

STATE OF ALABAMA
ALABAMA SECURITIES COMMISSION

IN THE MATTER OF:)
) ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER
WWW.PROBITUS.US aka ProbitUS) NO. CD-2025-0007
JAMEL NORTON, whose identity)
is otherwise unknown,)
)
)
)
RESPONDENTS)

CEASE AND DESIST ORDER

The Alabama Securities Commission ("Commission"), having the authority to administer and provide for the enforcement of all provisions of Title 8, Chapter 6, Code of Alabama 1975, the Alabama Securities Act ("Act"), upon due consideration of the subject matter hereof, has determined as follows:

RESPONDENTS

1. **WWW.PROBITUS.US** ("PROBITUS") is an online entity marketed as a global blockchain asset trading platform with innovative trading technology, analytics, education, customer service, and in operation for the past two years.
2. **RESPONDENT** website **WWW.PROBITUS.US** may be served through its domain registrar NameSilo located at 8825 N. 23rd Ave., Suite 100, Phoenix, Arizona 85021 via legal@namesilo.com.
3. **JAMEL NORTON ("NORTON")**, whose identity is otherwise unknown, is the owner of **PROBITUS**. **JAMEL NORTON** may be served through their domain registrar NameSilo located at 8825 N. 23rd Ave., Suite 100, Phoenix, Arizona 85021 via legal@namesilo.com.

STATEMENT OF FACTS

4. On April 9, 2024, a complaint was received by the Commission from an Alabama resident regarding an investment made with global blockchain asset trading platform website known to the resident as **WWW.PROBITUS.US**. The resident was concerned their investment of approximately \$53,500 was lost and they may be a victim of a cryptocurrency investment fraud scheme.

5. In October 2023, the victim researched cryptocurrency investment sites on the Internet. The victim clicked on a website they presumed was associated with Blackrock Investments. A message from the site directed the victim to Blackrock's alleged cryptocurrency trading platform identified as **PROBITUS**. The victim completed informational prompts on the **PROBITUS** site leading to a direct telephonic communication with an associate identified as "Catherine." Following their initial text and verbal exchanges, Catherine discussed the valuable tips **PROBITUS** provided to investors involved in short-term trading.

6. Catherine directed the victim to the WhatsApp communication platform to continue their communications. Subsequently, Catherine provided directions to download other apps to include the Coinbase and Crypto.com apps to convert U.S. Dollars to virtual currency. The victim wired approximately \$18,500.00 from their personal bank account to purchase cryptocurrency within the Coinbase platform for the victim's benefit. Catherine instructed the victim to move the cryptocurrency balance in the Coinbase App to the **PROBITUS** trading site. Catherine directed the victim to the **PROBITUS** domain addresses, <https://WWW.PROBITUS.US>, to download the **PROBITUS** App to victim's cell phone. Based on Catherine's instructions, the victim created an account at **PROBITUS** and funded the account with the cryptocurrency purchased from Coinbase. Catherine requested the victim provide screenshot images from their cell phone reflecting each deposit/transaction submitted by the victim using the **PROBITUS** App. Catherine then instructed the victim on how to trade their cryptocurrency balance within the **PROBITUS** platform.

7. Following the victim's initial investment, Catherine encouraged the victim to consider increasing their investment portfolio by contributing a larger sum to the victim's short-term

trading account within **PROBITUS**. Catherine touted **PROBITUS**' success as a cryptocurrency trading platform. In both verbal conversations and text messages, Catherine promised the victim guaranteed income and growth of their savings if the victim would merely follow Catherine's advice and execute cryptocurrency trades using the **PROBITUS** platform. **PROBITUS** claims to make timely trades with proprietary algorithms and leading market research to bolster profits exceeding the market for account holders. In addition, Catherine told the victim they would be in control of their investment portfolio within the **PROBITUS** platform to include transparent views of each trade and the victim's account balance. Further, Catherine stated the victim would be able to retrieve their principal and any earnings garnered through trades and enhanced cryptocurrency values.

