

Required fields are shown with yellow backgrounds and asterisks.

Filing by Nasdaq MRX, LLC
Pursuant to Rule 19b-4 under the Securities Exchange Act of 1934

Initial *	Amendment *	Withdrawal	Section 19(b)(2) *	Section 19(b)(3)(A) *	Section 19(b)(3)(B) *
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
			Rule		
Pilot	Extension of Time Period for Commission Action *	Date Expires *	<input type="checkbox"/> 19b-4(f)(1)	<input type="checkbox"/> 19b-4(f)(4)	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> 19b-4(f)(2)	<input type="checkbox"/> 19b-4(f)(5)	
			<input type="checkbox"/> 19b-4(f)(3)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 19b-4(f)(6)	

Notice of proposed change pursuant to the Payment, Clearing, and Settlement Act of 2010	Security-Based Swap Submission pursuant to the Securities Exchange Act of 1934
Section 806(e)(1) *	Section 806(e)(2) *
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Section 3C(b)(2) *
	<input type="checkbox"/>

Exhibit 2 Sent As Paper Document	Exhibit 3 Sent As Paper Document
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Description

Provide a brief description of the action (limit 250 characters, required when Initial is checked *).

A proposal to amend MRX Options 3, Section 8, Options Opening Process

Contact Information

Provide the name, telephone number, and e-mail address of the person on the staff of the self-regulatory organization prepared to respond to questions and comments on the action.

First Name * Angela	Last Name * Dunn
Title * Principal Associate General Counsel	
E-mail * angela.dunn@nasdaq.com	
Telephone * (215) 496-5692	Fax

Signature

Pursuant to the requirements of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934,

has duly caused this filing to be signed on its behalf by the undersigned thereunto duly authorized.

(Title *)

Date 07/19/2021	EVP and Chief Legal Counsel
By John Zecca	<div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 100%; height: 20px;"></div>
(Name *)	

john.zecca@nasdaq.com

NOTE: Clicking the button at right will digitally sign and lock this form. A digital signature is as legally binding as a physical signature, and once signed, this form cannot be changed.

SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20549

For complete Form 19b-4 instructions please refer to the EFFF website.

Form 19b-4 Information *

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The self-regulatory organization must provide all required information, presented in a clear and comprehensible manner, to enable the public to provide meaningful comment on the proposal and for the Commission to determine whether the proposal is consistent with the Act and applicable rules and regulations under the Act.

Exhibit 1 - Notice of Proposed Rule Change *

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The Notice section of this Form 19b-4 must comply with the guidelines for publication in the Federal Register as well as any requirements for electronic filing as published by the Commission (if applicable). The Office of the Federal Register (OFR) offers guidance on Federal Register publication requirements in the Federal Register Document Drafting Handbook, October 1998 Revision. For example, all references to the federal securities laws must include the corresponding cite to the United States Code in a footnote. All references to SEC rules must include the corresponding cite to the Code of Federal Regulations in a footnote. All references to Securities Exchange Act Releases must include the release number, release date, Federal Register cite, Federal Register date, and corresponding file number (e.g., SR-[SRO]-xx-xx). A material failure to comply with these guidelines will result in the proposed rule change being deemed not properly filed. See also Rule 0-3 under the Act (17 CFR 240.0-3)

Exhibit 1A- Notice of Proposed Rule Change, Security-Based Swap Submission, or Advance Notice by Clearing Agencies *

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The Notice section of this Form 19b-4 must comply with the guidelines for publication in the Federal Register as well as any requirements for electronic filing as published by the Commission (if applicable). The Office of the Federal Register (OFR) offers guidance on Federal Register publication requirements in the Federal Register Document Drafting Handbook, October 1998 Revision. For example, all references to the federal securities laws must include the corresponding cite to the United States Code in a footnote. All references to SEC rules must include the corresponding cite to the Code of Federal Regulations in a footnote. All references to Securities Exchange Act Releases must include the release number, release date, Federal Register cite, Federal Register date, and corresponding file number (e.g., SR-[SRO]-xx-xx). A material failure to comply with these guidelines will result in the proposed rule change, security-based swap submission, or advance notice being deemed not properly filed. See also Rule 0-3 under the Act (17 CFR 240.0-3)

Exhibit 2 - Notices, Written Comments, Transcripts, Other Communications

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Exhibit Sent As Paper Document

Copies of notices, written comments, transcripts, other communications. If such documents cannot be filed electronically in accordance with Instruction F, they shall be filed in accordance with Instruction G.

Exhibit 3 - Form, Report, or Questionnaire

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Exhibit Sent As Paper Document

Copies of any form, report, or questionnaire that the self-regulatory organization proposes to use to help implement or operate the proposed rule change, or that is referred to by the proposed rule change.

Exhibit 4 - Marked Copies

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The full text shall be marked, in any convenient manner, to indicate additions to and deletions from the immediately preceding filing. The purpose of Exhibit 4 is to permit the staff to identify immediately the changes made from the text of the rule with which it has been working.

Exhibit 5 - Proposed Rule Text

Add Remove View

The self-regulatory organization may choose to attach as Exhibit 5 proposed changes to rule text in place of providing it in Item I and which may otherwise be more easily readable if provided separately from Form 19b-4. Exhibit 5 shall be considered part of the proposed rule change.

Partial Amendment

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If the self-regulatory organization is amending only part of the text of a lengthy proposed rule change, it may, with the Commission's permission, file only those portions of the text of the proposed rule change in which changes are being made if the filing (i.e. partial amendment) is clearly understandable on its face. Such partial amendment shall be clearly identified and marked to show deletions and additions.

1. Text of the Proposed Rule Change

(a) Nasdaq MRX, LLC (“MRX” or “Exchange”), pursuant to Section 19(b)(1) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 (“Act”)¹ and Rule 19b-4 thereunder,² is filing with the Securities and Exchange Commission (“Commission”) a proposal to amend MRX Options 3, Section 8, “Options Opening Process.”

A notice of the proposed rule change for publication in the Federal Register is attached as Exhibit 1. The text of the proposed rule change is attached as Exhibit 5.

(b) Not applicable.

(c) Not applicable.

