Fall 2020

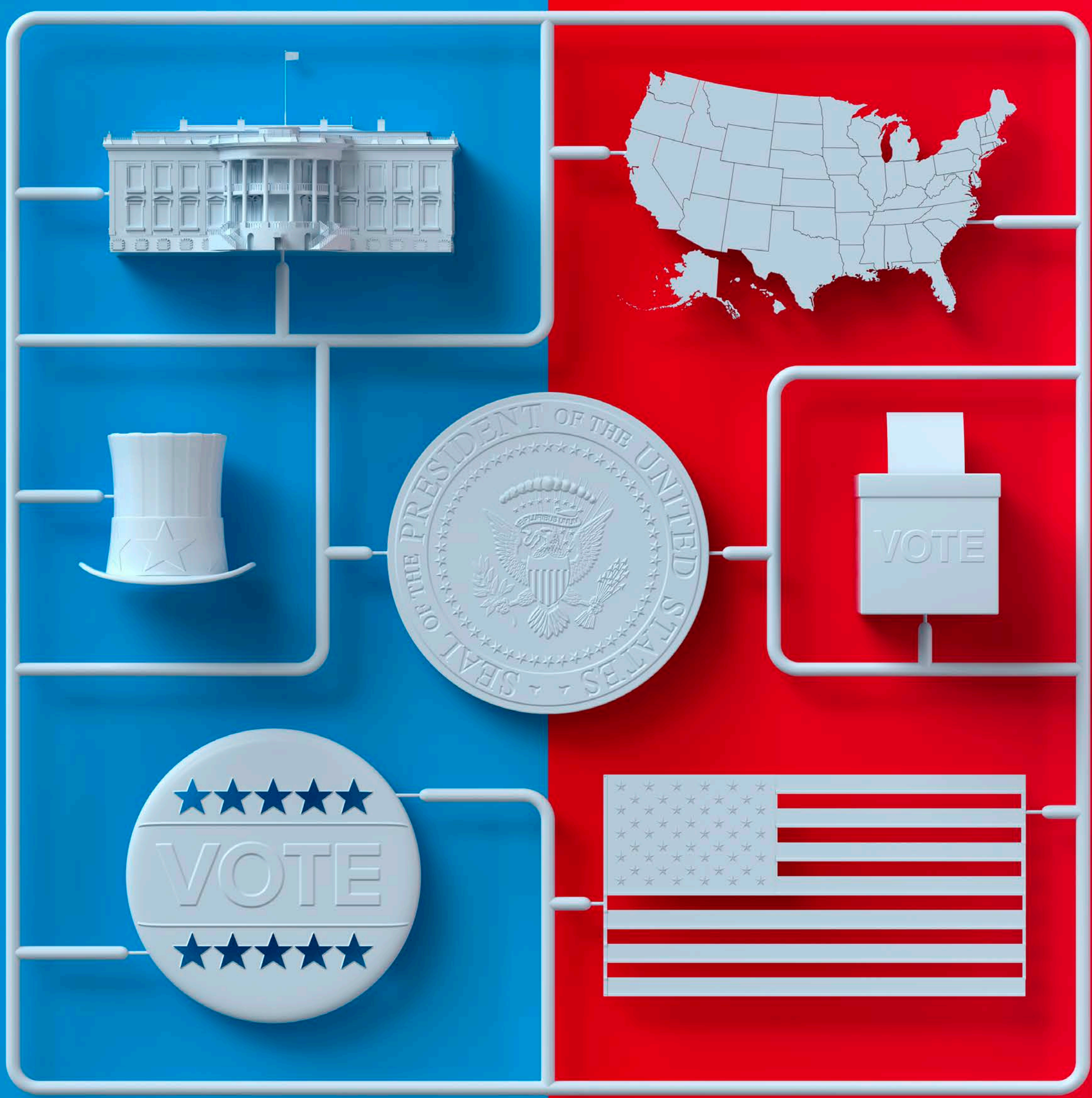
Insights

BUILDING AND PRESERVING YOUR WEALTH

REGIONS PRIVATE WEALTH MANAGEMENT

The 2020 Election: The Issues and Your Wealth

Our experienced professionals discuss how all the pieces might come together.



Insights for Uncertain Times

We can all agree that 2020 has been a challenging year. Together we are weathering the storm of the coronavirus pandemic, adapting to swift economic changes, advocating for racial justice and preparing for a presidential election. Undoubtedly, these events have caused concern, but they also present a moment to seize new opportunities. Our goal for this issue of *Insights* is to provide an analysis of the topics that matter most to you right now.

"The Candidates, the Issues and Your Wealth" (page 6) discusses what the 2020 presidential election might mean for U.S. policies and your portfolio. "Persisting in Turbulent Markets" (page 1) provides additional guidance on preparing your portfolio for the rest of 2020's uncertainties. And with ongoing protests calling for racial justice, "Why Every Company Needs to Invest in Diversity and Inclusion" (page 12) focuses on racial equity in the workplace.

We are also deeply invested in the success of our clients during this pandemic. "The Show Must Go On" (page 13) provides an inside look into how the Paycheck Protection Program helped a country music business. And smart tips for boosting productivity while working remotely are available in "Managing and Leading from a Distance" (page 10).

We hope you find this issue of *Insights* helpful. We are committed to helping you effectively manage your wealth and work toward your goals.

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COVER: OLIVER BURSTON/THEISPOT

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Persisting in Turbulent Markets

How to plan your investments in the midst of volatility.

Since they were established, stock markets have made it through every crisis the world has known. There are up days and down days, but the markets keep chugging along. So while stocks have been particularly turbulent this year, keep your eye on the eventual recovery and stabilization.

"While we're in unprecedented times and facing a lot of short-term risks because of volatility, we're eternally optimistic about the U.S. stock market," says Josh Fendley, Portfolio Manager for Regions Bank in Little Rock, Arkansas. "We base that optimism on empirical data and deep knowledge of the markets. We believe, by sufficiently managing risks and liquidity, investors can be rewarded in the future." Here is how we suggest holding onto a positive outlook.

Avoid Rash Moves

We have a human tendency, as uncertainty increases, to become more certain of our own opinions. Yet making big financial decisions when there is so much volatility often leaves investors with lost returns in the long run. They might sell at a low point and miss out on a recovery, for example. "Humans have the tendency to overweigh the likelihood of high-impact-but-low-probability events," Fendley says. "Confirmation bias starts to build up."

