

## Investment Policy

### I. Scope

This policy complies with the Texas Public Funds Investment Act and applies to the investment of short-term operating funds and proceeds from certain bond issues. Longer-term funds, including investments of employees' investment retirement funds, are covered by a separate policy.

1. **Pooling of Funds** Except for cash in certain restricted and special funds, Hidalgo County Regional Mobility Authority (RMA) will consolidate cash balances from all funds to maximize investment earnings. Investment income will be allocated to the various funds based on their respective participation and in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles.

### II. General Objectives

The primary objectives, in priority order, of investment activities shall be safety, liquidity, and yield:

1. **Safety** Safety of principal is the foremost objective of the investment program. Investments shall be undertaken in a manner that seeks to ensure the preservation of capital in the overall portfolio. The objective will be to mitigate credit risk and interest rate risk.

- a. **Credit Risk** Hidalgo County RMA will minimize credit risk, the risk of loss due to the failure of the security issuer or backer, by:

- Limiting investments to the safest types of securities and the highest credit quality investment counterparts
- Qualifying the financial institutions, broker/dealers, intermediaries, counterparties, investment agreement providers, and investment advisers with which Hidalgo County RMA will do business
- Diversifying the investment portfolio so that potential losses on individual securities will be minimized.

- b. **Interest Rate Risk** Hidalgo County RMA will minimize the risk that the market value of securities in the portfolio will fall due to changes in general interest rates, by:

- Structuring the investment portfolio so that securities mature to meet cash requirements for ongoing operations, thereby avoiding the need to sell securities on the open market prior to maturity (matching cash flow requirement with investment cash flow)
- Investing operating funds primarily in shorter-term securities, money market mutual funds, or similar investment pools.

2. **Liquidity** The investment portfolio shall remain sufficiently liquid to meet all operating requirements that may be reasonably anticipated. This is accomplished by structuring the portfolio so that securities mature concurrent with cash needs to meet anticipated demands (static liquidity). Furthermore, since all possible cash demands cannot be anticipated, the portfolio should consist largely of securities with active secondary or resale markets (dynamic liquidity). A portion of the portfolio also may be placed in money market mutual funds or local government investment pools which offer same-day liquidity for short-term funds. Investment agreements that provide cash flow flexibility may also be used.
3. **Yield** The investment portfolio shall be designed with the objective of attaining a market rate of return throughout budgetary and economic cycles, taking into account the investment risk constraints and liquidity needs. Return on investment is of subordinated importance compared to the safety and liquidity objectives described above. The core of investments are limited to relatively low risk securities in anticipation of earning a fair return relative to the risk being assumed. Securities shall not be sold prior to maturity with the following exceptions:
  - A security with declining credit may be sold early to minimize loss of principal.
  - A security swap would improve the quality, yield, or target duration in the portfolio.
  - Liquidity needs of the portfolio require that the security be sold.

### **III. Standards of Care**

1. **Prudence** The standard of prudence to be used by investment officials shall be the "prudent person" standard and shall be applied in the context of managing an overall portfolio. Investment officers acting in accordance with written procedures and this investment policy and exercising due diligence shall be relieved of personal responsibility for an individual security's credit risk or market price changes, provided deviations from expectations are reported in a timely fashion and the liquidity and the sale of securities are carried out in accordance with the terms of this policy.

Investments shall be made with judgment and care, under circumstances then prevailing, which persons of prudence, discretion and intelligence exercise in the management of their own affairs, not for speculation, but for investment, considering the probable safety of their capital as well as the probable income to be derived.
2. **Ethics and Conflicts of Interest** Officers and employees involved in the investment process shall refrain from personal business activity that could conflict with the proper execution and management of the investment program, or that could impair their ability to make impartial decisions. Employees and investment officials shall disclose any material interests in financial institutions with which they conduct business. They shall further disclose any personal financial/investment positions that could be related to the performance of the investment portfolio. Employees and officers shall refrain from undertaking personal investment transactions with the same individual with whom business is conducted on behalf of Hidalgo County RMA.
3. **Delegation of Authority** Authority to manage the investment program is granted to a designated official as appointed by the Board, hereinafter referred to as "investment officer", and derived from the following: Texas Public Fund Investment Act. Responsibility for the operation of the investment program is hereby delegated to the investment officer, who shall

act in accordance with established written procedures and internal controls for the operation of the investment program consistent with this investment policy. Procedures should include references to: safekeeping, delivery vs. payment, investment accounting, repurchase agreements, wire transfer agreements, and collateral/depository investment agreements. No person may engage in an investment transaction except as provided under the terms of this policy and the procedures established by the investment officer. The investment officer shall be responsible for all transactions undertaken and shall establish a system of controls to regulate the activities of subordinate officials.

