

## See Katten's Model Clawback Policy as Mandatory Rules Take Effect

October 2, 2023

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As [we previously noted](#), the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) adopted long-delayed rules on October 26, 2022, which will require public companies to implement mandatory "clawback" policies with respect to incentive-based compensation if the company's financial statements tied to achieving the relevant incentive payments are later required to be restated.

Since our initial alert, the New York Stock Exchange (NYSE) and Nasdaq Stock Market (Nasdaq) proposed listing standards that the SEC approved on June 9, 2023. Each exchange's applicable listing standards became effective on October 2, 2023. Issuers must adopt a clawback policy compliant with such listing standards no later than December 1, 2023.

We have prepared the following model clawback policy that is designed to comply with both the NYSE's and Nasdaq's listing requirements and assist in preparing a new or revised clawback policy.

Please note this model clawback policy is intended to be a guide, and issuers should construct their clawback policy by considering existing and future incentive-based compensation arrangements for their covered executive officers. Accordingly, clawback policies should be customized to fit the particular facts and circumstances while concurrently satisfying the relevant listing requirements. In tandem with adopting a compliant policy, issuers should consider whether they must make any requisite amendments or modifications to existing plan and/or award documentation (e.g., the governing incentive equity plan and the forms of award agreements, employment agreements, annual bonus plans, etc.) to give effect to such a policy.

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# [COMPANY]

## CLAWBACK POLICY

EFFECTIVE [•], 2023

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1. Purpose. The purpose of this [COMPANY] (the “Company”) Clawback Policy (this “Policy”) is to enable the Company to recover Erroneously Awarded Compensation from Covered Executive Officers in the event that the Company is required to prepare an Accounting Restatement. This Policy is designed to comply with, and shall be interpreted to be consistent with, Section 954 of the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act of 2010, as codified in Section 10D of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended (the “Exchange Act”), Rule 10D-1 promulgated under the Exchange Act (“Rule 10D-1”) and [Section 303A.14 of the New York Stock Exchange (the “NYSE”) Listed Company Manual] [Listing Rule 5608 of the corporate governance rules of The Nasdaq Stock Market (“Nasdaq”)] (the “Listing Standards”).<sup>1</sup> Unless otherwise defined in this Policy, capitalized terms shall have the meaning ascribed to such terms in Section 2.
2. Definitions. As used in this Policy, the following capitalized terms shall have the meanings set forth below.
  - a. “Accounting Restatement” means an accounting restatement of the Company’s financial statements due to the Company’s material noncompliance with any financial reporting requirement under the securities laws, including any required accounting restatement to correct an error in previously issued financial statements that is material to the previously issued financial statements (i.e., a “Big R” restatement), or to correct an error that is not material to the previously issued financial statements, but that would result in a material misstatement if the error were corrected in the current period or left uncorrected in the current period (i.e., a “little r” restatement).
  - b. “Accounting Restatement Date” means the earlier to occur of (i) the date the Board, a committee of the Board, or the officer or officers of the Company authorized to take such action if the Board’s action is not required, concludes, or reasonably should have concluded, that the Company is required to prepare an Accounting Restatement and (ii) the date a court, regulator, or other legally authorized body directs the Company to prepare an Accounting Restatement.
  - c. “Applicable Period” means, with respect to any Accounting Restatement, the three completed fiscal years immediately preceding the Accounting Restatement Date, as well as any transition period (that results from a change in the Company’s fiscal year) within or immediately following those three completed fiscal years (except that a transition period that comprises a period of at least nine months shall count as a completed fiscal year).
  - d. “Board” means the board of directors of the Company.
  - e. “Code” means the U.S. Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended. Any reference to a section of the Code or regulation thereunder includes such section or regulation, any valid regulation or other official guidance promulgated under such section, and any comparable provision of any future legislation or regulation amending, supplementing, or superseding such section or regulation.

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<sup>1</sup> Note: This Policy is drafted to satisfy Section 954 of the Dodd-Frank Act, the SEC’s Rule 10D-1, and the proposed listing standards of the NYSE and Nasdaq, as applicable.

