

**UNITED STATES OF AMERICA**  
**Before the**  
**SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION**

**SECURITIES EXCHANGE ACT OF 1934**  
**Release No. 96253 / November 8, 2022**

**ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEEDING**  
**File No. 3-21236**

**In the Matter of**

**CARLOS PINGARRON,**

**Respondent.**

**ORDER INSTITUTING**  
**ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEEDINGS**  
**PURSUANT TO SECTION 15(b)(6) OF**  
**THE SECURITIES EXCHANGE ACT OF**  
**1934, MAKING FINDINGS, AND**  
**IMPOSING REMEDIAL SANCTIONS**

**I.**

The Securities and Exchange Commission (“Commission”) deems it appropriate and in the public interest that public administrative proceedings be, and hereby are, instituted pursuant to Section 15(b)(6) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 (“Exchange Act”) against Carlos Pingarron (“Respondent” or “Pingarron”).

**II.**

In anticipation of the institution of these proceedings, Respondent has submitted an Offer of Settlement (the “Offer”) which the Commission has determined to accept. Solely for the purpose of these proceedings and any other proceedings brought by or on behalf of the Commission, or to which the Commission is a party, and without admitting or denying the findings herein, except as to the Commission’s jurisdiction over him and the subject matter of these proceedings and the findings contained in paragraph III.2 below, which are admitted, Respondent consents to the entry of this (“Order”), as set forth below.

**III.**

On the basis of this Order and Respondent’s Offer, the Commission finds that:

1. Pingarron, age 41, resides in Doral, Florida. From no later than July 2017 through at least July 2019, Pingarron acted as an unregistered broker or dealer by selling the securities of

Sky Group USA, LLC (“Sky Group”), a private South Florida payday loan company. At all relevant times, Pingarron was not registered as or associated with a registered broker-dealer.

2. On October 6, 2022, a final judgment was entered by consent against Pingarron, permanently enjoining him from future violations of Sections 5(a) and 5(c) of the Securities Act of 1933 (“Securities Act”) and Section 15(a)(1) of the Exchange Act, in the civil action entitled Securities and Exchange Commission v. Carlos Pingarron, Case No. 22-cv-22143 (S.D. Fla. 2022).

3. The Commission’s Complaint alleged, among other things, that Sky Group and Betancourt fraudulently raised more than \$66 million from at least 505 investors through the offer and sale of promissory notes in Sky Group. According to the Complaint, the Sky Group securities offerings were not registered with the Commission. The Complaint further alleged that Pingarron, in communications with investors: touted Sky Group’s business, including the safety and profitability of its operations; provided logistical assistance to at least one investor who purchased the securities; and received \$942,000 in transaction-based compensation from Sky Group for selling approximately \$3.9 million of Sky Group securities to at least 67 investors.

#### IV.

In view of the foregoing, the Commission deems it appropriate and in the public interest to impose the sanctions agreed to in Respondent Pingarron’s Offer.

Accordingly, it is hereby ORDERED pursuant to Section 15(b)(6) of the Exchange Act that Respondent Pingarron be, and hereby is, barred from association with any broker, dealer, investment adviser, municipal securities dealer, municipal advisor, transfer agent, or nationally recognized statistical rating organization; and

Pursuant to Section 15(b)(6) of the Exchange Act, Respondent Pingarron be, and hereby is, barred from participating in any offering of a penny stock, including: acting as a promoter, finder, consultant, agent or other person who engages in activities with a broker, dealer or issuer for purposes of the issuance or trading in any penny stock, or inducing or attempting to induce the purchase or sale of any penny stock.

Any reapplication for association by the Respondent will be subject to the applicable laws and regulations governing the reentry process, and reentry may be conditioned upon a number of factors, including, but not limited to, compliance with the Commission’s order and payment of any or all of the following: (a) any disgorgement or civil penalties ordered by a Court against the Respondent in any action brought by the Commission; (b) any disgorgement amounts ordered against the Respondent for which the Commission waived payment; (c) any arbitration award related to the conduct that served as the basis for the Commission order; (d) any self-regulatory

organization arbitration award to a customer, whether or not related to the conduct that served as the basis for the Commission order; and (e) any restitution order by a self-regulatory organization, whether or not related to the conduct that served as the basis for the Commission order.

By the Commission.

Vanessa A. Countryman  
Secretary