

# Item 1: Cover Page



Avant Financial Advisors

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## **Form ADV Part 2A – Firm Brochure**

Dated March 2, 2022

<http://www.avantfinancialadvisors.com/>

This Brochure provides information about the qualifications and business practices of Avant Financial Advisors LLC d/b/a Avant Financial Advisors, “AFA”. If you have any questions about the contents of this Brochure, please contact us at (512) 910-2467. The information in this Brochure has not been approved or verified by the United States Securities and Exchange Commission or by any state securities authority.

Avant Financial Advisors is registered as an Investment Adviser with the State of Texas. Registration of an Investment Adviser does not imply any level of skill or training.

Additional information about AFA is available on the SEC’s website at [www.adviserinfo.sec.gov](http://www.adviserinfo.sec.gov) which can be found using the firm’s identification number 297894.

## Item 2: Material Changes

The following changes have been made to this Disclosure Brochure since its last filing:

- Item 4: AFA updated the asset under management to \$55,333,710, all of which is discretionary. Additionally, the Types of Advisory Services have been modified to distinguish the differences between the six month Comprehensive Planning Services, and the Ongoing Financial Planning Services provided to Wealth Management Services clients. Please see Item 4 for additional information.
- Item 5: AFA has changed the billing methodology for Wealth Management Services. Fees are now paid in advance based on the quarterly ending value of all accounts under management. In compliance with Rule 116.13(a), a note was added stating that the minimum quarterly fee may result in an annual fee of 3.00% or higher. Additionally, the fee description associated with Comprehensive Financial Planning has been modified for clarity. Single topic planning is no longer provided. Please see Item 5 for additional information.
- Item 12 has been updated to include Schwab as a broker-dealer utilized for custody of securities, trade execution, clearance, and settlement of transactions. Please see Item 12 for additional information.
- Item 14 has been updated to include Schwab. Please see Item 14 for additional information.
- Item 19 and Part 2B have been updated to include the addition of Thomas James Stevenson. Please see Item 19 and Part 2B for additional information.

# Item 3 Table of Contents

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# Item 4: Advisory Business

## Description of Advisory Firm

Avant Financial Advisors LLC is registered as an Investment Adviser with the State of Texas. We were founded in June 2018. Scott Matthew Ela is the principal owner of AFA. AFA reports \$55,333,710 in total Assets Under Management as of December 31, 2021, all of which are under discretionary management.

## Types of Advisory Services

### Wealth Management Services

**Investment Advisory Services** - For Wealth Management Services clients, we manage individually tailored investment portfolios. Our firm provides continuous advice to a Client regarding the investment of Client funds based on the individual needs of the Client. Through personal discussions in which goals and objectives based on a Client's particular circumstances are established, we develop a Client's personal investment policy or an investment plan with an asset allocation target and create and manage a portfolio based on that policy and allocation targets. We will also review and discuss a Client's prior investment history, as well as family composition and background.

Account supervision is guided by the stated objectives of the Client (e.g., maximum capital appreciation, growth, income, or growth, and income), as well as tax considerations. Clients may impose reasonable restrictions on investing in certain securities, types of securities, or industry sectors. Fees pertaining to this service are outlined in Item 5 of this brochure.

**Ongoing Financial Planning Services** - For Wealth Management Services clients, we provide ongoing financial planning services on topics such as retirement planning, risk management, college savings, cash flow, debt management, work benefits, and estate and incapacity planning.

Financial planning is a comprehensive evaluation of a client's current and future financial state by using currently known variables to predict future cash flows, asset values, and withdrawal plans. The key defining aspect of financial planning is that through the financial planning process, all questions, information, and analysis will be considered as they affect and are affected by the entire financial and life situation of the client. Clients receiving this service will receive a written or an electronic report, upon request, providing the client with a detailed financial plan designed to achieve his or her stated financial goals and objectives. Financial plans are based on the financial information provided to our firm. Clients must promptly notify us if their financial situation, goals, objectives, or needs change.

In general, the financial plan will address any or all of the following areas of concern. The client and advisor will work together to select the specific areas to cover. These areas may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- **Business Planning:** We provide consulting services for clients who currently operate their own business, are considering starting a business, or are planning for an exit from their current

business. Under this type of engagement, we work with you to assess your current situation, identify your objectives, and develop a plan aimed at achieving your goals.

