



[Home](#) | [Jobs](#) | [Fast Answers](#) | [Site Map](#) | [Search](#)

## U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission

### The Investor's Advocate: How the SEC Protects Investors, Maintains Market Integrity, and Facilitates Capital Formation

#### About the SEC

[What We Do](#)  
[Commissioners](#)  
[Upcoming Events](#)  
[SEC Rules of Practice and  
Rules on Fair Fund and  
Disgorgement Plans](#)  
[Forms \(PDF Formats\)](#)  
[Concise Directory  
Office of the Inspector  
General](#)  
[Data Quality Guidelines](#)  
[FAIR Act](#)  
[Laws & Regulations](#)  
[Annual Report](#)

- [Introduction](#)
- [Creation of the SEC](#)
- [Organization of the SEC](#)
- [Laws That Govern the Industry](#)

#### Introduction

The mission of the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission is to protect investors, maintain fair, orderly, and efficient markets, and facilitate capital formation.

As more and more first-time investors turn to the markets to help secure their futures, pay for homes, and send children to college, our investor protection mission is more compelling than ever.

As our nation's securities exchanges mature into global for-profit competitors, there is even greater need for sound market regulation.

And the common interest of all Americans in a growing economy that produces jobs, improves our standard of living, and protects the value of our savings means that all of the SEC's actions must be taken with an eye toward promoting the capital formation that is necessary to sustain economic growth.

The world of investing is fascinating and complex, and it can be very fruitful. But unlike the banking world, where deposits are guaranteed by the federal government, stocks, bonds and other securities can lose value. There are no guarantees. That's why investing is not a spectator sport. By far the best way for investors to protect the money they put into the securities markets is to do research and ask questions.

The laws and rules that govern the securities industry in the United States derive from a simple and straightforward concept: all investors, whether large institutions or private individuals, should have access to certain basic facts about an investment prior to buying it, and so long as they hold it. To achieve this, the SEC requires public companies to disclose meaningful financial and other information to the public. This provides a common pool of knowledge for all investors to use to judge for themselves whether to buy, sell, or hold a particular security. Only through the steady flow of timely, comprehensive, and accurate information can people make sound investment decisions.

enforcement sec. gov.