



## SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION

[Release No. 34-104523; File No. SR-Phlx-2025-74]

### Self-Regulatory Organizations; Nasdaq PHLX LLC; Notice of Filing and Immediate Effectiveness of Proposed Rule Change to Amend Options 7, Section 4

December 30, 2025.

Pursuant to Section 19(b)(1) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 (“Act”),<sup>1</sup> and Rule 19b-4 thereunder,<sup>2</sup> notice is hereby given that on December 16, 2025, Nasdaq PHLX LLC (“Phlx” or “Exchange”) filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission (“SEC” or “Commission”) the proposed rule change as described in Items I, II, and III, below, which Items have been prepared by the Exchange. 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 to amend Options 7, Section 4, Multiply Listed Options Fees (Includes options overlying equities, ETFs, ETNs and indexes which are Multiply Listed) (Excludes SPY and broad-based index options symbols listed within Options 7, Section 5.A).

The text of the proposed rule change is available on the Exchange’s Website at <https://listingcenter.nasdaq.com/rulebook/phlx/rulefilings>, and at the principal office of the Exchange.

#### 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 Exchange 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 these statements may be examined at the places specified in

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<sup>1</sup> 15 U.S.C. 78s(b)(1).

<sup>2</sup> 17 CFR 240.19b-4.

Item IV below. The Exchange has prepared summaries, set forth in sections A, B, and C below, of the most significant aspects of such statements.

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

1. Purpose

Phlx proposes to amend pricing within Options 7, Section 4 with respect to strategy caps for Floor Originated Strategy Executions.

Today, the Exchange permits the following strategy executions: (1) dividend strategy,<sup>3</sup> merger strategy,<sup>4</sup> short stock interest strategy,<sup>5</sup> reversal and conversion strategies,<sup>6</sup> jelly roll strategy,<sup>7</sup> and a box spread strategy.<sup>8</sup> To qualify for a strategy cap,<sup>9</sup> the buy and sell side of a transaction must originate either from the Exchange Trading Floor or as a Floor Qualified Contingent Cross Order.<sup>10</sup> Currently, in lieu of the Options Transactions Charges in Options 7,

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<sup>3</sup> A dividend strategy is defined as transactions done to achieve a dividend arbitrage involving the purchase, sale and exercise of in-the-money options of the same class, executed the first business day prior to the date on which the underlying stock goes ex-dividend. See Options 7, Section 4.

<sup>4</sup> A merger strategy is defined as transactions done to achieve a merger arbitrage involving the purchase, sale and exercise of options of the same class and expiration date, executed the first business day prior to the date on which shareholders of record are required to elect their respective form of consideration, i.e., cash or stock. See Options 7, Section 4.

<sup>5</sup> A short stock interest strategy is defined as transactions done to achieve a short stock interest arbitrage involving the purchase, sale and exercise of in-the-money options of the same class. See Options 7, Section 4.

<sup>6</sup> Reversal and conversion strategies are transactions that employ calls and puts of the same strike price and the underlying stock. Reversals are established by combining a short stock position with a short put and a long call position that shares the same strike and expiration. Conversions employ long positions in the underlying stock that accompany long puts and short calls sharing the same strike and expiration. See Options 7, Section 4.

<sup>7</sup> A jelly roll strategy is defined as transactions created by entering into two separate positions simultaneously. One position involves buying a put and selling a call with the same strike price and expiration. The second position involves selling a put and buying a call, with the same strike price, but with a different expiration from the first position. See Options 7, Section 4.

<sup>8</sup> A box spread strategy is a strategy that synthesizes long and short stock positions to create a profit. Specifically, a long call and short put at one strike is combined with a short call and long put at a different strike to create synthetic long and synthetic short stock positions, respectively. See Options 7, Section 4.

<sup>9</sup> Of note, NDX, NDXP, and XND Options Transactions are excluded from strategy cap pricing.

<sup>10</sup> See Phlx’s Pricing Schedule at Options 7, Section 4. A Floor Qualified Contingent Cross Order is comprised of an originating order to buy or sell at least 1,000 contracts that is identified as being part of a qualified contingent trade coupled with a contra-side order or orders totaling an equal number of contracts. The term “qualified contingent trade” shall have the same meaning set forth in Options 3, Section 12(a)(3). See Options 8, Section 30(e).