- **Cash Flow and Debt Management:** We will conduct a review of your income and expenses to determine your current surplus or deficit along with advice on prioritizing how any surplus should be used or how to reduce expenses if they exceed your income. Advice may also be provided on which debts to pay off first based on factors such as the interest rate of the debt and any income tax ramifications. We may also recommend what we believe to be an appropriate cash reserve that should be considered for emergencies and other financial goals, along with a review of accounts (such as money market funds) for such reserves, plus strategies to save desired amounts.
- **College Savings:** Includes projecting the amount that will be needed to achieve college or other post-secondary education funding goals, along with advice on ways for you to save the desired amount. Recommendations as to savings strategies are included, and, if needed, we will review your financial picture as it relates to eligibility for financial aid or the best way to contribute to grandchildren (if appropriate).
- **Employee Benefits Optimization:** We will provide review and analysis as to whether you, as an employee, are taking the maximum advantage possible of your employee benefits. If you are a business owner, we will consider and/or recommend the various benefit programs that can be structured to meet both business and personal retirement goals.
- **Estate Planning:** This usually includes an analysis of your exposure to estate taxes and your current estate plan, which may include whether you have a will, powers of attorney, trusts, and other related documents. Our advice also typically includes ways for you to minimize or avoid future estate taxes by implementing appropriate estate planning strategies such as the use of applicable trusts. We always recommend that you consult with a qualified attorney when you initiate, update, or complete estate planning activities. We may provide you with contact information for attorneys who specialize in estate planning when you wish to hire an attorney for such purposes. From time-to-time, we will participate in meetings or phone calls between you and your attorney with your approval or request.
- **Financial Goals:** We will help clients identify financial goals and develop a plan to reach them. We will identify what you plan to accomplish, what resources you will need to make it happen, how much time you will need to reach the goal, and how much you should budget for your goal.
- **Insurance:** Review of existing policies to ensure proper coverage for life, health, disability, long-term care, liability, home, and automobile.
- **Investment Analysis:** This may involve developing an asset allocation strategy to meet clients' financial goals and risk tolerance, providing information on investment vehicles and strategies,

reviewing employee stock options, as well as assisting you in establishing your own investment account at a selected broker/dealer or custodian. The strategies and types of investments we may recommend are further discussed in Item 8 of this brochure.

- **Retirement Planning:** Our retirement planning services typically include projections of your likelihood of achieving your financial goals, typically focusing on financial independence as the primary objective. For situations where projections show less than the desired results, we may make recommendations, including those that may impact the original projections by adjusting certain variables (e.g., working longer, saving more, spending less, taking more risk with investments).

If you are near retirement or already retired, advice may be given on appropriate distribution strategies to minimize the likelihood of running out of money or having to adversely alter spending during your retirement years.

- **Risk Management:** A risk management review includes an analysis of your exposure to major risks that could have a significant adverse impact on your financial picture, such as premature death, disability, property and casualty losses, or the need for long-term care planning. Advice may be provided on ways to minimize such risks and about weighing the costs of purchasing insurance versus the benefits of doing so and, likewise, the potential cost of not purchasing insurance (“self-insuring”).
- **Tax Planning Strategies:** Advice may include ways to minimize current and future income taxes as a part of your overall financial planning picture. For example, we may make recommendations on which type of account(s) or specific investments should be owned based in part on their “tax efficiency,” with consideration that there is always a possibility of future changes to federal, state or local tax laws and rates that may impact your situation.

We recommend that you consult with a qualified tax professional before initiating any tax planning strategy, and we may provide you with contact information for accountants or attorneys who specialize in this area if you wish to hire someone for such purposes. We will participate in meetings or phone calls between you and your tax professional with your approval.

### **Comprehensive Financial Planning**

This service involves working one-on-one with a planner over a six month period. By paying an upfront, fixed fee, clients get to work with a planner who will develop their plan. The client will be taken through establishing their goals and values around money. They will be required to provide information to help complete the following areas of analysis: net worth, cash flow, insurance, employee benefits, retirement planning, insurance, investments, college planning and estate planning. Once the client's information is reviewed, their plan will be built and analyzed, and then the findings, analysis and potential changes to their current situation will be reviewed with the client. Clients subscribing to this service will receive a written or an electronic report, providing the client with a detailed financial plan designed to achieve his or her stated financial goals and objectives.

## Client Tailored Services and Client Imposed Restrictions

We offer the same suite of services to all of our clients. However, specific client financial plans and their implementation are dependent upon the client Investment Policy Statement which outlines each client's current situation (portfolio value, savings goals, and risk tolerance levels) and is used to construct a client specific plan to aid in the selection of a portfolio that matches restrictions, needs, and targets.

## Wrap Fee Programs

We do not participate in wrap fee programs.

# Item 5: Fees and Compensation

Please note, unless a client has received the firm's disclosure brochure at least 48 hours prior to signing the investment advisory contract, the investment advisory contract may be terminated by the client within five (5) business days of signing the contract without incurring any advisory fees. How we are paid depends on the type of advisory service we are performing. Please review the fee and compensation information below.

## Wealth Management Services

The Wealth Management fee is based on a percentage of assets under management calculated using the below tiered schedule:

Assets Under Management	Annual Advisory Fee Tier
First \$1,000,000	1.00%
Next \$2,000,000 (\$1,000,000 - \$3,000,000)	0.75%
Amount above \$3,000,000	0.50%

The annual fees are paid in advance on a quarterly basis based upon the ending value of the previous billing quarter for all accounts under management and the tier percentage rates in the table above. For the initial period of engagement, the fee is calculated on a pro rata basis. There is a minimum quarterly fee of \$900 - \$2,400, depending on complexity and the needs of the client. AFA will debit the client's advisory fee from the client's account. Fees are negotiable.

The minimum quarterly fee may result in a higher advisory fee than listed in the table above. In some cases, it can result in an annual fee of 3.00% or higher on the assets under management. Compliant with Rule 116.13(a) of the Texas State Securities Board, the firm is required to disclose that an annual fee of 3.00% or higher is in excess of industry norm and that similar advisory services can be obtained for less. If you have questions about this fee, we encourage you to ask.

No increase in the annual fee shall be effective without agreement from the client by signing a new agreement or amendment to their current advisory agreement.

