

ROYAL BANK OF CANADA
Form 424B2
May 29, 2018

RBC Capital Markets® Filed Pursuant to Rule 424(b)(2)
Registration Statement No. 333-208507

The information in this pricing supplement is not complete and may be changed.

Preliminary Pricing
Supplement

Subject to Completion:

Dated May 29, 2018 \$ _____
To the Product Floating Rate Notes,
Prospectus Supplement Due June 15, 2021
FIN-1 Dated January 14, Royal Bank of Canada
2016, and the Prospectus
Supplement and
Prospectus, each dated
January 8, 2016

Royal Bank of Canada is offering the Floating Rate Notes (the “Notes”) described below.

The CUSIP number for the Notes is 78014RAF7.

The Notes will pay interest quarterly, on the 15th day of each March, June, September and December, commencing on September 15, 2018 and ending on the Maturity Date.

The “Reference Rate” is the 2 Year CMS rate. The Notes will accrue interest at a rate equal to the Reference Rate, subject to the Coupon Floor of 0.00%.

The Notes will not be listed on any U.S. securities exchange.

Investing in the Notes involves a number of risks. See “Risk Factors” beginning on page S-1 of the prospectus supplement dated January 8, 2016, “Additional Risk Factors Specific to the Notes” beginning on page PS-5 of the product prospectus supplement FIN-1 dated January 14, 2016 and “Additional Risk Factors” beginning on page P-7 of this pricing supplement.

The Notes will not constitute deposits insured by the Canada Deposit Insurance Corporation, the U.S. Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation or any other Canadian or U.S. government agency or instrumentality.

Neither the Securities and Exchange Commission (the “SEC”) nor any state securities commission has approved or disapproved of these securities or determined that this pricing supplement is truthful or complete. Any representation to the contrary is a criminal offense.

The initial estimated value of the Notes as of the date of this pricing supplement is \$992.10 per \$1,000 in principal amount, which is less than the price to public. The final pricing supplement relating to the Notes will set forth our estimate of the initial value of the Notes as of the Pricing Date, which will not be less than \$972.10 per \$1,000 in principal amount. The actual value of the Notes at any time will reflect many factors, cannot be predicted with accuracy, and may be less than this amount. We describe our determination of the initial estimated value in more detail below.

RBC Capital Markets, LLC (“RBCCM”) will offer the Notes at a public offering price equal to the principal amount, and will purchase the Notes from us on the Issue Date at a purchase price that is expected to be 99.65% of the principal amount. See “Supplemental Plan of Distribution (Conflicts of Interest)” on page P-8 below.

We will deliver the Notes in book-entry only form through the facilities of The Depository Trust Company on or about June 15, 2018, against payment in immediately available funds.

RBC Capital Markets, LLC

Floating Rate Notes,
Due June 15, 2021

SUMMARY

The information in this “Summary” section is qualified by the more detailed information set forth in this pricing supplement, the product prospectus supplement FIN-1, the prospectus supplement, and the prospectus.

Issuer: Royal Bank of Canada (“Royal Bank”)

Issue: Senior Global Medium-Term Notes, Series G

Underwriter: RBC Capital Markets, LLC

Currency: U.S. Dollars

Minimum Investment: \$1,000 and minimum denominations of \$1,000 in excess of \$1,000

Pricing Date: June 13, 2018

Issue Date: June 15, 2018

Maturity Date: June 15, 2021

CUSIP: 78014RAF7

Interest Rate: The Reference Rate, subject to the Coupon Floor.

Reference Rate: 2 Year CMS Rate, as reported on Reuters Page ICESWAP1 or any successor page thereto at 11:00 am New York time

Coupon Floor: 0.00%

Day Count Fraction: 30/360

Type of Note: Floating Rate Notes

Interest Payment Dates: Quarterly, in arrears, on the 15th day of each March, June, September and December, commencing on September 15, 2018 and ending on the Maturity Date. If any Interest Payment Date is not a New York business day, interest will be paid on the next New York business day as further discussed on page S-15 of the prospectus supplement, without adjustment for period end dates and no additional interest will be paid in respect of the postponement.

Interest Period: Each period from and including an Interest Payment Date (or, for the first period, the Settlement Date) to but excluding the next following Interest Payment Date.