2. Procedures of the Self-Regulatory Organization

The proposed rule change was approved by senior management of the Exchange pursuant to authority delegated by the Board of Directors of the Exchange (the “Board”) on November 5, 2020. Exchange staff will advise the Board of any action taken pursuant to delegated authority. No other action is necessary for the filing of the rule change.

Questions and comments on the proposed rule change may be directed to:

Angela Saccomandi Dunn
Principal Associate General Counsel
Nasdaq, Inc.
215-496-5692

¹ 15 U.S.C. 78s(b)(1).

² 17 CFR 240.19b-4.

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

a. Purpose

MRX proposes to amend Options 3, Section 8, “Options Opening Process.”

Specifically, the Exchange proposes to amend the definition of Valid Width Quote at Options 3, Section 8(a)(8).

MRX’s Opening Process for an option series is conducted pursuant to Options 3, Section 8 paragraphs (f) - (j), on or after 9:30 AM Eastern the ABBO, if any, is not crossed and the System has received, within two minutes³ of the opening trade or quote on the market for the underlying security,⁴ a Valid Width Quote. The System will accept a Primary Market Maker’s Valid Width Quote or the Valid Width Quote of at least one Competitive Market Maker.⁵ Today, MRX requires a Primary Market Maker to enter a Valid Width Quote in 90% of their assigned series, not later than one minute following the dissemination of a quote or trade by the market for the underlying security.⁶ Primary

³ The Exchange may designated a shorter time provided it is disseminated to membership on the Exchange’s web site.

⁴ In the case of index options, the timing is within two minutes of the receipt of the opening price in the underlying index or within two minutes of market opening for the underlying security in the case of U.S. dollar-settled foreign currency options. In both cases the Exchange may designated a shorter time provided it is disseminated to membership on the Exchange’s web site.

⁵ The Exchange proposes an amendment within Options 3, Section 8(c)(1)(B) as described below.

⁶ In the case of index options, a Primary Market Maker must enter a Valid Width Quote in 90% of their assigned series, not later than one minute following the receipt of the opening price in the underlying index. The Primary Market Maker assigned in a particular U.S. dollar-settled foreign currency option must enter a Valid Width Quote, in 90% of their assigned series, not later than one minute after the announced market opening. See Options 3, Section 8(c)(3). The Exchange

Market Makers must promptly enter a Valid Width Quote in the remainder of their assigned series, which did not open within one minute following the dissemination of a quote or trade by the market for the underlying security.⁷ In either case, the Primary Market Maker or Competitive Market Maker must enter a Valid Width Quote to open an options series. MRX Options 3, Section 8(a)(8) defines a Valid Width Quote as follows:

A “Valid Width Quote” is a two-sided electronic quotation submitted by a Market Maker that meets the following requirements: differentials shall be no more than \$.25 between the bid and offer for each options contract for which the bid is less than \$2, no more than \$.40 where the bid is at least \$2 but does not exceed \$5, no more than \$.50 where the bid is more than \$5 but does not exceed \$10, no more than \$.80 where the bid is more than \$10 but does not exceed \$20, and no more than \$1 where the bid is \$20 or greater, provided that, in the case of equity options, the bid/ask differentials stated above shall not apply to in-the-money series where the market for the underlying security is wider than the differentials set forth above. The bid/ask differentials for in-the-money options series may be as wide as the quotation for the underlying security on the primary market, or its decimal equivalent rounded down to the nearest minimum increment. The Exchange may establish differences other than the above for one or more series or classes of options.

The Exchange proposes to amend a Valid Width Quote to instead provide:

A “Valid Width Quote” is a two-sided electronic quotation submitted by a Market Maker that meets the following requirements: differentials shall be no more than \$5, provided that, in the case of equity options, the bid/ask differential stated above shall not apply to in-the-money series where the market for the underlying security is wider than the differential set forth above. The bid/ask differentials for in-the-money options series may be as wide as the quotation for the underlying security on the primary market, or its decimal equivalent rounded down to the nearest minimum increment. The Exchange may establish differences other than the above for one or

proposes to make a technical amendment to Options 3, Section 8(c)(3) which is described below.

⁷ In the case of index options, Primary Market Makers must promptly enter a Valid Width Quote in the remainder of their assigned series, which did not open following the receipt of the opening price in the underlying index or, with respect to U.S. dollar-settled foreign currency options, following the announced market opening. See Options 3, Section 8(c)(3).

more series or classes of options. Such differences will be posted by the Exchange on its website.

This proposed language is similar to Nasdaq BX, Inc. (“BX”).⁸ The Exchange proposes to widen the current bid/ask differentials for several reasons.

First, the proposal would conform the Valid Width Quote definition of MRX to that of BX. BX refers to a difference not to exceed \$5 between the bid and offer within the description of a Valid Width Quote, similar to BX Options 2, Section 4(f) and 5(d)(2) that describes intra-day quotes. By amending MRX’s Valid Width Quote, the Exchange notes that the \$5 difference is akin to MRX’s intra-day requirement within MRX Options 2, Section 4(b)(4).⁹

Second, the proposed differential would simplify the differential for Primary Market Makers, who would continue to be required to submit a Valid Width Quote

⁸ BX Options 3, Section 8(a)(9) provides, “A ‘Valid Width Quote’ is a two-sided electronic quotation, submitted by a Market Maker, quoted with a difference not to exceed \$5 between the bid and offer regardless of the price of the bid. However, respecting in-the-money series where the market for the underlying security is wider than \$5, the bid/ask differential may be as wide as the quotation for the underlying security on the primary market, or its decimal equivalent rounded down to the nearest minimum increment. The Exchange may establish differences other than the above for one or more series or classes of options.” See also Securities Exchange Act Release No. 89731 (September 1, 2020), 85 FR 55524 (September 8, 2020) (SR-BX-2020-016) (Order Approving Proposed Rule Change To Amend BX’s Opening Process in Connection With a Technology Migration).