Accounts initiated during a calendar quarter will be charged a prorated fee in the first billing period. An account may be terminated with written notice at least 30 calendar days in advance. Upon termination of the account, the fee for the final billing period is prorated based upon the amount of time remaining in the billing period.

Clients participating in our Wealth Management Services will receive Ongoing Financial Planning Services at no additional charge.

### **Comprehensive Financial Planning**

Comprehensive Financial Planning will be offered on a fixed fee basis for clients who do not require ongoing Wealth Management Services. Clients will receive a one-time, six month financial plan. The fixed fee will be agreed upon before the start of any work. The fixed fee can range between \$3,500 and \$8,000 for the six month plan, depending on complexity and the needs of the client. The fee is negotiable. If a fixed fee program is chosen, the fee will be due upfront, however, AFA will not bill an amount above \$500.00 more than 6 months in advance.

Fees for this service may be paid by electronic funds transfer, credit card, or check. In the event of an early termination, any unearned portion of the fee will be prorated based on the amount of work completed and refunded to the client.

### **Other Types of Fees and Expenses**

Our fees are exclusive of brokerage commissions, transaction fees, and other related costs and expenses which may be incurred by the client. Clients may incur certain charges imposed by custodians, brokers, and other third parties such as custodial fees, deferred sales charges, odd-lot differentials, transfer taxes, wire transfer and electronic fund fees, and other fees and taxes on brokerage accounts and securities transactions. Mutual fund and exchange traded funds also charge internal management fees, which are disclosed in a fund's prospectus. Such charges, fees, and commissions are exclusive of and in addition to our fee, and we shall not receive any portion of these commissions, fees, and costs.

Item 12 further describes the factors that we consider in selecting or recommending broker-dealers for client's transactions and determining the reasonableness of their compensation (e.g., commissions).

We do not accept compensation for the sale of securities or other investment products including asset-based sales charges or service fees from the sale of mutual funds.

## **Item 6: Performance-Based Fees and Side-By-Side Management**

We do not offer performance-based fees and do not engage in side-by-side management.



## Item 7: Types of Clients

We provide financial planning and portfolio management services to individuals or families and high net-worth individuals.

We do not have a minimum account size requirement.

## Item 8: Methods of Analysis, Investment Strategies and Risk of Loss

When clients have us complete an Investment Analysis (described in Item 4 of this brochure) as part of their financial plan, or when we perform Investment Advisory services for clients, our primary method of investment analysis is Modern Portfolio Theory.

### **Modern Portfolio Theory:**

Our primary methods of investment analysis include Modern Portfolio Theory (MPT). The following are some of the basic tenets of MPT:

- Investors are risk averse. An investor will take on more risk only if they are expecting a higher return as compensation for that risk.
- Markets are efficient. The market as a whole knows all information about a company, and reacts instantaneously to any new information. Therefore it is virtually impossible to predict the future direction of the market as a whole or any individual security. Current market prices are fair based on available information.
- The design of the portfolio as a whole is more important than the selection of any particular security within the portfolio. The appropriate allocation of capital among asset classes will have far more influence on long-term portfolio performance than the selection of individual securities.
- Portfolio risk can be decreased by increasing diversification of the portfolio. This is done by lowering the correlation of market behavior among the asset classes in the portfolio. Correlation is the statistical term for the extent to which two asset classes move in tandem or opposition to one another.
- Equities offer the potential for higher long-term investment returns than cash or fixed income investments. Investors seeking a higher return in their portfolio should allocate a higher percentage of it towards equities and accept the volatility that comes with equities.

### **Passive Investment Management**

We primarily practice passive investment management. Passive investing involves building portfolios that are composed of various distinct asset classes. The asset classes are weighted in a manner to achieve the desired relationship between correlation, risk, and return. Funds that passively capture the returns of the desired asset classes are placed in the portfolio. The funds that are used to build passive portfolios are

typically index mutual funds or exchange traded funds.

Passive investment management is characterized by low portfolio expenses (i.e. the funds inside the portfolio have low internal costs), minimal trading costs (due to infrequent trading activity), and relative tax efficiency (because the funds inside the portfolio are tax efficient and turnover inside the portfolio is minimal).

In contrast, active management involves a single manager or managers who employ some method, strategy or technique to construct a portfolio that is intended to generate returns that are greater than the broader market or a designated benchmark. Academic research indicates most active managers underperform the market.

### **Material Risks Involved**

**All investing strategies we offer involve risk and may result in a loss of your original investment which you should be prepared to bear.** Many of these risks apply equally to stocks, bonds, commodities and any other investment or security. Material risks associated with our investment strategies are listed below.

**Market Risk:** Market risk involves the possibility that an investment's current market value will fall because of a general market decline, reducing the value of the investment regardless of the operational success of the issuer's operations or its financial condition.

**Strategy Risk:** The Adviser's investment strategies and/or investment techniques may not work as intended.

**Small and Medium Cap Company Risk:** Securities of companies with small and medium market capitalizations are often more volatile and less liquid than investments in larger companies. Small and medium cap companies may face a greater risk of business failure, which could increase the volatility of the client's portfolio.

**Turnover Risk:** At times, the strategy may have a portfolio turnover rate that is higher than other strategies. A high portfolio turnover would result in correspondingly greater brokerage commission expenses and may result in the distribution of additional capital gains for tax purposes. These factors may negatively affect the account's performance.

