

MANUAL OF POLICY

Title	Investment Policy	5120
Legal Authority	Approval of the Board of Trustees	Page 1 of 12
Date Approved by Board	As Amended by Board Minute Order Dated October 18, 2022	

PREFACE

It is the policy of South Texas College that, giving due regard to the safety and risk of investment, all available funds shall be invested in conformance with State and Federal Regulations, applicable Tax Exempt Bond Issue requirements, adopted Investment Policy and adopted Investment Strategy Statement.

Effective cash management is recognized as essential to good fiscal management. Aggressive cash management and effective investment strategy development will be pursued to take advantage of interest earnings as viable and material revenue to all South Texas College funds. The South Texas College investment portfolio shall conform to the strict requirements of the Act and this Policy.

Investments shall be made with the primary objectives of:

Preservation of capital and safety of South Texas College funds,
Maintenance of sufficient liquidity,
Maximization of return within acceptable risk constraints, and
Diversification of investments.

I. PURPOSE

A. Formal Adoption

This Investment Policy (hereinafter “Investment Policy” or “Policy”) is adopted by South Texas College (hereinafter “South Texas College” or the “College”) in accordance with Chapter 2256, Texas Government Code, the Public Funds Investment Act (hereinafter the “Act,” “Public Funds Investment Act,” or “PFIA”) and shall be interpreted at all times to comply with the Act.

B. Scope

This Investment Policy applies to all financial assets of South Texas College and includes the following funds or fund types: Unrestricted, Auxiliary, Restricted, Loan, Endowment, Agency, Funds for Renewal and Replacement, Unexpended Plant Funds, Funds for Retirement of Indebtedness, and any other funds which have been contractually delegated to South Texas College for management purposes.

This Policy establishes guidelines for:

- 1) Designation of Investment Officers and Investment Committee to invest South Texas College funds,
- 2) Authorized investments, and
- 3) Review and oversight of investments.

In addition to this Policy, bond funds (as defined by the Internal Revenue Service) shall be managed in accordance with their issuing documentation and all applicable State and Federal Laws.

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C. Review and Amendment

This Policy shall be reviewed annually by the Board of Trustees. Amendments must be adopted by the Board of Trustees.

D. Investment Strategy

In conjunction with the annual Policy review, the Board of Trustees shall review the separate written investment strategy for each of South Texas College's funds. The investment strategy must describe the investment objectives for each fund according to the following priorities:

- 1) understanding of the suitability of the investment to the financial requirements of South Texas College,
- 2) preservation and safety of principal,
- 3) liquidity,
- 4) marketability of the investment if the need arises to liquidate the investment prior to maturity,
- 5) diversification of the investment portfolio, and
- 6) yield.

II. INVESTMENT OBJECTIVES

A. Safety of Principal

The primary objective of all investment activity is the preservation of capital and the safety of principal in the overall portfolio. Each investment transaction shall seek to ensure first that capital losses are minimized, whether they result from securities investments defaults or erosion of market value.

The objective will be to mitigate credit and interest rate risk.

- **Credit Risk:** In accordance with State law and the College's Investment Policy, the College limits its exposure to credit risk (the risk that the issuer of a debt security will not pay its par value upon maturity) by limiting its investments to only those authorized in Section III.A in accordance with the PFIA. In Section III.E.1, the College's Investment Policy seeks to further minimize its concentration of credit risk by establishing maximum investment percentages of classes of investments and a diversification strategy for the total College portfolio.
- **Interest Rate Risk:** In accordance with its Investment Policy, the College limits its exposure to interest rate risk by utilizing investments whose maturities will not exceed the anticipated cash flow requirements for the funds. College policy states that investments of all fund types, except for Unexpended Plant Funds and Funds for Retirement of Indebtedness, are limited to a weighted average maturity of 365 days for all investments, with a maximum allowable maturity of two years for any investment type. The investment maturities of Unexpended Plant Funds and of Funds for Retirement of Indebtedness are generally limited to the anticipated cash flow requirements of the funds.

