

SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION

[Release No. 34-79329; File No. SR-BX-2016-058]

Self-Regulatory Organizations; NASDAQ BX, Inc.; Notice of Filing and Immediate Effectiveness of Proposed Rule Change To Amend the Limit Order Protection

November 16, 2016.

Pursuant to Section 19(b)(1) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 (“Act”),¹ and Rule 19b-4 thereunder,² notice is hereby given that on November 4, 2016, NASDAQ BX, Inc. (“BX” or “Exchange”) filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission (“SEC” or “Commission”) the proposed rule change as described in Items I and II below, which Items have been prepared by the Exchange. The Commission is publishing this notice to solicit comments on the proposed rule change from interested persons.

I. Self-Regulatory Organization’s Statement of the Terms of Substance of the Proposed Rule Change

The Exchange proposes to amend the Limit Order Protection or “LOP” for members accessing the BX Market Center and adding rule text related to a collar applicable to Primary Pegging and Market Pegging Orders.

The text of the proposed rule change is available on the Exchange’s Web site at <http://nasdaqbx.cchwallstreet.com/>, at the principal office of the Exchange, and at the Commission’s Public Reference Room.

II. Self-Regulatory Organization’s Statement of the Purpose of, and Statutory Basis for, the Proposed Rule Change

In its filing with the Commission, the Exchange included statements concerning the purpose of and basis for the proposed rule change and discussed any comments it received on the proposed rule change. The text of these statements may be examined at the places specified in Item IV below. The Exchange has prepared summaries, set forth in sections A, B, and C below, of the most significant aspects of such statements.

A. Self-Regulatory Organization’s Statement of the Purpose of, and Statutory Basis for, the Proposed Rule Change

1. Purpose

The Exchange recently adopted a new mechanism to protect against erroneous Limit Orders which are entered into the BX Market Center at Rule 4757(d).³ This mechanism addresses risks to market participants of human error in entering Limit Orders at unintended prices. Specifically, LOP prevents certain Limit Orders from executing or being placed on the Order Book at prices outside pre-set standard limits. The System rejects those Limit Orders, rather than executing them automatically. LOP rejects Limit Orders back to the member when the order exceeds certain defined logic. Specifically, LOP prevents certain Limit Orders at prices outside of pre-set standard limits (“LOP Limit”) from being accepted by the System.

Modifications of Orders

In its adoptive filing, the Exchange noted that LOP shall apply to all Quotes and Orders, including any modified Orders.⁴ At this time, the Exchange proposes to remove “including any modified Orders” from the rule text at rule 4757(d)(i). The Exchange proposes to amend this language because it is misleading and may cause confusion.

The Exchange proposes to state that LOP shall apply to all Quotes and Orders, including Quotes and Orders that have been modified, where the modification results in a new timestamp and priority.⁵ Any Order that is modified within the System, but does not lose priority, for example an Order that was decremented, will not be subject to LOP after it was modified because the system does not cancel decremented orders from the Order Book. If an Order is cancelled either by the member or by the system and a new Order entered into the System, the new Order would be subject to LOP. For example, if the price of an Order is modified, the system will cancel the Order and the modified Order would receive a new timestamp and priority and this Order would be subject to LOP.

Exceptions to LOP

The Exchange also noted in its adoptive filing that LOP would not

apply to Market Orders, Market Maker Peg Orders⁶ or Intermarket Sweep Orders (ISO).⁷ The Exchange proposes to modify this language to specifically state that LOP would not apply to Orders with Market and Primary Pegging.⁸

There are three types of Pegging Orders: Primary Pegging, Market Pegging and Midpoint Pegging. Pegging is an Order Attribute that allows an Order to have its price automatically set with reference to the NBBO; provided, however, that if BX is the sole market center at the Best Bid or Best Offer (as applicable), then the price of any Displayed Order with Primary Pegging (as defined below) will be set with reference to the highest bid or lowest offer disseminated by a market center other than BX. An Order with a Pegging Order Attribute may be referred to as a “Pegged Order.”⁹ For purposes of this Rule 4703, the price to which an Order is pegged will be referred to as the Inside Quotation, the Inside Bid, or the Inside Offer, as appropriate. There are three varieties of Pegging:

- Primary Pegging means Pegging with reference to the Inside Quotation on the same side of the market. For example, if the Inside Bid was \$11, an Order to buy with Primary Pegging would be priced at \$11.
- Market Pegging means Pegging with reference to the Inside Quotation on the opposite side of the market. For example, if the Inside Offer was \$11.06, an Order to buy with Market Pegging would be priced at \$11.06.
- Midpoint Pegging means Pegging with reference to the midpoint between the Inside Bid and the Inside Offer (the “Midpoint”). Thus, if the Inside Bid was

⁶ A “Market Maker Peg Order” is an Order Type designed to allow a Market Maker to maintain a continuous two-sided quotation at a displayed price that is compliant with the quotation requirements for Market Makers set forth in Rule 4613(a)(2). The displayed price of the Market Maker Peg Order is set with reference to a “Reference Price” in order to keep the displayed price of the Market Maker Peg Order within a bounded price range. A Market Maker Peg Order may be entered through RASH, FIX or QIX only. A Market Maker Peg Order must be entered with a limit price beyond which the Order may not be priced. The Reference Price for a Market Maker Peg Order to buy (sell) is the then-current National Best Bid (National Best Offer) (including BX), or if no such National Best Bid or National Best Offer, the most recent reported last-sale eligible trade from the responsible single plan processor for that day, or if none, the previous closing price of the security as adjusted to reflect any corporate actions (e.g., dividends or stock splits) in the security. See BX Rule 4702(b)(7).

⁷ An Intermarket Sweep or ISO Order, which is an Order that is immediately executable within BX against Orders against which they are marketable, is not subject to LOP. See BX Rule 6951(g).

⁸ Orders with Market and Primary Pegging available through RASH, FIX, and QIX only.

⁹ Rule 4703(d).

³ See Securities Exchange Act Release No. 78246 [sic] (August 24, 2016), 81 FR 59672 (August 30, 2016) (SR-BX-2016-037).

⁴ If an Order is modified for price, LOP will review the order anew and, if LOP is triggered, such modification will not take effect and the original order will be rejected.

⁵ See Rule 4756 (Entry and Display of Quotes and Orders) at (a)(3).

¹ 15 U.S.C. 78s(b)(1).

² 17 CFR 240.19b-4.

\$11 and the Inside Offer was \$11.06, an Order with Midpoint Pegging would be priced at \$11.03. An Order with Midpoint Pegging is not displayed. An Order with Midpoint Pegging may be executed in sub-pennies if necessary to obtain a midpoint price.

Midpoint Pegging will be the only Pegging Order subject to LOP, provided it has a limit price. Pegging is available only during Market Hours. An Order with Pegging may specify a limit price beyond which the Order may not be executed; provided, however, that if an Order has been assigned a Pegging Order Attribute and a Discretion Order¹⁰ Attribute, the Order may execute at any price within the discretionary price range, even if beyond the limit price specified with respect to the Pegging Order Attribute. A Midpoint Pegging Order may have a discretion attribute. A Midpoint Pegging Order with a discretion price would not be subject to LOP.

The Exchange notes that a Midpoint Pegging Order, similar to a Primary or Market Pegging Order, as explained below, may result in [sic] an aggressive or passive price. As a result, the LOP may remove orders that were intended to be more aggressive or passive due to the discretionary attribute. For this reason, the Exchange will not subject a Midpoint Pegging Order with a discretion price to LOP.

In addition, an Order with Primary Pegging or Market Pegging may specify an Offset Amount, such that the price of the Order will vary from the Inside Quotation by the selected Offset Amount.¹¹ The Offset Amount may be either aggressive or passive. Thus, for example, if a Participant entered an Order to buy with Primary Pegging and a passive Offset Amount of \$0.05 and the Inside Bid was \$11, the Order would be priced at \$10.95. If the Participant selected an aggressive Offset Amount of \$0.02, however, the Order would be priced at \$11.02. An Order with Primary Pegging and an Offset Amount will not be Displayed, unless the Order is Attributable. The Exchange notes that both Market and Primary Pegging may impact the market by effecting the bid or offer.

