

right to refund vests under the provisions of this part.

(g) The *time of solicitation* of an order shall mean that time when the seller has:

(1) Mailed or otherwise disseminated the solicitation to a prospective purchaser,

(2) Made arrangements for an advertisement containing the solicitation to appear in a newspaper, magazine or the like or on radio or television which cannot be changed or cancelled without incurring substantial expense, or

(3) Made arrangements for the printing of a catalog, brochure or the like which cannot be changed without incurring substantial expense, in which the solicitation in question forms an insubstantial part.

[58 FR 49121, Sept. 21, 1993, as amended at 60 FR 56950, Nov. 13, 1995]

§ 435.3 Limited applicability.

(a) This part shall not apply to:

(1) Subscriptions, such as magazine sales, ordered for serial delivery, after the initial shipment is made in compliance with this part.

(2) Orders of seeds and growing plants.

(3) Orders made on a collect-on-delivery (C.O.D.) basis.

(4) Transactions governed by the Federal Trade Commission's Trade Regulation Rule entitled "Use of Negative Option Plans by Sellers in Commerce," 16 CFR part 425.

(b) By taking action in this area:

(1) The Federal Trade Commission does not intend to preempt action in the same area, which is not inconsistent with this part, by any State, municipal, or other local government. This part does not annul or diminish any rights or remedies provided to consumers by any State law, municipal ordinance, or other local regulation, insofar as those rights or remedies are equal to or greater than those provided by this part. In addition, this part does not supersede those provisions of any State law, municipal ordinance, or other local regulation which impose obligations or liabilities upon sellers, when sellers subject to this part are not in compliance therewith.

(2) This part does supersede those provisions of any State law, municipal

ordinance, or other local regulation which are inconsistent with this part to the extent that those provisions do not provide a buyer with rights which are equal to or greater than those rights granted a buyer by this part. This part also supersedes those provisions of any State law, municipal ordinance, or other local regulation requiring that a buyer be notified of a right which is the same as a right provided by this part but requiring that a buyer be given notice of this right in a language, form, or manner which is different in any way from that required by this part. In those instances where any State law, municipal ordinance, or other local regulation contains provisions, some but not all of which are partially or completely superseded by this part, the provisions or portions of those provisions which have not been superseded retain their full force and effect.

(c) If any provision of this part, or its application to any person, partnership, corporation, act or practice is held invalid, the remainder of this part or the application of the provision to any other person, partnership, corporation, act or practice shall not be affected thereby.

§ 435.4 Effective date of the rule.

The original rule, which became effective 100 days after its promulgation on October 22, 1975, remains in effect. The amended rule, as set forth in this part, becomes effective March 1, 1994.

PART 436—DISCLOSURE REQUIREMENTS AND PROHIBITIONS CONCERNING FRANCHISING AND BUSINESS OPPORTUNITY VENTURES

Sec.

436.1 The Rule.

436.2 Definitions.

436.3 Severability.

AUTHORITY: 38 Stat. 717, as amended, 15 U.S.C. 41-58.

SOURCE: 43 FR 59614, Dec. 21, 1978, unless otherwise noted.

§ 436.1 The Rule.

In connection with the advertising, offering, licensing, contracting, sale, or

other promotion in or affecting commerce, as “commerce” is defined in the Federal Trade Commission Act, of any franchise, or any relationship which is represented either orally or in writing to be a franchise, it is an unfair or deceptive act or practice within the meaning of section 5 of that Act for any franchisor or franchise broker:

(a) To fail to furnish any prospective franchisee with the following information accurately, clearly, and concisely stated, in a legible, written document at the earlier of the “time for making of disclosures” or the first “personal meeting”:

(1)(i) The official name and address and principal place of business of the franchisor, and of the parent firm or holding company of the franchisor, if any;

(ii) The name under which the franchisor is doing or intends to do business; and

(iii) The trademarks, trade names, service marks, advertising or other commercial symbols (hereinafter collectively referred to as “marks”) which identify the goods, commodities, or services to be offered, sold, or distributed by the prospective franchisee, or under which the prospective franchisee will be operating.

(2) The business experience during the past 5 years, stated individually, of each of the franchisor’s current directors and executive officers (including, and hereinafter to include, the chief executive and chief operating officer, financial, franchise marketing, training and service officers). With regard to each person listed, those persons’ principal occupations and employers must be included.

(3) The business experience of the franchisor and the franchisor’s parent firm (if any), including the length of time each: (i) Has conducted a business of the type to be operated by the franchisee; (ii) has offered or sold a franchise for such business; (iii) has conducted a business or offered or sold a franchise for a business (A) operating under a name using any mark set forth under paragraph (a)(1)(iii) of this section, or (B) involving the sale, offering, or distribution of goods, commodities, or services which are identified by any mark set forth under paragraph

(a)(1)(iii) of this section; and (iv) has offered for sale or sold franchises in other lines of business, together with a description of such other lines of business.