**Limited markets:** Certain securities may be less liquid (harder to sell or buy) and their prices may at times be more volatile than at other times. Under certain market conditions we may be unable to sell or liquidate investments at prices we consider reasonable or favorable or find buyers at any price.

**Concentration Risk:** Certain investment strategies focus on particular asset-classes, industries, sectors or types of investment. From time to time these strategies may be subject to greater risks of adverse developments in such areas of focus than a strategy that is more broadly diversified across a wider variety of investments.

**Interest Rate Risk:** Bond (fixed income) prices generally fall when interest rates rise, and the value may fall below par value or the principal investment. The opposite is also generally true: bond prices generally rise when interest rates fall. In general, fixed income securities with longer maturities are more sensitive to these price changes. Most other investments are also sensitive to the level and direction of interest

rates.

**Legal or Legislative Risk:** Legislative changes or Court rulings may impact the value of investments, or the securities' claim on the issuer's assets and finances.

**Inflation:** Inflation may erode the buying power of your investment portfolio, even if the dollar value of your investments remains the same.

### **Risks Associated with Securities**

Apart from the general risks outlined above which apply to all types of investments, specific securities may have other risks.

**Commercial Paper** is, in most cases, an unsecured promissory note that is issued with a maturity of 270 days or less. Being unsecured the risk to the investor is that the issuer may default.

**Common stocks** may go up and down in price quite dramatically, and in the event of an issuer's bankruptcy or restructuring could lose all value. A slower-growth or recessionary economic environment could have an adverse effect on the price of all stocks.

**Corporate Bonds** are debt securities to borrow money. Generally, issuers pay investors periodic interest and repay the amount borrowed either periodically during the life of the security and/or at maturity. Alternatively, investors can purchase other debt securities, such as zero coupon bonds, which do not pay current interest, but rather are priced at a discount from their face values and their values accrete over time to face value at maturity. The market prices of debt securities fluctuate depending on such factors as interest rates, credit quality, and maturity. In general, market prices of debt securities decline when interest rates rise and increase when interest rates fall. The longer the time to a bond's maturity, the greater its interest rate risk.

**Bank Obligations** including bonds and certificates of deposit may be vulnerable to setbacks or panics in the banking industry. Banks and other financial institutions are greatly affected by interest rates and may be adversely affected by downturns in the U.S. and foreign economies or changes in banking regulations.

**Municipal Bonds** are debt obligations generally issued to obtain funds for various public purposes, including the construction of public facilities. Municipal bonds pay a lower rate of return than most other types of bonds. However, because of a municipal bond's tax-favored status, investors should compare the relative after-tax return to the after-tax return of other bonds, depending on the investor's tax bracket. Investing in municipal bonds carries the same general risks as investing in bonds in general. Those risks include interest rate risk, reinvestment risk, inflation risk, market risk, call or redemption risk, credit risk, and liquidity and valuation risk.

**Exchange Traded Funds** prices may vary significantly from the Net Asset Value due to market conditions. Certain Exchange Traded Funds may not track underlying benchmarks as expected. ETFs are also subject to the following risks: (i) an ETF's shares may trade at a market price that is above or below their net asset value; (ii) the ETF may employ an investment strategy that utilizes high leverage ratios; or (iii) trading of an ETF's shares may be halted if the listing exchange's officials deem such action appropriate, the shares are de-listed from the exchange, or the activation of market-wide "circuit breakers" (which are tied to large decreases in stock prices) halts stock trading generally. The Adviser has

no control over the risks taken by the underlying funds in which client's invest.

**Investment Companies Risk.** When a client invests in open-end mutual funds or ETFs, the client indirectly bears its proportionate share of any fees and expenses payable directly by those funds. Therefore, the client will incur higher expenses, many of which may be duplicative. In addition, the client's overall portfolio may be affected by losses of an underlying fund and the level of risk arising from the investment practices of an underlying fund (such as the use of derivatives).

## Item 9: Disciplinary Information

### **Criminal or Civil Actions**

AFA and its management have not been involved in any criminal or civil action.

### **Administrative Enforcement Proceedings**

AFA and its management have not been involved in administrative enforcement proceedings.

### **Self-Regulatory Organization Enforcement Proceedings**

AFA and its management have not been involved in legal or disciplinary events that are material to a client's or prospective client's evaluation of AFA or the integrity of its management.

## Item 10: Other Financial Industry Activities and Affiliations

No AFA employee is registered, or have an application pending to register, as a broker-dealer or a registered representative of a broker-dealer.

No AFA employee is registered, or have an application pending to register, as a futures commission merchant, commodity pool operator or a commodity trading advisor.

AFA does not have any related parties. As a result, we do not have a relationship with any related parties.

AFA only receives compensation directly from clients. We do not receive compensation from any outside source. We do not have any conflicts of interest with any outside party.

## Item 11: Code of Ethics, Participation or Interest in Client Transactions and Personal Trading

As a fiduciary, our firm and its associates have a duty of utmost good faith to act solely in the best interests of each client. Our clients entrust us with their funds and personal information, which in turn places a high standard on our conduct and integrity. Our fiduciary duty is a core aspect of our Code of Ethics and represents the expected basis of all of our dealings. The firm also adheres to the Code of Ethics and Professional Responsibility adopted by the CFP® Board of Standards Inc., and accepts the obligation not only to comply with the mandates and requirements of all applicable laws and regulations but also to take responsibility to act in an ethical and professionally responsible manner in all professional services and activities.