#### **IV. Financial Dealers and Institutions**

- 1. Authorized Financial Dealers and Institutions** A list will be maintained of financial institutions authorized to provide investment services. In addition, a list also will be maintained of approved security broker/dealers selected by creditworthiness (e.g., a minimum capital requirement of \$10,000,000 and at least five years of operation). These may include, but are not limited to, "primary" dealers or regional dealers that qualify under Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) Rule 15C3-1 (uniform net capital rule).

All financial institutions and broker/dealers who desire to become qualified for investment transactions must supply the following as appropriate:

- Audited financial statements
- Proof of Financial Industry Regulatory Authority (FINRA) certification, as appropriate
- Proof of state registration, as appropriate
- Completed broker/dealer questionnaire, as appropriate
- Certification of having read and understood the Hidalgo County RMA investment policy.

An annual review of the financial condition and registration of qualified financial institutions and broker/dealers will be conducted by the investment officer.

From time to time, the investment officer may choose to invest in instruments offered by minority and community financial institutions. In such situations, a waiver to the criteria under Paragraph 1 may be granted. All terms and relationships will be fully disclosed prior to purchase and will be reported to the appropriate entity on a consistent basis and should be consistent with state or local law. These types of investment purchases should be approved by the appropriate legislative or governing body in advance.

- 2. Internal Controls** The investment officer is responsible for establishing and maintaining an internal control structure designed to ensure that the assets of Hidalgo County RMA are protected from loss, theft or misuse. The internal control structure shall be designed to provide reasonable assurance that these objectives are met. The concept of reasonable assurance recognizes that (1) the cost of a control should not exceed the benefits likely to be derived and (2) the valuation of costs and benefits requires estimates and judgments by management.

Accordingly, the investment officer shall establish a process for an annual independent review by an external auditor to assure compliance with policies and procedures. The internal controls shall address the following points:

- Control of collusion
- Separation of transaction authority from accounting and recordkeeping
- Custodial safekeeping
- Avoidance of physical delivery securities
- Clear delegation of authority to subordinate staff members
- Written confirmation of transactions for investments and wire transfers
- Development of a wire transfer agreement with the lead bank and third-party custodian

3. **Delivery vs. Payment** All trades where applicable will be executed by delivery vs. payment (DVP) to ensure that securities are deposited in an eligible financial institution prior to the release of funds. Securities will be held by a third-party custodian as evidenced by safekeeping receipts.

## **V. Suitable and Authorized Investments**

In accordance with authorizing Federal and State laws, the Trust Agreements, the Authority's depository contract, and appropriate approved collateral provisions, and in furtherance of the Investment Strategy Statement attached hereto, the Authority may utilize the following investments for the investment of the Authority's funds:

### Obligations of or Guaranteed by Governmental Entities

- a) Obligations of the United States or its agencies and instrumentalities, excluding mortgage-backed securities.
- b) Direct obligations of the State of Texas or its agencies and Instrumentalities.
- c) Other obligations, the principal and interest of which are unconditionally guaranteed or insured by, or backed by the full faith and credit of, the State of Texas or the United States or their respective agencies and instrumentalities.
- d) Obligations of states, agencies, counties, cities, and other political subdivisions of any state rated as to investment quality by a nationally recognized investment rating firm not less than A or its equivalent.
- e) Certificates of Deposit and Share Certificates

A certificate of deposit, or share certificate meeting the requirements of the Act that are issued by or through a depository institution that either has its main office, or a branch in the State of Texas that is (1) guaranteed or insured by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, or its successor or the National Credit Union Share Insurance Fund or its successor; (2) secured by obligations described in clauses (a)-(d) above, excluding mortgage-backed securities directly issued by a federal agency or instrumentality that have a market value of not less than the principal amount of

the certificates and those mortgage-backed securities listed in Section 16.0; or (3) secured in any other manner and amount provided by law for deposits of the Authority.

