

BrokerCheck Report

Scot THOMAS Benefiel

CRD# 1968666

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Please be aware that fraudsters may link to BrokerCheck from phishing and similar scam websites, trying to steal your personal information or your money. Make sure you know who you're dealing with when investing, and contact FINRA with any concerns.

For more information read our [investor alert](#) on imposters.

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.

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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.](http://www.finra.org)



Scot T. Benefiel

CRD# 1968666

Currently employed by and registered with the following Firm(s):

B **MERRILL LYNCH, PIERCE, FENNER & SMITH INCORPORATED**
14636 N SCOTTSDALE RD
SCOTTSDALE, AZ 85254
CRD# 7691
Registered with this firm since: 01/01/2006

IA **MERRILL LYNCH, PIERCE, FENNER & SMITH INCORPORATED**
14636 N SCOTTSDALE RD
SCOTTSDALE, AZ 85254
CRD# 7691
Registered with this firm since: 01/06/2006

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 registered with:

- 9 Self-Regulatory Organizations
- 22 U.S. states and territories

This broker has passed:

- 0 Principal/Supervisory Exams
- 2 General Industry/Product Exams
- 2 State Securities Law Exams

Registration History

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

- IA** **MERRILL LYNCH PIERCE FENNER & SMITH INC.**
CRD# 7691
NEW YORK, NY
12/1996 - 04/2003
- B** **MERRILL LYNCH, PIERCE, FENNER & SMITH INCORPORATED**
CRD# 7691
NEW YORK, NY
08/1989 - 04/2003

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
Customer Dispute	2



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 individual is currently registered with 9 SROs and is licensed in 22 U.S. states and territories through his or her employer.

Employment 1 of 1

Firm Name: **MERRILL LYNCH, PIERCE, FENNER & SMITH INCORPORATED**

Main Office Address: **ONE BRYANT PARK
NEW YORK, NY 10036**

Firm CRD#: **7691**

	SRO	Category	Status	Date
B	Cboe BYX Exchange, Inc.	General Securities Representative	Approved	05/12/2014
B	Cboe BZX Exchange, Inc.	General Securities Representative	Approved	05/12/2014
B	Cboe EDGA Exchange, Inc.	General Securities Representative	Approved	05/12/2014
B	Cboe EDGX Exchange, Inc.	General Securities Representative	Approved	05/12/2014
B	Cboe Exchange, Inc.	General Securities Representative	Approved	01/01/2006
B	FINRA	General Securities Representative	Approved	01/01/2006
B	Investors' Exchange LLC	General Securities Representative	Approved	08/17/2016
B	Nasdaq Stock Market	General Securities Representative	Approved	07/12/2006
B	New York Stock Exchange	General Securities Representative	Approved	01/30/2006

	U.S. State/ Territory	Category	Status	Date
B	Arizona	Agent	Approved	02/15/2006
B	California	Agent	Approved	01/06/2006
IA	California	Investment Adviser Representative	Approved	01/06/2006
B	Colorado	Agent	Approved	03/23/2006



Broker Qualifications

Employment 1 of 1, continued

	U.S. State/ Territory	Category	Status	Date
B	District of Columbia	Agent	Approved	01/10/2023
B	Florida	Agent	Approved	01/05/2023
B	Georgia	Agent	Approved	05/07/2018
B	Illinois	Agent	Approved	04/29/2009
B	Indiana	Agent	Approved	02/22/2006
B	Kansas	Agent	Approved	06/01/2021
B	Massachusetts	Agent	Approved	06/23/2010
B	Michigan	Agent	Approved	01/08/2014
B	Missouri	Agent	Approved	08/09/2017
B	Montana	Agent	Approved	02/21/2006
B	Nevada	Agent	Approved	09/05/2018
B	New Mexico	Agent	Approved	04/07/2021
B	North Carolina	Agent	Approved	12/02/2009
B	Ohio	Agent	Approved	11/23/2022
B	Tennessee	Agent	Approved	09/24/2014
B	Texas	Agent	Approved	02/10/2011
IA	Texas	Investment Adviser Representative	Restricted Approval	02/10/2011
B	Utah	Agent	Approved	11/20/2017
B	Virginia	Agent	Approved	04/20/2020
B	Washington	Agent	Approved	09/10/2015



Broker Qualifications

Employment 1 of 1, continued

Branch Office Locations

MERRILL LYNCH, PIERCE, FENNER & SMITH INCORPORATED
14636 N SCOTTSDALE RD
SCOTTSDALE, AZ 85254

MERRILL LYNCH, PIERCE, FENNER & SMITH INCORPORATED
520 NEWPORT CENTER DR
NEWPORT BEACH, CA 92660



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.

This individual has passed 0 principal/supervisory exams, 2 general industry/product exams, and 2 state securities law exams.

Principal/Supervisory Exams

Exam	Category	Date
No information reported.		

General Industry/Product Exams

Exam	Category	Date
B Securities Industry Essentials Examination	SIE	10/01/2018
B General Securities Representative Examination	Series 7	12/22/2005

State Securities Law Exams

Exam	Category	Date
B IA Uniform Combined State Law Examination	Series 66	01/05/2006
B Uniform Securities Agent State Law Examination	Series 63	08/31/1989

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
IA 12/1996 - 04/2003	MERRILL LYNCH PIERCE FENNER & SMITH INC.	7691	SCOTTSDALE, AZ
B 08/1989 - 04/2003	MERRILL LYNCH, PIERCE, FENNER & SMITH INCORPORATED	7691	NEW YORK, NY

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
06/2011 - Present	Bank of America,N.A.	Senior Financial Advisor	Y	SCOTTSDALE, AZ, United States
12/2005 - Present	MERRILL LYNCH, PIERCE, FENNER & SMITH INCORPORATED	FINANCIAL ADVISOR	Y	PHOENIX, AZ, 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.

