted, the text of Rule 9261 and Rule 9830 are substantially the same as the FINRA rules with certain modifications.⁸

In response to the COVID-19 global health crisis and the corresponding need to restrict in-person activities, on August 31, 2020, FINRA filed with the Commission a proposed rule change for immediate effectiveness, SR-FINRA-2020-027, which allowed FINRA’s Office of Hearing Officers (“OHO”) to conduct hearings, on a temporary basis, by video conference, if warranted by the current COVID-19-related public health risks posed by an in-person hearing. Among the rules FINRA amended were Rules 9261 and 9830.⁹

NYSEAMER-2020-69. The amended NYSE American rules will revert back to their original state at the conclusion of the temporary relief period and any extension thereof.

⁶ See Securities Exchange Act Release Nos. 77241 (February 26, 2016), 81 FR 11311 (March 3, 2016) (SR-NYSEMKT-2016-30) (“2016 Notice”).

⁷ See NYSE MKT Information Memorandum 16-02 (March 14, 2016).

⁸ See 2016 Notice, 81 FR at 11327 & 11332.

⁹ See Securities Exchange Act Release No. 89737 (September 2, 2020), 85 FR

Given that FINRA and OHO administers disciplinary hearings on the Exchange's behalf, and that the public health concerns addressed by FINRA's amendments apply equally to Exchange disciplinary hearings, on September 15, 2020, the Exchange filed to temporarily amend Rule 9261 and Rule 9830 to permit FINRA to conduct virtual hearings on its behalf.¹⁰ In December 2020, FINRA filed a proposed rule change, SR-FINRA-2020-042, to extend the expiration date of the temporary amendments in SR-FINRA-2020-027 from December 31, 2020, to April 30, 2021.¹¹ On December 22, 2020, the Exchange similarly filed to extend the temporary amendments to Rule 9261 and Rule 9830 to April 30, 2021.¹² On April 1, 2021, FINRA filed a proposed rule change, SR-FINRA-2021-006, to extend the expiration date of the temporary rule amendments to, among other rules, FINRA Rule 9261 and 9830 from April 30, 2021, to August 31, 2021.¹³ On April 20, 2021, the Exchange filed to extend the temporary amendments to Rule 9261 and Rule 9830 to August 31, 2021.¹⁴ On August 13, 2021, FINRA filed a proposed rule change, SR-FINRA-2021-019, to extend the expiration date of the temporary amendments to, among other rules, FINRA Rule 9261 and 9830 from August 31, 2021, to December 31, 2021.¹⁵ On August 27, 2021, the Exchange filed to extend the

55712 (September 9, 2020) (SR-FINRA-2020-027) ("SR-FINRA-2020-027").

¹⁰ See note 4, *supra*.

¹¹ See Securities Exchange Act Release No. 90619 (December 9, 2020), 85 FR 81250 (December 15, 2020) (SR-FINRA-2020-042).

¹² See Securities Exchange Act Release No. 90823 (December 30, 2020), 86 FR 650 (January 6, 2021) (SR-NYSEAMER-2020-88).

¹³ See Securities Exchange Act Release No. 91495 (April 7, 2021), 86 FR 19306 (April 13, 2021) (SR-FINRA-2021-006).

¹⁴ See Securities Exchange Act Release No. 91631 (April 22, 2021), 86 FR 22471 (April 28, 2021) (SR-NYSEAMER-2021-23).

¹⁵ See Securities Exchange Act Release No. 92685 (August 17, 2021), 86 FR 47169

temporary amendments to Rule 9261 and Rule 9830 to December 31, 2021, after which the temporary amendments will expire absent another proposed rule change filing by the Exchange.¹⁶

While there are signs of improvement, FINRA has determined that much uncertainty remains for the coming months. The presence of the Delta variant, dissimilar vaccination rates throughout the United States, and the uptick in transmissions in many locations indicate that COVID-19 remains an active and real public health concern.¹⁷ Due to the uncertainty and the lack of a clear timeframe for a sustained and widespread abatement of COVID-19-related health concerns and corresponding restrictions,¹⁸

(August 23, 2021) (SR-FINRA-2021-019).

¹⁶ See Securities Exchange Act Release No. 92910 (September 9, 2021), 86 FR 51418 (September 15, 2021) (SR-NYSEAMER-2021-37).