Interest Determination Dates During Floating Rate Period: Five U.S. government securities settlement days prior to the beginning of each interest period. A “U.S. government securities settlement day” is any day except a Saturday, a Sunday, or a day on which The Securities Industry and Financial Markets Association (or any successor thereto) recommends that the fixed income departments of its members be closed for the entire day for purposes of trading in U.S. government securities.

Redemption: Not Applicable

Survivor's
Option: Not Applicable

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U.S. Tax Treatment: We intend to take the position that the Notes will be treated as variable rate debt instruments for U.S. federal income tax purposes. Please see the discussion (including the opinion of our counsel Morrison & Foerster LLP) in the product prospectus supplement FIN-1 dated January 14, 2016 under “Supplemental Discussion of U.S. Federal Income Tax Consequences” and specifically the discussion under “Supplemental Discussion of U.S. Federal Income Tax Consequences—Supplemental U.S. Tax Considerations—Where the term of your notes will exceed one year—Fixed Rate Notes, Floating Rate Notes, Inverse Floating Rate Notes, Step Up Notes, Leveraged Notes, Range Accrual Notes, Dual Range Accrual Notes and Non-Inversion Range Accrual Notes,” and “Supplemental Discussion of U.S. Federal Income Tax Consequences—Supplemental U.S. Tax Considerations—Where the term of your notes will exceed one year—Sale, Redemption or Maturity of Notes that Are Not Treated as Contingent Payment Debt Instruments,” which applies to your Notes. These discussions do not address the tax consequences applicable to holders subject to Section 451(b) of the Code.

Calculation Agent: RBC Capital Markets, LLC

Listing: The Notes will not be listed on any securities exchange.

Clearance and Settlement: DTC global (including through its indirect participants Euroclear and Clearstream, Luxembourg as described under “Description of Debt Securities—Ownership and Book-Entry Issuance” in the prospectus dated January 8, 2016).

Terms Incorporated in the Master Note: All of the terms appearing above the item captioned “Listing” on page P-2 of this pricing supplement and the terms appearing under the caption “General Terms of the Notes” in the product prospectus supplement FIN-1 dated January 14, 2016, as modified by this pricing supplement. In addition to those terms, the following two sentences are also so incorporated into the master note: RBC confirms that it fully understands and is able to calculate the effective annual rate of interest applicable to the Notes based on the methodology for calculating per annum rates provided for in the Notes. RBC irrevocably agrees not to plead or assert Section 4 of the Interest Act (Canada), whether by way of defense or otherwise, in any proceeding relating to the Notes.

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ADDITIONAL TERMS OF YOUR NOTES

You should read this pricing supplement together with the prospectus dated January 8, 2016, as supplemented by the prospectus supplement dated January 8, 2016 and the product prospectus supplement FIN-1 dated January 14, 2016, relating to our Senior Global Medium-Term Notes, Series G, of which these Notes are a part. Capitalized terms used but not defined in this pricing supplement will have the meanings given to them in the product prospectus supplement FIN-1. In the event of any conflict, this pricing supplement will control. The Notes vary from the terms described in the product prospectus supplement FIN-1 in several important ways. You should read this pricing supplement carefully.

This pricing supplement, together with the documents listed below, contains the terms of the Notes and supersedes all prior or contemporaneous oral statements as well as any other written materials including preliminary or indicative pricing terms, correspondence, trade ideas, structures for implementation, sample structures, brochures or other educational materials of ours. You should carefully consider, among other things, the matters set forth in “Risk Factors” in the prospectus supplement dated January 8, 2016, “Additional Risk Factors Specific to the Notes” in the product prospectus supplement FIN-1 dated January 14, 2016 and “Additional Risk Factors” in this pricing supplement, as the Notes involve risks not associated with conventional debt securities. We urge you to consult your investment, legal, tax, accounting and other advisors before you invest in the Notes. You may access these documents on the SEC website at www.sec.gov as follows (or if that address has changed, by reviewing our filings for the relevant date on the SEC website):

Prospectus dated January 8, 2016:

<http://www.sec.gov/Archives/edgar/data/1000275/000121465916008810/j18160424b3.htm>

Prospectus Supplement dated January 8, 2016:

<https://www.sec.gov/Archives/edgar/data/1000275/000121465916008811/p14150424b3.htm>

Product Prospectus Supplement FIN-1 dated January 14, 2016:

<https://www.sec.gov/Archives/edgar/data/1000275/000114036116047762/form424b5.htm>

Our Central Index Key, or CIK, on the SEC website is 1000275. As used in this pricing supplement, “we,” “us”, or “our” refers to Royal Bank of Canada.