In the midst of uncertainty, portfolio managers at Regions put emotions aside and focus on data. Our investment portfolios are designed for the long term, with a focus on your timeline, your goals and everything we know about the financial markets. While individual crises come and go, our plan is always aimed squarely at achieving your long-term goals.

Discuss Your Options

Double-checking your liquid assets might be a good place to start a portfolio review with your advisor. Do you have enough to weather additional tumult? "We've been having planning meetings with our clients to identify their cash flow needs for the next 18 to 24 months," Fendley says. "If something unforeseen happens, we don't have to make trades when we don't want or need to."

Remember as well that there is often the silver lining of inexpensive stock when markets are down. "As there's more uncertainty, there's going to be more volatility. That means opportunity too," Fendley says.

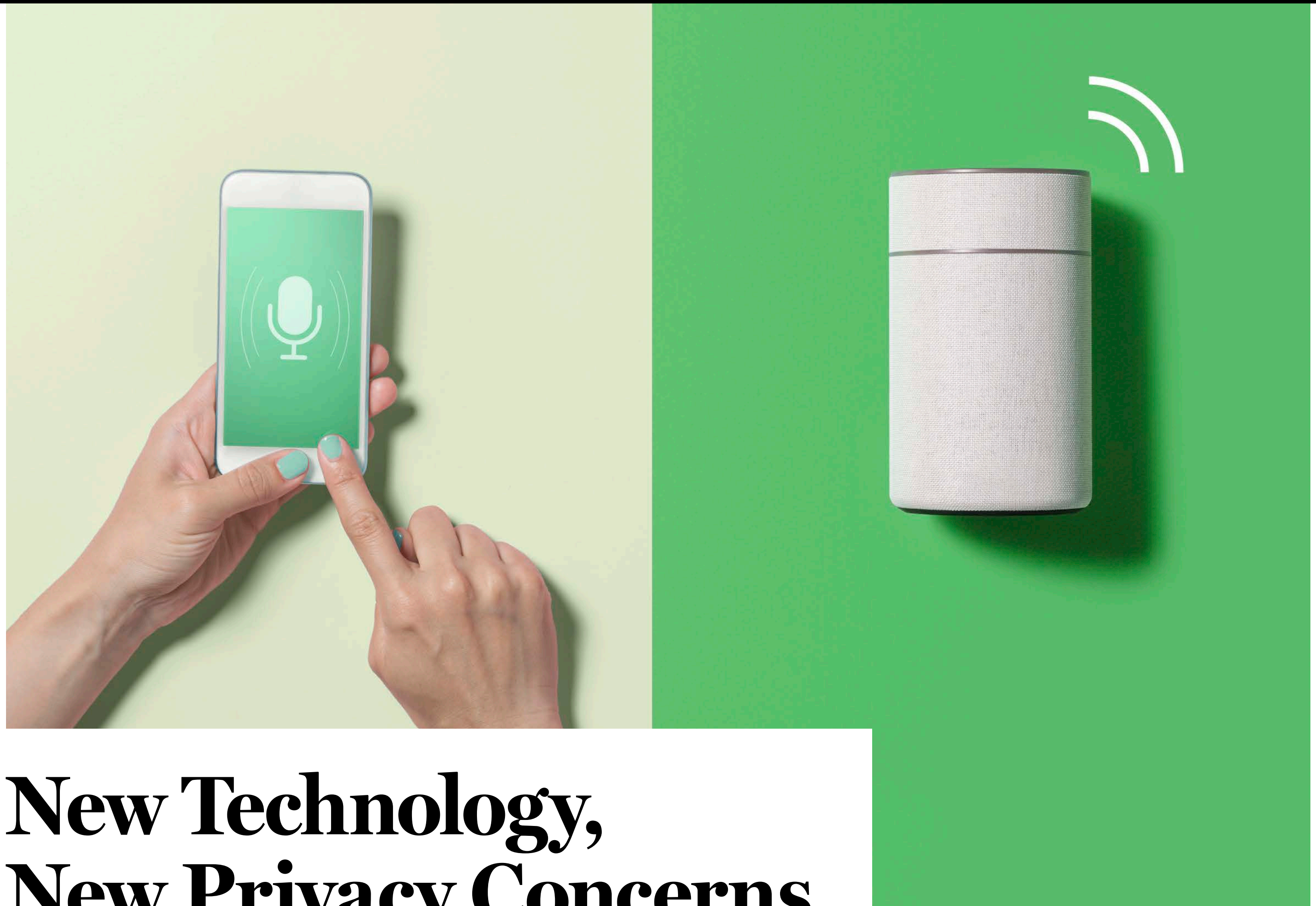
Get a Stress Test

Each of our client portfolios is run through computer simulations to measure its resilience against possible future financial situations. The simulations determine the probability of success, based on your goals and time frames.

"We revisit this simulated probability in good times and bad, and that is the driver behind whether anything needs to be changed," Fendley says.

If your portfolio hasn't been evaluated yet, contact your portfolio manager to schedule a consultation. ▲

MORE ONLINE See additional insights at **regions.com/wealthinsights**



New Technology, New Privacy Concerns

How your smart devices might be endangering your data.

Smart devices and virtual assistants are everywhere now, not just in phones and stand-alone speakers, but also integrated into televisions, home security systems, thermostats, cars and even appliances. Access to instant assistance comes with a privacy trade-off that isn't always transparent.

To respond to voice commands, devices must constantly listen to and record your requests. Over time, your queries build up a picture of your lifestyle and interests. That consumer data can be used to market products and services to you, or it can be sold to other companies that want access to your information.

"The rapid adoption and dependence on smart devices without a full understanding of future implications creates risk," says Cecil Williams, Chief Privacy Officer at Regions Bank. "Consumers are giving up personal information in return for convenience or a lower cost of services."

Security Concerns

"The terms of any specific privacy policy may allow companies to sell information to third parties, which means consumers may not really know where it goes," says Chase Baker, Enterprise Privacy Compliance Manager at Regions Bank. "It can be sold to a company the consumer knows nothing about, including their intentions."

As with any technology, there are going to be security vulnerabilities, and you're going to have people who try to exploit that information. A thermostat that understands when you're not home, for example, contains data that could be exploited.

When you use such devices and services, you're often consenting to data collection in an end-user agreement that typically is anything but transparent. "The disclosures can be confusing and quite lengthy. And there's a lack of clarity about the data that's being collected and how it's being used," Williams says.

Making Informed Decisions

So how do you determine what smart devices you're comfortable with? Williams recommends looking out for agreements that suggest the devices are collecting more data than they need. For example, if your thermostat has a microphone but doesn't respond to voice commands, what audio information is it collecting and for what purpose?

