# How Advisers Can Leverage the Recent 401k Litigation



#### Charles G. Humphrey, Esq.

Brought to you by ERISApedia.com and KnowHow401k.com





#### **Your Presenter Today**

• Charles G. Humphrey, JD







#### **Your Hosts Today**

• Facilitator:

**Chuck Gouge** 



Question Board Moderator
Joanne Pecina







### **During the webinar**

- All attendees lines are muted
- Question board available and monitored
  - Please send in questions
  - We will answer as many submitted questions as possible
- Follow up questions and comments can be sent to:
  - support@erisapedia.com





# Introduction/Agenda

- Challenges & opportunities
- Litigation & investigation avoidance
- Adviser role





# **Adviser Ecosystem**

- Marketplace pressures
- Margins
- Fiduciary rule
- Litigation





# **ERISA Fiduciary Standard**

- The problem
- Prudent man standard of care
- Fiduciaries are on their own





# **ERISA Fiduciary Standard**

- Act solely in the interest
- Exclusive purpose of providing benefits
- Pay reasonable expenses
- Care, skill, prudence, diligence





# Is your process good enough?

- Key elements
  - -Meet regularly
  - -Education
  - -Use of experts
  - -Documentation





# Is your process good enough?

- Vulnerabilities surfaced in 2016
  - -Leverage
  - -Homework
  - -Not seeing the future





#### **Leverage Fails**

- Use of asset size to lower fees
- Cheap may not be cheap enough
- Key questions for plan sponsors

Bell v. Anthem





# Have you done your homework? (Part I)

- Understanding costs & investments
- Excessive fees
- Inexperienced TDF managers

Johnson et. al. v. Fujitsu Technology and Business of America, Inc. et. al.





# Have you done your homework? (Part II)

- Deviation of fund investments from typical mix
- Reading labels
- Plan sponsor obligations

Ellis v. Fidelity Management Trust Company





#### **Crystal Ball "Fails"**

- Pledger v. Reliance
- White v. Chevron
  - Are plan fiduciaries really required to know the future?
  - Money market v. stable value funds





### The Import of the Litigation

- Some will fail
- Process/procedure will be more closely examined
- Play defense





# What Can Advisers Do to Help Clients?

- Build on your base, then
  - Refine processes
  - Help clients leverage
  - Document
  - Educate your clients





















# **Contact Information**

Author of the Fiduciary Responsibility eSource: Chuck Humphrey Law Office of Charles G. Humphrey (716) 465-7505 <u>chumphrey@cghbenefitslaw.com</u>

**ERISApedia.com:** 

Chuck Gouge (704) 577-3384

cgouge@erisapedia.com