Royal Bank of Canada has filed a registration statement (including a product prospectus supplement, a prospectus supplement, and a prospectus) with the SEC for the offering to which this pricing supplement relates. Before you invest, you should read those documents and the other documents relating to this offering that we have filed with the SEC for more complete information about us and this offering. You may obtain these documents without cost by visiting EDGAR on the SEC website at www.sec.gov. Alternatively, Royal Bank of Canada, any agent or any dealer participating in this offering will arrange to send you the product prospectus supplement FIN-1, the prospectus supplement and the prospectus if you so request by calling toll-free at 1-877-688-2301.

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Floating Rate Notes,
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HYPOTHETICAL EXAMPLES

The table below presents examples of the hypothetical interest which will accrue on the Notes with a principal amount of \$1,000. The examples below are for purposes of illustration only. The actual interest payments will depend on the Reference Rate on each interest determination date. The applicable interest rate for each interest period will be determined on a per-annum basis but will apply only to that interest period.

| Hypothetical Reference Rate | Hypothetical Interest Rate (per annum) | Hypothetical Quarterly Interest Payment |
|-----------------------------|--|---|
| 0.00% | 0.00% | \$0.00 |
| 0.50% | 0.50% | \$1.25 |
| 1.00% | 1.00% | \$2.50 |
| 1.50% | 1.50% | \$3.75 |
| 2.00% | 2.00% | \$5.00 |
| 2.80% | 2.80% | \$7.00 |
| 3.60% | 3.60% | \$9.00 |
| 4.40% | 4.40% | \$11.00 |
| 5.60% | 5.60% | \$14.00 |
| 6.40% | 6.40% | \$16.00 |
| 7.60% | 7.60% | \$19.00 |
| 8.00% | 8.00% | \$20.00 |
| 8.60% | 8.60% | \$22.00 |
| 9.20% | 9.20% | \$24.00 |

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ADDITIONAL RISK FACTORS

The Notes involve risks not associated with an investment in ordinary fixed rate notes. This section describes the most significant risks relating to the terms of the Notes. For additional information as to the risks related to an investment in the Notes, please see the accompanying product prospectus supplement, prospectus supplement and prospectus. You should carefully consider whether the Notes are suited to your particular circumstances before you decide to purchase them. Accordingly, prospective investors should consult their financial and legal advisors as to the risks entailed by an investment in the Notes and the suitability of the Notes in light of their particular circumstances.

Investors Are Subject to Our Credit Risk, and Our Credit Ratings and Credit Spreads May Adversely Affect the Market Value of the Notes. Investors are dependent on Royal Bank's ability to pay all amounts due on the Notes on interest payment dates and at maturity, and, therefore, investors are subject to the credit risk of Royal Bank and to changes in the market's view of Royal Bank's creditworthiness. Any decrease in Royal Bank's credit ratings or increase in the credit spreads charged by the market for taking Royal Bank's credit risk is likely to adversely affect the market value of the Notes.

The Initial Estimated Value of the Notes Will Be Less than the Price to the Public. The initial estimated value set forth on the cover page and that will be set forth in the final pricing supplement for the Notes does not represent a minimum price at which we, RBCCM or any of our affiliates would be willing to purchase the Notes in any secondary market (if any exists) at any time. If you attempt to sell the Notes prior to maturity, their market value may be lower than the price you paid for them and the initial estimated value. This is due to, among other things, changes in the level of the Reference Rate, the borrowing rate we pay to issue securities of this kind, and the inclusion in the price to the public of the underwriting discount and the estimated costs relating to our hedging of the Notes. These factors, together with various credit, market and economic factors over the term of the Notes, are expected to reduce the price at which you may be able to sell the Notes in any secondary market and will affect the value of the Notes in complex and unpredictable ways. Assuming no change in market conditions or any other relevant factors, the price, if any, at which you may be able to sell your Notes prior to maturity may be less than your original purchase price, as any such sale price would not be expected to include the underwriting discount and the hedging costs relating to the Notes. In addition to bid-ask spreads, the value of the Notes determined for any secondary market price is expected to be based on the secondary rate rather than the internal funding rate used to price the Notes and determine the initial estimated value. As a result, the secondary price will be less than if the internal funding rate was used. The Notes are not designed to be short-term trading instruments. Accordingly, you should be able and willing to hold your Notes to maturity.