(4) A statement disclosing who, if any, of the persons listed in paragraphs (a) (2) and (3) of this section:

(i) Has, at any time during the previous seven fiscal years, been convicted of a felony or pleaded nolo contendere to a felony charge if the felony involved fraud (including violation of any franchise law, or unfair or deceptive practices law), embezzlement, fraudulent conversion, misappropriation of property, or restraint of trade;

(ii) Has, at any time during the previous seven fiscal years, been held liable in a civil action resulting in a final judgment or has settled out of court any civil action or is a party to any civil action (A) involving allegations of fraud (including violation of any franchise law, or unfair or deceptive practices law), embezzlement, fraudulent conversion, misappropriation of property, or restraint of trade, or (B) which was brought by a present or former franchisee or franchisees and which involves or involved the franchise relationship; *Provided, however,* That only material individual civil actions need be so listed pursuant to paragraph (4)(ii) of this section, including any group of civil actions which, irrespective of the materiality of any single such action, in the aggregate is material;

(iii) Is subject to any currently effective State or Federal agency or court injunctive or restrictive order, or is a party to a proceeding currently pending in which such order is sought, relating to or affecting franchise activities or the franchisor-franchisee relationship, or involving fraud (including violation of any franchise law, or unfair or deceptive practices law), embezzlement, fraudulent conversion, misappropriation of property, or restraint of trade.

Such statement shall set forth the identity and location of the court or agency; the date of conviction, judgment, or decision; the penalty imposed; the damages assessed; the terms of settlement or the terms of the order; and the date, nature, and issuer of each

such order or ruling. A franchisor may include a summary opinion of counsel as to any pending litigation, but only if counsel's consent to the use of such opinion is included in the disclosure statement.

(5) A statement disclosing who, if any, of the persons listed in paragraphs (a) (2) and (3) of this section at any time during the previous 7 fiscal years has:

- (i) Filed in bankruptcy;
- (ii) Been adjudged bankrupt;
- (iii) Been reorganized due to insolvency; or
- (iv) Been a principal, director, executive officer, or partner of any other person that has so filed or was so adjudged or reorganized, during or within 1 year after the period that such person held such position in such other person. If so, the name and location of the person having so filed, or having been so adjudged or reorganized, the date thereof, and any other material facts relating thereto, shall be set forth.

(6) A factual description of the franchise offered to be sold by the franchisor.

(7) A statement of the total funds which must be paid by the franchisee to the franchisor or to a person affiliated with the franchisor, or which the franchisor or such affiliated person imposes or collects in whole or in part on behalf of a third party, in order to obtain or commence the franchise operation, such as initial franchise fees, deposits, downpayments, prepaid rent, and equipment and inventory purchases. If all or part of these fees or deposits are returnable under certain conditions, these conditions shall be set forth; and if not returnable, such fact shall be disclosed.

(8) A statement describing any recurring funds required to be paid, in connection with carrying on the franchise business, by the franchisee to the franchisor or to a person affiliated with the franchisor, or which the franchisor or such affiliated person imposes or collects in whole or in part on behalf of a third party, including, but not limited to, royalty, lease, advertising, training, and sign rental fees, and equipment or inventory purchases.

(9) A statement setting forth the name of each person (including the

franchisor) the franchisee is directly or indirectly required or advised to do business with by the franchisor, where such persons are affiliated with the franchisor.

(10) A statement describing any real estate, services, supplies, products, inventories, signs, fixtures, or equipment relating to the establishment or the operation of the franchise business which the franchisee is directly or indirectly required by the franchisor to purchase, lease or rent; and if such purchases, leases or rentals must be made from specific persons (including the franchisor), a list of the names and addresses of each such person. Such list may be made in a separate document delivered to the prospective franchisee with the prospectus if the existence of such separate document is disclosed in the prospectus.

(11) A description of the basis for calculating, and, if such information is readily available, the actual amount of, any revenue or other consideration to be received by the franchisor or persons affiliated with the franchisor from suppliers to the prospective franchisee in consideration for goods or services which the franchisor requires or advises the franchisee to obtain from such suppliers.

(12)(i) A statement of all the material terms and conditions of any financing arrangement offered directly or indirectly by the franchisor, or any person affiliated with the franchisor, to the prospective franchisee; and

(ii) A description of the terms by which any payment is to be received by the franchisor from (A) any person offering financing to a prospective franchisee; and (B) any person arranging for financing for a prospective franchisee.

(13) A statement describing the material facts of whether, by the terms of the franchise agreement or other device or practice, the franchisee is:

(i) Limited in the goods or services he or she may offer for sale;

(ii) Limited in the customers to whom he or she may sell such goods or services;

(iii) Limited in the geographic area in which he or she may offer for sale or sell goods or services; or

(iv) Granted territorial protection by the franchisor, by which, with respect to a territory or area, (A) the franchisor will not establish another, or more than any fixed number of, franchises or company-owned outlets, either operating under, or selling, offering, or distributing goods, commodities or services, identified by any mark set forth under paragraph (a)(1)(iii) of this section; or (B) the franchisor or its parent will not establish other franchises or company-owned outlets selling or leasing the same or similar products or services under a different trade name, trademark, service mark, advertising or other commercial symbol.

(14) A statement of the extent to which the franchisor requires the franchisee (or, if the franchisee is a corporation, any person affiliated with the franchisee) to participate personally in the direct operation of the franchise.