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- f. “Covered Executive Officer” means an individual who is currently or previously served as the Company’s principal executive officer, principal financial officer, principal accounting officer (or, if there is no such accounting officer, the controller), vice president of the Company in charge of a principal business unit, division, or function (such as sales, administration, or finance), an officer who performs (or performed) a policy-making function, or any other person who performs (or performed) similar policy-making functions for the Company or is otherwise determined to be an executive officer of the Company pursuant to Item 401(b) of Regulation S-K. An executive officer of the Company’s parent or subsidiary is deemed a “Covered Executive Officer” if the executive officer performs (or performed) such policy-making functions for the Company.
- g. “Erroneously Awarded Compensation” means, in the event of an Accounting Restatement, the amount of Incentive-Based Compensation previously received that exceeds the amount of Incentive-Based Compensation that otherwise would have been received had it been determined based on the restated amounts in such Accounting Restatement, and must be computed without regard to any taxes paid by the relevant Covered Executive Officer; provided, however, that for Incentive-Based Compensation based on stock price or total stockholder return, where the amount of Erroneously Awarded Compensation is not subject to mathematical recalculation directly from the information in an Accounting Restatement: (i) the amount of Erroneously Awarded Compensation must be based on a reasonable estimate of the effect of the Accounting Restatement on the stock price or total stockholder return upon which the Incentive-Based Compensation was received and (ii) the Company must maintain documentation of the determination of that reasonable estimate and provide such documentation to [the NYSE][Nasdaq].
- h. “Financial Reporting Measure” means any measure that is determined and presented in accordance with the accounting principles used in preparing the Company’s financial statements and any measure that is derived wholly or in part from such measure. A Financial Reporting Measure is not required to be presented within the Company’s financial statements or included in a filing with the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission to qualify as a “Financial Reporting Measure.”<sup>2</sup>
- i. “Incentive-Based Compensation” means any compensation that is granted, earned, or vested based wholly or in part upon the attainment of a Financial Reporting Measure. Incentive-Based Compensation is deemed “received” for purposes of this Policy in the Company’s fiscal period during which the Financial Reporting Measure specified in the Incentive-Based Compensation award is attained, even if the payment or grant of such Incentive-Based Compensation occurs after the end of that period.
3. Administration. This Policy shall be administered by the [Board, the Compensation Committee of the Board (the “Compensation Committee”), the Audit Committee of the Board (the “Audit Committee”) or a special committee comprised of members of the Compensation Committee and Audit Committee.]<sup>3</sup> For purposes of this Policy, the body charged with administering this Policy shall be referred to herein as the “Administrator.” The Administrator is authorized to interpret and construe this Policy and to make all determinations necessary, appropriate or advisable for the administration of this Policy, in each case, to the extent permitted under the Listing Standards and in compliance with (or pursuant to an exemption from

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<sup>2</sup> Note: In the final publication of Rule 10D-1, the SEC explained Financial Reporting Measures include, but are not limited to, the following (and any accounting-based measures and measures derived from the following): revenues; net income; operating income; profitability of one or more reportable segments; financial ratios (e.g., accounts receivable turnover and inventory turnover rates); net assets or net asset value per share (e.g., for registered investment companies and business development companies that are subject to the rule); earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortization; funds from operations and adjusted funds from operations; liquidity measures (e.g., working capital, operating cash flow); return measures (e.g., return on invested capital, return on assets); earnings measures (e.g., earnings per share); sales per square foot or same store sales, where sales are subject to an Accounting Restatement; revenue per user, or average revenue per user, where revenue is subject to an Accounting Restatement; cost per employee, where cost is subject to an Accounting Restatement; any of such financial reporting measures relative to a peer group, where the Company’s financial reporting measure is subject to an Accounting Restatement; and tax basis income.

<sup>3</sup> Note: This Policy may be administered by the Board, the Compensation Committee, the Audit Committee or a special committee comprised of members of the Compensation Committee and Audit Committee.

the application of) Section 409A of the Code. All determinations and decisions made by the Administrator pursuant to the provisions of this Policy shall be final, conclusive and binding on all persons, including the Company, its affiliates, its stockholders and Covered Executive Officers, and need not be uniform with respect to each person covered by this Policy.