8. The victim agreed to increase their investment to take advantage of the contract earnings rate as recommended by Catherine. The victim wired funds in the approximate amount of \$35,000.00 from their personal bank account to the Coinbase platform to acquire the necessary cryptocurrency for trade. Consistent with the initial investment, Catherine instructed the victim to move the cryptocurrency balance in the Coinbase App to the **PROBITUS** trading site. Based on Catherine's instructions, the victim transferred their Coinbase cryptocurrency balance to the **PROBITUS** platform. Further, Catherine requested the victim provide screenshot images from their cell phone reflecting each deposit/transaction submitted by the victim to their **PROBITUS** account.

9. The trades initiated by the victim generated immediate profits for the victim as reflected in the victim's **PROBITUS** account. The two deposits contributed by the victim to their **PROBITUS** account immediately increased the victim's account balance to well over \$400,000 in October 2023. The victim informed Catherine of their intent to make a nominal withdrawal of \$20,000.00 from the victim's earnings within their **PROBITUS** account. At this point, Catherine informed the victim they would need to pay a 10% commission in the approximate amount of \$43,000.00 to the **PROBITUS** site prior to making any withdrawals. The victim initially agreed to pay the commission from their **PROBITUS** account balance. However, Catherine stated the mandatory commission payment could only be paid with a new deposit of cryptocurrency from the victim. The victim would not be allowed to pay the commission from their **PROBITUS** account balance.

10. Catherine offered to make a \$10,000 loan to the victim to help with the required \$43,000.00 commission payment. Catherine aggressively encouraged the victim to obtain a short-term loan from a bank or borrow money from the victim's mother or friends to pay the commission. Fortunately, the victim did not contribute any additional funds to the **PROBITUS** platform. Catherine's discussions with the victim ended in December 2023 when it became clear no more funds would be forthcoming from the victim. Subsequently, the **PROBIIUS** site was deleted from the Internet.

11. Legal process served during the investigation identified the owner of **PROBITUS** as username "steaab145" with an email of stefflikeabiewo@yahoo.com and a subscriber name of **JAMEL NORTON**.

12. On October 23, 2024, a review of the registration files of the Alabama Securities Commission revealed no registration for the **RESPONDENTS** in any capacity.

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

13. Pursuant to section 8-6-2(10), Code of Alabama, 1975, the definition of a security includes investment contracts and profit-sharing agreements. The investment plans outlined by **RESPONDENTS** require the investment of money in the investment program managed by **RESPONDENTS** from which the investor expected profits to be derived from the efforts of **RESPONDENTS** and therefore, are securities as defined by the Act.

14. Pursuant to section 8-6-4, Code of Alabama, 1975, it is unlawful for any person to offer or sell any security in this state unless: (1) it is registered under the Act; (2) the security is exempt from registration under Section 8-6-10; or (3) the transaction is exempt under Section 8-6-11. **RESPONDENTS** sold a security as defined under 8-6-2(10), Code of Alabama 1975, while that security was neither registered nor exempt with the state, in violation of the Act.

15. Pursuant to section 8-6-17(a)(1), Code of Alabama, 1975, it is unlawful for any person who receives, directly or indirectly, any consideration from another person for advising the other person as to the value of securities or their purchase or sale, whether through the issuance of

analyses or reports or otherwise to employ any device, scheme, or artifice to defraud the other person. **RESPONDENTS** promised excessive returns to investors, reported fictitious account values, and imposed undisclosed fees in violation of the Act.

This Order is appropriate in the public interest for the protection of investors and is consistent with the purposes of the Act.

This Order does not prevent the Commission from seeking such other civil or criminal remedies that may be available to it under the Alabama Securities Act.

Additionally, if the allegations set forth herein are found to be true, through either administrative adjudication, failure of the **RESPONDENTS** to make a timely request for a hearing, or default of the **RESPONDENTS**, it is the intention of the Commission to impose sanctions upon the **RESPONDENTS**. Such sanctions may include, *inter alia*, an administrative assessment imposed on **RESPONDENTS**, an additional administrative assessment for investigative costs arising from the investigation of the violations described herein against **RESPONDENTS**, and a permanent order to bar **RESPONDENTS** from participation in any securities-related industry in the State of Alabama.

ACCORDINGLY, IT IS HEREBY ORDERED that **RESPONDENTS CEASE AND DESIST** from further offers or sales of any security into, within or from the State of Alabama.

Entered at Montgomery, Alabama, this 20 day of March, 2025.

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BY:

Amanda L. Senn
Director