

Quick Start Checklist: Certified Advisor Reviews™

This checklist is for SEC registered investment advisors interested in getting started quickly and compliantly with Certified Advisor Reviews™ to grow their business.

	Action Items	Lead	Resources from Wealthtender
<input type="checkbox"/>	Update your firm policies and procedures to comply with new SEC Marketing rule 206(4)-1	Compliance Officer	Use this editable policies and procedures template from Wealthtender as a starting point for inclusion with your updates.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Educate staff on SEC Marketing rule, and the firm's updated policies and procedures	Compliance Officer	Ask your staff to read your new policies and procedures; Encourage staff to read the Wealthtender Online Reviews Playbook
<input type="checkbox"/>	Toggle reviews feature to the on position for each advisor profile page on Wealthtender (found in the Edit panel when signed in)	Financial Advisors	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Send email to all current clients inviting them to write a review (or invite within next client newsletter)	Financial Advisors	Download this email outreach template designed to ask for a review tactfully

Congratulations! Next, when clients submit reviews on your Wealthtender profile page (or on your firm's website using your embeddable widget from Wealthtender), **here's what happens:**

- Reviews are **not** displayed publicly yet, pending the certification process:
- Wealthtender notifies you by email of your new review, including all relevant review details
- Click the link within the email and provide the requested details, including:
 - Is the reviewer a current client? Or a non-client? (e.g., peer, professional acquaintance)
 - Was the reviewer compensated for their review in any form?
 - Are there any material conflicts of interest?
 - Any additional disclosures?
- Upon submitting the above details, Wealthtender publishes the review with the Certified Advisor Review™ mark, formatted for compliance with the SEC Marketing rule.

You're off to a great start! Now, your Certified Advisor Reviews will begin working for you to help you attract your ideal clients and grow your business. And typically, once you've received around 5 reviews, Google will start displaying your gold stars in search results with the link to your Wealthtender profile.

The following pages expand upon the certification process summarized above, along with templates and resources available for your use | [➔ View 7-Minute Video Demo: Certified Advisor Reviews](#)

1. Get prepared to email ALL of your current clients to ask for a review

💡 **Wealthtender Recommends:** We provide the below email template you can use and customize to request reviews from ALL of your current clients. Remember, the SEC is concerned about *cherrypicking*, so it is important to contact all of your clients concurrently with a consistent message. Use your CRM system to record your email outreach to breeze through an SEC exam that asks for this detail. Alternatively (or in addition), consider including an invitation in your next client newsletter for clients to write a review.

Email Outreach Template: Current Clients

Subject (Suggestion): How am I doing?

Hi FirstName,

I'm reaching out to you and each of my clients this morning to thank you for trusting me to help you achieve your financial goals. It's my pleasure serving you, and I appreciate you choosing me as your financial advisor.

I would be grateful if you could write a review about your experience working with me as a valued client of our firm. These reviews only take a couple of minutes and help other people looking for a financial advisor decide if we may be a good fit to work together.

Of course, writing a review is completely optional, and I appreciate your consideration. Here's a link to my profile page on Wealthtender if you'd like to write a review when you have time:

<https://wealthtender.com/financial-advisors/your-name>

Simply scroll down and click 'Write a Review', and you'll see a form appear with easy to follow instructions.


Thanks again for your consideration, and please let me know if there's anything I can do for you today.

YourName

Additional Resources:

- [SEC Marketing Rule: Asking for Testimonials and Endorsements](#)
- [Email Outreach Template: Non-Clients \(Endorsements\)](#)

2. Send your outreach email to ALL of your current clients

 **Wealthtender Recommends:** Before clicking the send button on your outreach email to all clients (or distributing your client newsletter that includes an invitation to write a review), consider the tips and suggestions below to ensure a smooth and compliant process.

- Avoid asking for a positive review or inserting language which appears to influence a reviewer towards responding in a particular way

- Prepare a single email you'll send to all clients – This will demonstrate to the SEC that your messaging is consistent regardless of the nature of your relationship. Or include an invitation to write a review in an upcoming client newsletter.

