Regent Financial Services

January 2018

Regent Financial Services
7134 South Yale Avenue
Suite 700
Tulsa, OK 74136
918-493-4190
www.RegentFS.com

January 2018

Key Retirement and Tax Numbers for 2018 *(page 2)*

What can I do to crack down on robocalls? *(page 3)*

How can I protect myself from digital deception? *(page 3)*

Recipe *(page 4)*

Event: Forecast 2018 *(page 5)*

How Much Risk Can You Take?

Many market shocks are short-lived once investors conclude the event is unlikely to cause lasting economic damage. Still, major market downturns such as the 2000 dot-com bust and the 2008-09 credit crisis are powerful reminders that we cannot control or predict exactly how, where, or when precarious situations will arise.

Market risk refers to the possibility that an investment will lose value because of a broad decline in the financial markets, which can be the result of economic or sociopolitical factors. Investors who are willing to accept more investment risk may benefit from higher returns in the good times, but they also get hit harder during the bad times. A more conservative portfolio generally means there are fewer highs, but also fewer lows.

Your portfolio's risk profile should reflect your ability to endure periods of market volatility, both financially and emotionally. Here are some questions that may help you evaluate your personal relationship with risk.

How much risk can you afford?

Your capacity for risk generally depends on your current financial position (income, assets, and expenses) as well as your age, health, future earning potential, and time horizon. Your time horizon is the length of time before you expect to tap your investment assets for specific financial goals. The more time you have to keep the money invested, the more likely it is that you can ride out the volatility associated with riskier investments. An aggressive risk profile may be appropriate if you're investing for a retirement that is many years away. However, investing for a teenager's upcoming college education may call for a conservative approach.

How much risk may be needed to meet your goals?

If you know how much money you have to invest and can estimate how much you will need in the future, then it's possible to calculate a "required return" (and a corresponding level of risk) for your investments. Older retirees who have sufficient income and assets to cover expenses for the rest of their lives may not need to expose their savings to risk. On the other hand, some risk-averse individuals may need to invest more aggressively to accumulate enough money for retirement and offset another risk: that inflation could erode the purchasing power of their assets over the long term.

How much risk are you comfortable taking?

Some people seem to be born risk-takers, whereas others are cautious by nature, but an investor's true psychological risk tolerance can be difficult to assess. Some people who describe their personality a certain way on a questionnaire may act differently when they are tested by real events.

Moreover, an investor's attitude toward risk can change over time, with experience and age. New investors may be more fearful of potential losses. Investors who have experienced the cyclical and ever-changing nature of the economy and investment performance may be more comfortable with short-term market swings.

Brace yourself

Market declines are an inevitable part of investing, but abandoning a sound investment strategy in the heat of the moment could be detrimental to your portfolio's long-term performance. One thing you can do to strengthen your mindset is to anticipate scenarios in which the value of your investments were to fall by 20% to 40%. If you become overly anxious about the possibility of such a loss, it might be helpful to reduce the level of risk in your portfolio. Otherwise, having a plan in place could help you manage your emotions when turbulent times arrive.

All investing involves risk, including the possible loss of principal, and there is no guarantee that any investment strategy will be successful.

See disclaimer on page 3 & 5

Key Retirement and Tax Numbers for 2018

Proposed tax reform legislation may make changes to the estate and gift tax, the personal exemption, the standard deduction, and the alternative minimum tax.

Every year, the Internal Revenue Service announces cost-of-living adjustments that affect contribution limits for retirement plans, thresholds for deductions and credits, and standard deduction and personal exemption amounts. Here are a few of the key adjustments for 2018.

Employer retirement plans

- Employees who participate in 401(k), 403(b), and most 457 plans can defer up to $18,500 in compensation in 2018 (up from $18,000 in 2017); employees age 50 and older can defer up to an additional $6,000 in 2018 (the same as in 2017).
- Employees participating in a SIMPLE retirement plan can defer up to $12,500 in 2018 (the same as in 2017), and employees age 50 and older can defer up to an additional $3,000 in 2018 (the same as in 2017).