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B. Maintenance of Adequate Liquidity

The investment portfolio will remain sufficiently liquid to meet the cash flow requirements that might be reasonably anticipated. Liquidity shall be achieved by matching investment maturity with forecasted cash flow requirements, investing in securities with active secondary markets, and maintaining appropriate portfolio diversification.

C. Market Rate of Return (Yield)

The College's investment portfolio shall be designed with the objective of attaining a market rate of return throughout budgetary and economic cycles, consistent with the College's investment risk constraints and the cash flow needs projected. Return on investment is of secondary importance compared to the safety and liquidity objectives described above. The core of investments is limited to relatively low risk investments in anticipation of earning a fair return relative to the risk being assumed. Weighted Average Yield to Maturity shall be the standard for calculating portfolio rate of return.

III. INVESTMENT POLICIES

A. Authorized Investments

South Texas College restricts its investments to the following eligible securities, as authorized by the Act.

- 1) Obligations, including letters of credit, of the United States or its agencies and instrumentalities, including the Federal Home Loan Banks.
- 2) Direct obligations of the State of Texas, or its agencies and instrumentalities.
- 3) 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, including obligations that are fully guaranteed or insured by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation or by the explicit full faith and credit of the United States.
- 4) 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.
- 5) Financial institution deposits issued by a depository institution that has its main office or branch in Texas and is:
 - a) guaranteed or insured by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC) or its successors or the National Credit Union Share Insurance Fund or its successor,
 - b) secured by obligations that are described by the Public Funds Collateral Act (Chapter 2257, Texas Government Code), including mortgage backed securities directly issued by a federal agency or instrumentality that have a market value of not less than 102% of the principal amount plus accrued interest of the deposit less the applicable level of FDIC insurance, or by Letters of Credit issued by the Federal Home Loan Bank with a value of 100% of the principal amount plus accrued interest of the deposit less the applicable level of FDIC insurance, or
 - c) secured in any other manner and amount provided by law for deposits of the College,
 - d) issued in a manner consistent with the Act that distributes the deposit among multiple financial institutions to effectively provide FDIC insurance for the entire deposit,
 - e) governed by a Depository Agreement, as described in Section E.4 herein, that complies with Federal and State Regulation, and
 - f) solicited for bid orally, in writing, electronically, or any combination of those methods, unless acquired exclusively from the South Texas College depository.

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- 6) No-load government money market mutual funds registered with and regulated by the Securities and Exchange Commission whose investment objectives seek to maintain a stable \$1.0000 net asset value and that comply with the requirements of State law.
- 7) Eligible investment pools organized and operating in compliance with the Act that have been authorized by the Board of Trustees by rule, order, ordinance, or resolution and whose investment philosophy and strategy is consistent with this Policy and South Texas College's ongoing investment strategy. A public funds investment pool must be continuously rated no lower than AAA or AAA-m or at an equivalent rating by at least one nationally recognized rating service.

To the extent the bonds or other obligations of the College or a municipal bond insurance policy further limits the types of investments the College makes with funds pledged to the payment of those bonds or obligations, the provisions thereof shall govern.

B. Existing Investments

The College is not required to liquidate investments that were authorized investments at the time of the purchase.

C. Prohibited Investment

In accordance with Texas state law, the following are not authorized investments:

- 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.

D. Credit Rating Review and Effect of Loss of Required Rating

The College will seek to control the risk of loss due to failure of an investment issuer by monitoring the ratings of portfolio positions to ensure compliance with the rating requirements imposed by the Act. Not less than quarterly, the Investment Officers will obtain, from a reliable source, the current credit rating for each held investment that has a PFIA-required minimum rating. Any authorized investment that requires a minimum rating does not qualify during the period the investment does not have the minimum rating. All prudent measures will be taken to liquidate an investment that is downgraded to less than the required minimum rating.