⁹ MRX Options 2, Section 4(b)(4) provides, “...To price options contracts fairly by, among other things, bidding and offering so as to create differences of no more than \$5 between the bid and offer following the opening rotation in an equity or index options contract. The Exchange may establish differences other than the above for one or more series or classes of options.” Intra-day, MRX also distinguishes in-the-money options series where the underlying securities market is wider than the differentials set forth above. For these series, the bid/ask differential may be as wide as the spread between the national best bid and offer in the underlying security.

during the Opening Process in their assigned options series. Widening the differentials would allow Primary Market Makers and Competitive Market Makers that elect to quote during the Opening Process, an ability to quote wider during the Opening Process when an underlying is volatile. Today, pursuant to Options 3, Section 8(a)(8), the Exchange may establish differences other than the established bid/ask differentials for one or more series or classes of options. With this proposal, the Exchange is not amending its ability to continue to establish differences for one or more series or classes of options, rather the Exchange may continue to set other requirements pursuant to current MRX Options 3, Section 8(a)(8). Today, the Exchange has established Valid Width Quote differentials which differ from those described within Options 3, Section 8(a)(8),¹⁰ they are:

Bid Price low end of	Bid Price high end of	Maximum bid/ask differential
\$0.00	\$1.99	\$0.75
\$2.00	\$4.99	\$1.20
\$5.00	\$9.99	\$1.50
\$10.00	\$19.99	\$2.40
\$20.00	\$20.00+	\$3.00

Also, options with an expiration more than nine months away continue to be permitted a Valid Width Quote bid/ask differential of \$5.00. The Exchange will continue to utilize the differentials currently posted on its website until such time as it provides notice to Members of a change.

Third, the Exchange also proposes to add rule text to state that such differences

¹⁰ See <https://www.nasdaq.com/docs/2021/03/22/MRXSystemSetting.pdf>.

will be posted by the Exchange on its website.¹¹ Posting the current differentials on its website would allow Members to easily refer to the quoting obligations for the Opening Process.

Technical Amendment

The Exchange proposes to amend “Quotes” to “Quote” within Options 3, Section 8(c)(1)(B). The Exchange also proposes to remove two incorrect citations to Options 3, Section 8(c)(1)(iii). The “iii” was removed in a prior rule change.¹²

b. Statutory Basis

The Exchange believes that its proposal to establish a \$5 difference is consistent with Section 6(b) of the Act.¹³ Specifically, the Exchange believes the proposed rule change is consistent with the Section 6(b)(5)¹⁴ requirements that the rules of an exchange be designed to prevent fraudulent and manipulative acts and practices, to promote just and equitable principles of trade, to foster cooperation and coordination with persons engaged in regulating, clearing, settling, processing information with respect to, and facilitating transactions in securities, 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. Additionally, the Exchange believes the

¹¹ Id.

¹² See Securities Exchange Act Release No. 88660 (April 16, 2020), 85 FR 22482 (April 22, 2020) (SR-MRX-2020-09) (Notice of Filing and Immediate Effectiveness of Proposed Rule Change To Amend Options 3, Section 8, Relating to the Options Opening Process).

¹³ 15 U.S.C. 78f(b).

¹⁴ 15 U.S.C. 78f(b)(5).

proposed rule change is consistent with the Section 6(b)(5)¹⁵ requirement that the rules of an exchange not be designed to permit unfair discrimination between customers, issuers, brokers, or dealers.

The Exchange believes that the proposed \$5 difference for the Valid Width Quote is more appropriate because it reflects the Exchange's experience in administering the rule and would continue to give Market Makers flexibility including during the Opening Process. The Exchange notes that the current standard is not being applied as the Exchange has established Valid Width Quote differentials which differ from those described within Options 3, Section 8(a)(8).¹⁶ Widening the Valid Width Quote requirement would provide Primary Market Makers, and Competitive Market Makers that elect to quote during the Opening Process, additional flexibility when submitting Valid Width Quotes during the Opening Process thereby allowing these Market Makers the ability to quote wider in instances where the Exchange has not established Valid Width Quote differentials which differ from those in the rule because volatile market conditions exist or there is news regarding an underlying security which may impact pricing. Primary Market Makers are integral to the Exchange's Opening Process as MRX is dependent on receiving a Valid Width Quote to open an options series. With this proposal, Primary Market Makers would continue to be required to submit a Valid Width Quote during the Opening Process in their assigned options series.¹⁷

¹⁵ Id.

¹⁶ See supra note 10.

¹⁷ Today, MRX, Nasdaq GEMX, LLC ("GEMX"), Nasdaq ISE, LLC ("ISE"), Nasdaq Phlx LLC ("Phlx"), Miami International Securities Exchange, LLC ("MIAX") and MIAX Emerald, LLC ("Emerald") and are the only options

The proposal would conform the Valid Width Quote definition of MRX to that of BX.¹⁸ BX refers to a difference not to exceed \$5 between the bid and offer within the description of a Valid Width Quote, similar to BX Options 2, Section 4(f) and 5(d)(2) that describes intra-day quotes. By amending MRX's Valid Width Quote, the Exchange notes that the \$5 difference is akin to MRX's intra-day requirement within MRX Options 2, Section 4(b)(4).¹⁹ Also, today, MIAX and Emerald require market makers to enter a valid width NBBO with a difference of no more than \$5 between the bid and offer.²⁰

Not all options markets have bid/ask differentials. In 2019, Cboe removed its quote width requirements while citing corresponding rules of its affiliated exchanges.²¹ Cboe noted in the 2019 Rule Change that the current quote width requirement at the time for generally all classes was \$10, however, its Market-Makers consistently maintained two-sided quotes that were much tighter than the required width. Cboe opined that, even if markets experienced periods of stress or volatility, they remained obligated to maintain

markets that require a Primary Market Maker, or Lead Market Maker in the case of Phlx, to submit a quote to open an options series.

¹⁸ See supra note 8.

¹⁹ See supra note 9.

²⁰ MIAX and Emerald require Market Makers to submit a valid width NBBO in the opening where the bid and offer of the NBBO differ no more than differences outlined in MIAX and Emerald Rule 603(b)(4)(i). MIAX and Emerald Rule 603(b)(4)(i) provides that bidding and offering so as to create differences of no more than \$5 between the bid and offer. Rule 603(b)(4)(ii) provides MIAX and Emerald may establish differences other than the bid/ask differentials described in (i) above for one or more option series or classes, respectively. See MIAX and Emerald Rules 503.