The Exchange is not applying LOP to orders with Market or Primary Pegging because it may result in removing orders that were intended to be more aggressive or to set the bid or offer on

¹⁰ Discretion is an Order Attribute under which an Order has a non-displayed discretionary price range within which the entering Participant is willing to trade; such an Order may be referred to as a "Discretionary Order." See BX Rule 4703(g).

¹¹ An offset is not supported for a Midpoint Pegging Order.

the market due to the order attributes noted above. These Pegging Orders are also subject to a collar, which is explained in this rule change.

In contrast, an Order with Midpoint Pegging will only be at the midpoint and not have the same impact as the other two types of orders and therefore subjecting such an order to LOP does not impact the potential of the order since by definition it is set to the midpoint. An Order with Midpoint Pegging will not be displayed and is not subject to a collar.

An Order with Market Pegging and no Offset behaves as a "market order" with respect to any liquidity on the BX Book at the Inside Quotation on the opposite side of the market because it is immediately executable at that price. If, at the time of entry, there is no price to which a Pegged Order can be pegged, the Order will be rejected; provided, however, that a Displayed Order that has Market Pegging, or an Order with a Non-Display Attribute that has Primary Pegging or Market Pegging, will be accepted at its limit price.

In the case of an Order with Midpoint Pegging, if the Inside Bid and Inside Offer are locked, the Order will be priced at the locking price, if the Inside Bid and Inside Offer are crossed, the Order will nevertheless be priced at the midpoint between the Inside Bid and Inside Offer, and if there is no Inside Bid and/or Inside Offer, the Order will be rejected.¹² However, even if the Inside Bid and Inside Offer are locked or crossed, an Order with Midpoint Pegging that locked or crossed an Order on the BX Book would execute (provided, however, that a Midpoint Peg Post-Only Order would execute or post as described in Rule 4702(b)(5)(A)).¹³ It is important to note that only to the extent that a Midpoint Pegging Order has a limit price that the Order would be subject to LOP, unless the Midpoint Pegging Order also has a discretion attribute. If no limit price is specified, the Midpoint Pegging Order would not be subject to LOP.

LOP will be operational each trading day, except during trading halts and pauses. LOP will not apply in the event that there is no established LOP Reference Price.¹⁴ The LOP Reference Price shall be the current National Best

¹² This provision is subject to change by another rule change. See Securities Exchange Act Release No. 78909 (September 22, 2016), 81 FR 66708 (September 28, 2016) (SR-BX-2016-046). The Commission notes that it approved SR-BX-2016-046 on November 10, 2016. See Securities Exchange Act Release No. 79290.

¹³ *Id.*

¹⁴ For example, if there is a one-sided quote or if the NBB, when used as the LOP Reference Price, is equal to or less than \$0.50.

Bid or Best Offer (NBBO), the bid for sell orders and the offer for buy orders.¹⁵

LOP will be applicable on all protocols.¹⁶ The LOP feature will be mandatory for all BX members.

Implementation of LOP

The Exchange indicated in its adoptive rule change that it would implement this rule within ninety (90) days of the approval of the proposed rule change.¹⁷ At this time, the Exchange proposes to delay this implementation an additional sixty (60) days from the original timeframe in order to implement the LOP with the changes proposed herein. The Exchange will issue an Equities Trader Alert in advance to inform market participants of such implementation date.

Pegging Order Collar

In 2009, the Exchange adopted a collar for certain Unpriced Orders.¹⁸ At that time, the Exchange defined an Unpriced Order as any order type permitted by the System to buy or sell shares of a security at the national best bid (best offer) ("NBBO") at the time when the order reaches the System. Any portion of an Unpriced Order that would execute on BX at a price more than \$0.25 or 5 percent worse than the NBBO at the time when the order reaches the System, whichever is greater, will be cancelled.

This rule related to the collar was inadvertently removed from the

¹⁵ The Exchange will not accept incoming Limit Orders that exceed the LOP Reference Threshold. Limit Orders will not be accepted if the price of the Limit Order is greater than the LOP Reference Threshold for a buy Limit Order. Limit Orders will not be accepted if the price of the Limit Order is less than the LOP Reference Threshold for a sell Limit Order. The LOP Reference Threshold for buy orders will be the LOP Reference Price (offer) plus the applicable percentage specified in the LOP Limit. The LOP Reference Threshold for sell orders will be the LOP Reference Price (bid) minus the applicable percentage specified in the LOP Limit. The LOP Limit will be the greater of 10% of the LOP Reference Price or \$0.50 for all securities across all trading sessions. The LOP Reference Price will be the current National Best Bid or Best Offer (NBBO), the bid for sell orders and the offer for buy orders.