E. Protection of Principal

South Texas College shall seek to control the risk of loss due to the failure of an investment issuer or grantor. Such risk shall be limited by utilizing only the least-risk types of investments as defined in the Act and the Policy, by qualifying the broker, dealer, and financial institution with whom the College will transact, by collateralization as required by law, and through portfolio diversification by maturity and type.

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The purchase of individual securities shall be executed on “delivery versus payment” (DVP) terms through the South Texas College Safekeeping Agent. By so doing, South Texas College’s funds are not released until South Texas College has received, through the Safekeeping Agent, the securities purchased.

1. Diversification by Investment Type

Diversification by investment type shall be maintained by ensuring an active and efficient secondary market in portfolio securities and by opportunity risks associated with specific security types.

Diversification by investment type shall be established by the following maximum percentages of investment type to the total South Texas College investment portfolio at the time of each investment transaction:

- a. U.S. Treasury Bills/Notes/Bonds 100%
- b. U.S. Agencies and Instrumentalities 100%
- c. States, Counties, Cities, and Other 25%
- d. Financial Institution Deposits 100%
- e. Government Money Market Mutual Funds 25%
- f. Eligible Investment Pools 50%

Bond proceeds may be invested in a single security or investment if the Investment Committee determines that such an investment is necessary to comply with Federal arbitrage restrictions or to facilitate arbitrage record-keeping and calculations.

2. Diversification by Investment Maturity

To minimize risk of loss due to interest rate fluctuations, investment maturities will not exceed the anticipated cash flow requirements of the funds. Maturity guidelines by fund are as follows: (Investment transactions made prior to the adoption of this Policy are not subject to these guidelines).

a) Unrestricted, Auxiliary, Restricted, Loan, Endowment, Agency and Plant Renewal and Replacement Funds

The weighted average days to maturity for the portfolio of these funds shall be less than 365 days and the maximum allowable maturity shall be two years for any investment type.

b) Unexpended Plant Funds

The investment maturity of Unexpended Plant Funds, allocable to a bond issue, shall generally be limited to the anticipated cash flow requirements or the “Temporary Period,” as defined by the U.S. Tax Code and the regulations thereunder. During the Temporary Period, bond proceeds may be invested at an unrestricted yield. After the expiration of the Temporary Period, bond proceeds subject to yield restriction shall be invested consistent with the yield restrictions under the U.S. Tax Code and the regulations thereunder.

The weighted average days to maturity for the Unexpended Plant Funds not allocable to a bond issue shall be less than 365 days and the maximum allowable maturity shall be two years for any investment type.

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6. Competitive Bidding

The College will require at least three competitive offers or bids for all individual security purchases and sales (excluding those transactions with financial institution deposits, eligible money market mutual funds, and eligible investment pools) and require any investment advisor to do the same. Rather than relying solely on yield, investments in financial institution deposits, eligible money market mutual funds, and eligible investment pools shall be based on criteria determined by the Investment Officers.

F. Investment Advisors and Investment Providers

Investment Advisors shall adhere to the spirit, philosophy, and terms of this Policy and shall invest within the same “Standard of Care.” Investment Providers shall adhere to the spirit and philosophy of this Policy and shall avoid recommending or suggesting transactions outside that “Standard of Care.”

Selection of Investment Advisors and Investment Providers will be performed by the Board of Trustees. The Board of Trustees may contract with an investment management firm registered under the Investment Advisers Act of 1940 or with the State Securities Board to provide for the investment and management of public funds under its control. The contract period will be for a maximum of two years, and a renewal or extension of the contract must be made by the Board of Trustees by order, ordinance, or resolution. The criteria to evaluate Investment Advisors and Investor Providers include the following:

- a) Adherence to South Texas College’s policies and strategies,
- b) Investment performance and transaction pricing within accepted risk constraints,
- c) Responsiveness to South Texas College’s requests for services, information and open communication,
- d) Understanding of the inherent fiduciary responsibility of investing public funds, and
- e) Similarity in philosophy and strategy with South Texas College’s objectives.

Selected Investment Advisors and Investment Providers shall provide timely transaction confirmations and monthly activity reports.