### **Code of Ethics Description**

This code does not attempt to identify all possible conflicts of interest, and literal compliance with each of its specific provisions will not shield associated persons from liability for personal trading or other conduct that violates a fiduciary duty to advisory clients. A summary of the Code of Ethics' Principles is outlined below.

- Integrity - Associated persons shall offer and provide professional services with integrity.
- Objectivity - Associated persons shall be objective in providing professional services to clients.
- Competence - Associated persons shall provide services to clients competently and maintain the necessary knowledge and skill to continue to do so in those areas in which they are engaged.
- Fairness - Associated persons shall perform professional services in a manner that is fair and reasonable to clients, principals, partners, and employers, and shall disclose conflict(s) of interest in providing such services.
- Confidentiality - Associated persons shall not disclose confidential client information without the specific consent of the client unless in response to proper legal process, or as required by law.
- Professionalism - Associated persons' conduct in all matter shall reflect the credit of the profession.
- Diligence - Associated persons shall act diligently in providing professional services.

We periodically review and amend our Code of Ethics to ensure that it remains current, and we require all firm access persons to attest to their understanding of and adherence to the Code of Ethics at least annually. Our firm will provide of a copy of its Code of Ethics to any client or prospective client upon request.

### **Investment Recommendations Involving a Material Financial Interest and Conflicts of Interest**

Neither our firm, its associates or any related person is authorized to recommend to a client or effect a transaction for a client, involving any security in which our firm or a related person has a material financial interest, such as in the capacity as an underwriter, adviser to the issuer, etc

### **Advisory Firm Purchase of Same Securities Recommended to Clients and Conflicts of Interest**

Our firm and its “related persons” may buy or sell securities similar to, or different from, those we

recommend to clients for their accounts. In an effort to reduce or eliminate certain conflicts of interest involving the firm or personal trading, our policy may require that we restrict or prohibit associates' transactions in specific reportable securities transactions. Any exceptions or trading pre-clearance must be approved by the firm principal in advance of the transaction in an account, and we maintain the required personal securities transaction records per regulation.

### **Trading Securities At/Around the Same Time as Client's Securities**

From time to time, our firm or its "related persons" may buy or sell securities for themselves at or around the same time as clients. We will not trade non-mutual fund securities 5 days prior to the same security for clients.

## **Item 12: Brokerage Practices**

### **Factors Used to Select Custodians and/or Broker-Dealers**

Avant Financial Advisors does not have any affiliation with Broker-Dealers. Specific custodian recommendations are made to the client based on their need for such services. We recommend custodians based on the reputation and services provided by the firm.

#### **1. Research and Other Soft-Dollar Benefits**

We currently do not receive soft dollar benefits.

#### **2. Brokerage for Client Referrals**

We receive no referrals from a broker-dealer or third party in exchange for using that broker-dealer or third party.

#### **3. Clients Directing Which Broker/Dealer/Custodian to Use**

We do recommend a specific custodian for clients to use, however, clients may custody their assets at a custodian of their choice. Clients may also direct us to use a specific broker-dealer to execute transactions. By allowing clients to choose a specific custodian, we may be unable to achieve most favorable execution of client transaction and this may cost clients money over using a lower-cost custodian.

### **The Custodians and Brokers We Use**

Advisor participates in the TD Ameritrade Institutional program. TD Ameritrade Institutional is a division of TD Ameritrade, Inc. ("TD Ameritrade"), member FINRA/SIPC. TD Ameritrade is an independent [and unaffiliated] SEC-registered broker-dealer. TD Ameritrade offers to independent investment Advisors services which include custody of securities, trade execution, clearance, and settlement of transactions.

Advisor also utilizes the Schwab Institutional division of Charles Schwab & Co., Inc. ("Schwab"), member FINRA/SIPC. Schwab is an independent [and unaffiliated] SEC-registered broker-dealer. Schwab offers to independent investment Advisors services which include custody of securities, trade execution, clearance, and settlement of transactions.

Advisor receives some benefits from TD Ameritrade and Schwab. (Please see the disclosure under Item 14 below.)

## **Aggregating (Block) Trading for Multiple Client Accounts**

Investment advisers may elect to purchase or sell the same securities for several clients at approximately the same time when they believe such action may prove advantageous to clients. This process is referred to as aggregating orders, batch trading or block trading. We do not engage in block trading. It should be noted that implementing trades on a block or aggregate basis may be less expensive for client accounts; however, it is our trading policy is to implement all client orders on an individual basis. Therefore, we do not aggregate or “block” client transactions. Considering the types of investments we hold in advisory client accounts, we do not believe clients are hindered in any way because we trade accounts individually. This is because we develop individualized investment strategies for clients and holdings will vary. Our strategies are primarily developed for the long-term and minor differences in price execution are not material to our overall investment strategy.

Outside Managers used by AFA may block client trades at their discretion. Their specific practices are further discussed in their ADV Part 2A, Item 12.

## **Item 13: Review of Accounts**

AFA will work with clients to obtain current information regarding their assets and investment holdings and will review this information as part of our financial planning services. AFA does not provide specific reports to clients, other than financial plans.

Client accounts with the Wealth Management Service will be reviewed regularly on a quarterly basis by a lead planner. The account is reviewed with regards to the client’s investment policies and risk tolerance levels. Events that may trigger a special review would be unusual performance, addition or deletions of client imposed restrictions, excessive draw-down, volatility in performance, or buy and sell decisions from the firm or per client's needs.