In the end, it's a trade-off, Williams says. "It's making an independent decision about the company that you're doing business with," and your level of confidence in what it will do with your data. ▲

YAGI STUDIO/GETTY IMAGES

Planning for Health Care in Retirement

Careful planning is essential if you want to enjoy your sunset years without undue stress and uncertainty, especially when it comes to health care. Here are a few quick tips to start planning.

Take Stock

Understanding what your financial life will look like in retirement will help you decide what funds you can allot to health care needs. Ask a lot of questions about yourself, says Aimee Chester, Senior Wealth Advisor for Regions Private Wealth Management in Houston: "Are you married?" "Do you have kids who will need your financial support?" "Will you downsize?"

Medicare Has Limits

Chester says to use caution when factoring in Medicare: "Most folks to some degree are going to rely on Medicare, but it's not going to cover everything." Prescription medications may require additional out-of-pocket payments, or you might need to add coverage for specific health care needs. "Also, expenses such as home care and home modifications are not covered."

Plan for Long-Term Care

The cost of long-term care insurance policies can seem daunting. "But there are smart ways to manage those costs," Chester says. You can take out partial care policies or set shorter benefit periods, both of which reduce the initial costs.

Get Advice, Regularly

Managing your finances throughout retirement is a complex process that often requires financial flexibility to meet changing circumstances. "Have tough conversations regularly with your advisors," Chester says. ▲

JUSTIN PAGET/GETTY IMAGES

ESTATE PLANNING

Should You Freeze Your Estate?

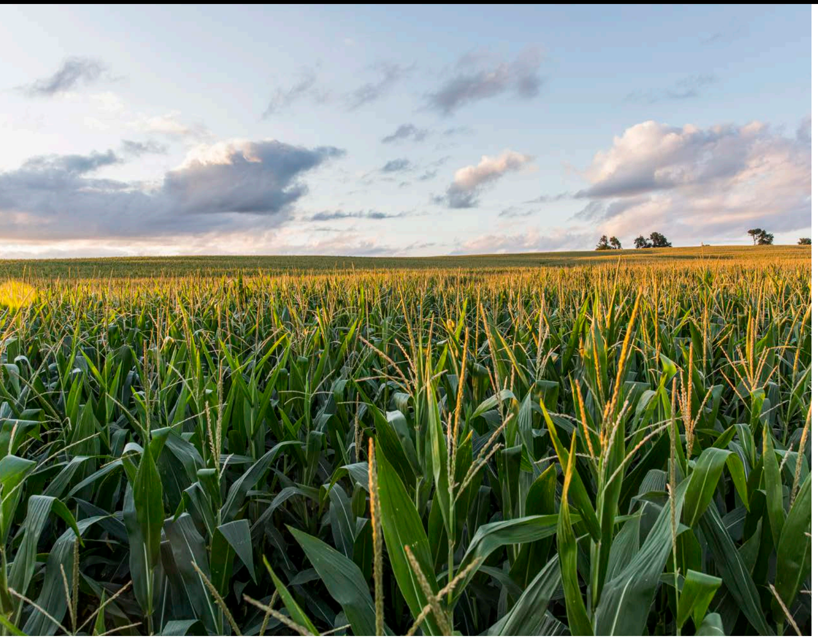
During periods of economic downturn, families with estate tax concerns may benefit from an estate freeze.

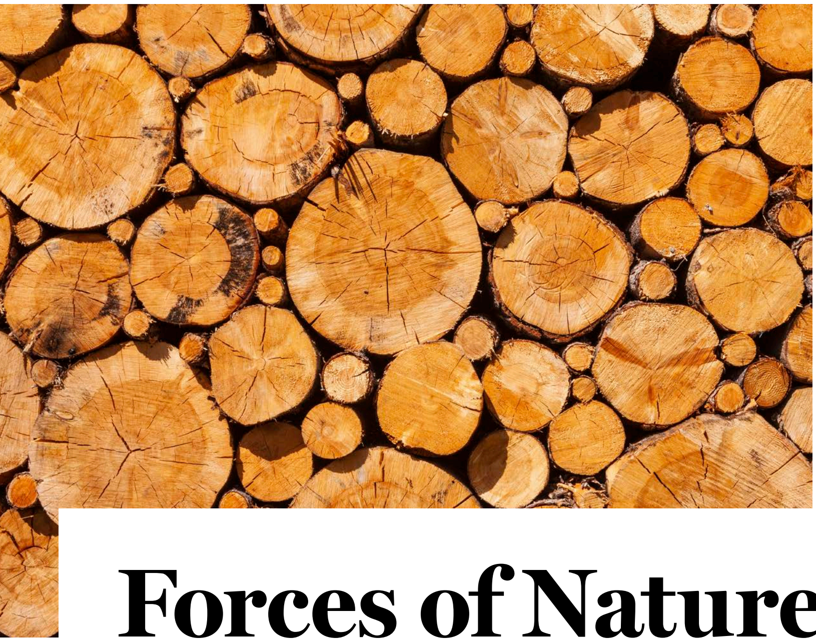
What is it? An estate freeze is a broad term for a group of different planning strategies built around a common goal: maintaining potential estate tax exposure at current levels. While the result of an estate freeze may include the transfer of assets, the primary focus is often to shift future appreciation to the next generation. "If structured properly, estate freezes can be accomplished with minimal or no gift tax implications or immediate income tax consequences," says Jeffrey H. Winick, Senior Wealth Strategist for Regions Bank in Birmingham, Alabama.

Who benefits? Estate freezes can benefit families with ongoing estate tax concerns. They are best suited for those who have attained a level of wealth projected to meet current and future financial goals without the need for additional financial resources. Estate freeze techniques are most effective when implemented during times of low interest rates ahead of anticipated asset appreciation. "Because there is currently both depressed values and low interest rates, there could not be a better time for families to consider using an estate freeze to reduce their estate tax exposure and pass on asset growth to future generations," Winick says.

Added complexity. Estate freezes may not be for everyone, for instance, individuals or couples who are still in a wealth accumulation phase or focused on goals other than wealth preservation. "One downside to an estate freeze can be the added layers put in place around an individual's or couple's assets," Winick says. "There can be restrictions or loss of flexibility during the estate freeze process that may not appeal to some people."

Speak with your Regions Wealth Advisor if you believe an estate freeze might be the right move for you and your family. ▲





Forces of Nature

As investments, timberland, farmland and minerals are unusual, but that's what makes them great options for a balanced portfolio.