(15) A statement disclosing, with respect to the franchise agreement and any related agreements:

(i) The term (i.e., duration of arrangement), if any, of such agreement, and whether such term is or may be affected by any agreement (including leases or subleases) other than the one from which such term arises;

(ii) The conditions under which the franchisee may renew or extend;

(iii) The conditions under which the franchisor may refuse to renew or extend;

(iv) The conditions under which the franchisee may terminate;

(v) The conditions under which the franchisor may terminate;

(vi) The obligations (including lease or sublease obligations) of the franchisee after termination of the franchise by the franchisor, and the obligations of the franchisee (including lease or sublease obligations) after termination of the franchise by the franchisee and after the expiration of the franchise;

(vii) The franchisee's interest upon termination of the franchise, or upon refusal to renew or extend the franchise, whether by the franchisor or by the franchisee;

(viii) The conditions under which the franchisor may repurchase, whether by

right of first refusal or at the option of the franchisor (and if the franchisor has the option to repurchase the franchise, whether there will be an independent appraisal of the franchise, whether the repurchase price will be determined by a predetermined formula and whether there will be a recognition of goodwill or other intangibles associated therewith in the repurchase price to be given the franchisee);

(ix) The conditions under which the franchisee may sell or assign all or any interest in the ownership of the franchise, or of the assets of the franchise business;

(x) The conditions under which the franchisor may sell or assign, in whole or in part, its interest under such agreements;

(xi) The conditions under which the franchisee may modify;

(xii) The conditions under which the franchisor may modify;

(xiii) The rights of the franchisee's heirs or personal representative upon the death or incapacity of the franchisee; and

(xiv) The provisions of any covenant not to compete.

(16) A statement disclosing, with respect to the franchisor and as to the particular named business being offered:

(i) The total number of franchises operating at the end of the preceding fiscal year;

(ii) The total number of company-owned outlets operating at the end of the preceding fiscal year;

(iii) The names, addresses, and telephone numbers of (A) The 10 franchised outlets of the named franchise business nearest the prospective franchisee's intended location; or (B) all franchisees of the franchisor, or (C) all franchisees of the franchisor in the State in which the prospective franchisee lives or where the proposed franchise is to be located, *Provided, however*, That there are more than 10 such franchisees. If the number of franchisees to be disclosed pursuant to paragraph (a)(16)(iii)(B) or (C) of this section exceeds 50, such listing may be made in a separate document delivered to the

prospective franchisee with the prospectus if the existence of such separate document is disclosed in the prospectus;

(iv) The number of franchises voluntarily terminated or not renewed by franchisees within, or at the conclusion of, the term of the franchise agreement, during the preceding fiscal year;

(v) The number of franchises reacquired by purchase by the franchisor during the term of the franchise agreement, and upon the conclusion of the term of the franchise agreement, during the preceding fiscal year;

(vi) The number of franchises otherwise reacquired by the franchisor during the term of the franchise agreement, and upon the conclusion of the term of the franchise agreement, during the preceding fiscal year;

(vii) The number of franchises for which the franchisor refused renewal of the franchise agreement or other agreements relating to the franchise during the preceding fiscal year; and

(viii) The number of franchises that were canceled or terminated by the franchisor during the term of the franchise agreement, and upon conclusion of the term of the franchise agreement, during the preceding fiscal year.

With respect to the disclosures required by paragraphs (a)(16) (v), (vi), (vii), and (viii) of this section, the disclosure statement shall also include a general categorization of the reasons for such reacquisitions, refusals to renew or terminations, and the number falling within each such category, including but not limited to the following: failure to comply with quality control standards, failure to make sufficient sales, and other breaches of contract.

(17)(i) If site selection or approval thereof by the franchisor is involved in the franchise relationship, a statement disclosing the range of time that has elapsed between signing of franchise agreements or other agreements relating to the franchise and site selection, for agreements entered into during the preceding fiscal year; and

(ii) If operating franchise outlets are to be provided by the franchisor, a statement disclosing the range of time that has elapsed between the signing of franchise agreements or other agree-

ments relating to the franchise and the commencement of the franchisee's business, for agreements entered into during the preceding fiscal year.

With respect to the disclosures required by paragraphs (a)(17) (i) and (ii) of this section, a franchisor may at its option also provide a distribution chart using meaningful classifications with respect to such ranges of time.

(18) If the franchisor offers an initial training program or informs the prospective franchisee that it intends to provide such person with initial training, a statement disclosing:

(i) The type and nature of such training;

(ii) The minimum amount, if any, of training that will be provided to a franchisee; and

(iii) The cost, if any, to be borne by the franchisee for the training to be provided, or for obtaining such training.

(19) If the name of a public figure is used in connection with a recommendation to purchase a franchise, or as a part of the name of the franchise operation, or if the public figure is stated to be involved with the management of the franchisor, a statement disclosing:

(i) The nature and extent of the public figure's involvement and obligations to the franchisor, including but not limited to the promotional assistance the public figure will provide to the franchisor and to the franchisee;

(ii) The total investment of the public figure in the franchise operation; and

(iii) The amount of any fee or fees the franchisee will be obligated to pay for such involvement or assistance provided by the public figure.