²¹ See Securities Exchange Act Release No. 87024 (September 19, 2019), 84 FR 50545 (September 25, 2019) (SR-Cboe-2019-059) (“2019 Rule Change”).

two sided markets and engage in a course of dealings that must be reasonably calculated to contribute to the maintenance of a fair and orderly market, which includes refraining from making bids or offers that are inconsistent with such course of dealings and updating quotations in response to changed market conditions.²² Cboe noted that it did not believe that continuing to provide for a quote width requirement was necessary nor would it impact the maintenance of fair and orderly markets because Market-Makers already quoted at a bid/ask spread much narrower than the requirements and were required to continuously fulfill their obligations to engage in a course of dealings reasonably calculated to contribute to the maintenance of a fair and orderly market.²³

Unlike Cboe, MRX does require its Market Makers to quote both during the Opening Process and intra-day within certain established bid/ask differentials. The Exchange notes that widening its Valid Width Quote differential during the Opening Process will not impact the maintenance of fair and orderly markets because Market Makers on MRX, unlike other markets that do not require quoting during the Opening Process, will continue to require that its Market Makers provide Valid Width Quotes during the Opening Process, thereby ensuring liquidity. Also, Market Makers may quote tighter than the defined Valid Width Quote differential. Finally, similar to Cboe's argument in the 2019 Rule Change, Market Makers are required to continuously fulfill their obligations to engage in a course of dealings reasonably calculated to contribute to the maintenance of a fair and orderly market.

²² Id.

²³ Id.

Today, the Exchange has discretion to set other differentials,²⁴ similar to MIAX and Emerald.²⁵ The Exchange currently is utilizing that discretion to set different bid/ask differentials based on its observation of market openings. Currently, the Exchange requires Market Makers to submit Valid Width Quotes which are tighter than the proposed \$5 difference.

The Exchange's robust Opening Process seeks to encourage quality markets. As noted herein, unlike a majority of options markets,²⁶ it requires Primary Market Makers to quote during the Opening Process to ensure liquidity as well as an efficient Opening Process where options series are opened quickly and at fair prices.

The proposal to add rule text to state that such differences will be posted by the Exchange on its website²⁷ would allow Members to easily refer to the quoting obligations for the Opening Process.

Technical Amendment

The Exchange's proposal to amend "Quotes" to "Quote" within Options 3, Section 8(c)(1)(B) and remove two incorrect citations to Options 3, Section 8(c)(1)(C) will bring greater clarity to the Exchange's Rules.

4. 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

²⁴ See Options 3, Section 8(a)(8), the Exchange may establish differences other than the established bid/ask differentials for one or more series or classes of options.

²⁵ See MIAX and Emerald Rules 503.

²⁶ See supra note 17.

²⁷ Id.

Act. The Exchange’s proposal to require Primary Market Makers and Competitive Market Makers to bid and/or offer an option series with differences of no more than \$5 for options on equities and index options does not impose an undue burden on competition. All Primary Market Makers, and Competitive Market Makers who elect to quote during the Opening Process, would be subject to the same requirement to submit a Valid Width Quote when submitting quotes during the Opening Process. Differentials would be available on the Exchange’s website and therefore transparent, allowing Members to easily refer to the quoting obligations for the Opening Process. Finally, the proposal would also align quoting requirements more closely to intra-day requirements within MRX Options 2, Section 4(b)(4).

With respect to inter-market competition, the Exchange notes that most options markets do not require market makers to quote during the opening.²⁸ The Exchange notes that MIAX and Emerald have quoting requirements in the opening similar to the differential proposed herein. Also, ISE, GEMX and Phlx are filing similar rule changes to this proposal.²⁹

Technical Amendment

Exchange’s proposal to amend “Quotes” to “Quote” within Options 3, Section 8(c)(1)(B) and remove two incorrect citations to Options 3, Section 8(c)(1)(C) will bring greater clarity to the Exchange’s Rules.

5. Self-Regulatory Organization’s Statement on Comments on the Proposed Rule Change Received from Members, Participants, or Others

²⁸ See supra note 17 citing the options markets that require bid/ask differentials.

²⁹ See SR-ISE-2021-17, SR-GEMX-2021-07 and SR-Phlx-2021-42. These rule changes are not yet noticed.

No written comments were either solicited or received.

6. Extension of Time Period for Commission Action

Not Applicable.

7. Basis for Summary Effectiveness Pursuant to Section 19(b)(3) or for Accelerated Effectiveness Pursuant to Section 19(b)(2)

The foregoing rule change has become effective pursuant to Section 19(b)(3)(A)(iii)³⁰ of the Act and Rule 19b-4(f)(6) thereunder³¹ in that it effects a change that: (i) does not significantly affect the protection of investors or the public interest; (ii) does not impose any significant burden on competition; and (iii) by its terms, does not become operative for 30 days after the date of the filing, or such shorter time as the Commission may designate if consistent with the protection of investors and the public interest.

The Exchange's proposal does not significantly affect the protection of investors or the public interest. The Exchange believes that the proposed \$5 difference for the Valid Width Quote is more appropriate because it reflects the Exchange's experience in administering the rule and would continue to give Market Makers flexibility including during the Opening Process. The Exchange notes that the current standard is not being applied as the Exchange has established Valid Width Quote differentials which differ from those described within Options 3, Section 8(a)(8).³² Widening the Valid Width Quote requirement would provide Primary Market Makers, and Competitive Market Makers that elect to quote during the Opening Process, additional flexibility when

³⁰ 15 U.S.C. 78s(b)(3)(A)(iii).

³¹ 17 CFR 240.19b-4(f)(6).

