



Frequently Asked Questions

Who has my money?

The majority of Copeland Wealth Management's accounts are custodied at Sterne Agee, a privately held financial services firm based in Birmingham, Ala. Sterne Agee has a solid reputation as a custodian and a long history of safeguarding investment assets: The firm was founded in 1901.

Are my assets insured?

Yes. The Securities Investor Protection Corporation (SIPC) protects investors from financial harm in the event of a broker-dealer's failure. Sterne Agee, which custodies most of Copeland Wealth Management's client assets, is such a clearing firm. In addition, certain money market investments held in your account by Copeland Wealth Management are insured by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation. However, investors are not insured against potential securities losses incurred by holdings of stocks, bonds and other types of investments.

How long would it take to cash out my investments?

After securities are sold, there is generally a three-day waiting period, known as a settlement period, before the transactions are finalized. After the settlement period, clients can wire their money into their bank account immediately.

Why is my money sometimes in cash rather than investments?

Our job is to not only grow your assets, but to protect them as well. In volatile market environments, temporarily keeping a portion of your portfolio in cash equivalents such as money market funds may be the prudent course of action.

In some cases, new clients' accounts may for a time consist largely of cash equivalents until the best investment opportunities are identified. Finally, certain clients' goals and risk tolerances may dictate keeping a fraction of their assets in cash equivalents at all times.

Why does my account value fluctuate?

The market value of stocks and bonds regularly rises and falls; clients' investments and account values fluctuate correspondingly. Unfortunately, past investment performance cannot guarantee future performance.

What's the minimum amount of money I need to be your client?

Copeland Wealth Management does not have a strictly defined asset minimum for new clients. But the firm only works with clients who are deemed a good fit for its services. Generally, families have a liquid net worth of \$500,000 or greater or the potential to have a liquid net worth of this amount or greater.

What's the difference between a broker and an advisor?

The key difference is that a broker sells products, whereas an advisor gets paid for providing advice. Advisors do not have a financial interest in recommending one kind of investment over another. In addition, brokers and advisors are generally held to different regulatory standards. Brokers must sell only products that they judge to be suitable to their client. The advisory standard is widely considered to be more robust: Advisors must act in their clients' best interests. Copeland Wealth Management is an advisory firm.

Given the markets' recent volatility, how do you know when to "get back in?"

Copeland Wealth Management's analysis consists of studying a stock or bond's intrinsic value and researching market data such as past prices and trading volume. This analysis allows us to choose entry points in the stock and bond markets with the goal of maximizing total returns.

How do you charge for your services?

We offer four options: A set fee (for a specific service such as building a customized retirement plan); a monthly fee based on the amount of assets we manage for a client; an hourly fee based on the complexity of the situation; or a combination of the three.

Copeland Wealth Management describes itself as a "holistic" advisor. What does that mean?

Copeland Wealth Management does not seek to simply sell investments to clients. By addressing the entire scope of clients' needs and goals, we strive to become their most trusted financial advisor. We start with customized, comprehensive financial plans, and work with you to make sure all of your assets are best positioned to help you reach your goals.

How much input do clients get into how you manage their money?

We provide discretionary asset management, meaning clients' input is not required on a day-to-day or week-to-week basis. However, we are available for consultation, and of course we manage clients' money based on their individual goals and levels of risk tolerance.

How often do you meet with clients?

At a minimum, we meet each client personally once a year for a thorough portfolio review. However, most clients meet with us every six months, and we seek to have at least a phone conversation once per quarter.

I'm concerned that I might outlive my money. How can I prevent that?

The most important step you can take is to hire an independent, qualified financial advisor. We can help you determine your needs and goals and provide guidance on how to balance them. And we continually monitor your portfolio and your income needs with an eye toward ensuring that assets are available for as long as you need them.