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FOR PROFIT OR NOT FOR PROFIT: NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION

NAME OF OUTSIDE BUSINESS ORGANIZATION: RS HOYT JR. FOUNDATION

INVESTMENT RELATED: N

ADDRESS OF BUSINESS:

5202 S. 40TH STREET,
PHOENIX, ARIZONA 85040

NATURE OF BUSINESS: CHARITABLE ORGANIZATION,

POSITION, TITLE, ASSOCIATION: DIRECTOR,

START DATE OF RELATIONSHIP: 12/11/2014

NUMBER OF HOURS DEVOTED: 1 HOUR(S) QUARTERLY

Registration and Employment History



Other Business Activities, continued

NUMBER OF HOURS DEVOTED DURING TRADING HOURS: 0

DUTIES: DIRECTOR



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.
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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
Customer Dispute	0	2	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.

Customer Dispute - Settled

This type of disclosure event involves a consumer-initiated, investment-related complaint, arbitration proceeding or civil suit containing allegations of sale practice violations against the broker that resulted in a monetary settlement to the customer.

Disclosure 1 of 1

Reporting Source:	Firm
Employing firm when activities occurred which led to the complaint:	MERRILL LYNCH
Allegations:	PLAINTIFFS ALLEGE BREACH OF FIDUCIARY DUTY, AS WELL AS MISREPRESENTATIONS AND OMISSIONS OF MATERIAL FACTS. ALLEGED DAMAGES UNSPECIFIED.
Product Type:	Insurance
Alleged Damages:	\$0.00

Customer Complaint Information

Date Complaint Received:	06/02/2003
Complaint Pending?	No
Status:	Litigation
Status Date:	06/02/2003

Settlement Amount:

Individual Contribution Amount:

Civil Litigation Information

Court Details:	SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF ARIZONA, COUNTY OF MARICOPA, CASE NO. CV2003-010466
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Date Notice/Process Served: 06/02/2003
Litigation Pending? No
Disposition: Settled
Disposition Date: 03/02/2005
Monetary Compensation Amount: \$275,000.00
Individual Contribution Amount: \$0.00
Firm Statement WE SETTLED THIS MATTER FOR BUSINESS REASONS AND LESS THAN THE COST OF DEFENSE.

Reporting Source: Broker
Employing firm when activities occurred which led to the complaint: MERRILL LYNCH
Allegations: PLAINTIFFS ALLEGE BREACH OF FIDUCIARY DUTY, AS WELL AS MISREPRESENTATIONS AND OMISSIONS OF MATERIAL FACTS.
Product Type: Insurance
Alleged Damages: \$0.00

Customer Complaint Information

Date Complaint Received: 06/02/2003
Complaint Pending? No
Status: Settled
Status Date: 03/02/2005
Settlement Amount: \$275,000.00
Individual Contribution Amount: \$0.00

Civil Litigation Information

Court Details: SUPERIOR CT. OF THE STATE OF ARIZONA, COUNTY OF MARICOPA, CASE ID # CV2003-010466
Date Notice/Process Served: 06/02/2003
Litigation Pending? No



Disposition:	Settled
Disposition Date:	03/02/2005
Monetary Compensation Amount:	\$275,000.00
Individual Contribution Amount:	\$0.00
Broker Statement	MERRILL LYNCH SETTLED THIS MATTER FOR BUSINESS REASONS AND FOR LESS THAN THE COST OF DEFENSE.



Customer Dispute - Closed-No Action / Withdrawn / Dismissed / Denied

This type of disclosure event involves (1) a consumer-initiated, investment-related arbitration or civil suit containing allegations of sales practice violations against the individual broker that was dismissed, withdrawn, or denied; or (2) a consumer-initiated, investment-related written complaint containing allegations that the broker engaged in sales practice violations resulting in compensatory damages of at least \$5,000, forgery, theft, or misappropriation, or conversion of funds or securities, which was closed without action, withdrawn, or denied.

Disclosure 1 of 1

Reporting Source:	Broker
Employing firm when activities occurred which led to the complaint:	Merrill Lynch, Pierce, Fenner & Smith Incorporated
Allegations:	The customer alleges that the Financial Advisor did not have his best interests in mind when purchasing stocks.
Product Type:	Equity-OTC Other: Common and Preferred, New Issue
Alleged Damages:	\$0.00
Alleged Damages Amount Explanation (if amount not exact):	Damages are not specified.
Is this an oral complaint?	No
Is this a written complaint?	Yes
Is this an arbitration/CFTC reparation or civil litigation?	No

Customer Complaint Information

Date Complaint Received:	03/18/2021
Complaint Pending?	No
Status:	Denied
Status Date:	05/05/2021
Settlement Amount:	
Individual Contribution Amount:	

Broker Statement The Financial Advisor denies any allegations of wrongdoing. The customer rescinded the complaint the next day and continues to maintain a professional relationship with the Advisor.

End of Report



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