IRAs

The limit on annual contributions to an IRA remains unchanged at $5,500 in 2018, with individuals age 50 and older able to contribute an additional $1,000. For individuals who are covered by a workplace retirement plan, the deduction for contributions to a traditional IRA is phased out for the following modified adjusted gross income (AGI) ranges:

	2017	2018
Single/head of household (HOH)	$62,000 - $72,000	$63,000 - $73,000
Married filing jointly (MFJ)	$99,000 - $119,000	$101,000 - $121,000
Married filing separately (MFS)	$0 - $10,000	$0 - $10,000

Note: *The 2018 phaseout range is $189,000 - $199,000 (up from $186,000 - $196,000 in 2017) when the individual making the IRA contribution is not covered by a workplace retirement plan but is filing jointly with a spouse who is covered.*

The modified AGI phaseout ranges for individuals to make contributions to a Roth IRA are:

	2017	2018
Single/HOH	$118,000 - $133,000	$120,000 - $135,000
MFJ	$186,000 - $196,000	$189,000 - $199,000
MFS	$0 - $10,000	$0 - $10,000

Estate and gift tax

- The annual gift tax exclusion for 2018 is $15,000, up from $14,000 in 2017.
- The gift and estate tax basic exclusion amount for 2018 is $5,600,000, up from $5,490,000 in 2017.

Personal exemption

The personal exemption amount for 2018 is $4,150, up from $4,050 in 2017. For 2018, personal exemptions begin to phase out once AGI exceeds $266,700 (single), $293,350 (HOH), $320,000 (MFJ), or $160,000 (MFS).

Note: *These same AGI thresholds apply in determining if itemized deductions may be limited. The corresponding 2017 threshold amounts were $261,500 (single), $287,650 (HOH), $313,800 (MFJ), or $156,900 (MFS).*

Standard deduction

These amounts have been adjusted as follows:

	2017	2018
Single	$6,350	$6,500
HOH	$9,350	$9,550
MFJ	$12,700	$13,000
MFS	$6,350	$6,500

Note: *The 2018 additional standard deduction amount (age 65 or older, or blind) is $1,600 (up from $1,550 in 2017) for single/HOH or $1,300 (up from $1,250 in 2017) for all other filing statuses. Special rules apply if you can be claimed as a dependent by another taxpayer.*

Alternative minimum tax (AMT)

	2017	2018
Maximum AMT exemption amount		
Single/HOH	$54,300	$55,400
MFJ	$84,500	$86,200
MFS	$42,250	$43,100
Exemption phaseout threshold		
Single/HOH	$120,700	$123,100
MFJ	$160,900	$164,100
MFS	$80,450	$82,050
26% on AMTI* up to this amount, 28% on AMTI above this amount		
MFS	$93,900	$95,750
All others	$187,800	$191,500
*Alternative minimum taxable income		

REGENT
FINANCIAL SERVICES

Regent Financial Services
7134 South Yale Avenue
Suite 700
Tulsa, OK 74136
918-493-4190
www.RegentFS.com

What can I do to crack down on robocalls?

You may not mind if a legitimate robocall provides a helpful announcement from your child's school or an appointment reminder from a doctor's office. But sadly, criminals often use robocalls to collect consumers' personal information and/or conduct various scams. Newer "spoofing" technology displays fake numbers to make it look as though calls are local, rather than coming from overseas, which could trick more people into answering the phone.

Robocalls have been illegal since 2009 (unless the telemarketer has the consumer's prior consent). In mid-2017, federal agencies announced they are ramping up enforcement by fining violators and encouraging blocking technologies. What should you do if you want to help put an end to this nuisance?

1. Don't answer calls when you don't recognize the phone number. If you pick up an unwanted robocall, just hang up. Don't answer "yes" or "no" questions, provide personal information, or press a number to "opt out." Responding to the call in any way verifies that it has reached a real number and could prompt additional calls.
2. Look into robocall blocking solutions that may be offered by your phone service provider. If they're available, you may need to follow specific instructions to "opt in." Otherwise, consider a mobile app or cloud-based service designed to block robocalls; some of them are free or cost just a few dollars.
3. Consider registering your phone number on the National Do Not Call Registry. While taking this step can help mitigate the amount of robocalls you receive, it's only a partial solution to the problem. The Federal Trade Commission advises consumers whose numbers are on the registry but still receive unwanted calls to report robocall violations at complaints.donotcall.gov. The phone numbers provided by consumers will be released each day to companies that are working on call-blocking technologies, which largely depend on "blacklists" with numbers associated with multiple complaints.

