

# The Road to Fiduciary Security



**Begins with a  
CEFEX Certified Advisory Firm**





## Who is Watching Over Your Investments?

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Hiring someone to manage your financial assets can be challenging. A continually changing investment landscape, containing a myriad of often complex products offered by well-marketed providers, makes it very difficult for an investor to make a life-long plan. Seemingly small issues related to fees or performance could have significant impact on the investor's eventual retirement. How can the investor limit risk and ensure best-practice processes are in place? CEFEX certification has made it easier to appropriately assess how well your Investment Advisory firm is watching over your investments.

## What a CEFEX Certified Advisory Firm Offers You:

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Investment decision-making can be complex. Although some providers have embraced transparency and true fiduciary accountability, many have not. Over time many interpretations of the law have emerged, allowing some providers the ability to find loopholes from which to profit at the expense of investors.

Now, more than ever, investors need to select **trustworthy** Investment Advisory firms who are **dedicated to safeguarding their clients' best interests** by finding the most appropriate products at the best price.

## How a CEFEX Certified Investment Advisory Firm Benefits You:

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Investors should conduct due diligence and oversee the providers they hire. This can be time-consuming, but is also very difficult unless you are an expert yourself.

A CEFEX Certified Investment Advisory firm comes 'diligence ready.' The Investment Advisory firm is assessed on an annual basis by an independent fiduciary expert. This benefits you through:

- Acts in your best interests:** CEFEX Certified Advisory firms can demonstrate how they select investments which are in your best interest, rather than just 'suitable' for you.
- Increased efficiency:** CEFEX Certified Advisory firms have developed processes that maximize quality and efficiency.
- Better decision-making:** CEFEX Certified Advisory firms utilize a factual approach that facilitates information-gathering and decision-making based on market data.



## Exceeding Industry Standards:

When you hire a CEFEX Certified Advisory firm, you can be sure that it avoids conflicts of interest. The CEFEX Certified Advisory firm serves your best interests by adhering to a fiduciary standard described in the handbook: *Prudent Practices for Investment Stewards & Investment Advisors*, published by the industry leader in fiduciary excellence, fi360, Inc.

The Prudent Practices® are organized under a four-step Investment Management Process. The steps are consistent with the global ISO 9000 Quality Management System standard, which emphasizes continual improvement in an organization.

### CEFEX Certified Advisory firms are expected to:

1. Know standards, laws and trust provisions
2. Diversify assets to specific risk/return profiles of their clients
3. Prepare investment policy statements
4. Use 'prudent experts' (e.g. money managers) and document due diligence
5. Control and account for investment expenses
6. Monitor the activities of 'prudent experts'
7. Avoid conflicts of interest and prohibited transactions

**Contact a CEFEX Certified Advisory firm today to learn how well your investments can be managed and get on the road to fiduciary security.**

[www.cefex.org](http://www.cefex.org)

The Centre for Fiduciary Excellence, LLC (CEFEX) is an independent certification organization that works closely with industry experts to conduct comprehensive assessments of investment fiduciaries. CEFEX's mission is to promote best practices in the investment management industry. CEFEX Certification helps determine the trustworthiness of investment fiduciaries.



## What Fiduciary Means:

*The word “fiduciary” comes from the Latin “fiducia,” meaning “trust.” It refers to an entity ( a business, such as a bank or investment advisory firm) which has the power and obligation to act for another (often called the beneficiary) under circumstances that require total trust, good faith and honesty.*

*Characteristically, the fiduciary has greater knowledge and expertise about the matters being handled. A fiduciary is held to the highest standard of conduct and trust. The firm must avoid self-dealing or situations in which the potential benefit to the fiduciary is in conflict with what is best for the person who trusts it.*



*The Gold Standard of Fiduciary Excellence*

**CE $\phi$ EX<sup>®</sup>**  
CENTRE FOR FIDUCIARY EXCELLENCE