¹⁶ BX maintains several communications protocols for members to use in entering Orders and sending other messages to BX, such as: OUCH, RASH, FLITE, and FIX.

¹⁷ See note 3 above.

¹⁸ See Securities Exchange Act Release No. 63052 (October 6, 2010), 75 FR 62902 (October 13, 2010) (SR-BX-2010-067). An "Unpriced Order" was defined in this rule change as any order type permitted by the System to buy or sell shares of a security at the national best bid (best offer) ("NBBO") at the time when the order reaches the System.

Exchange's rules.¹⁹ At this time, the Exchange proposes to amend the BX rules to add the collar into the rules once again.

The purpose of the collar is to protect market participants by reducing the risk that Primary and Market Pegging Orders will execute at prices that are significantly worse than the national best bid and offer ("NBBO") at the time the Exchange receives the order. The Exchange believes that most market participants expect that their order will be executed at its full size at a price reasonably related to the prevailing market. However, market participants may not be aware that there is insufficient liquidity at or near the NBBO to fill the entire order, particularly for more thinly-traded securities.

The Exchange proposes to memorialize this collar, which currently exists in its trading and routing systems functionality, and define it specifically as applicable to Primary and Market Pegging Orders. The Exchange seeks to memorialize the rule within Rule 4703, entitled "Order Attributes." The new rule text would state, "Primary Pegging Orders and Market Pegging Orders are subject to a collar. Any portion of a Primary Pegging Order or Market Pegging Order that would execute, either on the Exchange or when routed to another market center, at a price of more than \$0.25 or 5 percent worse than the NBBO at the time when the order reaches the System, whichever is greater, will be cancelled."

The following example illustrates how the collar works. A market participant submits a routable order to buy 500 shares. The NBBO is \$6.00 bid by \$6.05 offer, with 100 shares available on each side. Both sides of the NBBO are set by another market center ("Away Market"), but BX has 100 shares available at the \$6.05 to sell at the offer price and also has reserve orders to sell 100 shares at \$6.32 and 400 shares at \$6.40. No other market center is publishing offers to sell the security in between \$6.05 and \$6.40.

In this example, the order would be executed in the following manner:

- 100 shares would be executed by BX at the \$6.05;
- 400 shares would be routed to the Away Market as an immediate or cancel order with a price of \$6.05;
- 100 shares executed by the Away Market;²⁰

- 300 shares returned to BX;
- 100 shares executed by BX at \$6.32 (more than \$0.25 but less than 5 percent worse than the NBBO); and 200 shares, representing the remainder of the order, would be cancelled because the remaining liquidity available at \$6.40 is more than 5 percent worse than the NBBO.

Implementation of Pegging Order Collar

The Exchange intends to implement the Pegging Order Collar as soon as practicable pursuant to this proposal. The Exchange requests a waiver of the operative delay to implement the Pegging Order Collar.

2. Statutory Basis

The Exchange believes that its proposal is consistent with Section 6(b) of the Act,²¹ in general, and furthers the objectives of Section 6(b)(5) of the Act,²² in particular, in that it is designed to promote just and equitable principles of trade, to remove impediments to and perfect the mechanism of a free and open market and a national market system, and, in general to protect investors and the public interest, by mitigating risks to market participants of human error in entering Limit Orders at clearly unintended prices. The proposal will allow for protections for Limit Orders which should encourage price continuity and, in turn, protect investors and the public interest by reducing executions occurring at dislocated prices.

The Exchange's proposal to amend the language concerning the modification of Orders is consistent with the Act because only new Orders would be subject to LOP. The proposed new language specifies that Orders that are modified for size and remain in the Order Book with the same priority, because only size was modified to reduce the size, will not be subject to LOP. Other modifications to Orders that amend the timestamp or priority will subject the modified orders to LOP because these Orders will be submitted into the System as new Orders. The LOP functionality protects market participants by reducing the risk that Midpoint Pegging Orders will execute at prices that are significantly worse than the national best bid and offer ("NBBO") at the time the Exchange receives the order.