Consider, side by side, two potential investments: a stock listed on the U.S. stock market and, of all things, a tree. There are some similarities, but some big differences, too. As assets, both the equities and timber markets can provide solid returns. Yet stocks can be unpredictable, while a tree is always growing and gaining value, even if the price of timber fluctuates in times of economic turmoil. This somewhat independent correlation can make equities and timber ideal partners in an investor's portfolio.

It's all about the diversification, says Frank Walburn, Head of Regions' Natural Resources & Real Estate group, which works with investors seeking to buy, manage and sell "hard assets" such as those in timber, farmland and minerals.

Natural Diversification

Investments in timber, farmland and minerals move at a slow and stable rate, so owning these alternative hard assets offers some portfolio balance, though Walburn acknowledges that if the stock market were to crash, the value of many natural resources may fall as well. Each type of investment has its own nuances when it comes to diversification.

TIMBERLAND. While financial-markets investors may confront higher interest rates, trees just need some sun and rain, and a lot of their growth will be predictable. "If we are patient with our hard assets, and time our sales to hit the markets in the strong cycles when we can, biologic tree growth may create independence from financial markets," Walburn says.

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: DAVID PAPAZIAN/GETTY IMAGES, VOSTOK/GETTY IMAGES, MICHAEL MILNER/GETTY IMAGES, JEKATERINA NIKITINA/GETTY IMAGES

FARMLAND. Agricultural land is also less dependent on markets. The amount of acreage for sale can be scarce, so values are likely to grow irrespective of the financial markets, as long as farms are properly maintained. There continues to be strong demand from farmers to rent land, and investors who are not farmers seek land to diversify their portfolios with a more steady income.

MINERALS. Minerals, particularly oil and gas, have shown a greater correlation to financial markets. "When oil is $25 a barrel, the folks with oil wells are making half of what they made when it was $50 a barrel. It's really that simple, and that's not negatively correlated at all," Walburn says. In some situations, the Natural Resources & Real Estate group has the ability to withhold development when prices are low and turn it up when prices are high, offering additional independence.

Hands-On Investment Management

Investors in timber, farmland and minerals can work with Regions' Natural Resources & Real Estate group in a number of ways. Once an investor purchases a natural-resource asset, the group often manages it via a fiduciary relationship, such as a trust. Its specialists may also act as advisors and agents, performing many of the same functions, Walburn notes. The group employs 42 professional property managers, including registered foresters, geologists, oil and gas professionals, farm managers and real-estate professionals.

"Proven managers matter," Walburn says, and the group's professional property managers have a wide set of responsibilities that demand asset-specific experience. Take agriculture, he says. "Let's say someone in Nashville inherits a farm in Mississippi, loves the idea of the farm, but has no intention of moving down there. We would find qualified lessee farmers and monitor their activities. We'd also negotiate the rental rates, take advantage of USDA crop and conservation programs to improve the land and income, distribute the income properly from those activities and make sure the property was insured, from a liability standpoint. That's kind of a typical relationship for us."

> *"If we are patient with our hard assets, and time our sales to hit the markets in the strong cycles when we can, biologic tree growth may create independence from financial markets."*
>
> –Frank Walburn, Head of Natural Resources & Real Estate Group, Regions Bank

In contrast to farmland, timber is usually managed directly. "We protect the forests and marry the forests' growth attributes to the economics to try to produce the maximum return. And then we lease the hunting rights for income."

Walburn's Natural Resources & Real Estate group plays a similar role with portfolio investments in minerals such as coal, hard-rock substances, oil and gas. Whether managing the whole process or acting as an observer of another operator, the group actively engages in leasing the mineral rights. The group is knowledgeable about mineral extraction and environmental compliance. It can receive the income and distribute it properly, among other various tasks.

Investment Funds

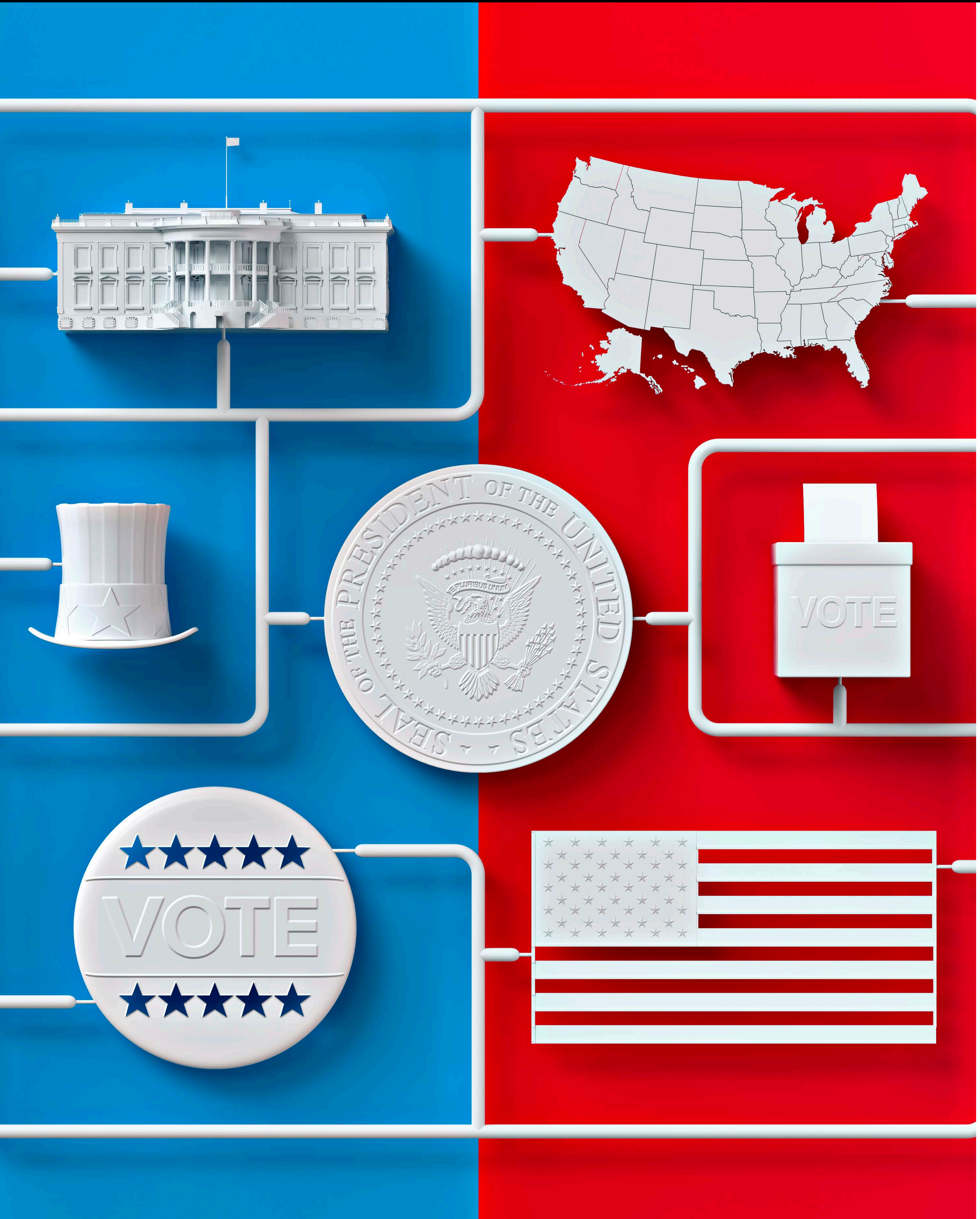
Once every few years, the Regions Natural Resources & Real Estate group advises accredited investors on a different way into the hard-asset space, through the occasional timber investment fund, although there may be no investment product currently available. The funds, which own timber in multiple locations to reduce natural-hazard risk, can "produce single-digit returns, throw off cash and give investors a lot of comfort in these scary times," Walburn says.