In the administration of this Policy, the Administrator is authorized and directed to consult with the full Board or such other committees of the Board as may be necessary or appropriate as to matters within the scope of such other committee's responsibility and authority. Subject to any limitation at applicable law, the Administrator may authorize and empower any officer or employee of the Company to take any and all actions necessary or appropriate to carry out the purpose and intent of this Policy (other than with respect to any recovery under this Policy involving such officer or employee). Any action or inaction by the Administrator with respect to a Covered Executive Officer under this Policy in no way limits the Administrator's decision to act or not to act with respect to any other Covered Executive Officer under this Policy or under any similar policy, agreement or arrangement, nor shall any such action or inaction serve as a waiver of any rights the Company may have against any Covered Executive Officer other than as set forth in this Policy.

4. Application of this Policy. This Policy applies to all Incentive-Based Compensation received by a person: (a) after beginning service as a Covered Executive Officer; (b) who served as a Covered Executive Officer at any time during the performance period for such Incentive-Based Compensation; (c) while the Company had a listed class of securities on a national securities exchange; and (d) during the Applicable Period. For the avoidance of doubt, Incentive-Based Compensation that is subject to both a Financial Reporting Measure vesting condition and a service-based vesting condition shall be considered received when the relevant Financial Reporting Measure is achieved, even if the Incentive-Based Compensation continues to be subject to the service-based vesting condition.
5. Recovery Erroneously Awarded Compensation. In the event of an Accounting Restatement, the Company must recover Erroneously Awarded Compensation reasonably promptly, in amounts determined pursuant to this Policy. The Company's obligation to recover Erroneously Awarded Compensation is not dependent on the filing of restated financial statements. Recovery under this Policy with respect to a Covered Executive Officer shall not require the finding of any misconduct by such Covered Executive Officer or such Covered Executive Officer being found responsible for the accounting error leading to an Accounting Restatement. In the event of an Accounting Restatement, the method for recouping Erroneously Awarded Compensation shall be determined by the Administrator in its sole and absolute discretion, to the extent permitted under the Listing Standards and in compliance with (or pursuant to an exemption from the application of) Section 409A of the Code.

Recovery may include, without limitation, (i) reimbursement of all or a portion of any incentive compensation award, (ii) cancellation of incentive compensation awards and (iii) any other method authorized by applicable law or contract.

The Company is authorized and directed pursuant to this Policy to recover Erroneously Awarded Compensation in compliance with this Policy unless the [Compensation Committee]<sup>4</sup> has determined that recovery would be impracticable solely for the following limited reasons, and subject to the following procedural and disclosure requirements:

- a. The direct expenses paid to a third party to assist in enforcing this Policy would exceed the amount to be recovered. Before reaching such conclusion, the Administrator must make a reasonable attempt to recover such Erroneously Awarded Compensation, document such reasonable attempt(s) to recover, and provide that documentation to [the NYSE/Nasdaq];

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<sup>4</sup> Note: Under Rule 10D-1, the determination that recovery would be impracticable under the rule must be made by "the issuer's committee of independent directors responsible for executive compensation decisions, or in the absence of such a committee, a majority of the independent directors serving on the board," which is the reason for referencing the Compensation Committee here rather than the Administrator. If the Administrator is the Compensation Committee, the term Administrator can be used here.