Section 4 for Penny Symbols and Non-Penny Symbols, the Exchange pays a \$0.01 rebate per contract on any strategy execution that meets the qualifications noted in the table in Options 7, Section 4. Therefore, for a dividend strategy, a Lead Market Maker,<sup>11</sup> Market Maker,<sup>12</sup> Professional,<sup>13</sup> Firm<sup>14</sup> and Broker-Dealer<sup>15</sup> that executed on the same trading day in the same class of options when such members are trading: (1) in their own proprietary accounts; or (2) on an agency basis, is paid a \$0.01 rebate per contract. For a merger, short stock interest and box spread strategy, a Lead Market Maker, Market Maker, Professional, Firm and Broker-Dealer that executed on the same trading day for all classes of options in the aggregate when such members are trading (1) in their own proprietary accounts; or (2) on an agency basis, is paid a \$0.01 rebate per contract. Finally, for reversal and conversion and jelly roll strategies, a Lead Market Maker, Market Maker, Professional, Firm and Broker-Dealer that executed on the same trading day for all classes of options in the aggregate when such members are trading (1) in their own proprietary accounts; or (2) on an agency basis, is paid a \$0.01 rebate per contract. Finally,

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<sup>11</sup> The term “Lead Market Maker” applies to transactions for the account of a Lead Market Maker (as defined in Options 2, Section 12(a)). A Lead Market Maker is an Exchange member who is registered as an options Lead Market Maker pursuant to Options 2, Section 12(a). An options Lead Market Maker includes a Remote Lead Market Maker which is defined as an options Lead Market Maker in one or more classes that does not have a physical presence on an Exchange floor and is approved by the Exchange pursuant to Options 2, Section 11. See Options 7, Section 1(c).

<sup>12</sup> The term “Market Maker” is defined in Options 1, Section 1(b)(28) as a member of the Exchange who is registered as an options Market Maker pursuant to Options 2, Section 12(a). A Market Maker includes SQTs and RSQTs as well as Floor Market Makers. The term “Streaming Quote Trader” or “SQT” is defined in Options 1, Section 1(b)(55) as a Market Maker who has received permission from the Exchange to generate and submit option quotations electronically in options to which such SQT is assigned. The term “Remote Streaming Quote Trader” or “RSQT” is defined in Options 1, Section 1(b)(49) as a Market Maker that is a member affiliated with an RSQTO with no physical trading floor presence who has received permission from the Exchange to generate and submit option quotations electronically in options to which such RSQT has been assigned. A Remote Streaming Quote Trader Organization or “RSQTO,” which may also be referred to as a Remote Market Making Organization (“RMO”), is a member organization in good standing that satisfies the RSQTO readiness requirements in Options 2, Section 1(a). See Options 7, Section 1(c).

<sup>13</sup> The term “Professional” applies to transactions for the accounts of Professionals, as defined in Options 1, Section 1(b)(45) means any person or entity that (i) is not a broker or dealer in securities, and (ii) places more than 390 orders in listed options per day on average during a calendar month for its own beneficial account(s). See Options 7, Section 1(c).

<sup>14</sup> The term “Firm” applies to any transaction that is identified by a member or member organization for clearing in the Firm range at The Options Clearing Corporation. See Options 7, Section 1(c).

<sup>15</sup> The term “Broker-Dealer” applies to any transaction which is not subject to any of the other transaction fees applicable within a particular category. See Options 7, Section 1(c).

Customers are not assessed a fee and do not receive a rebate for strategy transactions.

### *Proposal*

At this time, the Exchange proposes to remove the \$0.01 strategy rebates described in the table at Options 7, Section 4 and instead assess no transaction charges on any permissible strategy executions defined in Options 7, Section 4 that meet the qualifications. For a dividend strategy, a Lead Market Maker, Market Maker, Professional, Firm and Broker-Dealer that executed on the same trading day in the same class of options when such members are trading: (1) in their own proprietary accounts; or (2) on an agency basis, are subject to no transaction fee. For a merger, short stock interest and box spread strategy, a Lead Market Maker, Market Maker, Professional, Firm and Broker-Dealer that executed on the same trading day for all classes of options in the aggregate when such members are trading (1) in their own proprietary accounts; or (2) on an agency basis, are subject to no transaction fee. Finally, for reversal and conversion and jelly roll strategies, a Lead Market Maker, Market Maker, Professional, Firm and Broker-Dealer that executed on the same trading day for all classes of options in the aggregate when such members are trading (1) in their own proprietary accounts; or (2) on an agency basis, are subject to no transaction fee. As is the case today, Customers are not assessed a fee nor receive a rebate for strategy transactions.

The Exchange believes that despite the removal of the \$0.01 rebate for qualifying strategy executions, the proposed pricing will continue to attract strategy executions to Phlx as it assesses no transaction fee for qualifying strategy executions

## 2. Statutory Basis

The Exchange believes that its proposal is consistent with Section 6(b) of the Act,<sup>16</sup> in general, and furthers the objectives of Sections 6(b)(4) and 6(b)(5) of the Act,<sup>17</sup> in particular, in that it provides for the equitable allocation of reasonable dues, fees and other charges among

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<sup>16</sup> 15 U.S.C. 78f(b).

<sup>17</sup> 15 U.S.C. 78f(b)(4) and (5).

members and issuers and other persons using any facility, and is not designed to permit unfair discrimination between customers, issuers, brokers, or dealers.