In addition to Hidalgo County RMA to invest funds in certificates of deposit above, an investment in certificates of deposit made in accordance with the following conditions is an authorized investment under this policy:

1. The funds are invested by Hidalgo County RMA through: (1) a broker that has its main office or a branch office in the State of Texas and is selected from a list adopted by Hidalgo County RMA as required by Section IV(1) of this Investment Policy; or (2) a depository institution that has its main office or a branch office in the State of Texas and that is selected by the investing entity.
2. The broker or the depository institution selected by the investing entity under subparagraph (i) above arranges for the deposit of the funds in certificates of deposit in one or more federally insured depository institutions, wherever located, for the account of Hidalgo County RMA.
3. the full amount of the principal and accrued interest of each of the certificates of deposit is insured by the United States or an instrumentality of the United States; and
4. Hidalgo County RMA appoints the depository institution selected by Hidalgo County RMA under subparagraph (i) above, an entity described by Section 2257.041(d) of the Act, or a clearing broker-dealer registered with the Securities and Exchange Commission and operating pursuant to Securities and Exchange Commission Rule 15c3-3 (17 C.F.R. Section 240.15c3-3) as custodian for the investing entity with respect to the certificates of deposit issued for the account of the investing entity.

f) Repurchase Agreements

A fully collateralized repurchase agreement that (1) has a defined termination date; (2) is secured by obligations described in clause (a) above; (3) requires the securities being purchased by the Authority to be pledged to the Authority, held in the Authority's name, and deposited at the time the investment is made with the Authority or with a third party selected and approved by the Authority; and (4) is placed through a primary government securities dealer, as defined by the Federal Reserve, or a financial institution doing business in the State of Texas. "Repurchase agreement" means a simultaneous agreement to buy, hold for a specified time, and sell back at a future date obligations described in clause (a) above, at a market value at the time the funds are disbursed of not less than the principal amount of the funds disbursed. The term includes a direct security repurchase agreement and reverse security repurchase agreement.

Notwithstanding any other law, the term of any reverse security repurchase agreement may not exceed 180 days after the date the reverse security repurchase agreement is delivered. Money received by the Authority under the terms of a reverse security repurchase agreement shall be used to acquire additional authorized investments, but the term of authorized investments acquired must mature not later than the expiration date stated in the reverse security repurchase agreement. The Authority requires the execution of a Master Repurchase Agreement in substantially the form as may be prescribed by The Securities Industry and Financial Markets Association (SIFMA).

g) Banker's Acceptance

A Bankers' acceptance that (1) has a stated maturity of 270 days or fewer from the date of its issuance; (2) will be, in accordance with its terms, liquidated in full at maturity; (3) is eligible for collateral for borrowing from a Federal Reserve Bank; and (4) is accepted by a bank organized and existing under the laws of the United States or any state, if the short-term obligations of the bank,

or of a bank holding company of which the bank is the largest subsidiary, are rated not less than A-1 or P-1 or an equivalent rating of at least one nationally recognized credit rating agency. Such transactions shall not exceed 5% of the total Authority's Investment Portfolio, and all such endorsing banks shall come only from a list of entities that are constantly monitored as to financial solvency.

h) Commercial Paper

Commercial Paper that (1) has a stated maturity of 270 days or fewer from the date of its issuance; and (2) is rated not less than A-1 or P-1 or an equivalent rating by at least (A) two nationally recognized credit rating agencies or (B) one nationally recognized credit rating agency and is fully secured by an irrevocable letter of credit issued by a bank organized and existing under the laws of the United States or any State. Such transactions shall not exceed 25% of the total Authority's Investment Portfolio with no more than 5% in any one issuer or its subsidiaries.

i) Mutual Funds

A no-load money market mutual fund that (1) is registered with and regulated by the Securities and Exchange Commission; (2) provides the Authority with a prospectus and other information required by the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 or the Investment Company Act of 1940; (3) has a dollar-weighted average stated maturity of 60 days or fewer; and (4) includes in its investment objectives the maintenance of a stable net asset value of \$1 for each share.

A no-load mutual fund that (1) is registered with the Securities and Exchange Commission; (2) has an average weighted maturity of less than two years; (3) is invested exclusively in obligations described in this Section 14.0; (4) is continuously rated as to investment quality by at least one nationally recognized investment rating firm of not less than AAA or its equivalent; and (5) conforms to the requirements set forth in Sections 2256.016(b) and (c) of the Act, relating to the eligibility of investment pools to receive and invest funds of investing entities.

The Authority is not authorized to (1) invest in the aggregate more than 15% of its monthly average fund balance, excluding bond proceeds and reserves and other funds held for debt service, in mutual funds described in the immediately preceding paragraph; (2) invest any portion of bond proceeds, reserves and funds held for debt service, in mutual funds described in the immediately preceding paragraph; or (3) invest its funds or funds under its control, including bond proceeds and reserves and other funds held for debt service, in any one mutual fund described in either paragraph above in an amount that exceeds 10% of the total assets of the mutual fund. In addition, the total assets invested in any single mutual fund may not exceed 5% of the Authority's average fund balance, excluding bond proceeds and reserves and other funds held for debt service.