¹⁷ See Securities Exchange Act Release No. 93758 (December 13, 2021), 86 FR 71695 (December 17, 2021) (SR-FINRA-2021-031) (“SR-FINRA-2021-031”). FINRA noted that, for example, President Joe Biden on July 29, 2021, announced several measures to increase the number of people vaccinated against COVID-19 and to slow the spread of the Delta variant, including strengthening safety protocols for federal government employees and contractors. See <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2021/07/29/factsheet-president-biden-to-announce-new-actions-to-get-more-americans-vaccinated-and-slow-the-spread-of-the-delta-variant/>. Thereafter, the Biden Administration announced on November 4, 2021, details of two major vaccination policies to further help fight COVID-19. See <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2021/11/04/factsheet-biden-administration-announces-details-of-two-major-vaccination-policies/>. Most recently, President Biden announced several new actions to help protect Americans against the Delta and Omicron variants. See <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2021/12/02/factsheet-president-biden-announces-new-actions-to-protect-americans-against-the-delta-and-omicron-variants-as-we-battle-covid-19-this-winter/>. See SR-FINRA-2021-031, 86 FR at 71695, n. 6.

¹⁸ For instance, FINRA noted that the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (“CDC”) recently announced that the first confirmed case of COVID-19 caused by the Omicron variant was detected in the United States. See <https://www.cdc.gov/media/releases/2021/s1201-omicron-variant.html>. The CDC

FINRA believes that there is a continued need for temporary relief beyond December 31, 2021.¹⁹ On December 7, 2021, FINRA accordingly filed to extend the expiration date of the temporary rule amendments to, among other rules, FINRA Rule 9261 and 9830 from December 31, 2021, to March 31, 2022.²⁰

Proposed Rule Change

Consistent with FINRA's recent proposal, the Exchange proposes to extend the expiration date of the temporary rule amendments to NYSE American Rules 9261 and 9830 as set forth in SR-NYSEAMER-2020-69 from December 31, 2021, to March 31, 2022.

As set forth in SR-FINRA-2021-031, while there are signs of improvement, much uncertainty remains for the coming months. The presence of the Delta variant, dissimilar vaccination rates throughout the United States, and the uptick in transmissions in many locations indicate that COVID-19 remains an active and real public health concern.²¹

also recommends that fully vaccinated people wear a mask in public indoor settings in areas of substantial or high transmission and noted that fully vaccinated people might choose to wear a mask regardless of the level of transmission, particularly if they are immunocompromised or at increased risk for severe disease from COVID-19. See <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/fully-vaccinated-guidance.html>. Furthermore, as FINRA also noted, numerous states currently have COVID-19 restrictions in place. Six states (Hawaii, Illinois, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, and Washington) require most people to wear masks in indoor public places regardless of vaccination status, and three states (California, Connecticut, and New York) have mask mandates in indoor public places for those individuals who are unvaccinated. Several other states have mask mandates in certain settings, such as healthcare facilities, schools, and correctional facilities. See SR-FINRA-2021-031, 86 FR at 71696, n. 7.

¹⁹ See SR-FINRA-2021-031, 86 FR at 71695-96.

²⁰ See SR-FINRA-2021-031, 86 FR at 71695.

²¹ See note 17, supra.

Due to the uncertainty and the lack of a clear timeframe for a sustained and widespread abatement of COVID-19-related health concerns and corresponding restrictions,²² FINRA believes that there is a continued need for temporary relief beyond March 31, 2022.²³ FINRA accordingly proposed to extend the expiration date of the temporary rule amendments from December 31, 2021, to March 31, 2022.

The Exchange proposes to similarly extend the expiration date of the temporary rule amendments to NYSE American Rules 9261 and 9830 as set forth in SR-NYSEAMER-2020-69 from December 31, 2021, to March 31, 2022. The Exchange agrees with FINRA that, while there are signs of improvement, much uncertainty remains for the coming months. The Exchange also agrees that, due to the uncertainty and the lack of a clear timeframe for a sustained and widespread abatement of COVID-19-related health concerns and corresponding restrictions, for the reasons set forth in SR-FINRA-2021-031, there is a continued need for this temporary relief beyond December 31, 2021. The proposed change would permit OHO to continue to assess, based on critical COVID-19 data and criteria and the guidance of health and security consultants, whether an in-person hearing would compromise the health and safety of the hearing participants such that the hearing should proceed by video conference. As noted in SR-FINRA-2021-031, in deciding whether to schedule a hearing by video conference, OHO may consider a variety of other factors in addition to COVID-19 trends. Similarly, as noted in SR-FINRA-2021-031, in SR-FINRA-2020-027, FINRA provided a non-exhaustive list of other factors OHO may take into consideration, including a hearing participant's

²² See note 18, *supra*.