(20)(i) A balance sheet (statement of financial position) for the franchisor for the most recent fiscal year, and an income statement (statement of results of operations) and statement of changes in financial position for the franchisor for the most recent 3 fiscal years. Such statements are required to have been examined in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards by an independent certified or licensed public accountant.

Provided, however, That where a franchisee is a subsidiary of another corporation which is permitted under

generally accepted accounting principles to prepare financial statements on a consolidated or combined statement basis, the above information may be submitted for the parent if (A) the corresponding unaudited financial statements of the franchisor are also provided, and (B) the parent absolutely and irrevocably has agreed to guarantee all obligations of the subsidiary;

(ii) Unaudited statements shall be used only to the extent that audited statements have not been made, and provided that such statements are accompanied by a clear and conspicuous disclosure that they are unaudited. Statements shall be prepared on an audited basis as soon as practicable, but, at a minimum, financial statements for the first full fiscal year following the date on which the franchisor must first comply with this part shall contain a balance sheet opinion prepared by an independent certified or licensed public accountant, and financial statements for the following fiscal year shall be fully audited.

(21) All of the foregoing information in paragraphs (a) (1) through (20) of this section shall be contained in a single disclosure statement or prospectus, which shall not contain any materials or information other than that required by this part or by State law not preempted by this part. This does not preclude franchisors or franchise brokers from giving other nondeceptive information orally, visually, or in separate literature so long as such information is not contradictory to the information in the disclosure statement required by paragraph (a) of this section. This disclosure statement shall carry a cover sheet distinctively and conspicuously showing the name of the franchisor, the date of issuance of the disclosure statement, and the following notice imprinted thereon in upper and lower case bold-face type of not less than 12 point size:

Information for Prospective Franchisees
Required by Federal Trade Commission

* * * * *

To protect you, we've required your franchisor to give you this information. *We haven't checked it, and don't know if it's correct.* It should help you make up your mind. Study it carefully. While it includes some in-

formation about your contract, don't rely on it alone to understand your contract. Read all of your contract carefully. Buying a franchise is a complicated investment. Take your time to decide. If possible, show your contract and this information to an advisor, like a lawyer or an accountant. If you find anything you think may be wrong or anything important that's been left out, you should let us know about it. It may be against the law.

There may also be laws on franchising in your state. Ask your state agencies about them.

FEDERAL TRADE COMMISSION,
Washington, D.C.

Provided, That the obligation to furnish such disclosure statement shall be deemed to have been met for both the franchisor and the franchise broker if either such party furnishes the prospective franchisee with such disclosure statement.

(22) All information contained in the disclosure statement shall be current as of the close of the franchisor's most recent fiscal year. After the close of each fiscal year, the franchisor shall be given a period not exceeding 90 days to prepare a revised disclosure statement and, following such 90 days, may distribute only the revised prospectus and no other. The franchisor shall, within a reasonable time after the close of each quarter of the fiscal year, prepare revisions to be attached to the disclosure statement to reflect any material change in the franchisor or relating to the franchise business of the franchisor, about which the franchisor or franchise broker, or any agent, representative, or employee thereof, knows or should know. Each prospective franchisee shall have in his or her possession, at the "time for making of disclosures," the disclosure statement and quarterly revision for the period most recent to the "time for making of disclosures" and available at that time. Information which is required to be audited pursuant to paragraph (a)(20) of this section is not required to be audited for quarterly revisions, *Provided, however,* That the unaudited information be accompanied by a statement in immediate conjunction therewith that clearly and conspicuously discloses that such information has not been audited.

(23) A table of contents shall be included within the disclosure statement.

(24) The disclosure statement shall include a comment which either positively or negatively responds to each disclosure item required to be in the disclosure statement, by use of a statement which fully incorporates the information required by the item. Each disclosure item therein must be preceded by the appropriate heading, as set forth in Note 3 of this part.

(b) To make any oral, written, or visual representation to a prospective franchisee which states a specific level of potential sales, income, gross or net profit for that prospective franchisee, or which states other facts which suggest such a specific level, unless:

(1) At the time such representation is made, such representation is relevant to the geographic market in which the franchise is to be located;

(2) At the time such representation is made, a reasonable basis exists for such representation and the franchisor has in its possession material which constitutes a reasonable basis for such representation, and such material is made available to any prospective franchisee and to the Commission or its staff upon reasonable demand.

Provided, further, That in immediate conjunction with such representation, the franchisor shall disclose in a clear and conspicuous manner that such material is available to the prospective franchisee; and *Provided, however,* That no provision within paragraph (b) of this section shall be construed as requiring the disclosure to any prospective franchisee of the identity of any specific franchisee or of information reasonably likely to lead to the disclosure of such person's identity; and *Provided, further,* That no additional representation as to a prospective franchisee's potential sales, income, or profits may be made later than the "time for making of disclosures";

(3) Such representation is set forth in detail along with the material bases and assumptions therefor in a single legible written document whose text accurately, clearly and concisely discloses such information, and none other than that provided for by this part or by State law not preempted by this part. Each prospective franchisee

to whom the representation is made shall be furnished with such document no later than the "time for making of disclosures"; *Provided, however,* That if the representation is made at or prior to a "personal meeting" and such meeting occurs before the "time for making of disclosures", the document shall be furnished to the prospective franchisee to whom the representation is made at that "personal meeting";

(4) The following statement is clearly and conspicuously disclosed in the document described by paragraph (b)(3) of this section in immediate conjunction with such representation and in not less than twelve point upper and lowercase boldface type:

CAUTION

These figures are only estimates of what we think you may earn. There is no assurance you'll do as well. If you rely upon our figures, you must accept the risk of not doing as well.