Clients will receive trade confirmations from the broker(s) for each transaction in their accounts as well as monthly or quarterly statements and annual tax reporting statements from their custodian showing all activity in the accounts, such as receipt of dividends and interest.

AFA will provide written reports to Wealth Management Services clients upon request.

## **Item 14: Client Referrals and Other Compensation**

We do not receive any economic benefit, directly or indirectly, from any third party for advice rendered to our clients. Nor do we, directly or indirectly, compensate any person who is not advisory personnel for client referrals.

As disclosed under Item 12, above, Advisor may recommend TD Ameritrade or Schwab to Clients for custody and brokerage services. There is no direct link between Advisor's participation in these programs and the investment advice it gives to its Clients, although Advisor receives economic benefits through its participation in these programs that are typically not available to TD Ameritrade or Schwab retail investors. These benefits include the following products and services (provided without cost or at a discount): receipt of duplicate Client statements and confirmations; research related products and tools; consulting services; access to a trading desk serving Advisor participants; access to block trading (which provides the ability to aggregate securities transactions for execution and then allocate the appropriate shares to Client accounts); the ability to have advisory fees deducted directly from Client accounts; access to an electronic communications network for Client order entry and account information; access to mutual funds with no transaction fees and to certain institutional money managers; and discounts on compliance, marketing, research, technology, and practice management products or services provided to Advisor by third party vendors. TD Ameritrade or Schwab may also have paid for business consulting and professional services received by Advisor's related persons. Some of the products and services made available by TD Ameritrade or Schwab through these programs may benefit Advisor but may not benefit its Client accounts. These products or services may assist Advisor in managing and administering Client accounts, including accounts not maintained at TD Ameritrade or Schwab. Other services made available by TD Ameritrade or Schwab are intended to help Advisor manage and further develop its business enterprise. The benefits received by Advisor or its personnel through participation in the program do not depend on the amount of brokerage transactions directed to TD Ameritrade or Schwab. As part of its fiduciary duties to clients, Advisor endeavors at all times to put the interests of its clients first. Clients should be aware, however, that the receipt of economic benefits by Advisor or its related persons in and of itself creates a potential conflict of interest and may indirectly influence the Advisor's choice of TD Ameritrade or Schwab for custody and brokerage services.

## Item 15: Custody

AFA is considered to have custody of client funds when authorized or permitted, by the client, to instruct the custodian to deduct advisory fees from the client's account held at the custodian.

For client accounts in which AFA directly debits their advisory fee:

- i. AFA will send a copy of its invoice to the custodian at the same time that it sends the client a copy.
- ii. The custodian will send at least quarterly statements to the client showing all disbursements for the account, including the amount of the advisory fee.
- iii. The client will provide written authorization to AFA, permitting them to be paid directly for their accounts held by the custodian.

Clients should receive at least quarterly statements from the broker-dealer, bank or other qualified custodian that holds and maintains client's investment assets. We urge you to carefully review such statements and compare such official custodial records to the account statements or reports that we may provide to you. Our statements or reports may vary from custodial statements based on accounting procedures, reporting dates, or valuation methodologies of certain securities.



For certain clients AFA is considered to have custody of client funds because AFA has usernames and passwords for accounts outside of TD Ameritrade or Schwab, to provide investment related services. AFA has retained an independent accountant to conduct an annual audit of the firm, as required by the rules and regulations of the Texas State Securities Board.

For clients accounts in which AFA has custody due to usernames and passwords the same safeguards listed above will be applicable.

## Item 16: Investment Discretion

For those client accounts where we provide Investment Advisory Services, we maintain discretion over client accounts with respect to securities to be bought and sold and the amount of securities to be bought and sold. Investment discretion is explained to clients in detail when an advisory relationship has commenced. At the start of the advisory relationship, the client will execute a Limited Power of Attorney, which will grant our firm discretion over the account. Additionally, the discretionary relationship will be outlined in the advisory contract and signed by the client.

## Item 17: Voting Client Securities

We do not vote Client proxies. Therefore, Clients maintain exclusive responsibility for: (1) voting proxies, and (2) acting on corporate actions pertaining to the Client's investment assets. The Client shall instruct the Client's qualified custodian to forward to the Client copies of all proxies and shareholder communications relating to the Client's investment assets. If the client would like our opinion on a particular proxy vote, they may contact us at the number listed on the cover of this brochure.

In most cases, you will receive proxy materials directly from the account custodian. However, in the event we were to receive any written or electronic proxy materials, we would forward them directly to you by mail, unless you have authorized our firm to contact you by electronic mail, in which case, we would forward you any electronic solicitation to vote proxies.

## Item 18: Financial Information

Registered Investment Advisers are required in this Item to provide you with certain financial information or disclosures about our financial condition. We have no financial commitment that impairs our ability to meet contractual and fiduciary commitments to clients, and we have not been the subject of a bankruptcy proceeding.

We do not require or solicit prepayment of more than \$500 in fees per client six months in advance.