But the funds won't buy just any tree, he cautions. "In the timber investment model, we walk away when the details aren't right for us."

Talk to your Regions Wealth Advisor if you want to learn more about the Natural Resources & Real Estate group or integrating hard assets into your portfolio. ▲

Talk to your Regions Wealth Advisor about:

- Whether your investment portfolio could use additional diversification to better weather volatile markets
- How timberland, farmland and mineral investments might fit into your overall financial plan
- Strategies for managing hard assets



OLIVER BURSTON/THEISPOT

The Candidates, the Issues and Your Wealth

Here's how the election could influence your taxes, portfolio and finances.

Presidential elections don't just tell us which way the political winds may blow for the next four years. They also have an important impact on the economy and markets, and as such are an important time for investors to take stock of their portfolios, their tax situation and their personal finances.

First and most immediately, elections often cause short-term market turmoil, especially when—as in 2020—the race is bitter and divisive and the outcome is difficult to predict, says Bryan Koepp, Wealth Planning Executive for Regions Private Wealth Management. "Markets like certainty. When you have uncertainty, that results in volatility."

A Year of Turmoil

This election is taking place amid an historic and ongoing coronavirus pandemic, and the unrest only deepens those political uncertainties, says Elizabeth Taylor, Head of Governmental Affairs for Regions Bank. If virus cases are spiking in certain cities or states in November, "Are voters going to feel comfortable going to the polls?" she asks. On the other hand, will a rise in mail-in ballots lead to charges of fraud by whichever party loses?

Beyond the potential for short-term volatility and civil unrest, elections also hold the potential for sweeping policy changes. "The president has the ability to appoint Cabinet members, change the makeup of the various federal agencies and influence the direction of rules and regulations that come out of those agencies," Taylor says.

All of which means that now is a good time to think carefully about the issues at stake, and think about what, if any, steps may be needed to prepare for November.

The Supreme Court

"We have a split court right now, with four justices on each side tending to vote together and Chief Justice John Roberts often serving as the deciding vote," Taylor says. "You have aging justices who could leave the court at any time, and the next president could appoint one, two or even three new justices." Given the variety of cases the Supreme Court reviews that affect anything from health care to employment law to regulation, a decisive shift in the balance either way could have long-term impacts on the economy, she adds.

> *"It may be a challenge to offer targeted tax cuts as a way to stimulate the economy, considering the national debt and the amount the government has spent since the pandemic started."*
>
> –Bryan Koepp, Wealth Planning Executive, Regions Private Wealth Management

Possibilities for Bipartisanship

While Republicans and Democrats today seem more divided and contentious than perhaps ever before, there remains the possibility that both sides can come together on key issues. The massive coronavirus stimulus bills, passed swiftly as the pandemic broke out, offer one good example. Koepp points to another: Opportunity Zones, designations created under the 2017 tax law, which was passed by a Republican-controlled Senate and Democrat-controlled House, to extend both potential tax deferral and the opportunity for taxpayers to invest in economically distressed areas. "Ideas such as Opportunity Zones are extremely beneficial and may come from either party. Especially in years with a presidential election, we tend to focus on the 'horse race' and who won or lost versus policy and the prospect of bipartisanship."

Key Issues to Watch

Electoral candidates promise to solve nationwide problems with unique solutions, which will directly affect you and your finances. Here's what to look out for.

Health care. Whether it's Republican incumbent Donald Trump or Democratic challenger Joe Biden, a top priority for the next president will be to finally put an end to the coronavirus crisis. That, in turn, elevates the broader issue of health care coverage as a major election issue, says Elizabeth Taylor, Head of Governmental Affairs at Regions Bank.

A Biden presidency could mean a move toward single-payer health care coverage. That approach could gain public support in the current environment, Taylor adds. "With more people out of work due to the coronavirus, the current system based on employer-sponsored coverage might have less appeal."

It's less clear what health care reforms might take place under Republican control, Taylor says. The party could continue its efforts to repeal and replace health care reforms passed during the Obama presidency, or come up with something entirely new, she adds.

Economic recovery. The widespread unemployment and shuttering of businesses due to the pandemic is also top of mind. And though trillions of stimulus dollars have been spent helping individuals, families and businesses, the Democratic and Republican parties have different visions of how to support recovery, Taylor notes.