(5) The following information is clearly and conspicuously disclosed in the document described by paragraph (b)(3) of this section in immediate conjunction with such representation:

(i) The number and percentage of outlets of the named franchise business which are located in the geographic markets that form the basis for any such representation and which are known to the franchisor or franchise broker to have earned or made at least the same sales, income, or profits during a period of corresponding length in the immediate past as those potential sales, income, or profits represented; and

(ii) The beginning and ending dates for the corresponding time period referred to by paragraph (b)(5)(i) of this section, *Provided, however,* That any franchisor without prior franchising experience as to the named franchise business so indicate such lack of experience in the document described in paragraph (b)(3) of this section.

Except, That representations of the sales, income or profits of existing franchise outlets need not comply with paragraph (b) of this section.

(c) To make any oral, written or visual representation to a prospective franchisee which states a specific level of sales, income, gross or net profits of

existing outlets (whether franchised or company-owned) of the named franchise business, or which states other facts which suggest such a specific level, unless:

(1) At the time such representation is made, such representation is relevant to the geographic market in which the franchise is to be located;

(2) At the time such representation is made, a reasonable basis exists for such representation and the franchisor has in its possession material which constitutes a reasonable basis for such representation, and such material is made available to any prospective franchisee and to the Commission or its staff upon reasonable demand, *Provided, however*, That in immediate conjunction with such representation, the franchisor discloses in a clear and conspicuous manner that such material is available to the prospective franchisee; and *Provided, further*, That no provision within paragraph (c) of this section shall be construed as requiring the disclosure to any prospective franchisee of the identity of any specific franchisee or of information reasonably likely to lead to the disclosure of such person's identity; and *Provided, further*, That no additional representation as to the sales, income, or gross or net profits of existing outlets (whether franchised or company-owned) of the named franchise business may be made later than the "time for making of disclosures";

(3) Such representation is set forth in detail along with the material bases and assumptions therefor in a single legible written document which accurately, clearly and concisely discloses such information, and none other than that provided for by this part or by State law not preempted by this part. Each prospective franchisee to whom the representation is made shall be furnished with such document no later than the "time for making of disclosures", *Provided, however*, That if the representation is made at or prior to a "personal meeting" and such meeting occurs before the "time for making of disclosures," the document shall be furnished to the prospective franchisee to whom the representation is made at that "personal meeting";

(4) The underlying data on which the representation is based have been pre-

pared in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles;

(5) The following statement is clearly and conspicuously disclosed in the document described by paragraph (c)(3) of this section in immediate conjunction with such representation, and in not less than twelve point upper and lower case boldface type:

CAUTION

Some outlets have [sold] [earned] this amount. There is no assurance you'll do as well. If you rely upon our figures, you must accept the risk of not doing as well.

(6) The following information is clearly and conspicuously disclosed in the document described by paragraph (c)(3) of this section in immediate conjunction with such representation:

(i) The number and percentage of outlets of the named franchise business which are located in the geographic markets that form the basis for any such representation and which are known to the franchisor or franchise broker to have earned or made at least the same sales, income, or profits during a period of corresponding length in the immediate past as those sales, income, or profits represented; and

(ii) The beginning and ending dates for the corresponding time period referred to by paragraph (c)(6)(i) of this section, *Provided, however*, That any franchisor without prior franchising experience as to the named franchise business so indicate such lack of experience in the document described in paragraph (c)(3) of this section.

(d) To fail to provide the following information within the document(s) required by paragraphs (b)(3) and (c)(3) of this section whenever any representation is made to a prospective franchisee regarding its potential sales, income, or profits, or the sales, income, gross or net profits of existing outlets (whether franchised or company-owned) of the named franchise business:

(1) A cover sheet distinctively and conspicuously showing the name of the franchisor, the date of issuance of the document and the following notice imprinted thereon in upper and lower case boldface type of not less than twelve point size:

Federal Trade Commission

§ 436.1

Information for Prospective Franchisees
About Franchise [Sales] [Income] [Profit]
Required by the Federal Trade Commission.

To protect you, we've required the franchisor to give you this information. *We haven't checked it and don't know if it's correct.* Study these facts and figures carefully. If possible, show them to someone who can advise you, like a lawyer or an accountant. Then take your time and think it over.

If you find anything you think may be wrong or anything important that's been left out, let us know about it. It may be against the law.

There may also be laws on franchising in your State. Ask your State agencies about them.

FEDERAL TRADE COMMISSION,
Washington, D.C.

(2) A table of contents.