- Schedule the email for early morning delivery on a weekday (e.g., 5 am) or consider weekend delivery to avoid overlapping with time-sensitive client emails

- Consider reaching out to sensitive clients by phone the afternoon before your outreach to provide context about the email they'll receive the next day


- Consider reaching out to brand new clients by phone in advance who might feel the email asking for a review is premature; Offer context about the SEC rule to explain why they're receiving the invitation to write a review

- Are there non-clients you want to ask for a review (endorsement) at this time? Beyond your current clients, the SEC permits you to ask others to write reviews you'll be able to use to promote your business as well. Consider experts and professionals in your niche who can attest to your specialist knowledge or leaders of non-profit organizations who may praise your dedication to the community. Refer to [this email template](#) for non-clients as a starting point.

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After your initial emails have been sent (or newsletter invitation delivered), don't worry if you don't immediately receive reviews. You've checked the first box to comply with SEC requirements, and future opportunities to ask for reviews will be ample and feel more natural.

3. Watch your inbox for new pending reviews; Use Pre-Publication Checklist

 **Wealthtender Recommends:** When you receive an email from Wealthtender notifying you about a new (pending) testimonial or endorsement, review its details and use the Online Review [Pre-Publication Checklist](#) (also shown below) to ensure no prohibitions exist and proper disclosures are added. If you're uncertain about any element of the review, contact your compliance counterpart for guidance before proceeding.

Review for a) Prohibited Content & b) Unsubstantiated Material Statements of Fact

- Does the review include a material statement of fact we don't have a reasonable basis for believing we will be able to substantiate upon demand by the SEC?
- Does the review include any untrue statement of a material fact, or omit to state a material fact necessary in order to make the statement made (in light of circumstances) not misleading?
- Does the review include information that would reasonably be likely to cause an untrue or misleading implication or inference to be drawn concerning a material fact relating to us?
- Does the review discuss any potential benefits to clients or investors connected with or resulting from our services or methods of operation without providing fair and balanced treatment of any material risks or material limitations associated with the potential benefits?
- Does the review include a reference to specific investment advice provided by us where such investment advice is not presented in a manner that is fair and balanced?
- Does the review include or exclude performance results, or present performance time periods, in a manner that is not fair and balanced?
- Could the review otherwise be considered materially misleading?
- Does the review contain an unsubstantiated material statement of fact that we should substantiate in the Additional Disclosures section?

Our Disclosures Include a) *Clear and Prominent* Section & b) Access to Additional Disclosures:

- Yes, *Clear and Prominent* Section is Included
- Clear and Prominent* Section is Adjacent to Body of Review and Visible at All Times
- Clear and Prominent* Section Font is Same Size and Weight as Body of Review
- Additional disclosures are accessible via link or other method (expand to view, QR code, etc.)

Our *Clear and Prominent* Disclosures Include:

- Client Status: Current Client, Non-Client
- Compensation: Paid (Cash, Non-Cash), Unpaid
 - If Compensated: Is the Reviewer a Bad Actor? If over \$1,000, is written agreement in place?
- Conflicts of Interest: Material Conflict(s) Succinctly Described

Our Additional Disclosures Include:

- Compensation: Material terms including a description, compensation value, time period, etc.
- Conflicts of Interest: Detailed explanation of material conflicts of interest based on relationship and/or compensation arrangement; Disclosure includes explicit statement 'reviewer has an incentive to recommend based on [compensation / other]'.
- If the reviewer wishes to remain anonymous publicly, are we honoring their request appropriately?

4. Complete the online review certification process to publish your review

After you have followed the checklist steps, click the link in the notification email from Wealthtender and follow the prompts to provide the necessary disclosures, indicating if the reviewer is a client, if they were compensated, and conflicts of interest (if any).

Use the 'Other' field if you need to enter custom disclosure for any of the first three *clear and prominent* disclosure items. Use the 'Additional Disclosures' field if you need to provide supplementary disclosure details determined in your pre-publication checklist review.

ACTION REQUESTED:

Please provide the regulatory disclosure items requested below to complete the review certification process. [Jump to FAQs](#) | Additional Resources:

- View the [Online Review Pre-Publication Checklist \(PDF\)](#)
- Read the [first FAQ](#) below for pre-publication tips.

Relationship - This Reviewer is a: (Required)

Current Client

Former Client

This reviewer has never been a client.

Other

Compensation (Required)

This reviewer received no compensation for this review.

Other

Conflicts of Interest (Required)

There are no material conflicts of interest.

Other

Additional Disclosures (if applicable):

In the box above, please list any additional disclosures that should accompany this review. (Leave this field blank if no additional disclosures are required.)

Upon submitting the above details, Wealthtender publishes the review with the Certified Advisor Review™ mark, formatted with all disclosures for compliance with the SEC Marketing rule.