³² See supra note 10.

submitting Valid Width Quotes during the Opening Process thereby allowing these Market Makers the ability to quote wider in instances where the Exchange has not established Valid Width Quote differentials which differ from those in the rule because volatile market conditions exist or there is news regarding an underlying security which may impact pricing. Primary Market Makers are integral to the Exchange's Opening Process as MRX is dependent on receiving a Valid Width Quote to open an options series. With this proposal, Primary Market Makers would continue to be required to submit a Valid Width Quote during the Opening Process in their assigned options series.³³ The proposal would conform the Valid Width Quote definition of MRX to that of BX.³⁴ By amending MRX's Valid Width Quote, the Exchange notes that the \$5 difference is akin to MRX's intra-day requirement within MRX Options 2, Section 4(b)(4).³⁵ Also, today, MIAX and Emerald require market makers to enter a valid width NBBO with a difference of no more than \$5 between the bid and offer.³⁶ Today, the Exchange has discretion to set other differentials,³⁷ similar to MIAX and Emerald.³⁸ The Exchange currently is utilizing that discretion to set different bid/ask differentials based on its observation of market openings. Currently, the Exchange requires Market Makers

³³ Today, ISE, GEMX, MRX, Phlx, MIAX and Emerald and are the only options markets that require a Primary Market Maker, or Lead Market Maker in the case of Phlx, to submit a quote to open an options series.

³⁴ See supra note 8.

³⁵ See supra note 9.

³⁶ See supra note 20.

³⁷ See supra note 24.

³⁸ See MIAX and Emerald Rules 503.

to submit Valid Width Quotes which are tighter than the proposed \$5 difference. The proposal to add rule text to state that such differences will be posted by the Exchange on its website would allow Members to easily refer to the quoting obligations for the Opening Process and would also align quoting requirements more closely to intra-day requirements. The Exchange's proposal does not impose any significant burden on competition. All Primary Market Makers, and Competitive Market Makers who elect to quote during the Opening Process, would be subject to the same requirement to submit a Valid Width Quote when submitting quotes during the Opening Process. The remaining changes are non-substantive.

Furthermore, Rule 19b-4(f)(6)(iii)³⁹ requires a self-regulatory organization to give the Commission written notice of its intent to file a proposed rule change under that subsection at least five business days prior to the date of filing, or such shorter time as designated by the Commission. The Exchange has provided such notice.

At any time within 60 days of the filing of the 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 should be approved or disapproved.

A proposed rule change filed under Rule 19b-4(f)(6) normally does not become operative prior to 30 days after the date of filing. Rule 19b-4(f)(6)(iii), however, permits the Commission to designate a shorter time if such action is consistent with the protection

³⁹ 17 CFR 240.19b-4(f)(6)(iii).

of investors and the public interest. The Exchange requests that the Commission waive the 30-day operative delay contained in Rule 19b-4(f)(6)(iii) so that it may immediately amend its rules to require MRX Primary Market Makers, and Competitive Market Makers that elect to quote, to quote on MRX with similar Valid Width Quoting requirements during the Opening Process as market makers quote on BX during the opening. The Exchange believes that the proposed changes are reasonable and do not affect investor protection because the proposed changes do not present any novel or unique issues. The proposed rule change would more accurately reflect the current application of the Valid Width Quotes. A waiver of the operative delay would allow the Exchange to provide more transparency to Members with respect to its current Valid Width Quotes. Further, the proposal would provide Members an easy reference to the quoting obligations for the Opening Process on the Exchange's website.

8. Proposed Rule Change Based on Rules of Another Self-Regulatory Organization or of the Commission

This proposal is similar to BX Options 3, Section 8(a)(9). Unlike BX, which does not require its Primary Market Makers to enter Valid Width Quotes during the opening, MRX will continue to require its Primary Market Makers to quote during the Opening Process in an assigned options series.

9. Security-Based Swap Submissions Filed Pursuant to Section 3C of the Act

Not applicable.

10. Advance Notices Filed Pursuant to Section 806(e) of the Payment, Clearing and Settlement Supervision Act

Not applicable.

11. Exhibits

1. Notice of Proposed Rule Change for publication in the Federal Register.

5. Text of the proposed rule change.

EXHIBIT 1

SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION
(Release No. _____ ; File No. SR-MRX-2021-09)

July __, 2021

Self-Regulatory Organizations; Nasdaq MRX, LLC; Notice of Filing and Immediate Effectiveness of Proposed Rule Change to Amend the Opening Process

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 July 19, 2021, Nasdaq MRX, LLC (“MRX” or “Exchange”) filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission (“SEC” or “Commission”) the proposed rule change as described in Items I, II, and III, 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 MRX Options 3, Section 8, “Options Opening Process.”

The text of the proposed rule change is available on the Exchange’s Website at <https://listingcenter.nasdaq.com/rulebook/mrx/rules>, 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

¹ 15 U.S.C. 78s(b)(1).

² 17 CFR 240.19b-4.

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

MRX proposes to amend Options 3, Section 8, "Options Opening Process." Specifically, the Exchange proposes to amend the definition of Valid Width Quote at Options 3, Section 8(a)(8).

MRX's Opening Process for an option series is conducted pursuant to Options 3, Section 8 paragraphs (f) - (j), on or after 9:30 AM Eastern the ABBO, if any, is not crossed and the System has received, within two minutes³ of the opening trade or quote on the market for the underlying security,⁴ a Valid Width Quote. The System will accept a Primary Market Maker's Valid Width Quote or the Valid Width Quote of at least one Competitive Market Maker.⁵ Today, MRX requires a Primary Market Maker to enter a Valid Width Quote in 90% of their assigned series, not later than one minute following

³ The Exchange may designated a shorter time provided it is disseminated to membership on the Exchange's web site.

⁴ In the case of index options, the timing is within two minutes of the receipt of the opening price in the underlying index or within two minutes of market opening for the underlying security in the case of U.S. dollar-settled foreign currency options. In both cases the Exchange may designated a shorter time provided it is disseminated to membership on the Exchange's web site.