Provided, however, That each prospective franchisee to whom the representation is made shall be notified at the "time for making of disclosures" of any material change (about which the franchisor, franchise broker, or any of the agents, representatives, or employees thereof, knows or should know) in the information contained in the document(s) described by paragraphs (b)(3) and (c)(3) of this section.

(e) To make any oral, written, or visual representation for general dissemination (not otherwise covered by paragraph (b) or (c) of this section) which states a specific level of sales, income, gross or net profits, either actual or potential, of existing or prospective outlets (whether franchised or company-owned) of the named franchise business or which states other facts which suggest such a specific level, unless:

(1) At the time such representation is made, a reasonable basis exists for such representation and the franchisor has in its possession material which constitutes a reasonable basis for such representation and which is made available to the Commission or its staff upon reasonable demand;

(2) The underlying data on which each representation of sales, income or profit for existing outlets is based have been prepared in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles;

(3) In immediate conjunction with such representation, there shall be clearly and conspicuously disclosed the

number and percentage of outlets of the named franchise business which the franchisor or the franchise broker knows to have earned or made at least the same sales, income, or profits during a period of corresponding length in the immediate past as those sales, income, or profits represented, and the beginning and ending dates for said time period;

(4) In immediate conjunction with each such representation of potential sales, income or profits, the following statement shall be clearly and conspicuously disclosed:

CAUTION

These figures are only estimates; there is no assurance you'll do as well. If you rely upon our figures, you must accept the risk of not doing as well.

Provided, however, That if such representation is not based on actual experience of existing outlets of the named franchise business, that fact also should be disclosed;

(5) No later than the earlier of the first "personal meeting" or the "time for making of disclosures," each prospective franchisee shall be given a single, legible written document which accurately, clearly and concisely sets forth the following information and materials (and none other than that provided for by this part or by State law not preempted by this part):

(i) The representation, set forth in detail along with the material bases and assumptions therefor;

(ii) The number and percentage of outlets of the named franchise business which the franchisor or the franchise broker knows to have earned or made at least the same sales, income or profits during a period of corresponding length in the immediate past as those sales, income, or profits represented, and the beginning and ending dates for said time period;

(iii) With respect to each such representation of sales, income, or profits of existing outlets, the following statement shall be clearly and conspicuously disclosed in immediate conjunction therewith, printed in not less than 12 point upper and lower case boldface type:

CAUTION

Some outlets have [sold] [earned] this amount. There is no assurance you'll do as well. If you rely upon our figures, you must accept the risk of not doing as well.

(iv) With respect to each such representation of potential sales, income, or profits, the following statement shall be clearly and conspicuously disclosed in immediate conjunction therewith, printed in not less than 12 point upper and lower case boldface type:

CAUTION

These figures are only estimates. There is no assurance that you'll do as well. If you rely upon our figures, you must accept the risk of not doing as well.

(v) If applicable, a statement clearly and conspicuously disclosing that the franchisor lacks prior franchising experience as to the named franchise business;

(vi) If applicable, a statement clearly and conspicuously disclosing that the franchisor has not been in business long enough to have actual business data;

(vii) A cover sheet, distinctively and conspicuously showing the name of the franchisor, the date of issuance of the document, and the following notice printed thereon in not less than 12 point upper and lower case boldface type:

Information for Prospective Franchisees
About Franchise [Sales] [Income] [Profit]
Required by the Federal Trade Commission

To protect you, we've required the franchisor to give you this information. *We haven't checked it and don't know if it's correct.* Study these facts and figures carefully. If possible, show them to someone who can advise you, like a lawyer or an accountant. If you find anything you think may be wrong or anything important that's been left out, let us know about it. It may be against the law. There may also be laws about franchising in your State. Ask your State agencies about them.

FEDERAL TRADE COMMISSION,
Washington, D.C.

(viii) A table of contents;

(6) Each prospective franchisee shall be notified at the "time for making of disclosures" of any material changes that have occurred in the information contained in this document.

(f) To make any claim or representation which is contradictory to the information required to be disclosed by this part.

(g) To fail to furnish the prospective franchisee with a copy of the franchisor's franchise agreement and related agreements with the document, and a copy of the completed franchise and related agreements intended to be executed by the parties at least 5 business days prior to the date the agreements are to be executed.

Provided, however, That the obligations defined in paragraphs (b) through (g) of this section shall be deemed to have been met for both the franchisor and the franchise broker if either such person furnishes the prospective franchisee with the written disclosures required thereby.

(h) To fail to return any funds or deposits in accordance with any conditions disclosed pursuant to paragraph (a)(7) of this section.

§ 436.2 Definitions.