The LOP feature assists with the maintenance of fair and orderly markets by mitigating the risks associated with errors resulting in executions at prices that are away from the Best Bid or Offer

and potentially erroneous. Further it protects investors from potentially receiving executions away from the prevailing prices at any given time. The Exchange adopted LOP to avoid a series of improperly priced aggressive orders transacting in the Order Book.

The Exchange believes that excluding Primary Pegging and Market Pegging Orders is consistent with the Act because including such orders may result in removing orders that were intended to be more aggressive or to set the bid or offer on the market due to the order attributes noted in the Purpose section of this rule change. Market and Primary Pegging Orders are also currently subject to a collar. Market and Primary Pegging Orders that would execute, either on the Exchange or when routed to another market center, at a price of more than \$0.25 or 5 percent worse than the NBBO at the time when the order reaches the System, whichever is greater, will be cancelled.²³ Further, the Market Pegging Order has its own process for rejecting those orders where no price exists to which a Pegged Order can be pegged.

This feature should create a level of protection that prevents the Limit Orders from entering the Order Book outside of an acceptable range for the Limit Order to execute. The LOP should reduce the negative impacts of sudden, unanticipated volatility, and serve to preserve an orderly market in a transparent and uniform manner, increase overall market confidence, and promote fair and orderly markets and the protection of investors.

Pegging Order Collar

The Exchange believes that the collar proposal is consistent with the Act because it is designed to promote just and equitable principles of trade, to remove impediments to and perfect the mechanism of a free and open market and a national market system, and, in general to protect investors and the public interest, by avoiding execution of Primary and Market Pegging Orders (either on BX or on other market centers as a result of orders routed by BX) at prices that are significantly worse than the NBBO at the time the order is initially received. The NBBO provides reasonable guidance of the current value of a given security and therefore market participants should have confidence that their Market and Primary Pegging Orders will not be executed at a significantly worse price than the NBBO.

²³ The Exchange inadvertently removed the rule from the BX Rulebook. The Exchange proposes to adopt the rule herein.

¹⁹ See Securities Exchange Act Release No. 74617 (March 31, 2015), 80 FR 18473 (March 31, 2015) (SR-BX-2015-015).

²⁰ This assumes that the Away Market's offer was still available and that the Away Market had no additional non-displayed orders at this price.

²¹ 15 U.S.C. 78f(b).

²² 15 U.S.C. 78f(b)(5).

B. Self-Regulatory Organization's Statement on Burden on Competition

The Exchange does not believe that the proposed rule change will impose any burden on competition not necessary or appropriate in furtherance of the purposes of the Act. The LOP feature should provide market participants with additional price protection from anomalous executions. This feature is not optional and is applicable to all members submitting Limit Orders. Thus, the Exchange does not believe the proposal creates any significant impact on competition. In addition, the proposed collar in Rule 4703 would be applicable to all Market and Primary Pegging Orders entered into the BX System. Similarly, all Midpoint Pegging Order will be subject to LOP, unless they have a discretion attribute.

C. Self-Regulatory Organization's Statement on Comments on the Proposed Rule Change Received From Members, Participants, or Others

No written comments were either solicited or received.

III. Date of Effectiveness of the Proposed Rule Change and Timing for Commission Action

Because the foregoing proposed rule change does not: (i) Significantly affect the protection of investors or the public interest; (ii) impose any significant burden on competition; and (iii) become operative for 30 days from the date on which it was filed, or such shorter time as the Commission may designate, it has become effective pursuant to Section 19(b)(3)(A) of the Act and Rule 19b-4(f)(6) thereunder.²⁴

A proposed rule change filed pursuant to Rule 19b-4(f)(6) under the Act²⁵ normally does not become operative for 30 days after the date of its filing. However, Rule 19b-4(f)(6)(iii)²⁶ permits the Commission to designate a shorter time if such action is consistent with the protection of investors and the public interest. The Exchange has asked the Commission to waive the 30-day operative delay so that the proposal may become operative immediately upon filing. When the Exchange first proposed the LOP, the Exchange represented that it would implement the