⁵ The Exchange proposes an amendment within Options 3, Section 8(c)(1)(B) as described below.

the dissemination of a quote or trade by the market for the underlying security.⁶ Primary Market Makers must promptly enter a Valid Width Quote in the remainder of their assigned series, which did not open within one minute following the dissemination of a quote or trade by the market for the underlying security.⁷ In either case, the Primary Market Maker or Competitive Market Maker must enter a Valid Width Quote to open an options series. MRX Options 3, Section 8(a)(8) defines a Valid Width Quote as follows:

A “Valid Width Quote” is a two-sided electronic quotation submitted by a Market Maker that meets the following requirements: differentials shall be no more than \$.25 between the bid and offer for each options contract for which the bid is less than \$2, no more than \$.40 where the bid is at least \$2 but does not exceed \$5, no more than \$.50 where the bid is more than \$5 but does not exceed \$10, no more than \$.80 where the bid is more than \$10 but does not exceed \$20, and no more than \$1 where the bid is \$20 or greater, provided that, in the case of equity options, the bid/ask differentials stated above shall not apply to in-the-money series where the market for the underlying security is wider than the differentials set forth

⁶ In the case of index options, a Primary Market Maker must enter a Valid Width Quote in 90% of their assigned series, not later than one minute following the receipt of the opening price in the underlying index. The Primary Market Maker assigned in a particular U.S. dollar-settled foreign currency option must enter a Valid Width Quote, in 90% of their assigned series, not later than one minute after the announced market opening. See Options 3, Section 8(c)(3). The Exchange proposes to make a technical amendment to Options 3, Section 8(c)(3) which is described below.

⁷ In the case of index options, Primary Market Makers must promptly enter a Valid Width Quote in the remainder of their assigned series, which did not open following the receipt of the opening price in the underlying index or, with respect to U.S. dollar-settled foreign currency options, following the announced market opening. See Options 3, Section 8(c)(3).

above. The bid/ask differentials for in-the-money options series may be as wide as the quotation for the underlying security on the primary market, or its decimal equivalent rounded down to the nearest minimum increment. The Exchange may establish differences other than the above for one or more series or classes of options.

The Exchange proposes to amend a Valid Width Quote to instead provide:

A “Valid Width Quote” is a two-sided electronic quotation submitted by a Market Maker that meets the following requirements: differentials shall be no more than \$5, provided that, in the case of equity options, the bid/ask differential stated above shall not apply to in-the-money series where the market for the underlying security is wider than the differential set forth above. The bid/ask differentials for in-the-money options series may be as wide as the quotation for the underlying security on the primary market, or its decimal equivalent rounded down to the nearest minimum increment. The Exchange may establish differences other than the above for one or more series or classes of options. Such differences will be posted by the Exchange on its website.

This proposed language is similar to Nasdaq BX, Inc. (“BX”).⁸ The Exchange proposes to widen the current bid/ask differentials for several reasons.

⁸ BX Options 3, Section 8(a)(9) provides, “A ‘Valid Width Quote’ is a two-sided electronic quotation, submitted by a Market Maker, quoted with a difference not to exceed \$5 between the bid and offer regardless of the price of the bid. However, respecting in-the-money series where the market for the underlying

First, the proposal would conform the Valid Width Quote definition of MRX to that of BX. BX refers to a difference not to exceed \$5 between the bid and offer within the description of a Valid Width Quote, similar to BX Options 2, Section 4(f) and 5(d)(2) that describes intra-day quotes. By amending MRX's Valid Width Quote, the Exchange notes that the \$5 difference is akin to MRX's intra-day requirement within MRX Options 2, Section 4(b)(4).⁹

Second, the proposed differential would simplify the differential for Primary Market Makers, who would continue to be required to submit a Valid Width Quote during the Opening Process in their assigned options series. Widening the differentials would allow Primary Market Makers and Competitive Market Makers that elect to quote during the Opening Process, an ability to quote wider during the Opening Process when an underlying is volatile. Today, pursuant to Options 3, Section 8(a)(8), the Exchange may establish differences other than the established bid/ask differentials for one or more

security is wider than \$5, the bid/ask differential may be as wide as the quotation for the underlying security on the primary market, or its decimal equivalent rounded down to the nearest minimum increment. The Exchange may establish differences other than the above for one or more series or classes of options.” See also Securities Exchange Act Release No. 89731 (September 1, 2020), 85 FR 55524 (September 8, 2020) (SR-BX-2020-016) (Order Approving Proposed Rule Change To Amend BX's Opening Process in Connection With a Technology Migration).

⁹ MRX Options 2, Section 4(b)(4) provides, “...To price options contracts fairly by, among other things, bidding and offering so as to create differences of no more than \$5 between the bid and offer following the opening rotation in an equity or index options contract. The Exchange may establish differences other than the above for one or more series or classes of options.” Intra-day, MRX also distinguishes in-the-money options series where the underlying securities market is wider than the differentials set forth above. For these series, the bid/ask differential may be as wide as the spread between the national best bid and offer in the underlying security.

series or classes of options. With this proposal, the Exchange is not amending its ability to continue to establish differences for one or more series or classes of options, rather the Exchange may continue to set other requirements pursuant to current MRX Options 3, Section 8(a)(8). Today, the Exchange has established Valid Width Quote differentials which differ from those described within Options 3, Section 8(a)(8),¹⁰ they are:

Bid Price low end of	Bid Price high end of	Maximum bid/ask differential
\$0.00	\$1.99	\$0.75
\$2.00	\$4.99	\$1.20
\$5.00	\$9.99	\$1.50
\$10.00	\$19.99	\$2.40
\$20.00	\$20.00+	\$3.00

Also, options with an expiration more than nine months away continue to be permitted a Valid Width Quote bid/ask differential of \$5.00. The Exchange will continue to utilize the differentials currently posted on its website until such time as it provides notice to Members of a change.

Third, the Exchange also proposes to add rule text to state that such differences will be posted by the Exchange on its website.¹¹ Posting the current differentials on its website would allow Members to easily refer to the quoting obligations for the Opening Process.

¹⁰ See <https://www.nasdaq.com/docs/2021/03/22/MRXSystemSetting.pdf>.

¹¹ Id.

Technical Amendment

The Exchange proposes to amend “Quotes” to “Quote” within Options 3, Section 8(c)(1)(B). The Exchange also proposes to remove two incorrect citations to Options 3, Section 8(c)(1)(iii). The “iii” was removed in a prior rule change.¹²

2. Statutory Basis

The Exchange believes that its proposal to establish a \$5 difference is consistent with Section 6(b) of the Act.¹³ Specifically, the Exchange believes the proposed rule change is consistent with the Section 6(b)(5)¹⁴ requirements that the rules of an exchange be designed to prevent fraudulent and manipulative acts and practices, to promote just and equitable principles of trade, to foster cooperation and coordination with persons engaged in regulating, clearing, settling, processing information with respect to, and facilitating transactions in securities, 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. Additionally, the Exchange believes the proposed rule change is consistent with the Section 6(b)(5)¹⁵ requirement that the rules of an exchange not be designed to permit unfair discrimination between customers, issuers, brokers, or dealers.