As used in this part, the following definitions shall apply:

(a) The term *franchise* means any continuing commercial relationship created by any arrangement or arrangements whereby:

(1)(i)(A) a person (hereinafter "franchisee") offers, sells, or distributes to any person other than a "franchisor" (as hereinafter defined), goods, commodities, or services which are:

(1) Identified by a trademark, service mark, trade name, advertising or other commercial symbol designating another person (hereinafter "franchisor"); or

(2) Indirectly or directly required or advised to meet the quality standards prescribed by another person (hereinafter "franchisor") where the franchisee operates under a name using the trademark, service mark, trade name, advertising or other commercial symbol designating the franchisor; and

(B)(1) The franchisor exerts or has authority to exert a significant degree of control over the franchisee's method of operation, including but not limited

to, the franchisee's business organization, promotional activities, management, marketing plan or business affairs; or

(2) The franchisor gives significant assistance to the franchisee in the latter's method of operation, including, but not limited to, the franchisee's business organization, management, marketing plan, promotional activities, or business affairs; *Provided, however,* That assistance in the franchisee's promotional activities shall not, in the absence of assistance in other areas of the franchisee's method of operation, constitute significant assistance; or

(ii)(A) A person (hereinafter "franchisee") offers, sells, or distributes to any person other than a "franchisor" (as hereinafter defined), goods, commodities, or services which are:

(1) Supplied by another person (hereinafter "franchisor"), or

(2) Supplied by a third person (e.g., a supplier) with whom the franchisee is directly or indirectly required to do business by another person (hereinafter "franchisor"); or

(3) Supplied by a third person (e.g., a supplier) with whom the franchisee is directly or indirectly advised to do business by another person (hereinafter "franchisor") where such third person is affiliated with the franchisor; and

(B) The franchisor:

(1) Secures for the franchisee retail outlets or accounts for said goods, commodities, or services; or

(2) Secures for the franchisee locations or sites for vending machines, rack displays, or any other product sales display used by the franchisee in the offering, sale, or distribution of said goods, commodities, or services; or

(3) Provides to the franchisee the services of a person able to secure the retail outlets, accounts, sites or locations referred to in paragraphs (a)(1)(ii)(B) (1) and (2) of this section; and

(2) The franchisee is required as a condition of obtaining or commencing the franchise operation to make a payment or a commitment to pay to the franchisor, or to a person affiliated with the franchisor.

(3) Exemptions. The provisions of this part shall not apply to a franchise:

(i) Which is a "fractional franchise"; or

(ii) Where pursuant to a lease, license, or similar agreement, a person offers, sells, or distributes goods, commodities, or services on or about premises occupied by a retailer-grantor primarily for the retailer-grantor's own merchandising activities, which goods, commodities, or services are not purchased from the retailer-grantor or persons whom the lessee is directly or indirectly (A) required to do business with by the retailer-grantor or (B) advised to do business with by the retailer-grantor where such person is affiliated with the retailer-grantor; or

(iii) Where the total of the payments referred to in paragraph (a)(2) of this section made during a period from any time before to within 6 months after commencing operation of the franchisee's business, is less than \$500; or

(iv) Where there is no writing which evidences any material term or aspect of the relationship or arrangement.

(4) Exclusions. The term *franchise* shall not be deemed to include any continuing commercial relationship created solely by:

(i) The relationship between an employer and an employee, or among general business partners; or

(ii) Membership in a bona fide "cooperative association"; or

(iii) An agreement for the use of a trademark, service mark, trade name, seal, advertising, or other commercial symbol designating a person who offers on a general basis, for a fee or otherwise, a bona fide service for the evaluation, testing, or certification of goods, commodities, or services;

(iv) An agreement between a licensor and a single licensee to license a trademark, trade name, service mark, advertising or other commercial symbol where such license is the only one of its general nature and type to be granted by the licensor with respect to that trademark, trade name, service mark, advertising, or other commercial symbol.

(5) Any relationship which is represented either orally or in writing to

be a franchise (as defined in this paragraphs (a) (1) and (2) of this section) is subject to the requirements of this part.

(b) The term *person* means any individual, group, association, limited or general partnership, corporation, or any other business entity.

(c) The term *franchisor* means any person who participates in a franchise relationship as a franchisor, as denoted in paragraph (a) of this section.

(d) The term *franchisee* means any person (1) who participates in a franchise relationship as a franchisee, as denoted in paragraph (a) of this section, or (2) to whom an interest in a franchise is sold.

(e) The term *prospective franchisee* includes any person, including any representative, agent, or employee of that person, who approaches or is approached by a franchisor or franchise broker, or any representative, agent, or employee thereof, for the purpose of discussing the establishment, or possible establishment, of a franchise relationship involving such a person.

(f) The term *business day* means any day other than Saturday, Sunday, or the following national holidays: New Year's Day, Washington's Birthday, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Columbus Day, Veterans' Day, Thanksgiving, and Christmas.

(g) The term *time for making of disclosures* means ten (10) business days prior to the earlier of (1) the execution by a prospective franchisee of any franchise agreement or any other agreement imposing a binding legal obligation on such prospective franchisee, about which the franchisor, franchise broker, or any agent, representative, or employee thereof, knows or should know, in connection with the sale or proposed sale of a franchise, or (2) the payment by a prospective franchisee, about which the franchisor, franchise broker, or any agent, representative, or employee thereof, knows or should know, of any consideration in connection with the sale or proposed sale of a franchise.

(h) The term *fractional franchise* means any relationship, as denoted by paragraph (a) of this section, in which the person described therein as a franchisee, or any of the current direc-

tors or executive officers thereof, has been in the type of business represented by the franchise relationship for more than 2 years and the parties anticipated, or should have anticipated, at the time the agreement establishing the franchise relationship was reached, that the sales arising from the relationship would represent no more than 20 percent of the sales in dollar volume of the franchisee.