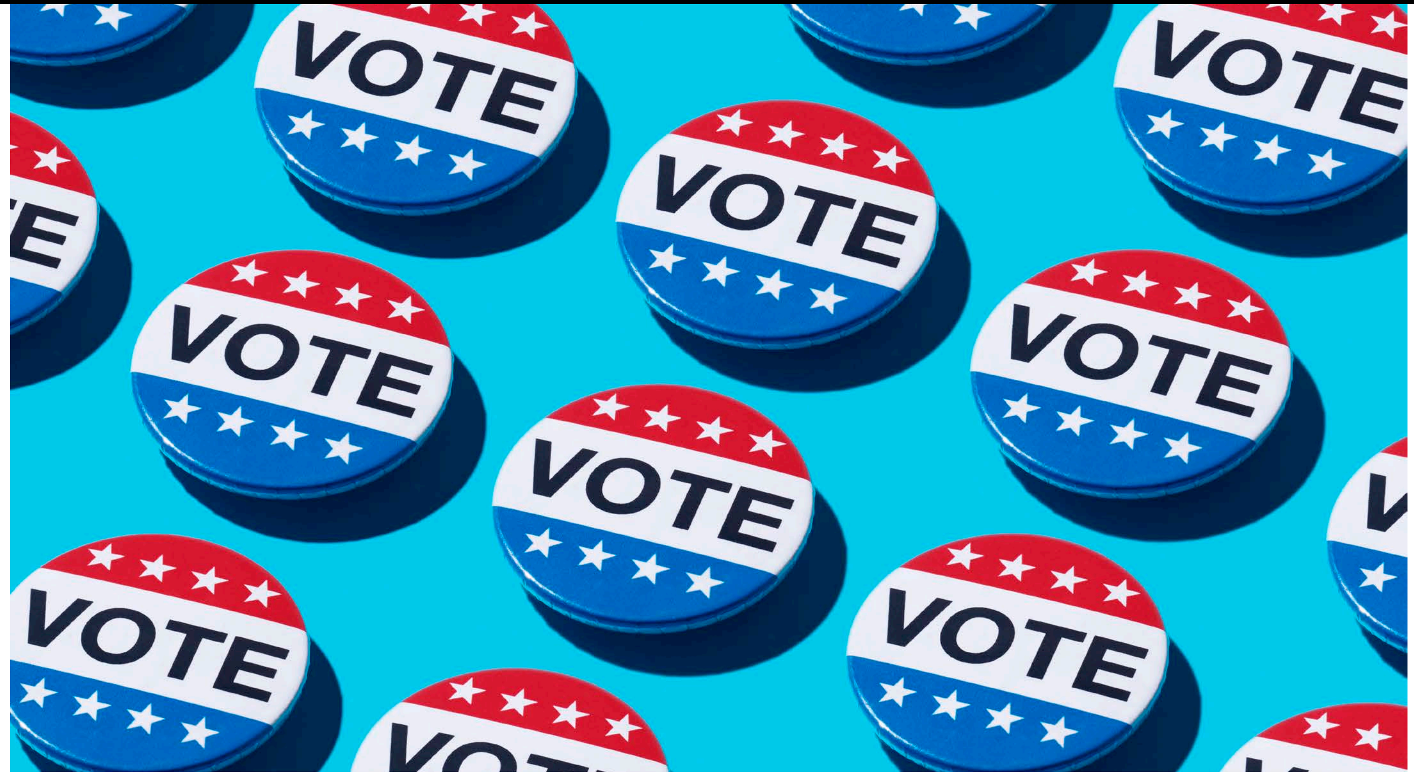
"Biden's platform includes increases in the minimum wage and greater support for college access for students," she says. Democrats would also likely impose greater environmental regulations on companies, including reinstating some regulations on coal and other industries that were rolled back under President Trump.

A second-term Trump administration would most likely "continue the rollback on regulations, making it easier for businesses to operate," Taylor adds. "Republicans believe it's harder for small businesses to compete in a complicated regulatory environment."

Taxes. With so much federal funding being spent to uphold and support the economy, the bigger question is: Who will ultimately pay the bill? That makes taxes a crucial consideration in 2020.

Trump slashed the corporate tax rate and expanded the standard deduction for individuals in his first term. However, Republicans may be less likely to implement cuts in the next term because of the national debt, says Bryan Koepp, Wealth Planning Executive for Regions Private Wealth Management. As an alternative, Republicans may emphasize deregulation.

A win by Democrats could mean a swift push to roll back or modify the 2017 tax cuts, especially if large corporations appear to be faring better coming out of the pandemic than smaller businesses and families, Taylor says. "Another possibility is a wealth tax, where those making over a certain amount would be subject to additional taxes." ▲



JUAN MOYANO/STOCKSY

Prepare Your Portfolio

Since it's impossible to predict the outcome of an election before it happens, buying or selling assets to capitalize on political changes that haven't happened yet could backfire, Koepp warns—much the same as trying to "time" investment markets. "Making decisions based on speculation may go against your ultimate goals and objectives," he says.

If anything, keep in mind that you have time to make decisions, Taylor suggests. Staying diversified can help protect your portfolio from the worst effects of short-term volatility—whether related to the election, the coronavirus or any other cause. "And while the election will happen in November, newly elected officials don't take office until January, so you have some time before we see any new legislation that could impact the economy," she says.

Use that time to "control what you can control," Koepp advises. "Identify what's most important to you financially. Write those things down, execute your plan and then build flexibility into your strategy." If the political tensions of the moment are making you anxious, a conversation with your Regions Wealth Advisor can help you separate facts from fear, Koepp says.

Assess Your Tax Situation

Now is also a good time to review your taxes. If tax increases appear likely, you may want to consider options such as tax-advantaged municipal bonds, Taylor says. But with some states and localities experiencing deeper drops in revenue than others during the pandemic, it's important to assess each opportunity carefully, she adds.

In addition to the potential for changes in the federal income tax code, the currently high estate and gift tax exemptions ($11.58 million for individuals and $23.16 million for couples in 2020) are set to revert at the end of 2025 to $5 million for individuals and $10 million for couples (adjusted annually for inflation). The party that wins the election could have much to say about whether that reversion occurs, or what other estate and gift tax changes could be in store.

The idea isn't to make wholesale changes to your asset allocation in anticipation of legislation, Koepp adds, but to maintain flexibility to ensure that your wealth is situated as tax efficiently as possible. This includes income taxes, investment taxes (capital gain and loss) and gift and estate taxes.

Take a Long Look

While it's important to stay atop the key issues and anticipate the impact they may have on your financial decisions, it's equally important to maintain perspective, Koepp advises.