The Initial Estimated Value of the Notes on the Cover Page and that We Will Provide in the Final Pricing Supplement Are Estimates Only, Calculated as of the Time the Terms of the Notes Are Set. The initial estimated value of the Notes will be based on the value of our obligation to make the payments on the Notes, together with the mid-market value of the derivative embedded in the terms of the Notes. See "Structuring the Notes" below. Our estimates are based on a variety of assumptions, including our credit spreads, expectations as to interest rates and volatility, and the expected term of the Notes. These assumptions are based on certain forecasts about future events, which may prove to be incorrect. Other entities may value the Notes or similar securities at a price that is significantly different than we do.

The value of the Notes at any time after the pricing date will vary based on many factors, including changes in market conditions, and cannot be predicted with accuracy. As a result, the actual value you would receive if you sold the Notes in any secondary market, if any, should be expected to differ materially from the initial estimated value of your Notes.

Recent Regulatory Investigations Regarding Potential Manipulation of CMS Rates May Adversely Affect Your Notes. It has been reported that certain U.S. and non-U.S. regulators are investigating potential manipulation of CMS rates

and other swap rates. If such manipulation occurred, it may have resulted in these rates, including CMS2 being artificially lower (or higher) than it or they would otherwise have been. Any changes or reforms affecting the determination or supervision of these rates in light of these investigations may result in a sudden or prolonged increase or decrease in

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these reported rates, which may have an adverse impact on the trading market for CMS-benchmarked securities, such as the Notes, the market value of your notes and the payments on your Notes.

Uncertainty About the Future of LIBOR and The Potential Discontinuance of LIBOR May Adversely Affect the Value of the Notes. The Reference Rate Is Based on Hypothetical Interest Rate Swaps Referencing 3-Month U.S. Dollar LIBOR. The Chief Executive of the United Kingdom Financial Conduct Authority (the “FCA”), which regulates LIBOR, has recently announced that the FCA intends to stop persuading or compelling banks to submit rates for the calculation of LIBOR after 2021. At this time, it is not possible to predict the effect of any such changes on 3-month U.S. dollar LIBOR and, therefore, CMS2. Uncertainty as to the nature of such potential changes or other reforms may adversely affect the payments on the Notes, and accordingly, the value of and the trading market for the Notes during their term. If CMS2 is discontinued, the Calculation Agent will have significant discretion in determining the interest payable on the Notes.

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HISTORICAL INFORMATION

Historically, the Reference Rate has experienced significant fluctuations. Any historical upward or downward trend in the level of the Reference Rate during any period shown below is not an indication that the interest payable on the Notes is more or less likely to increase or decrease at any time during the term of the Notes.

The Reference Rate was 2.778% on May 23, 2018. The graph below sets forth the historical performance of the Reference Rate from January 1, 2008 through May 23, 2018.

Source: Bloomberg L.P.

PAST PERFORMANCE IS NOT INDICATIVE OF FUTURE RESULTS

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SUPPLEMENTAL PLAN OF DISTRIBUTION (CONFLICTS OF INTEREST)

We expect that delivery of the Notes will be made against payment for the Notes on or about June 15, 2018, which is expected to be the second (2nd) business day following the Pricing Date (this settlement cycle being referred to as “T+2”). For additional information as to the relationship between us and RBCCM please see the section “Plan of Distribution—Conflicts of Interest” in the prospectus dated January 8, 2016.

After the initial offering of the Notes, the price to the public may change.