How can I protect myself from digital deception?

Imagine that you receive an email with an urgent message asking you to verify your banking information by clicking on a link. Or maybe you get an enticing text message claiming that you've won a free vacation to the destination of your choice — all you have to do is click on the link you were sent. In both scenarios, clicking on the link causes you to play right into the hands of a cybercriminal seeking your sensitive information. Just like that, you're at risk for identity theft because you were tricked by a social engineering scam.

Social engineering attacks are a form of digital deception in which cybercriminals psychologically manipulate victims into divulging sensitive information. Cybercriminals "engineer" believable scenarios designed to evoke an emotional response (curiosity, fear, empathy, or excitement) from their targets. As a result, people often react without thinking first due to curiosity or concern over the message that was sent. Since social engineering attacks appear in many forms and appeal to a variety of emotions, they can be especially difficult to identify.

Take steps to protect yourself from a social engineering scam. If you receive a message conveying a sense of urgency, slow down and read it carefully before reacting. Don't click on suspicious or unfamiliar links in emails, text messages, and instant messaging services. Hover your cursor over a link before clicking on it to see if it will bring you to a real URL. Don't forget to check the spelling of URLs — any mistakes indicate a scam website. Also be sure to look for the secure lock symbol and the letters *https:* in the address bar of your Internet browser. These are signs that you're navigating to a legitimate website.

Never download email attachments unless you can verify that the sender is legitimate. Similarly, don't send money to charities or organizations that request help unless you can follow up directly with the charitable group.

Be wary of unsolicited messages. If you get an email or a text that asks you for financial information or passwords, do not reply — delete it. Remember that social engineering scams can also be used over the phone. Use healthy skepticism when you receive calls that demand money or request sensitive information. Always be vigilant and think before acting.

REGENT
FINANCIAL SERVICES

Loaded Baked Omelet Muffins

Omelet muffins are perfect for meal prep. Make them ahead and freeze, or refrigerate the rest. Omelet muffins will keep in the refrigerator for about 3 days.

Recipe by: skinnytaste

How to freeze omelet muffins:
To freeze omelet muffins for the month, let them cool then remove from the muffin tin. Flash freeze them, then transfer to freezer safe bags, label, and freeze.

How to reheat omelet muffins:
To reheat, pop them in the microwave for 1 minute or until warm.

11 ***Ingredients*** **200** ***Calories*** **30** ***Minutes***

Ingredients

nonstick spray

6 whole eggs

6 large egg whites

1/4 teaspoon kosher salt

black pepper

3 strips chopped bacon (cooked)

3 tablespoons frozen spinach (thawed, drained)

3 tablespoons diced tomatoes

3 tablespoons diced onions

3 tablespoons diced bell pepper

2 ounces shredded cheddar cheese

Directions:

1. Preheat the oven to 350F. Spray the muffin tins with cooking spray.

2. In a large bowl whisk the eggs, season with salt and pepper.

3. Mix in the remaining ingredients.

4. Fill and place tins on a cookie sheet and bake 20 to 25 minutes, until set.

REGENT
FINANCIAL SERVICES

REGENT
FINANCIAL SERVICES

Forecast 2018

Please be our guests at our 2018 Forecast event. Join Gary Stanislawski, CFP®, Denise Lant, CFP®, and Kraig McFarland, RFC®, CRPC®, as we review milestones reached in 2017, where we are now, trends we are watching, and risks you should be aware of in 2018.

Tuesday, January 30th *or* Thursday, February 1st

6:00pm Registration
6:30pm - 8:00pm Dinner & Presentation

DoubleTree - Warren Place

6110 S. Yale Ave., Tulsa, OK 74136

Please RSVP prior to Tuesday, January 23rd

RegentFS.com/Events or 918-493-4190