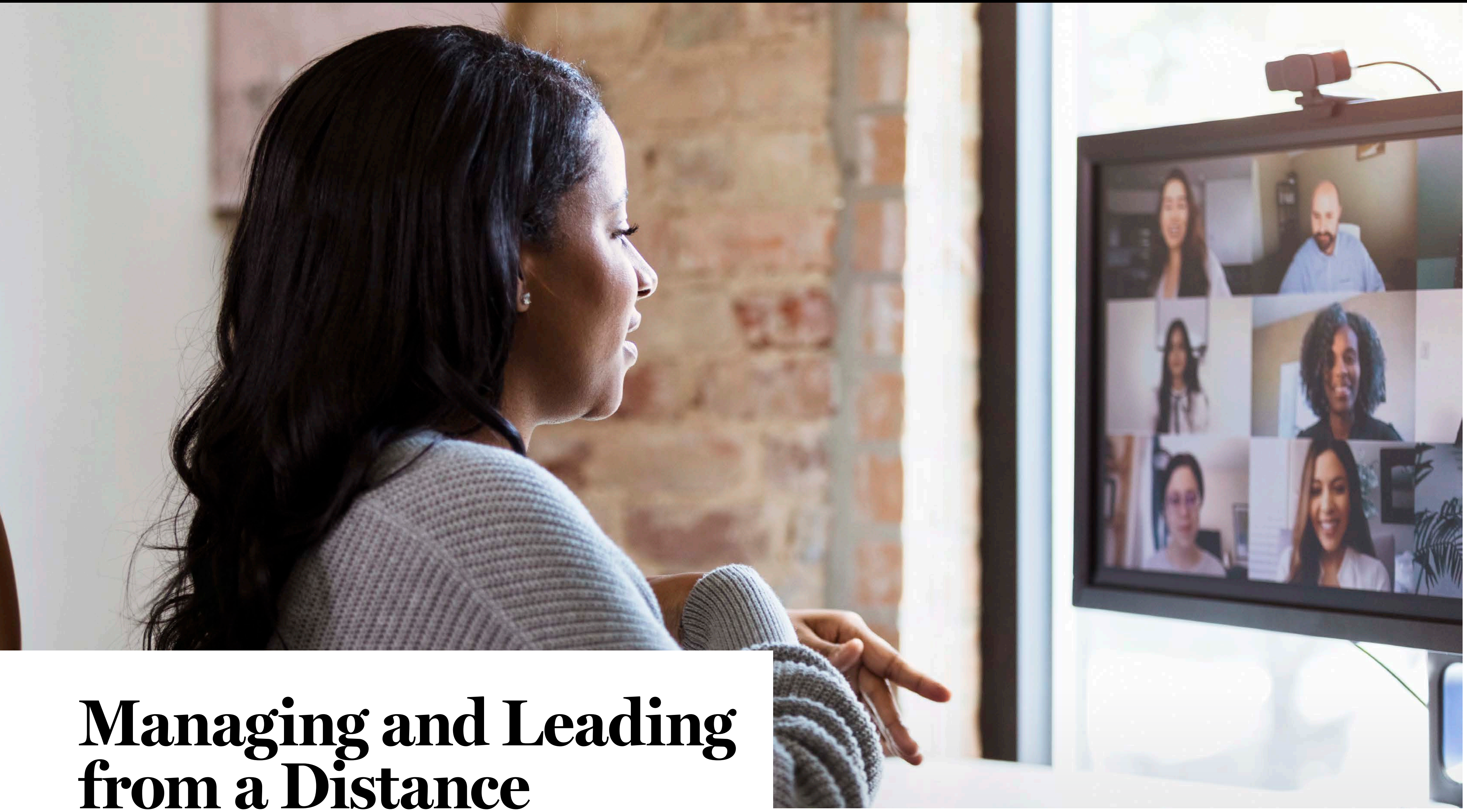
"That's where a great conversation with your financial advisor, your CPA and your attorney comes into play," he says. "They can really help you fill out that puzzle and give you the best chance to be successful."

Keep in mind that while the challenges facing the country feel immediate and new, our resilience as a country, and as individuals, has been demonstrated through many tough times. "We've lived in eras of high taxation and low taxation, through volatile markets and quiet ones," Koepp adds. "We've lived through war and peace. And we're going to make it through the challenges ahead—no matter what the results of the election may be." ▲

Talk to your Regions Wealth Advisor about:

- How you might hedge your financial assets against any changes in tax policy
- Whether municipal bonds could help you achieve financial security
- What additional strategies you can implement to further diversify your portfolio

Your Business



Managing and Leading from a Distance

Leading employees from afar has become the new norm, but doing so effectively requires more than just an email.

How and where many of us work are two of the most obvious areas impacted by the coronavirus pandemic. Many of us have traded our daily commutes to an office for work hours spent at the kitchen table or in a guest bedroom. Yet, while our surroundings may differ at home, our deadlines and deliverables remain the same and, in some cases, have become even more demanding.

On top of that, working from home presents its own unique set of challenges for employees such as juggling child care, managing household tasks and maintaining a quality internet connection. Managers and executives are responsible for ensuring that their teams remain focused and productive outside of the office and must find ways to coach and encourage their teams in the absence of daily in-person contact.

Shannon Knabb, Senior Vice President of Learning and Development at Regions Bank, has had to navigate these leadership challenges. But to Knabb, the fundamentals of good leadership and management remain the same, even though she has adapted how she communicates and interacts with her team from in-person conversations to instant messages, video conferences, emails and phone calls.

KNOW YOUR ASSOCIATES

Knabb strongly believes that the foundation of any leader's success is a firm knowledge of the talents and strengths of his or her colleagues. "Knowing each individual's talents and strengths allows for a leader to build a team culture that really is about collaboration, partnership and inclusivity," she says. "This knowledge helps leaders better partner people together to be more successful."

However, the tools required for those partnerships to flourish change in a remote work environment. Leaders must identify the right people to work on specific projects, establish goals and then allow employees to determine how to execute while providing support along the way. "If we have a task or project, I can create that virtual collaboration and establish expectations," she says. "Then the team collaborates on how to best complete the task based on their strengths, personal cadence and preferred means of communication."

Having a deep understanding of the skills and talents of your employees isn't enough in the world of remote work. Because the lines of home and work life have been blurred, leaders must also understand the unique life situations their employees face and use that as a gauge to schedule individual and group meetings. For example, Knabb holds 30-minute team meetings every Monday and Friday as well as a weekly virtual lunch or happy hour. "Right now, you have single people who are at home with little or no human interaction except for what they're getting virtually, and people at home with little ones who need grown-up interactions," she says. "It's being mindful as a leader of what those needs are and then addressing them."

> *"It's important to always make sure that we are setting and adjusting clear expectations and performance goals."*
>
> –Shannon Knabb, Senior Vice President, Learning and Development, Regions Bank

SET EXPECTATIONS

Though communicating expectations and providing ongoing coaching and performance feedback have always been important priorities for leaders, they are even more critical in a remote work environment. If anything, leaders and managers need to revisit expectations and progress more frequently than ever. "As we've moved into this new normal, have our goals changed? It's important to always make sure that we are setting and adjusting those clear expectations and performance goals," says Knabb.