Business organizations eligible to transact investment business with South Texas College shall be presented a written copy of this Investment Policy. Local Government Investment Pools and discretionary investment management firms seeking to transact investment business shall execute a written instrument substantially to the effect that the qualified representative has:

- 1) received and thoroughly reviewed this Investment Policy, and
- 2) acknowledged that the organization has implemented reasonable procedures and controls in an effort to preclude investment transactions conducted between South Texas College and the organization that are not authorized by the College’s Investment Policy, except to the extent that this authorization is dependent on an analysis of the makeup of the College’s entire portfolio or requires an interpretation of subjective investment standards, or relates to investment transactions that are not made through accounts or other contractual arrangements over which the business organization has accepted discretionary investment authority .

South Texas College shall not enter into an investment transaction with a Local Government Investment Pool or discretionary investment advisor prior to receiving the written instrument described above.

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The Board of Trustees of South Texas College shall, at least annually, review, revise, and adopt a list of qualified Investment Providers (brokers/dealers/banks/pools) that are authorized to engage in investment transactions with the College.

G. Responsibility and Controls

1. Authority to Invest

South Texas College's "Investment Officers" are the Vice President for Finance and Administrative Services, the Comptroller, and one of South Texas College's elected officials (selected by the Board of Trustees). The Investment Officers are authorized to deposit, withdraw, invest, transfer, execute documentation, and otherwise manage South Texas College's funds according to this Policy. The Investment Officers may authorize one Investment Officer to deposit, withdraw, or transfer funds out of or into financial institutions, an investment pool or money market mutual fund to meet daily operating needs of South Texas College.

The Board of Trustees' Finance and Human Resources Committee shall be the Investment Committee. The Investment Committee shall review the investment portfolio's status and performance, determine and implement appropriate portfolio adjustments, review brokers/dealers/banks/pools and independent training sources, oversee South Texas College's Investment Advisor, monitor compliance with the Investment Policy and Investment Strategy Statement, and perform other duties as necessary to manage South Texas College's funds.

Each member of the Board of Trustees and the Investment Officers shall attend at least one training session, relating to the person's responsibilities under the Act within six months after taking office or assuming duties. The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board shall provide the training.

The Investment Officers shall accumulate not less than 5 hours of instruction within the first twelve months after taking office or assuming duties. The Investment Officer shall prepare a report on any changes in the Act and deliver the report to the Board of Trustees not later than the 180th day after the last day of each regular session of the legislature.

To ensure qualified and capable investment management, the Investment Officers shall receive investment training not less than once each state fiscal biennium and accumulate not less than 5 hours of instruction relating to investment responsibilities that addresses investment controls, security risks, strategy risks, market risks, diversification of investment portfolio and compliance with the Act. The investment training shall be provided by the following approved training sources: the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, the Government Finance Officers Association of Texas, the Government Treasurers' Organization of Texas, the Texas Municipal League, Texas Association of Community College Business Officers or the University of North Texas Center for Public Management.

2. Prudent Investment Management

The Investment Officers shall perform their duties in accordance with the adopted Investment Policy and internal procedures. In determining whether an Investment Officer has exercised prudence with respect to an investment decision, the investment of all funds over which the Investment Officer had responsibility, rather than the prudence of a single investment, shall be considered. Investment Officers acting in good faith and in accordance with these policies and procedures shall be relieved of personal liability.

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3. Standard of Care

The standard of care used by the College shall be the “prudent person rule” and shall be applied in the context of managing the overall portfolio within the applicable legal constraints. The Act states:

“Investments shall be made with judgment and care, under prevailing circumstances, that a person of prudence, discretion, and intelligence would exercise in the management of the person’s own affairs, not for speculation, but for investment, considering the probable safety of capital and the probable income to be derived.”