¹² See Securities Exchange Act Release No. 88660 (April 16, 2020), 85 FR 22482 (April 22, 2020) (SR-MRX-2020-09) (Notice of Filing and Immediate Effectiveness of Proposed Rule Change To Amend Options 3, Section 8, Relating to the Options Opening Process).

¹³ 15 U.S.C. 78f(b).

¹⁴ 15 U.S.C. 78f(b)(5).

¹⁵ Id.

The Exchange believes that the proposed \$5 difference for the Valid Width Quote is more appropriate because it reflects the Exchange's experience in administering the rule and would continue to give Market Makers flexibility including during the Opening Process. The Exchange notes that the current standard is not being applied as the Exchange has established Valid Width Quote differentials which differ from those described within Options 3, Section 8(a)(8).¹⁶ Widening the Valid Width Quote requirement would provide Primary Market Makers, and Competitive Market Makers that elect to quote during the Opening Process, additional flexibility when submitting Valid Width Quotes during the Opening Process thereby allowing these Market Makers the ability to quote wider in instances where the Exchange has not established Valid Width Quote differentials which differ from those in the rule because volatile market conditions exist or there is news regarding an underlying security which may impact pricing. Primary Market Makers are integral to the Exchange's Opening Process as MRX is dependent on receiving a Valid Width Quote to open an options series. With this proposal, Primary Market Makers would continue to be required to submit a Valid Width Quote during the Opening Process in their assigned options series.¹⁷

The proposal would conform the Valid Width Quote definition of MRX to that of BX.¹⁸ BX refers to a difference not to exceed \$5 between the bid and offer within the

¹⁶ See supra note 10.

¹⁷ Today, MRX, Nasdaq GEMX, LLC ("GEMX"), Nasdaq ISE, LLC ("ISE"), Nasdaq Phlx LLC ("Phlx"), Miami International Securities Exchange, LLC ("MIAX") and MIAX Emerald, LLC ("Emerald") and are the only options markets that require a Primary Market Maker, or Lead Market Maker in the case of Phlx, to submit a quote to open an options series.

¹⁸ See supra note 8.

description of a Valid Width Quote, similar to BX Options 2, Section 4(f) and 5(d)(2) that describes intra-day quotes. By amending MRX's Valid Width Quote, the Exchange notes that the \$5 difference is akin to MRX's intra-day requirement within MRX Options 2, Section 4(b)(4).¹⁹ Also, today, MIAX and Emerald require market makers to enter a valid width NBBO with a difference of no more than \$5 between the bid and offer.²⁰

Not all options markets have bid/ask differentials. In 2019, Cboe removed its quote width requirements while citing corresponding rules of its affiliated exchanges.²¹ Cboe noted in the 2019 Rule Change that the current quote width requirement at the time for generally all classes was \$10, however, its Market-Makers consistently maintained two-sided quotes that were much tighter than the required width. Cboe opined that, even if markets experienced periods of stress or volatility, they remained obligated to maintain two sided markets and engage in a course of dealings that must be reasonably calculated to contribute to the maintenance of a fair and orderly market, which includes refraining from making bids or offers that are inconsistent with such course of dealings and updating quotations in response to changed market conditions.²² Cboe noted that it did

¹⁹ See supra note 9.

²⁰ MIAX and Emerald require Market Makers to submit a valid width NBBO in the opening where the bid and offer of the NBBO differ no more than differences outlined in MIAX and Emerald Rule 603(b)(4)(i). MIAX and Emerald Rule 603(b)(4)(i) provides that bidding and offering so as to create differences of no more than \$5 between the bid and offer. Rule 603(b)(4)(ii) provides MIAX and Emerald may establish differences other than the bid/ask differentials described in (i) above for one or more option series or classes, respectively. See MIAX and Emerald Rules 503.

²¹ See Securities Exchange Act Release No. 87024 (September 19, 2019), 84 FR 50545 (September 25, 2019) (SR-Cboe-2019-059) (“2019 Rule Change”).

²² Id.

not believe that continuing to provide for a quote width requirement was necessary nor would it impact the maintenance of fair and orderly markets because Market-Makers already quoted at a bid/ask spread much narrower than the requirements and were required to continuously fulfill their obligations to engage in a course of dealings reasonably calculated to contribute to the maintenance of a fair and orderly market.²³

Unlike Cboe, MRX does require its Market Makers to quote both during the Opening Process and intra-day within certain established bid/ask differentials. The Exchange notes that widening its Valid Width Quote differential during the Opening Process will not impact the maintenance of fair and orderly markets because Market Makers on MRX, unlike other markets that do not require quoting during the Opening Process, will continue to require that its Market Makers provide Valid Width Quotes during the Opening Process, thereby ensuring liquidity. Also, Market Makers may quote tighter than the defined Valid Width Quote differential. Finally, similar to Cboe's argument in the 2019 Rule Change, Market Makers are required to continuously fulfill their obligations to engage in a course of dealings reasonably calculated to contribute to the maintenance of a fair and orderly market.

Today, the Exchange has discretion to set other differentials,²⁴ similar to MIAX and Emerald.²⁵ The Exchange currently is utilizing that discretion to set different bid/ask differentials based on its observation of market openings. Currently, the Exchange

²³ Id.

²⁴ See Options 3, Section 8(a)(8), the Exchange may establish differences other than the established bid/ask differentials for one or more series or classes of options.

²⁵ See MIAX and Emerald Rules 503.

requires Market Makers to submit Valid Width Quotes which are tighter than the proposed \$5 difference.

The Exchange's robust Opening Process seeks to encourage quality markets. As noted herein, unlike a majority of options markets,²⁶ it requires Primary Market Makers to quote during the Opening Process to ensure liquidity as well as an efficient Opening Process where options series are opened quickly and at fair prices.

The proposal to add rule text to state that such differences will be posted by the Exchange on its website²⁷ would allow Members to easily refer to the quoting obligations for the Opening Process.