LOP within 90 days of obtaining Commission approval (*i.e.*, by November 22, 2016).²⁷ The Exchange now proposes to extend the LOP implementation date by 60 days in order to include the modifications in this proposed rule change with the implementation of the LOP. Waiver of the 30-day operative delay would allow the Exchange to immediately extend the LOP implementation date. The waiver would also permit the Exchange to immediately clarify the application of the LOP to modified orders. Moreover, the waiver would allow the Exchange to immediately exclude from the LOP Market Pegging Orders, Primary Pegging Orders, and Midpoint Pegging Orders that have a discretion price. As noted above, the Exchange proposes to exclude these Orders because these Orders may be intended to be aggressive or to set the bid or offer on the market. Moreover, as noted above, Market and Primary Pegging Orders are currently subject to collars. Lastly, the waiver would allow the Exchange's rules to immediately and accurately reflect the current collars for Market and Primary Pegging Orders, which were removed inadvertently. Accordingly, the Commission finds that waiving the 30-day operative delay is consistent with the protection of investors and the public interest and designates the proposal operative upon filing.²⁸

At any time within 60 days of the filing of such proposed rule change, the Commission summarily may temporarily suspend such rule change if it appears to the Commission that such action is necessary or appropriate in the public interest, for the protection of investors, or otherwise in furtherance of the purposes of the Act. If the Commission takes such action, the Commission shall institute proceedings to determine whether the proposed rule change should be approved or disapproved.

IV. Solicitation of Comments

Interested persons are invited to submit written data, views, and arguments concerning the foregoing, including whether the proposed rule change is consistent with the Act. Comments may be submitted by any of the following methods:

Electronic Comments

- Use the Commission's Internet comment form (<http://www.sec.gov/rules/sro.shtml>); or
- Send an email to rule-comments@sec.gov. Please include File Number SR-BX-2016-058 on the subject line.

Paper Comments

- Send paper comments in triplicate to Brent J. Fields, Secretary, Securities and Exchange Commission, 100 F Street NE., Washington, DC 20549-1090.

All submissions should refer to File Number SR-BX-2016-058. This file number should be included on the subject line if email is used. To help the Commission process and review your comments more efficiently, please use only one method. The Commission will post all comments on the Commission's Internet Web site (<http://www.sec.gov/rules/sro.shtml>). Copies of the submission, all subsequent amendments, all written statements with respect to the proposed rule change that are filed with the Commission, and all written communications relating to the proposed rule change between the Commission and any person, other than those that may be withheld from the public in accordance with the provisions of 5 U.S.C. 552, will be available for Web site viewing and printing in the Commission's Public Reference Room, 100 F Street NE., Washington, DC 20549, on official business days between the hours of 10:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. Copies of the filing also will be available for inspection and copying at the principal office of the Exchange. All comments received will be posted without change; the Commission does not edit personal identifying information from submissions. You should submit only information that you wish to make available publicly. All submissions should refer to File Number SR-BX-2016-058 and should be submitted on or before December 13, 2016.

For the Commission, by the Division of Trading and Markets, pursuant to delegated authority.²⁹

Brent J. Fields,
Secretary.

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²⁴ 17 CFR 240.19b-4(f)(6). As required under Rule 19b-4(f)(6)(iii), the Exchange provided the Commission with written notice of its intent to file the proposed rule change, along with a brief description and the text of the proposed rule change, at least five business days prior to the date of filing of the proposed rule change, or such shorter time as designated by the Commission.

²⁵ 17 CFR 240.19b-4(f)(6).

²⁶ 17 CFR 240.19b-4(f)(6)(iii).

²⁷ See Securities Exchange Act Release Nos. 78244 (July 7, 2016), 81 FR 45320 (July 13, 2016) (noticing SR-BX-2016-037) and 78667 (August 24, 2016), 81 FR 59672 (August 30, 2016) (approving SR-BX-2016-037).

²⁸ For purposes only of waiving the 30-day operative delay, the Commission has considered the proposed rule's impact on efficiency, competition, and capital formation. 15 U.S.C. 78c(f).

²⁹ 17 CFR 200.30-3(a)(12).