4. Standard of Ethics and Conflicts of Interest

The Investment Officers shall act as custodians of the public trust avoiding any transaction which might involve a conflict of interest, the appearance of a conflict of interest, or any activity which might otherwise discourage public confidence. Investment Officers shall refrain from personal business activity that could conflict with proper execution of the investment program, or which could impair their ability to make impartial investment decisions. If the Investment Officer has a personal business relationship with a business organization offering to engage in an investment transaction with South Texas College, the Investment Officer shall file a statement disclosing that personal business interest. If the Investment Officer is related within the second degree by affinity or consanguinity, as determined under Chapter 573 of the Texas Government Code, to an individual seeking to sell an investment to South Texas College, the Investment Officer shall file a statement disclosing that relationship as stated in the Act. This disclosure statement must be filed with the Texas Ethics Commission and the Board of Trustees. An Investment Officer has a personal business relationship with a business organization if:

- a) the Investment Officer owns 10 percent or more of the voting stock or shares of the business organization or owns \$5,000 or more of the fair market value of the business organization,
- b) funds received by the Investment Officer from the business organization exceed 10 percent of the Investment Officer’s gross income for the previous year, or
- c) the Investment Officer has acquired from the business organization during the previous year investments with a book value of \$2,500 or more for the personal account of the Investment Officer.

5. Establishment of Internal Controls

South Texas College’s Investment Officers will maintain a system of internal controls over the investment activities of South Texas College.

6. Reporting

Investment performance will be monitored and evaluated by the Investment Officers. The Investment Officers shall submit an investment report to the Board of Trustees and the President quarterly. This investment report shall:

- 1) describe in detail the investment position of South Texas College,
- 2) be prepared jointly by all Investment Officers of the College,
- 3) be signed by each Investment Officer of the College,
- 4) contain a summary statement of each pooled fund group that states the:
 - a. beginning market value for the reporting period,
 - b. ending market value for the period, and

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- c. fully accrued interest for the reporting period,
- 5) state the book value and market value of each separately invested asset at the end of the reporting period by the type of asset and fund type invested,
- 6) state the maturity date of each separately invested asset that has a maturity date,
- 7) state the account or fund or pooled group fund in the College for which each individual investment was acquired,
- 8) provide the credit rating for each separately invested asset that has a required minimum rating, and
- 9) state the compliance of the investment portfolio of the College as it relates to:
 - a) the investment strategy expressed in the College's Investment Policy, and
 - b) relevant provisions of the Act.

7. Methods used to Monitor the Market Price of Acquired Investments

The methods/sources to be used to monitor the market price of investments that have been acquired with public funds shall be from sources deemed reliable by an Investment Advisor, including safekeeping agent, brokers/dealers, the Wall Street Journal, Bloomberg, or other market pricing services.

8. Investment Transactions must be Settled on a Delivery Versus Payment Basis

Investment transactions will be settled on a delivery versus payment (DVP) basis with the exception of financial institution deposits, investment pool funds and mutual funds.

9. Review by Independent Auditor

In conjunction with its annual financial audit, the auditor shall perform a compliance audit of management controls on investments and adherence to the College's established Investment Policy.

If the College invests in other than money market mutual funds, investment pools or accounts offered by its depository bank in the form of certificates of deposit, or money market accounts or similar accounts, the reports prepared by the Investment Officers must be formally reviewed at least annually by an independent auditor, and the result of the review shall be reported to the Board of Trustees by the auditor.

10. Investment Policy Adoption

The Investment Policy and Investment Strategy Statement shall be reviewed annually by the Investment Committee and any modifications made thereto must be approved by the Board of Trustees. The Board of Trustees shall review the Investment Policy and Investment Strategy Statement not less than annually. The Board shall adopt a written instrument by rule, order, ordinance, or resolution stating that it has reviewed the Investment Policy and Investment Strategy Statement and that the written instrument so adopted shall record any changes made to either the Investment Policy or Investment Strategy Statement.

