

# Franklin High Yield Tax-Free Income Fund

Advisor Class: FHYVX Class A: FHYQX

Commentary | as of June 30, 2025

## Key Takeaways

- **Markets:** There were large swings in financial market sentiment across the second quarter of 2025. In early April, US President Donald Trump announced significant increases in US tariff rates as part of his "Liberation Day." Subsequently, a temporary pause (in many cases 90 days) in increased levies helped calm some of the market nerves. The passage of the "One Big Beautiful Bill" spending package after quarter-end further reduced the uncertainties that had been a strong headwind to municipal (muni) bond markets as it affirmed the tax-exempt status of muni securities.
- **Detractors:** Underweight allocation to muni bonds with five years to maturity, overweight allocation to muni bonds with no external credit rating and overweight allocation to muni bonds rated below investment grade.
- **Contributors:** Security selection in BBB rated bonds, security selection in A rated bonds and underweight allocation to A rated bonds.
- **Outlook:** Municipal bond valuations continue to appear attractive to us, particularly on a tax-adjusted basis, with yields near multi-year highs. In a more challenging environment, strong bottom-up research and disciplined security selection will be essential to identifying relative value and potentially preserving portfolio quality.

## Performance Review

- Over the quarter, Franklin High Yield Tax-Free Income Fund **fared worse than its benchmark**, the Bloomberg Municipal Bond Index.
- **The fund's yield curve positioning detracted from relative performance** during the second quarter, primarily driven by our underweight to muni bonds with five years to maturity and overweight to muni bonds with 10 or more years to maturity.
- **Rating allocations detracted from relative returns** for the period, owing to our overweights to bonds with no external credit rating and bonds rated below investment grade, along with an underweight to AAA rated bonds. Conversely, our underweight to A rated bonds partially lifted results. **Security selection benefited relative results**, particularly due to selection in BBB and A rated securities.

## Outlook

- We still feel that technical conditions in the market favor investors. Fund flows have moved to be positive, and the additional supply of munis has been well absorbed. The summer months typically see an increase in coupon payments and maturing bonds, which will require reinvestment that should provide a strong base to support valuations.
- Fundamentals remain broadly stable, with Moody's reporting that credit upgrades continued to outpace downgrades. However, as the economy slows and inflationary pressures ease, tax revenue growth at the state and local level is expected to moderate, placing greater importance on credit selectivity going forward.
- Municipal bond valuations continue to appear attractive to us, particularly on a tax-adjusted basis. In a more challenging environment, strong bottom-up research and disciplined security selection will be essential to identifying relative value and potentially preserving portfolio quality.

## Morningstar Rating™

Overall Rating as of June 30, 2025



**(4-Star) Advisor Class**



**(3-Star) Class A**

As of 06/30/2025 the fund's Advisor Class shares received a 4 star and Class A shares received a 3 star overall Morningstar rating™, measuring risk-adjusted returns against 179, 173 and 127 High Yield Muni funds over the 3-, 5- and 10- year periods, respectively. A fund's overall rating is derived from a weighted average of the performance figures associated with its 3-, 5- and 10-year (if applicable) rating metrics.

## Fund Characteristics

Effective Duration

## Fund

8.11 Years

## State / U.S. Territory Allocation (% of Total)

State	Fund
California	20.60
Florida	18.55
Texas	12.03
Puerto Rico	7.78
Colorado	5.13
N/A	4.05
Arizona	3.95
Wisconsin	3.72
Other	26.15
Cash & Cash Equivalents	-1.95

## Average annual total returns and fund expenses (%) - as of June 30, 2025

Class	CUSIP	Ticker	Without Sales Charge							With Maximum Sales Charge							Expenses		Sales Charges		Inception Date
			3-Mo	YTD	1-Yr	3-Yr	5-Yr	10-Yr	Inception	3-Mo	YTD	1-Yr	3-Yr	5-Yr	10-Yr	Inception	Gross	Net	Initial Charge	CDSC	
Advisor Class	354723272	FHYVX	-0.71	-0.71	1.73	3.62	1.54	2.57	5.40	-0.71	-0.71	1.73	3.62	1.54	2.57	5.40	0.54	0.54	—	—	3/18/1986
Class A	354726887	FHYQX	-0.89	-0.94	1.37	3.33	1.29	2.37	5.30	-4.61	-4.66	-2.43	2.03	0.52	1.98	5.20	0.79	0.79	3.75	—	3/18/1986
Benchmark	—	—	-0.12	-0.35	1.11	2.50	0.51	2.20	—	-0.12	-0.35	1.11	2.50	0.51	2.20	—	—	—	—	—	—

## Benchmark(s)

Benchmark = Bloomberg Municipal Bond Index

**Performance data quoted represents past performance, which does not guarantee future results.** Current performance may be lower or higher than the figures shown. Principal value and investment returns will fluctuate, and investors' shares, when redeemed, may be worth more or less than the original cost. Performance would have been lower if fees had not been waived in various periods. Total returns assume the reinvestment of all distributions and the deduction of all fund expenses. Returns with sales charge reflect a deduction of the stated maximum sales charge. An investor cannot invest directly in an index, and unmanaged index returns do not reflect any fees, expenses or sales charges. Returns for periods of less than one year are not annualized. All classes of shares may not be available to all investors or through all distribution channels. For current month-end performance, please visit [franklintempleton.com](http://franklintempleton.com).