A major reason these expectations and goals are so important is that employees everywhere may be struggling with their own health and well-being during what is obviously a stressful time. Being cognizant of that human element and its potential impact on performance is an aspect of good leadership. "Are we recognizing if there's burnout? Are we recognizing what stress looks like, and as leaders, making sure we're not contributing to it?" Knabb asks. "We have to have accountability, but how we approach it may be different in this environment."

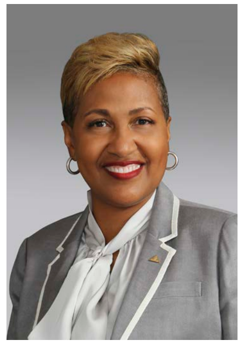
GIVE FEEDBACK REGULARLY

One way to ensure that expectations are clear and employee performance is on track is to commit to regular feedback conversations. Knabb looks at these check-ins as an opportunity to simultaneously revisit performance expectations and provide coaching. "These can be quick conversations to check in, find out what is working well, what is getting in the way and how I, as a leader, can help," she says.

Some managers dread conversations with employees who haven't met their performance goals. But those accountability discussions become much easier when they are frequent. "Accountability can sometimes be perceived as a difficult conversation or something bad," says Knabb. "When you're having ongoing conversations, accountability doesn't become a surprise because we are talking about it as we go."

PLAN FOR AN UNCERTAIN FUTURE

The unpredictable nature of COVID-19 makes it difficult to know what the new workplace norms will be. But whatever the environment, Knabb believes the same four key elements of leadership will remain effective. "Whether we are in person or remote, or some combination of the two, as a leader, I still need to set clear expectations, continually coach, hold associates accountable for performance, and foster an environment of inclusion and collaboration," she says. "If you're doing all four, your teams will work well in any environment." ▲



CLARA GREEN
Executive Vice President
Head of Diversity and Inclusion
Regions Bank

Why Every Company Needs to Invest in Diversity and Inclusion

It can boost morale, attract talent and even create new business.

With the economy upended due to the pandemic and protests calling for racial justice in all 50 states, it's clear that going back to "business as usual" may not be possible. Striving for racial equity in the workplace will be one of the most important goals that companies will tackle for years to come.

Clara Green, Executive Vice President and Head of Diversity and Inclusion at Regions Bank, lays out some strategies that businesses can implement to make diversity and inclusion (D&I) a part of their daily operations. "Regardless of the size of your organization, it has to be a priority," Green says. "The demographics are changing daily, so our workforce must change as well. Companies have to prepare, and assess if they are truly ready to engage and lead differently."

> "Inclusion is impactful for all organizations, and mid-to-small-sized companies can feel the impact more quickly."

INCLUSION BENEFITS YOUR BUSINESS

Investing in D&I is not only the right thing to do—it also has tremendous impact on a company's bottom line. "Data shows that teams that are diverse perform exponentially better than teams that aren't," says Green. "There is also a correlation with increased sales productivity, bottom line revenue and profit share."

A 2015 McKinsey report found that companies in the top quartile for ethnic and racial diversity in management were 35% more likely to have financial returns above their industry median. Those in the top quartile for gender diversity were 15% more likely to exceed their industry median. Green recommends the following to promote D&I within your organization.

BUILD INCLUSIVE TEAMS

Green advises that building an inclusion component into the culture strategy of your organization is a great way to begin your D&I journey. "Inclusion is impactful for all organizations, and mid-to-small-sized companies can feel the impact more quickly," says Green.

As a first step, use an inclusion calendar that identifies cultural, heritage and community observances that matter to your employees. Find ways to acknowledge and celebrate those observances.

ENGAGE YOUR ASSOCIATES

You likely have teams of associates that are eager to help with your efforts. "Eight months ago, we launched our first round of D&I networks across Regions," says Green. "It's amazing how quickly they have impacted associate morale and engagement."

As the social unrest was beginning earlier this year, Regions leveraged those networks to hold small group conversations about race and racial differences. "Groups such as these are also a great medium to share your D&I commitment and strategies across the organization," says Green.

MAKE DIVERSE HIRES

The best way a company can show its commitment to D&I is through its efforts to source, develop and retain diverse talent. Building a hiring strategy that is intentional about diversity is a smart first step, says Green. "Hiring managers must insist on having diverse representation on their hiring slates and panels."

Keep in mind that there's a war for talent, says Green. "Today's talent wants to see themselves reflected in your company and see that you are socially aware." Show them your intent and willingness to address the social issues that impact their lives. ▲

LEARN MORE at regions.com/about-regions/diversity-and-inclusion

The Show Must Go On

When the pandemic shut down the live music industry, this country music business in Nashville turned to Regions for guidance.

We're a country music business based in Nashville, Tennessee, with decades of experience in the industry and we have never seen anything like the coronavirus crisis. Pretty much every live event and concert has been canceled since mid-March. And it's not just your favorite recording artists, musicians and concert halls—any company that generates revenue tied to live performances has been affected. Equipment leasing companies, tour bus rental agencies, caterers and T-shirt manufacturers have all lost revenue.

As soon as we heard about the federal Paycheck Protection Program, we considered applying for a loan. With rent and staff salaries to pay, it sounded promising, but anyone taking out a loan is going to have questions, and we had a long list: Did we qualify? How much could we borrow? How long would it take to get approved, and how soon would we be able to get the funds? Were there constraints on how the money is used? And of course, what were the forgiveness rules and possible repayment obligations?

ANALOGUE ART PHOTOGRAPHY/GETTY IMAGES

With so much uncertainty, stress was high. We needed some guidance on where to start the process, so we turned to our Regions Private Wealth Management team, who were more than happy to pick up the phone and help. The music business is a unique industry, and our Regions Wealth Advisor has always impressed us with her innovative, can-do spirit when we look to her for guidance. This time was no different—she rose to the occasion for us yet again. She was available to address all of our questions and stayed in constant contact with us via phone and email throughout the process—right up until the day we submitted our Paycheck Protection Program application.

That focus paid off: We were one of the first clients approved in the first round of funding. The loan went through just one week after we applied, and the funds came in a week after that. So it was only 14 days total from filing to having the money deposited in our business account. And those funds made a world of difference, helping us keep our employees on the payroll and maintain our lease agreement. It kept us afloat during what has turned out to be an unprecedented crisis.

We know that the music industry is all about relationships built up over time. Some of our musicians and clients have been with us for decades, and even with the shutdown, we needed to be here for them from the moment they pick up the phone. During times of crisis, that kind of support is invaluable. ▲

TO READ MORE ONLINE go to regions.com/musicrow