Technical Amendment

The Exchange's proposal to amend "Quotes" to "Quote" within Options 3, Section 8(c)(1)(B) and remove two incorrect citations to Options 3, Section 8(c)(1)(C) will bring greater clarity to the Exchange's Rules.

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 Exchange's proposal to require Primary Market Makers and Competitive Market Makers to bid and/or offer an option series with differences of no more than \$5 for options on equities and index options does not impose an undue burden on competition. All Primary Market Makers, and Competitive Market Makers who elect to quote during the Opening Process, would be subject to the same requirement to submit a Valid Width Quote when submitting quotes during the Opening Process. Differentials

²⁶ See supra note 17.

²⁷ Id.

would be available on the Exchange's website and therefore transparent, allowing Members to easily refer to the quoting obligations for the Opening Process. Finally, the proposal would also align quoting requirements more closely to intra-day requirements within MRX Options 2, Section 4(b)(4).

With respect to inter-market competition, the Exchange notes that most options markets do not require market makers to quote during the opening.²⁸ The Exchange notes that MIAX and Emerald have quoting requirements in the opening similar to the differential proposed herein. Also, ISE, GEMX and Phlx are filing similar rule changes to this proposal.²⁹

Technical Amendment

Exchange's proposal to amend "Quotes" to "Quote" within Options 3, Section 8(c)(1)(B) and remove two incorrect citations to Options 3, Section 8(c)(1)(C) will bring greater clarity to the Exchange's Rules.

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

²⁸ See supra note 17 citing the options markets that require bid/ask differentials.

²⁹ See SR-ISE-2021-17, SR-GEMX-2021-07 and SR-Phlx-2021-42. These rule changes are not yet noticed.

to Section 19(b)(3)(A)(iii) of the Act³⁰ and subparagraph (f)(6) of Rule 19b-4 thereunder.³¹

At any time within 60 days of the filing of the 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 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 e-mail to rule-comments@sec.gov. Please include File Number SR-MRX-2021-09 on the subject line.

³⁰ 15 U.S.C. 78s(b)(3)(A)(iii).

³¹ 17 CFR 240.19b-4(f)(6). In addition, Rule 19b-4(f)(6) requires a self-regulatory organization to give the Commission written notice of its intent to file 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. The Exchange has satisfied this requirement.

Paper comments:

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

All submissions should refer to File Number SR-MRX-2021-09. This file number should be included on the subject line if e-mail 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 website 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-MRX-2021-09 and should be submitted on or before [insert date 21 days from publication in the Federal Register].

For the Commission, by the Division of Trading and Markets, pursuant to delegated authority.³²

J. Matthew DeLesDernier
Assistant Secretary

³² 17 CFR 200.30-3(a)(12).

EXHIBIT 5

New text is underlined; deleted text is in brackets.

Nasdaq MRX, LLC

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Options 3 Options Trading Rules

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Section 8. Options Opening Process

(a) **Definitions.** The Exchange conducts an electronic opening for all option series traded on the Exchange using its System.

(1) – (7) No Change.

(8) A “Valid Width Quote” is a two-sided electronic quotation submitted by a Market Maker that meets the following requirements: differentials shall be no more than \$5.[\$.25 between the bid and offer for each options contract for which the bid is less than \$2, no more than \$.40 where the bid is at least \$2 but does not exceed \$5, no more than \$.50 where the bid is more than \$5 but does not exceed \$10, no more than \$.80 where the bid is more than \$10 but does not exceed \$20, and no more than \$1 where the bid is \$20 or greater,] provided that, in the case of equity options, the bid/ask differential[s] stated above shall not apply to in-the-money series where the market for the underlying security is wider than the differential[s] set forth above. The bid/ask differentials for in-the-money options series may be as wide as the quotation for the underlying security on the primary market, or its decimal equivalent rounded down to the nearest minimum increment. The Exchange may establish differences other than the above for one or more series or classes of options. Such differences will be posted by the Exchange on its website.

* * * * *

(c) Market Maker Valid Width Quotes and Opening Sweeps received starting at 9:25 AM Eastern Time are included in the Opening Process. Orders entered at any time before an option series opens are included in the Opening Process.

(1) The Opening Process for an option series will be conducted pursuant to paragraphs (f) - (j) below on or after 9:30 AM Eastern Time if: the ABBO, if any, is not crossed; and the System has received, within two minutes (or such shorter time as determined by the Exchange and disseminated to membership on the Exchange's web site) of the opening trade or quote on the market for the underlying security in the case of equity options or, in the case of index options, within two minutes of the receipt of the opening price in the underlying index (or such shorter time as determined by the Exchange and disseminated to membership on the Exchange's web site), or within two minutes of market opening for the underlying security in the case of U.S. dollar-settled foreign currency options (or such

shorter time as determined by the Exchange and disseminated to membership on the Exchange's web site) any of the following:

- (i) the Primary Market Maker's ("PMM") Valid Width Quote; or
 - (ii) the Valid Width Quote[s] of at least one Competitive Market Maker ("CMM").
- (2) For all options, the underlying security, including indexes, must be open on the market for the underlying security for a certain time period as determined by the Exchange for the Opening Process to commence. The time period shall be no less than 100 milliseconds and no more than 5 seconds.
- (3) The PMM assigned in a particular equity or index option must enter a Valid Width Quote, in 90% of their assigned series, not later than one minute following the dissemination of a quote or trade by the market for the underlying security or, in the case of index options, following the receipt of the opening price in the underlying index. The PMM assigned in a particular U.S. dollar-settled foreign currency option must enter a Valid Width Quote, in 90% of their assigned series, not later than one minute after the announced market opening. Provided an options series has not opened pursuant to Options 3, Section 8(c)(1)(ii)[or (iii)], PMMs must promptly enter a Valid Width Quote in the remainder of their assigned series, which did not open within one minute following the dissemination of a quote or trade by the market for the underlying security or, in the case of index options, following the receipt of the opening price in the underlying index or, with respect to U.S. dollar-settled foreign currency options, following the announced market opening. Once an options series has opened pursuant to Options 3, Section 8(c)(1)(i) and ii [- (iii)], a PMM must submit intra-day, two-sided quotes in such options series pursuant to Options 2, Section 5(e)(2).

* * * * *