With regard to Money Market Mutual Funds, the Authority is not authorized to invest its funds in any one money market mutual fund in an amount that exceeds 5% of the total assets of the money market mutual fund.

j) Investment Pools

The Authority may invest its funds and funds under its control through an eligible investment pool if the Board of Directors by official action authorizes investment in the particular pool. An investment pool shall invest the funds it receives from entities in authorized investments permitted by the Act. The Authority may invest its funds through an eligible investment pool if the pool provides to the Investment Officer an offering circular or other similar disclosure document that contains, at a minimum, the following information:

- 1) The types of investments in which money is allowed to be invested.

- 2) The maximum average dollar-weighted maturity allowed, based on the stated maturity date, of the pool.
- 3) The maximum stated maturity date any investment security within the portfolio has.
- 4) The objectives of the pool.
- 5) The size of the pool.
- 6) The names of the members of the advisory board of the pool and the dates their terms expire.
- 7) The custodian bank that will safe keep the pool's assets.
- 8) Whether the intent of the pool is to maintain a net asset value of \$1 and the risk of market price fluctuation.
- 9) Whether the only source of payment is the assets of the pool at market value or whether there is a secondary source of payment, such as insurance or guarantees, and a description of the secondary source of payment.
- 10) The name and address of the independent auditor of the pool.
- 11) The requirements to be satisfied for an entity to deposit funds in and withdraw funds from the pool and any deadlines or other operating policies required for the entity to invest funds in and withdraw funds from the pool.
- 12) The performance history of the pool, including yield, average dollar-weighted maturities, and expense ratios.

To maintain eligibility to receive funds from and invest funds on behalf of the Authority, an investment pool must be continuously rated no lower than AAA, AAA-m, and AAA-f or at an equivalent rating of at least one nationally recognized rating service and must furnish to the Investment Officer: (i) Investment transaction confirmations and (ii) A monthly report that contains, at a minimum, the following information:

- 1) The types and percentage breakdown of securities in which the pool has invested.
- 2) The current average dollar-weighted maturity, based on the stated maturity date of the pool.
- 3) The current percentage of the pool's portfolio in investments that have stated maturities of more than one year.
- 4) The book value versus the market value of the pool's portfolio, using amortized cost valuation.
- 5) The size of the pool.
- 6) The number of participants in the pool.
- 7) The custodian bank that is safekeeping the assets of the pool.
- 8) A listing of daily transaction activity of the Authority in the pool.
- 9) The yield and expense ratio of the pool.
- 10) The portfolio managers of the pool.
- 11) Any changes or addenda to the offering circular.

The Authority by contract may delegate to an investment pool the Authority to hold legal title as custodian of investments purchased with its local funds.

For purposes of investment in an investment pool, "yield" shall be calculated in accordance with regulations governing the registration of open-end management investment companies under the Investment Company Act of 1940, as promulgated from time to time by the federal Securities and Exchange Commission.

To be eligible to receive funds from and invest funds on behalf of the Authority, a public funds investment pool created to function as a money market mutual fund must mark its portfolio to market daily, and, to the extent reasonably possible, stabilize at a \$1 net asset value. If the ratio of the market value of the portfolio divided by the book value of the portfolio is less than 0.995 or greater than 1.005, portfolio holdings shall be sold as necessary to maintain the ratio between 0.995 and 1.005.

To be eligible to receive funds from and invest funds on behalf of the Authority, a public funds investment pool must have an advisory board composed:

- 1) Equally of participants in the pool and other persons who do not have a business relationship with the pool and are qualified to advise the pool, for a public funds investment pool created under Chapter 791, Texas Government Code, and managed by a state agency; or
- 2) Of participants in the pool and other persons who do not have a business relationship with the pool and are qualified to advise the pool, for other investment pools.

k) Guaranteed Investment Contracts

A Guaranteed Investment Contract is an authorized investment for bond proceeds if the guaranteed investment contract:

- 1) Has a defined termination date;
- 2) Is secured by obligations described by clause (a) above, but excluding those obligations described by Section 16.0 herein in an amount at least equal to the amount of bond proceeds invested under the contract;
- 3) Is pledged to the Authority and deposited with the Authority or with a third party selected and approved by the Authority; and
- 4) Meets the following requirements:
  - a) The Board of Directors of the Authority must specifically authorize guaranteed investment contracts as an eligible investment in the order, ordinance, or resolution authorizing the issuance of bonds;
  - b) The Authority must receive bids from at least three separate providers with no material financial interest in the bonds from which proceeds were received;

- c) The Authority must purchase the highest yielding guaranteed investment contract for which a qualifying bid is received;
- d) The price of the guaranteed investment contract must take into account the reasonably expected drawdown schedule for the bond proceeds to be reinvested; and

The provider must certify the administrative costs reasonably expected to be paid to third parties in connection with the guaranteed investment contract.