The Commission and the courts have repeatedly expressed their preference for competition over regulatory intervention in determining prices, products, and services in the securities markets. In Regulation NMS, while adopting a series of steps to improve the current market model, the Commission highlighted the importance of market forces in determining prices and SRO revenues and, also, recognized that current regulation of the market system “has been remarkably successful in promoting market competition in its broader forms that are most important to investors and listed companies.”<sup>18</sup>

Likewise, in NetCoalition v. Securities and Exchange Commission<sup>19</sup> (“NetCoalition”) the D.C. Circuit upheld the Commission’s use of a market-based approach in evaluating the fairness of market data fees against a challenge claiming that Congress mandated a cost-based approach.<sup>20</sup> As the court emphasized, the Commission “intended in Regulation NMS that ‘market forces, rather than regulatory requirements’ play a role in determining the market data . . . to be made available to investors and at what cost.”<sup>21</sup>

Further, “[n]o one disputes that competition for order flow is ‘fierce.’ ... As the SEC explained, ‘[i]n the U.S. national market system, buyers and sellers of securities, and the broker-dealers that act as their order-routing agents, have a wide range of choices of where to route orders for execution’; [and] ‘no exchange can afford to take its market share percentages for granted’ because ‘no exchange possesses a monopoly, regulatory or otherwise, in the execution of order flow from broker dealers’ ....”<sup>22</sup> Although the court and the SEC were discussing the

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<sup>18</sup> Securities Exchange Act Release No. 51808 (June 9, 2005), 70 FR 37496, 37499 (June 29, 2005) (“Regulation NMS Adopting Release”).

<sup>19</sup> NetCoalition v. SEC, 615 F.3d 525 (D.C. Cir. 2010).

<sup>20</sup> See NetCoalition, at 534 - 535.

<sup>21</sup> Id. at 537.

<sup>22</sup> Id. at 539 (quoting Securities Exchange Act Release No. 59039 (December 2, 2008), 73 FR 74770, 74782-83 (December 9, 2008) (SR-NYSEArca-2006-21)).

cash equities markets, the Exchange believes that these views apply with equal force to the options markets.

The Exchange's proposal to amend the strategy execution pricing to assess no transaction fee on qualifying strategy executions is reasonable because despite the removal of the \$0.01 rebate for qualifying strategy executions, the proposed pricing will continue to attract strategy executions to Phlx. Also, Customers will continue to pay no strategy execution fees.

The Exchange's proposal to amend the strategy execution pricing to assess no transaction fee on qualifying strategy executions is equitable and not unfairly discriminatory because the Exchange would uniformly assess no transaction fee to qualifying strategy executions for all members and member organizations.

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

The Exchange does not believe that the proposed rule change will impose any burden on competition not necessary or appropriate in furtherance of the purposes of the Act.

Inter-market Competition

The proposal does not impose an undue burden on inter-market competition. The Exchange believes its proposal remains competitive with other options markets and will offer market participants with another choice of where to transact options. The Exchange notes that it operates in a highly competitive market in which market participants can readily favor competing venues if they deem fee levels at a particular venue to be excessive, or rebate opportunities available at other venues to be more favorable. In such an environment, the Exchange must continually adjust its fees to remain competitive with other exchanges. Because competitors are free to modify their own fees in response, and because market participants may readily adjust their order routing practices, the Exchange believes that the degree to which fee changes in this market may impose any burden on competition is extremely limited.

## Intra-market Competition

The Exchange's proposal to amend the strategy execution pricing to assess no transaction fee on qualifying strategy executions does not impose an undue burden on competition because the Exchange would uniformly assess no transaction fee to qualifying strategy executions for all members and member organizations.

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

No written comments were either solicited or received.

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

The foregoing rule change has become effective pursuant to Section 19(b)(3)(A)(ii) of the Act.<sup>23</sup>

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: (i) necessary or appropriate in the public interest; (ii) for the protection of investors; or (iii) otherwise in furtherance of the purposes of the Act. If the Commission takes such action, the Commission shall institute proceedings to determine whether the proposed rule 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 (<https://www.sec.gov/rules/sro.shtml>); or
- Send an email to [rule-comments@sec.gov](mailto:rule-comments@sec.gov). Please include file number

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<sup>23</sup> 15 U.S.C. 78s(b)(3)(A)(ii).

SR-Phlx-2025-74 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-Phlx-2025-74. This file number should be included on the subject line if email 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 (<https://www.sec.gov/rules/sro.shtml>). Copies of the filing will be available for inspection and copying at the principal office of the Exchange. Do not include personal identifiable information in submissions; you should submit only information that you wish to make available publicly. We may redact in part or withhold entirely from publication submitted material that is obscene or subject to copyright protection. All submissions should refer to file number SR-Phlx-2025-74 and should be submitted on or before [INSERT DATE 21 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE *FEDERAL REGISTER*].

For the Commission, by the Division of Trading and Markets, pursuant to delegated authority.<sup>24</sup>

**Sherry R. Haywood,**

*Assistant Secretary.*

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