(i) The term *affiliated person* means a person (as defined in paragraph (b) of this section):

(1) Which directly or indirectly controls, is controlled by, or is under common control with, a franchisor; or

(2) Which directly or indirectly owns, controls, or holds with power to vote, 10 percent or more of the outstanding voting securities of a franchisor; or

(3) Which has, in common with a franchisor, one or more partners, officers, directors, trustees, branch managers, or other persons occupying similar status or performing similar functions.

(j) The term *franchise broker* means any person other than a franchisor or a franchisee who sells, offers for sale, or arranges for the sale of a franchise.

(k) The term *sale of a franchise* includes a contract or agreement whereby a person obtains a franchise or interest in a franchise for value by purchase, license, or otherwise. This term shall not be deemed to include the renewal or extension of an existing franchise where there is no interruption in the operation of the franchised business by the franchisee, unless the new contracts or agreements contain material changes from those in effect between the franchisor and franchisee prior thereto.

(l) A *cooperative association* is either (1) an association of producers of agricultural products authorized by section 1 of the Capper-Volstead Act, 7 U.S.C. 291; or (2) an organization operated on a cooperative basis by and for independent retailers which wholesales goods or furnishes services primarily to its member-retailers.

(m) The term *fiscal year* means the franchisor's fiscal year.

(n) The terms *material*, *material fact*, and *material change* shall include any fact, circumstance, or set of conditions

which has a substantial likelihood of influencing a reasonable franchisee or a reasonable prospective franchisee in the making of a significant decision relating to a named franchise business or which has any significant financial impact on a franchisee or prospective franchisee.

(o) The term *personal meeting* means a face-to-face meeting between a franchisor or franchise broker (or any agent, representative, or employee thereof) and a prospective franchisee which is held for the purpose of discussing the sale or possible sale of a franchise.

§ 436.3 Severability.

If any provision of this part or its application to any person, act, or practice is held invalid, the remainder of the part or the application of its provisions to any person, act, or practice shall not be affected thereby.

NOTE 1: The Commission expresses no opinion as to the legality of any practice mentioned in this part. A provision for disclosure should not be construed as condonation or approval with respect to the matter required to be disclosed, nor as an indication of the Commission's intention not to enforce any applicable statute.

NOTE 2: By taking action in this area, the Federal Trade Commission does not intend to annul, alter, or affect, or exempt any person subject to the provisions of this part from complying with the laws or regulations of any State, municipality, or other local government with respect to franchising practices, except to the extent that those laws or regulations are inconsistent with any provision of this part, and then only to the extent of the inconsistency. For the purposes of this part, a law or regulation of any State, municipality, or other local government is not inconsistent with this part if the protection such law or regulation affords any prospective franchisee is equal to or greater than that provided by this part. Examples of provisions which provide protection equal to or greater than that provided by this part include laws or regulations which require more complete record keeping by the franchisor or the disclosure of more complete information to the franchisee.

NOTE 3: [As per § 436.1(a)(24) of this part]:

DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

Pursuant to 16 CFR 436.1 et seq., a Trade Regulation Rule of the Federal Trade Commission regarding Disclosure Requirements and Prohibitions Concerning Franchising

and Business Opportunity Ventures, the following information is set forth on [name of franchisor] for your examination:

1. Identifying information as to franchisor.
2. Business experience of franchisor's directors and executive officers.
3. Business experience of the franchisor.
4. Litigation history.
5. Bankruptcy history.
6. Description of franchise.
7. Initial funds required to be paid by a franchisee.
8. Recurring funds required to be paid by a franchisee.
9. Affiliated persons the franchisee is required or advised to do business with by the franchisor.
10. Obligations to purchase.
11. Revenues received by the franchisor in consideration of purchases by a franchisee.
12. Financing arrangements.
13. Restriction of sales.
14. Personal participation required of the franchisee in the operation of the franchise.
15. Termination, cancellation, and renewal of the franchise.
16. Statistical information concerning the number of franchises (and company-owned outlets).
17. Site selection.
18. Training programs.
19. Public figure involvement in the franchise.
20. Financial information concerning the franchisor.

PART 444—CREDIT PRACTICES

Sec.

- 444.1 Definitions.
- 444.2 Unfair credit practices.
- 444.3 Unfair or deceptive cosigner practices.
- 444.4 Late charges.
- 444.5 State exemptions.

AUTHORITY: Sec. 18(a), 88 Stat. 2193, as amended 93 Stat. 95 (15 U.S.C. 57a); 80 Stat. 383, as amended, 81 Stat. 54 (5 U.S.C. 552).

SOURCE: 49 FR 7789, Mar. 1, 1984, unless otherwise noted.

§ 444.1 Definitions.

(a) *Lender*. A person who engages in the business of lending money to consumers within the jurisdiction of the Federal Trade Commission.

(b) *Retail installment seller*. A person who sells goods or services to consumers on a deferred payment basis or pursuant to a lease-purchase arrangement within the jurisdiction of the Federal Trade Commission.

(c) *Person*. An individual, corporation, or other business organization.