The fund began offering Advisor Class shares on 1/3/2006 and the fund began offering A Class shares on 9/10/2018. Performance quotations have been calculated as follows: (a) for Advisor Class periods prior to 1/3/2006, a restated figure is used based on the fund's Class A1 performance; for A Class periods prior to 9/10/2018, a restated figure is used based on the fund's Class A1 performance. The performance was adjusted to take into account differences in class-specific operating expenses and maximum sales charges. (b) For periods after share class offering, performance for the specific share class is used, reflecting the expenses and maximum sales charges applicable to that class.

Gross expenses are the fund's total annual operating expenses as of the fund's prospectus available at the time of publication. Net expenses are capped under a contractual agreement, which cannot be terminated prior to 06/30/2026 without Board consent. Actual expenses may be higher and may impact portfolio returns.

## What are the Risks?

**All investments involve risks, including possible loss of principal. Fixed income securities** involve interest rate, credit, inflation and reinvestment risks, and possible loss of principal. As interest rates rise, the value of fixed income securities falls. **Changes in the credit rating of a bond**, or in the credit rating or financial strength of a bond's issuer, insurer or guarantor, may affect the bond's value. **Low-rated, high-yield bonds** are subject to greater price volatility, illiquidity and possibility of default. An investor may be subject to the federal **Alternative Minimum Tax**, and state and local taxes may apply. These and other risks are discussed in the fund's prospectus.

## Glossary

**Investment grade** is a rating that indicates that a municipal or corporate bond has a relatively low risk of default. BBB is medium credit quality rating.

The **yield curve** shows the relationship between yields and maturity dates for a similar class of bonds.

## Important Information

The information provided is not a complete analysis of every material fact regarding any country, market, industry, security or fund. Because market and economic conditions are subject to change, comments, opinions and analyses are rendered as of the date of this material and may change without notice. A portfolio manager's assessment of a particular security, investment or strategy is not intended as individual investment advice or a recommendation or solicitation to buy, sell or hold any security or to adopt any investment strategy; it is intended only to provide insight into the fund's portfolio selection process. Holdings are subject to change.

The **Bloomberg Municipal Bond Index** is a broad measure of the municipal bond market with maturities of at least one year. Source: Bloomberg Indices.

Important data provider notices and terms available at [www.franklintempletondatasources.com](http://www.franklintempletondatasources.com). All data is subject to change.

**Effective Duration** is a duration calculation for bonds with embedded options. Effective duration takes into account that expected cash flows will fluctuate as interest rates change. Duration measures the sensitivity of price (the value of principal) of a fixed-income investment to a change in interest rates. The higher the duration number, the more sensitive a fixed-income investment will be to interest rate changes.

**Morningstar Rating™**: Source: Morningstar®, 06/30/2025. For each mutual fund and ETF with at least a 3-year history, Morningstar calculates a Morningstar Rating™ based on how a fund ranks on a Morningstar Risk-Adjusted Return measure against other funds in the same category. This measure takes into account variations in a fund's monthly performance, and does not take into account the effects of sales charges and loads, placing more emphasis on downward variations and rewarding consistent performance. The top 10% of funds in each category receive 5 stars, the next 22.5% receive 4 stars, the next 35% receive 3 stars, the next 22.5% receive 2 stars and the bottom 10% receive 1 star. The weights are: 100% 3-year rating for 36-59 months of total returns, 60% 5-year rating/40% 3-year rating for 60-119 months of total returns, and 50% 10-year rating/30% 5-year rating/20% 3-year rating for 120 or more months of total returns. While the 10-year overall star rating formula seems to give the most weight to the 10-year period, the most recent 3-year period actually has the greatest impact because it is included in all three rating periods. The fund's Advisor Class shares received a Morningstar Rating of 4, 4 and 4 and fund's Class A shares received a Morningstar Rating of 4, 3 and 3 star(s) for the 3-, 5- and 10-year periods, respectively. Franklin Templeton provides this fund's Morningstar Rating™ for Advisor Class and Class A shares only. Other share classes may have different Morningstar ratings.

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**Before investing, carefully consider a fund's investment objectives, risks, charges and expenses. You can find this and other information in each prospectus, or summary prospectus, if available, at [www.franklintempleton.com](http://www.franklintempleton.com). Please read it carefully.**



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