# Item 19: Requirements for State-Registered Advisers

**Scott Matthew Ela**

Born: 1982

## **Educational Background**

- 2004 – BBA - Accounting and Finance, Texas A&M University

## **Business Experience**

- 06/2018 – Present, Avant Financial Advisors LLC, Managing Member and CCO
- 04/2015 – 05/2018, Austin Asset, Manager - Wealth Planning
- 07/2014 – 04/2015, Austin Asset, Senior Associate - Wealth Planning
- 07/2012 – 07/2014, Austin Asset, Associate - Wealth Planning
- 01/2007 – 07/2012, Texas State Auditor's Office, Senior Auditor
- 02/2005 – 01/2007, Texas State Auditor's Office, Auditor

## **Professional Designations, Licensing & Exams**

**CFP (Certified Financial Planner)®:** The CERTIFIED FINANCIAL PLANNER™, CFP® and federally registered CFP (with flame design) marks (collectively, the “CFP® marks”) are professional certification marks granted in the United States by Certified Financial Planner Board of Standards, Inc. (“CFP Board”).

The CFP® certification is a voluntary certification; no federal or state law or regulation requires financial planners to hold CFP® certification. It is recognized in the United States and a number of other countries for its (1) high standard of professional education; (2) stringent code of conduct and standards of practice; and (3) ethical requirements that govern professional engagements with clients. Currently, more than 71,000 individuals have obtained CFP® certification in the United States.

To attain the right to use the CFP® marks, an individual must satisfactorily fulfill the following requirements:

- Education – Complete an advanced college-level course of study addressing the financial planning subject areas that CFP Board’s studies have determined as necessary for the competent and professional delivery of financial planning services, and attain a Bachelor’s Degree from a regionally accredited United States college or university (or its equivalent from a foreign university). CFP Board’s financial planning subject areas include insurance planning and risk management, employee benefits planning, investment planning, income tax planning, retirement planning, and estate planning;
- Examination – Pass the comprehensive CFP® Certification Examination. The examination includes case studies and client scenarios designed to test one's ability to correctly diagnose financial planning issues and apply one's knowledge of financial planning to real-world circumstances;

- Experience – Complete at least three years of full-time financial planning-related experience (or the equivalent, measured as 2,000 hours per year); and
- Ethics – Agree to be bound by CFP Board’s *Standards of Professional Conduct*, a set of documents outlining the ethical and practice standards for CFP® professionals.

Individuals who become certified must complete the following ongoing education and ethics requirements in order to maintain the right to continue to use the CFP® marks:

- Continuing Education – Complete 30 hours of continuing education hours every two years, including two hours on the *Code of Ethics* and other parts of the *Standards of Professional Conduct*, to maintain competence and keep up with developments in the financial planning field; and
- Ethics – Renew an agreement to be bound by the *Standards of Professional Conduct*. The *Standards* prominently require that CFP® professionals provide financial planning services at a fiduciary standard of care. This means CFP® professionals must provide financial planning services in the best interests of their clients.

CFP® professionals who fail to comply with the above standards and requirements may be subject to CFP Board’s enforcement process, which could result in suspension or permanent revocation of their CFP® certification.

**Certified Public Accountant (CPA):** The CPA license is a voluntary certification; no federal or state law or regulation requires financial planners to hold a CPA license. It is recognized in the United States and a number of other countries for its (1) high standard of professional education; (2) stringent code of conduct and standards of practice; and (3) ethical requirements that govern professional engagements with clients. There are approximately 76,000 individuals that have obtained a CPA license in the State of Texas.

To attain the right to use the CPA license, an individual must satisfactorily fulfill the following requirements:

- Education – Requirements vary by state/jurisdiction. Most states (including Texas) require 150 semester hours in a Bachelors Degree; Within those 150 hours, Texas requires the following:
  - 30 semester hours or equivalent quarter hours of upper level accounting courses (15 hours requires physical attendance on campus; 2 credit hours required in accounting or taxation research and analysis);
  - 24 semester hours or quarter hour equivalents of upper level related business courses (2 hours of accounting or business communications are required), and
  - 3 semester hours in a Board-approved ethics course.
- Examination – the Uniform Certified Public Accountant (CPA) Examination is the examination that an individual must pass in order to qualify for licensure as a Certified Public Accountant (CPA) in any of the 55 U.S. jurisdictions (the 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, U.S. Virgin Islands, Guam, and the Commonwealth of Northern Mariana Islands).

CPAs are the only licensed accounting professionals. CPA licenses are issued by state boards of accountancy in the 55 jurisdictions – there is no national CPA licensure process in the U.S.

The purpose of the Uniform CPA Examination is to provide reasonable assurance to Boards of Accountancy (the state entities that have statutory authority to issue licenses) that those who pass the CPA Examination possess the level of technical knowledge and the skills necessary for initial licensure in protection of the public interest. Public interest is protected when only qualified individuals are admitted into the profession.

The Uniform CPA Examination currently consists of four sections: Auditing and Attestation (AUD), Business Environment and Concepts (BEC), Financial Accounting and Reporting (FAR), and Regulation (REG). These four sections represent a total of 14 hours of testing.

- Experience – As for experience, most states/jurisdictions require at least two years public accounting experience. Texas requires one year work experience in the following categories or in any combination of these: client practice of public accountancy, industry, government, law firm, education, or internship. The board, on a case-by-case basis, may approve other areas of work experience which are recognized as non-routine accounting work.