- b. Recovery would violate home country law where that law was adopted prior to November 28, 2022. Before reaching such conclusion, the Administrator must obtain an opinion of home country counsel, acceptable to [the NYSE/Nasdaq], that recovery would result in such a violation, and must provide such opinion to [the NYSE/ Nasdaq]; or
  - c. Recovery would likely cause an otherwise tax-qualified retirement plan, under which benefits are broadly available to employees of the Company, to fail to meet the requirements of Section 401(a)(13) or Section 411(a) of the Code.
6. Prohibition on Indemnification and Insurance Reimbursement. The Company is prohibited from indemnifying any Covered Executive Officer against the loss of any Erroneously Awarded Compensation. Further, the Company is prohibited from paying or reimbursing a Covered Executive Officer for the cost of purchasing insurance to cover any such loss. The Company is also prohibited from entering into any agreement or arrangement whereby this Policy would not apply or fail to be enforced against a Covered Executive Officer.
  7. Required Policy-Related Disclosure and Filings. The Company shall file all disclosures with respect to this Policy in accordance with the requirements of the federal securities laws, including disclosures required by U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission filings. A copy of this Policy and any amendments hereto shall be posted on the Company's website and filed as an exhibit to the Company's annual report on Form 10-K.
  8. Acknowledgement. Each Covered Executive Officer shall sign and return to the Company within thirty (30) calendar days following the later of (i) the effective date of this Policy set forth below or (ii) the date such individual becomes a Covered Executive Officer, the Acknowledgement Form attached hereto as Exhibit A, pursuant to which the Covered Executive Officer agrees to be bound by, and to comply with, the terms and conditions of this Policy.<sup>5</sup>
  9. Amendment; Termination. The Board may amend this Policy from time to time in its sole and absolute discretion and shall amend this Policy as it deems necessary to reflect the Listing Standards or to comply with (or maintain an exemption from the application of) Section 409A of the Code. The Board may terminate this Policy at any time; provided, that the termination of this Policy would not cause the Company to violate any federal securities laws, or rules promulgated by the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission or the Listing Standards.
  10. Other Recovery Obligations; General Rights. The Board intends that this Policy shall be applied to the fullest extent of the law. To the extent that the application of this Policy would provide for recovery of Incentive-Based Compensation that the Company already recovered pursuant to Section 304 of the Sarbanes-Oxley Act or other recovery obligations, any such amount recovered from a Covered Executive Officer will be credited to any recovery required under this Policy in respect of such Covered Executive Officer.
  11. Effective Date. This Policy shall be effective as of [●]<sup>6</sup>. The terms of this Policy shall apply to any Incentive-Based Compensation that is received by Covered Executive Officers on or after October 2, 2023, even if such Incentive-Based Compensation was approved, awarded or granted to Covered Executive Officers prior to such date.

This Policy shall not limit the rights of the Company to take any other actions or pursue other remedies that the Company may deem appropriate under the circumstances and under applicable law, in each case, to the extent permitted under the Listing Standards and in compliance with (or pursuant to an exemption from the application of) Section 409A of the Code.

This Policy is binding and enforceable against all Covered Executive Officers and their beneficiaries, heirs, executors, administrators or other legal representatives.

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<sup>5</sup> Note: Acknowledgement suggested, but not required, to be a part of the Policy.

<sup>6</sup> Note: NYSE/Nasdaq-listed issuers are required to adopt compliant clawback policies no later than December 1, 2023.

**EXHIBIT A**

**[COMPANY] CLAWBACK POLICY**

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FORM**

By signing below, the undersigned acknowledges and confirms that the undersigned has received and reviewed a copy of the [COMPANY] (the “Company”) Clawback Policy (the “Policy”).

By signing this Acknowledgement Form, the undersigned acknowledges and agrees that the undersigned is and will continue to be subject to the Policy and that the Policy will apply both during and after the undersigned’s employment or service with the Company. Further, by signing below, the undersigned agrees to abide by the terms of the Policy, including, without limitation, by returning any Erroneously Awarded Compensation (as defined in the Policy) to the Company to the extent required by, and in a manner consistent with, the Policy.

EXECUTIVE OFFICER

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Print Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

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## CONTACTS

For questions or more information, contact your Katten attorney or any of the following Employee Benefits and Executive Compensation or Capital Markets attorneys:



**Timothy Kirby**  
+1.212.940.6494  
tim.kirby@katten.com



**Mitchel Pahl**  
+1.212.940.6527  
mitch.pahl@katten.com



**Kate Ulrich Saracene**  
+1.212.940.6345  
+1.312.902.5436  
kate.saracene@katten.com



**Shira A. Selengut**  
+1.212.940.6767  
shira.selengut@katten.com



**Mark Wood**  
+1.312.902.5493  
mark.wood@katten.com



**Brandon Bucio**  
+1.469.627.7026  
brandon.bucio@katten.com



**Peter Dalmasy**  
+1.312.902.5605  
peter.dalmasy@katten.com



**Neal K. Patel**  
+1.212.940.6484  
neal.patel@katten.com



**Michael Tremeski**  
+1.312.902.5392  
michael.tremeski@katten.com

# Katten

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