²³ See SR-FINRA-2021-031, 86 FR at 71695.

individual health concerns and access to the connectivity and technology necessary to participate in a video conference hearing.²⁴ The Exchange believes that this is a reasonable procedure to continue to follow for hearings under Rules 9261 and 9830 chaired by a FINRA employee.

As noted below, the Exchange has filed the proposed rule change for immediate effectiveness and has requested that the SEC waive the requirement that the proposed rule change not become operative for 30 days after the date of the filing, so the Exchange can implement the proposed rule change immediately.

2. Statutory Basis

The proposed rule change is consistent with Section 6(b) of the Act,²⁵ in general, and furthers the objectives of Section 6(b)(5),²⁶ in particular, because it is designed to prevent fraudulent and manipulative acts and practices, to promote just and equitable principles of trade, to foster cooperation and coordination with persons engaged in facilitating transactions in securities, to remove impediments to, and perfect the mechanism of, a free and open market and a national market system and, in general, to protect investors and the public interest. Additionally, the Exchange believes the proposed rule change is designed to provide a fair procedure for the disciplining of members and persons associated with members, consistent with Sections 6(b)(7) and 6(d) of the Act.²⁷

The Exchange believes that the proposed rule change supports the objectives of

²⁴ See SR-FINRA-2021-031, 86 FR at 71695, n. 13.

²⁵ 15 U.S.C. 78f(b).

²⁶ 15 U.S.C. 78f(b)(5).

²⁷ 15 U.S.C. 78f(b)(7) & 78f(d).

the Act by providing greater harmonization between Exchange rules and FINRA rules of similar purpose, resulting in less burdensome and more efficient regulatory compliance. As such, the proposed rule change will foster cooperation and coordination with persons engaged in facilitating transactions in securities and will remove impediments to and perfect the mechanism of a free and open market and a national market system.

The proposed rule change, which extends the expiration date of the temporary amendments to Exchange rules consistent with FINRA's extension to its Rules 9261 and 9830 as set forth in SR-FINRA-2021-031, will permit the Exchange to continue to effectively conduct hearings during the COVID-19 pandemic. Given the current and frequently changing COVID-19 conditions and the uncertainty around when those conditions will see meaningful, widespread and sustained improvement, without this relief allowing OHO to proceed by video conference, some or all hearings may have to be postponed. The ability to conduct hearings by video conference will permit the adjudicatory functions of the Exchange's disciplinary rules to continue unabated, thereby avoiding protracted delays. The Exchange believes that this is especially important in matters where temporary and permanent cease and desist orders are sought because the proposed rule change would enable those hearings to continue to proceed without delay, thereby enabling the Exchange to continue to take immediate action to stop significant, ongoing customer harm, to the benefit of the investing public.

As set forth in detail in the SR-NYSEAMER-2020-69, the temporary relief to permit hearings to be conducted via video conference maintains fair process and will continue to provide fair process consistent with Sections 6(b)(7) and 6(d) of the Act²⁸

²⁸ 15 U.S.C. 78f(b)(7) & 78f(d).

while striking an appropriate balance between providing fair process and enabling the Exchange to fulfill its statutory obligations to protect investors and maintain fair and orderly markets while avoiding the COVID-19-related public health risks for hearing participants. The Exchange notes that this proposal, like SR-NYSEAMER-2020-69, provides only temporary relief. As proposed, the changes would be in place through March 31, 2022. As noted in SR-NYSEAMER-2020-69 and above, the amended rules will revert back to their original state at the conclusion of the temporary relief period and, if applicable, any extension thereof.

Accordingly, the proposed rule change extending this temporary relief is in the public interest and consistent with the Act's purpose.