The following are not authorized investments under this Section V:

1. Obligations whose payment represents the coupon payments on the outstanding principal balance of the underlying mortgage-backed security collateral and pays no principal;
2. Obligations whose payment represents the principal stream of cash flow from the underlying mortgage-backed security collateral and bears no interest;
3. Collateralized mortgage obligations that have a stated final maturity date of greater than 10 years; and.
4. Collateralized mortgage obligations the interest rate of which is determined by an index that adjusts opposite to the changes in a market index.

## **VI. Investment Parameters**

1. **Diversification** The investments shall be diversified by:

- limiting investments to avoid over concentration in securities from a specific issuer or business sector (excluding U.S. Treasury securities),
- limiting investment in securities that have higher credit risks,
- investing in securities with varying maturities, and
- continuously investing a portion of the portfolio in readily available funds such as local government investment pools (LGIPs), money market funds or repurchase agreements to ensure that appropriate liquidity is maintained in order to meet ongoing obligations.

2. **Maximum Maturities** To the extent possible, Hidalgo County RMA shall attempt to match its investments with anticipated cash flow requirements. Unless matched to a specific cash flow, the Hidalgo County RMA will not directly invest in securities maturing more than five (5) years from the date of purchase or in accordance with state and local statutes and ordinances. Hidalgo County RMA shall adopt weighted average maturity limitations (which often range from 60 days to 3 years), consistent with the investment objectives.

Reserve funds and other funds with longer-term investment horizons may be invested in securities exceeding five (5) years if the maturity of such investments are made to coincide as nearly as practicable with the expected use of funds. The intent to invest in securities with longer maturities shall be disclosed in writing to the legislative body.

Because of inherent difficulties in accurately forecasting cash flow requirements, a portion of the portfolio should be continuously invested in readily available funds such as LGIPs, money market funds, or overnight repurchase agreements to ensure that appropriate liquidity is maintained to meet ongoing obligations.

## VII. Reporting

1. **Methods** The investment officer shall prepare an investment report at least quarterly, including a management summary that provides an analysis of the status of the current investment portfolio and transactions made over the last quarter. This management summary will be prepared in a manner which will allow Hidalgo County RMA to ascertain whether investment activities during the reporting period have conformed to the investment policy. The report should be provided to the investment officer, the legislative body, and any pool participants. The report will include the following:
  - Listing of individual securities held at the end of the reporting period.
  - Realized and unrealized gains or losses resulting from appreciation or depreciation by listing the cost and market value of securities over one-year duration that are not intended to be held until maturity (in accordance with Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) requirements).
  - Average weighted yield to maturity of portfolio on investments as compared to applicable benchmarks.
  - Listing of investment by maturity date.
  - Percentage of the total portfolio which each type of investment represents.
2. **Performance Standards** The investment portfolio will be managed in accordance with the parameters specified within this policy. The portfolio should obtain a market average rate of return during a market/economic environment of stable interest rates.
3. **Marking to Market** The market value of the portfolio shall be calculated at least quarterly and a statement of the market value of the portfolio shall be issued at least quarterly. In defining market value, considerations should be given to the GASB Statement 31 pronouncement.

## VIII. Policy Considerations

1. **Exemption** Any investment currently held that does not meet the guidelines of this policy shall be exempted from the requirements of this policy. At maturity or liquidation, such monies shall be reinvested only as provided by this policy
2. **Amendments** This policy shall be reviewed on an annual basis. Any changes must be approved by the investment officer and any other appropriate authority, as well as the individual(s) charged with maintaining internal controls.

## **IX. List of Attachments**

The following documents, as applicable, are (or may be in the future) attached to this policy:

- Listing of authorized personnel,
- Repurchase agreements and tri-party agreements,
- Listing of authorized broker/dealers and financial institutions,
- Credit studies for securities purchased and financial institutions used,
- Safekeeping agreements,
- Wire transfer agreements,
- Sample investment reports, and
- Methodology for calculating rate of return.