The value of the Notes shown on your account statement may be based on RBCCM’s estimate of the value of the Notes if RBCCM or another of our affiliates were to make a market in the Notes (which it is not obligated to do). That estimate will be based upon the price that RBCCM may pay for the Notes in light of then prevailing market conditions, our creditworthiness and transaction costs. For a period of up to approximately six months after the issue date of the Notes, the value of the Notes that may be shown on your account statement is expected to be higher than RBCCM’s estimated value of the Notes at that time. This is because the estimated value of the Notes will not include the underwriting discount and our hedging costs and profits; however, the value of the Notes shown on your account statement during that period is initially expected to be a higher amount, reflecting the addition of RBCCM’s underwriting discount and our estimated costs and profits from hedging the Notes. This excess is expected to decrease over time until the end of this period. After this period, if RBCCM repurchases your Notes, it expects to do so at prices that reflect their estimated value.

We may use this pricing supplement in the initial sale of the Notes. In addition, RBCCM or another of our affiliates may use this pricing supplement in a market-making transaction in the Notes after their initial sale. Unless we or our agent informs the purchaser otherwise in the confirmation of sale, this pricing supplement is being used in a market-making transaction.

No Prospectus (as defined in Directive 2003/71/EC (as amended, the “Prospectus Directive”)) will be prepared in connection with the Notes. Accordingly, the Notes may not be offered to the public in any member state of the European Economic Area (the “EEA”), and any purchaser of the Notes who subsequently sells any of the Notes in any EEA member state must do so only in accordance with the requirements of the Prospectus Directive, as implemented in that member state.

The Notes are not intended to be offered, sold or otherwise made available to, and should not be offered, sold or otherwise made available to, any retail investor in the EEA. For these purposes, the expression “offer” includes the communication in any form and by any means of sufficient information on the terms of the offer and the Notes to be offered so as to enable an investor to decide to purchase or subscribe the Notes, and a “retail investor” means a person who is one (or more) of: (a) a retail client, as defined in point (11) of Article 4(1) of Directive 2014/65/EU (as amended, “MiFID II”); or (b) a customer, within the meaning of Insurance Distribution Directive 2016/97/EU, as amended, where that customer would not qualify as a professional client as defined in point (10) of Article 4(1) of MiFID II; or (c) not a qualified investor as defined in the Prospectus Directive. Consequently, no key information document required by Regulation (EU) No 1286/2014 (as amended, the “PRIIPs Regulation”) for offering or selling the Notes or otherwise making them available to retail investors in the EEA has been prepared, and therefore, offering or selling the Notes or otherwise making them available to any retail investor in the EEA may be unlawful under the PRIIPs Regulation.

STRUCTURING THE NOTES

The Notes are our debt securities, the return on which is linked to the Reference Rate. As is the case for all of our debt securities, including our structured notes, the economic terms of the Notes reflect our actual or perceived creditworthiness at the time of pricing. In addition, because structured notes result in increased operational, funding and liability management costs to us, we typically borrow the funds under these Notes at a rate that is more favorable to us than the rate that we might pay for a conventional fixed or floating rate debt security of comparable maturity.

Using this relatively lower implied borrowing rate rather than the secondary market rate, is a factor that is likely to reduce the initial estimated value of the Notes at the time their terms are set. Unlike the estimated value included in this terms supplement or in the

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final pricing supplement, any value of the Notes determined for purposes of a secondary market transaction may be based on a different funding rate, which may result in a lower value for the Notes than if our initial internal funding rate were used.

In order to satisfy our payment obligations under the Notes, we may choose to enter into certain hedging arrangements (which may include call options, put options or other derivatives) on the issue date with RBCCM or one of our other subsidiaries. The terms of these hedging arrangements take into account a number of factors, including our creditworthiness, interest rate movements, the volatility of the Reference Rate, and the tenor of the Notes. The economic terms of the Notes and their initial estimated value depend in part on the terms of these hedging arrangements.

The lower implied borrowing rate is a factor that reduces the economic terms of the Notes to you. The initial offering price of the Notes also reflects the underwriting commission and our estimated hedging costs. These factors result in the initial estimated value for the Notes on the pricing date being less than their public offering price. See “Additional Risk Factors—The Initial Estimated Value of the Notes Will Be Less than the Price to the Public” above.

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