Individuals who become certified must complete the following ongoing education and ethics requirements in order to maintain the right to continue to use the CPA license:

- Continuing Education – As for continuing professional education (CPE), most states/jurisdictions require an average of 40 hours of CPE per year. Texas requires annual registration with a minimum of 120 hours in each three-year period

### **Other Business Activities**

Scott Matthew Ela is not involved with outside business activities.

### **Performance-Based Fees**

AFA is not compensated by performance-based fees.

### **Material Disciplinary Disclosures**

No management person at Avant Financial Advisors has ever been involved in an arbitration claim of any kind or been found liable in a civil, self-regulatory organization, or administrative proceeding.

### **Material Relationships That Management Persons Have With Issuers of Securities**

Avant Financial Advisors, nor Scott Matthew Ela, have any relationship or arrangement with issuers of securities.

### **Additional Compensation**

Scott Matthew Ela does not receive any economic benefit from any person, company, or organization, in exchange for providing clients advisory services through AFA.

### **Supervision**

Scott Matthew Ela, as Managing Member and Chief Compliance Officer of AFA, is responsible for supervision. He may be contacted at the phone number on this brochure supplement.

### **Requirements for State Registered Advisers**

Scott Matthew Ela has NOT been involved in an arbitration, civil proceeding, self-regulatory proceeding, administrative proceeding, or a bankruptcy petition.

### **Thomas James Stevenson**

Born: 1991

#### **Educational Background**

- Baylor University, Waco, TX; Bachelor of Arts, Economics, 2009-2013
- Texas A&M University, College Station, TX, Attended: 2011-2011

#### **Business Experience**

- 02/2022-Present, Avant Financial Advisors LLC, Financial Advisor
- 01/2020-02/2022, Austin Asset, Lead Advisor and Wealth Planning Supervisor
- 06/2018-01/2020, Austin Asset, Service Advisor-Wealth Planning
- 05/2017-06/2018, Austin Asset, Senior Associate-Wealth Planning
- 04/2016-05/2017, Austin Asset, Associate-Wealth Planning
- 11/2014-04/2016, Austin Asset, Associate-Wealth Management
- 09/2013-11/2014, Lucien, Stirling & Gray Advisory Group, Dealer Interface Manager

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# Avant Financial Advisors

**Dripping Springs, TX (512) 910-2467**

Dated March 2nd, 2022

## Form ADV Part 2B – Brochure Supplement

**Scott Matthew Ela [Individual CRD# 6379699]**

**Managing Member, and Chief Compliance Officer**

**Thomas James Stevenson [Individual CRD# 5957044]**

**Financial Advisor**

This brochure supplement provides information about the Firm's Supervised Persons that supplements the Avant Financial Advisors LLC d/b/a Advant Financial Advisors ("AFA") brochure. A copy of that brochure precedes this supplement. Please contact Scott Matthew Ela at (512) 910-2467 if the AFA brochure is not included with this supplement or if you have any questions about the contents of this supplement.

Additional information about Scott Matthew Ela is available on the SEC's website at [www.adviserinfo.sec.gov](http://www.adviserinfo.sec.gov) which can be found using the identification number 6379699.



# Item 2: Educational Background and Business Experience

**Scott Matthew Ela**

Born: 1982

## **Educational Background**

- 2004 – BBA - Accounting and Finance, Texas A&M University

## **Business Experience**

- 06/2018 – Present, Avant Financial Advisors LLC, Managing Member and CCO
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## **Thomas James Stevenson**

Born: 1991

### **Educational Background**

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- Texas A&M University, College Station, TX, Attended: 2011-2011

### **Business Experience**

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- 01/2020-02/2022, Austin Asset, Lead Advisor and Wealth Planning Supervisor
- 06/2018-01/2020, Austin Asset, Service Advisor-Wealth Planning
- 05/2017-06/2018, Austin Asset, Senior Associate-Wealth Planning
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- 09/2013-11/2014, Lucien, Stirling & Gray Advisory Group, Dealer Interface Manager

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Individuals who become certified must complete the following ongoing education and ethics requirements in order to maintain the right to continue to use the CFP® marks:
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The *Standards* prominently require that CFP® professionals provide financial planning services at a fiduciary standard of care. This means CFP® professionals must provide financial planning services in the best interests of their clients.  
CFP® professionals who fail to comply with the above standards and requirements may be subject to CFP Board’s enforcement process, which could result in suspension or permanent revocation of their CFP® certification

## Item 3: Disciplinary Information

Neither Avant Financial Advisors nor any Supervised Persons have been involved in any activities resulting in disciplinary disclosure.

## Item 4: Other Business Activities

Our firm and our Supervised Persons are not engaged in other financial industry activities, investment-related activities, and are not engaged in any other business or occupation that provides substantial compensation or involves substantial amount of the Supervised Person’s time.

## Item 5: Additional Compensation

Our firm and our Supervised Persons do not receive any economic benefit from a non-advisory client for the provision of advisory services and do not receive commissions, bonuses or other compensation on the sale of securities or other investment products.

## Item 6: Supervision

Scott Matthew Ela, as Managing Member and Chief Compliance Officer of AFA, is responsible for supervision. He may be contacted at the phone number on this brochure supplement. The firm supervises account activity and Supervised Persons through various means.

# Item 7: Requirements for State Registered Advisers

Our firm and our Supervised Persons have NOT been involved in an arbitration, civil proceeding, self-regulatory proceeding, administrative proceeding, or a bankruptcy petition.