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IV. HISTORY

Origination Date Approved by Board	October 12, 1995
Date Amended and Approved by Board	August 8, 1996 December 11, 1997 October 15, 1998 October 17, 2002 October 16, 2003 October 21, 2004 November 17, 2005 October 19, 2006 February 15, 2007 October 18, 2007 October 13, 2008 June 25, 2009 November 23, 2009 October 25, 2010 October 27, 2011 October 30, 2012 October 28, 2013 October 28, 2014 October 27, 2015 October 25, 2016 October 24, 2017 October 30, 2018 October 29, 2019 October 27, 2020 October 26, 2021 October 18, 2022

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PREFACE

It is the policy of South Texas College that, giving due regard to the safety and risk of investment, all available funds shall be invested in conformance with State and Federal Regulations, applicable Bond Resolution requirements, adopted Investment Policy and adopted Investment Strategy Statement.

In accordance with the Act, South Texas College's investment strategies shall address the following priorities (in order of importance):

- * Understanding of the suitability of the investment to the financial requirements of South Texas College,
- * Preservation and safety of principal,
- * Liquidity,
- * Marketability of the investment if the need arises to liquidate the investment prior to maturity,
- * Diversification of the investment portfolio, and
- * Yield

Effective investment strategy development coordinates the primary objectives of South Texas College's Investment Policy and cash management procedures to enhance interest earnings and reduce investment risk. Aggressive cash management will increase the available "investment period" and subsequently interest earnings. Maturity selections shall be based on cash flow and market conditions to take advantage of various interest rate cycles. South Texas College's portfolio shall be designed and managed in a manner responsive to the public trust and consistent with the Investment Policy.

Each major fund type has varying cash flow requirements and liquidity needs. Therefore, specific strategies shall be implemented considering the fund's unique requirements. South Texas College's funds shall be analyzed and invested according to the following fund types:

- a) Unrestricted,
- b) Auxiliary,
- c) Restricted,
- d) Loan,
- e) Endowment,
- f) Agency,
- g) Funds for Renewal and Replacement,
- h) Unexpended Plant Funds, and
- i) Funds for Retirement of Indebtedness

INVESTMENT STRATEGY

To minimize risk of loss due to interest rate fluctuations, investment maturities will not exceed the anticipated cash flow requirements of the fund. Investment guidelines for all fund-types are as follows:

A. Funds

South Texas College's funds include:

- Unrestricted Fund
- Auxiliary Fund
- Restricted Fund
- Loan Fund
- Endowment Fund
- Agency Fund
- Funds for Renewal and Replacement

INVESTMENT STRATEGY STATEMENT

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Unexpended Plant Funds
Funds for Retirement of Indebtedness

Suitability: Any investment eligible in the Investment Policy is suitable for all fund types.

Safety of Principal: All investments shall be of high quality with no perceived default risk. Market price fluctuations will occur, however by managing the weighted average days to maturity for all fund types, except for Unexpended Plant Funds and Funds for Retirement of Indebtedness, to less than 365 days for all investments and restricting the maximum allowable maturity to two years for any investment type, the price volatility of the overall portfolio will be minimized. Unexpended Plant Funds investments should be as per Section III.E.2.b and Funds for Retirement of Indebtedness investments should be as per Section III.E.2.c.

Marketability: Securities with active and efficient secondary markets are necessary in the event of an unanticipated cash requirement. Historical market “spreads” between the bid and offer prices of a particular security-type of less than ten basis points shall define an efficient secondary market. Unexpended Plant Funds investment should be as per Section III.E.2.b and Funds for Retirement of Indebtedness investment should be as per Section III.E.2.c.

Liquidity: All fund types, except for Unexpended Plant Funds and Funds for Retirement of Indebtedness require short-term liquidity. Short-term investment pools, bank deposits, and eligible money market mutual funds shall provide daily liquidity and may be utilized as a competitive yield alternative to fixed maturity investments.

Diversification: Investment maturities shall be staggered throughout the budget cycle to provide cash flow based on the anticipated operating needs of South Texas College. Market cycle risk will be reduced by diversifying the appropriate maturity structure out over two years.

Yield: Attaining a competitive market yield for comparable security-types and portfolio restrictions is the desired objective. The yield of a rolling three-month Treasury bill portfolio shall be the minimum yield objective.