

# FORM 4

**UNITED STATES SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION  
Washington, D.C. 20549**

OMB APPROVAL	
OMB Number:	3235-0287
Estimated average burden hours per response...	0.5

Check this box if no longer subject to Section 16. Form 4 or Form 5 obligations may continue. See Instruction 1(b).

## STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN BENEFICIAL OWNERSHIP OF SECURITIES

Filed pursuant to Section 16(a) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 or Section 30(h) of the Investment Company Act of 1940

(Print or Type Responses)

1. Name and Address of Reporting Person <b>PAYAN DONALD G</b>			2. Issuer Name and Ticker or Trading Symbol <b>RIGEL PHARMACEUTICALS INC [RIGL]</b>			5. Relationship of Reporting Person(s) to Issuer (Check all applicable) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Director <input type="checkbox"/> 10% Owner <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Officer (give title below) <input type="checkbox"/> Other (specify below) <b>EVP, Pres. Discovery&amp;Research</b>		
(Last)	(First)	(Middle)	3. Date of Earliest Transaction (Month/Day/Year) <b>01/02/2009</b>					
RIGEL PHARMACEUTICALS, INC, ,, 1180 VETERANS BLVD.								
(Street)			4. If Amendment, Date Original Filed(Month/Day/Year)			6. Individual or Joint/Group Filing(Check Applicable Line) <input type="checkbox"/> Form filed by One Reporting Person <input type="checkbox"/> Form filed by More than One Reporting Person		
SOUTH SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94080								
(City) (State) (Zip)			<b>Table I - Non-Derivative Securities Acquired, Disposed of, or Beneficially Owned</b>					

1. Title of Security (Instr. 3)	2. Transaction Date (Month/Day/Year)	2A. Deemed Execution Date, if any (Month/Day/Year)	3. Transaction Code (Instr. 8)		4. Securities Acquired (A) or Disposed of (D) (Instr. 3, 4 and 5)			5. Amount of Securities Beneficially Owned Following Reported Transaction(s) (Instr. 3 and 4)	6. Ownership Form: Direct (D) or Indirect (I) (Instr. 4)	7. Nature of Indirect Beneficial Ownership (Instr. 4)
			Code	V	Amount	(A) or (D)	Price			
Common Stock	01/02/2009		M		3,334	A	\$ 1.8	118,334	D (1)	

Reminder: Report on a separate line for each class of securities beneficially owned directly or indirectly.

Persons who respond to the collection of information contained in this form are not required to respond unless the form displays a currently valid OMB control number. SEC 1474 (9-02)

**Table II - Derivative Securities Acquired, Disposed of, or Beneficially Owned (e.g., puts, calls, warrants, options, convertible securities)**

1. Title of Derivative Security (Instr. 3)	2. Conversion or Exercise Price of Derivative Security	3. Transaction Date (Month/Day/Year)	3A. Deemed Execution Date, if any (Month/Day/Year)	4. Transaction Code (Instr. 8)	5. Number of Derivative Securities Acquired (A) or Disposed of (D) (Instr. 3, 4, and 5)	6. Date Exercisable and Expiration Date (Month/Day/Year)		7. Title and Amount of Underlying Securities (Instr. 3 and 4)		8. Price of Derivative Security (Instr. 5)	9. Number of Derivative Securities Beneficially Owned Following Reported Transaction(s) (Instr. 4)	10. Ownership Form of Derivative Security: Direct (D) or Indirect (I) (Instr. 4)	11. Nature of Indirect Beneficial Ownership (Instr. 4)
						Date Exercisable	Expiration Date	Title	Amount or Number of Shares				
Stock Option (Right to Buy)	\$ 1.8	01/02/2009		M(2)	3,334	(3)	02/12/2009	Common Stock	3,334	\$ 0	0	D	

## Reporting Owners

Reporting Owner Name / Address	Relationships			
	Director	10% Owner	Officer	Other
PAYAN DONALD G RIGEL PHARMACEUTICALS, INC, , 1180 VETERANS BLVD. SOUTH SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94080	X		EVP, Pres. Discovery&Research	

## Signatures

/s/Dolly Vance (Attorney-in-Fact)	01/06/2009
Signature of Reporting Person	Date

## Explanation of Responses:

\* If the form is filed by more than one reporting person, *see* Instruction 4(b)(v).

\*\* Intentional misstatements or omissions of facts constitute Federal Criminal Violations. *See* 18 U.S.C. 1001 and 15 U.S.C. 78ff(a).

- (1) The shares exercised by the reporting person were issued in reporting person's name but were deposited into his joint tenancy account.
- (2) The option was exercised at this time due to the impending expiration of the option grant.
- (3) Fully vested.

Note: File three copies of this Form, one of which must be manually signed. If space is insufficient, *see* Instruction 6 for procedure.

Potential persons who are to respond to the collection of information contained in this form are not required to respond unless the form displays a currently valid OMB number.