B. Self-Regulatory Organization's Statement on Burden on Competition

The Exchange does not believe that the proposed temporary rule change will impose any burden on competition that is not necessary or appropriate in furtherance of the purposes of the Act. The proposed rule change is not intended to address competitive issues but is rather intended solely to provide continued temporary relief given the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and the related health and safety risks of conducting in-person activities. The Exchange believes that the proposed rule change will prevent unnecessary impediments to critical adjudicatory processes and its ability to fulfill its statutory obligations to protect investors and maintain fair and orderly markets that would otherwise result if the temporary amendments were to expire on December 31, 2021.

C. Self-Regulatory Organization's Statement on Comments on the Proposed Rule Change Received from Members, Participants, or Others

No written comments were solicited or received with respect to the proposed rule change.

III. Date of Effectiveness of the Proposed Rule Change and Timing for Commission Action

The Exchange has filed the proposed rule change pursuant to Section 19(b)(3)(A)(iii) of the Act²⁹ and Rule 19b-4(f)(6) thereunder.³⁰ Because the proposed rule change does not: (i) significantly affect the protection of investors or the public interest; (ii) impose any significant burden on competition; and (iii) become operative prior to 30 days from the date on which it was filed, or such shorter time as the Commission may designate, if consistent with the protection of investors and the public interest, the proposed rule change has become effective pursuant to Section 19(b)(3)(A) of the Act and Rule 19b-4(f)(6)(iii) thereunder.

A proposed rule change filed under Rule 19b-4(f)(6)³¹ normally does not become operative prior to 30 days after the date of the filing. However, pursuant to Rule 19b-4(f)(6)(iii),³² the Commission may designate a shorter time if such action is consistent with the protection of investors and the public interest. The Exchange has asked the Commission to waive the 30-day operative delay so that the proposal may become operative immediately upon filing.

At any time within 60 days of the filing of such proposed rule change, the Commission summarily may temporarily suspend such rule change if it appears to the Commission that such action is necessary or appropriate in the public interest, for the protection of investors, or otherwise in furtherance of the purposes of the Act. If the

²⁹ 15 U.S.C. 78s(b)(3)(A)(iii).

³⁰ 17 CFR 240.19b-4(f)(6).

³¹ 17 CFR 240.19b-4(f)(6).

³² 17 CFR 240.19b-4(f)(6)(iii).

Commission takes such action, the Commission shall institute proceedings under Section 19(b)(2)(B)³³ of the Act to determine whether the proposed rule change should be approved or disapproved.

IV. Solicitation of Comments

Interested persons are invited to submit written data, views, and arguments concerning the foregoing, including whether the proposed rule change is consistent with the Act. Comments may be submitted by any of the following methods:

Electronic comments:

- Use the Commission's Internet comment form (<http://www.sec.gov/rules/sro.shtml>); or
- Send an e-mail to rule-comments@sec.gov. Please include File Number SR-NYSEAMER-2021-49 on the subject line.

Paper comments:

- Send paper comments in triplicate to: Secretary, Securities and Exchange Commission, 100 F Street, NE, Washington, DC 20549-1090.

All submissions should refer to File Number SR-NYSEAMER-2021-49. This file number should be included on the subject line if e-mail is used. To help the Commission process and review your comments more efficiently, please use only one method. The Commission will post all comments on the Commission's Internet website (<http://www.sec.gov/rules/sro.shtml>). Copies of the submission, all subsequent amendments, all written statements with respect to the proposed rule change that are filed with the Commission, and all written communications relating to the proposed rule

³³ 15 U.S.C. 78s(b)(2)(B).

change between the Commission and any person, other than those that may be withheld from the public in accordance with the provisions of 5 U.S.C. 552, will be available for website viewing and printing in the Commission's Public Reference Room, 100 F Street, NE, Washington, DC 20549 on official business days between the hours of 10:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. Copies of the filing also will be available for inspection and copying at the principal office of the Exchange. All comments received will be posted without change. Persons submitting comments are cautioned that we do not redact or edit personal identifying information from comment submissions. You should submit only information that you wish to make available publicly. All submissions should refer to File Number SR-NYSEAMER-2021-49 and should be submitted on or before [insert date 21 days from publication in the Federal Register].

For the Commission, by the Division of Trading and Markets, pursuant to delegated authority.³⁴

Eduardo A. Aleman
Deputy Secretary

³⁴ 17 CFR 200.30-3(a)(12).