

Financial Stewardship

Helping You Make Wise Financial Choices



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I hope you are well and have things you are excited about. I am looking forward to A short visit with Grayson at NNU.

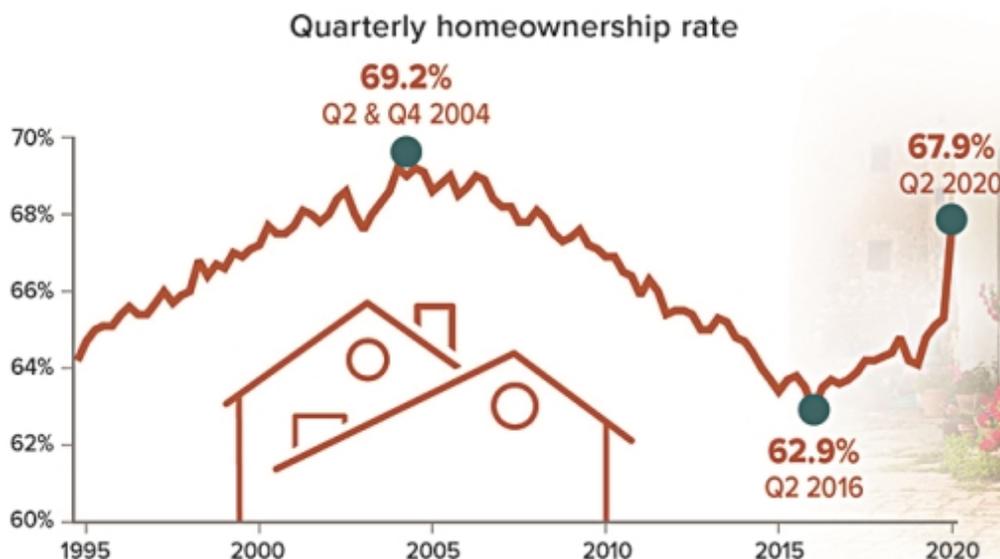
KMS Financial Services Inc., my broker dealer and Registered Investment Advisor firm will be consolidated into Securities America and Arbor Point November. 9, 2020. **Your account numbers, investments and your access to your accounts will not change.** There may be short term impacts to my ability to access your accounts. Financial planning services likely will also have short term impacts as this transition is made. If you are wanting me to complete transactions for you, please communicate those if possible before November 6, 2020. Also please give us grace as we respond through the next few months after the conversion. Feel free to call or email any questions

I enjoy being a resource and helping you. If your family or friends could benefit and be guided like you, please introduce us or share this newsletter with them. If you would like prayer, please let me know.

Homeownership Rate Spikes During Quarantine

The U.S. homeownership rate jumped by 2.6% in the second quarter of 2020, the largest quarterly increase on record, bringing it to a level last seen in 2008. Part of this unexpected increase may be due to a change in the survey process because of the coronavirus, as well as a drop in the number of rental units as renters moved in with family or took on roommates. However, many renters bought homes, spurred by low mortgage rates.

Homeownership increased across all age groups, but the biggest jump was among those under age 35, whose 40.6% rate was the highest in almost 12 years. Americans age 65 and older have the highest rate of homeownership at 80.4%.



Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, 2020; Bloomberg, July 28, 2020; MarketWatch, July 29, 2020

Is Now a Good Time to Consider a Roth Conversion?

This year has been challenging on many fronts, but one financial opportunity may have emerged from the economic turbulence. If you've been thinking about converting your traditional IRA to a Roth, now might be an appropriate time to do so.

Conversion Basics

Roth IRAs offer tax-free income in retirement. Contributions to a Roth IRA are not tax-deductible, but qualified withdrawals, including any earnings, are free of federal income tax. Such withdrawals may also be free of any state income tax that would apply to retirement plan distributions.

Generally, a Roth distribution is considered "qualified" if it meets a five-year holding requirement and you are age 59½ or older, become permanently disabled, or die (other exceptions may apply).

Regardless of your filing status or how much you earn, you can convert assets in a traditional IRA to a Roth IRA. Though annual IRA contribution limits are relatively low (\$6,000 to all IRAs combined in 2020, or \$7,000 if you are age 50 or older), there is no limit to the amount you can convert or the number of conversions you can make during a calendar year. An inherited traditional IRA cannot be converted to a Roth, but a spouse beneficiary who treats an inherited IRA as his or her own can convert the assets.

Converted assets are subject to federal income tax in the year of conversion and may also be subject to state taxes. This could result in a substantial tax bill, depending on the value of your account, and could move you into a higher tax bracket. However, if all conditions are met, the Roth account will incur no further income tax liability and you won't be subject to required minimum distributions. (Designated beneficiaries are required to take withdrawals based on certain rules and time frames, depending on their age and relationship to the original account holder, but such withdrawals would be free of federal tax.)

Why Now?

Comparatively low income tax rates combined with the impact of the economic downturn might make this an appropriate time to consider a Roth conversion.

The lower income tax rates passed in 2017 are scheduled to expire at year-end 2025; however, some industry observers have noted that taxes may rise even sooner due to rising deficits exacerbated by the pandemic relief measures.

Moreover, if the value of your IRA remains below its pre-pandemic value, the tax obligation on your conversion will be lower than if you had converted prior to the downturn. If your income is lower in 2020 due to the economic challenges, your tax rate could be lower as well.

Any or all of these factors may make it worth considering a Roth conversion, provided you have the funds available to cover the tax obligation.

As long as your traditional and Roth IRAs are with the same provider, you can typically transfer shares from one account to the other. When share prices are lower, as they may be in the current market environment, you could theoretically convert more shares for each dollar and would have more shares in your Roth account to pursue tax-free growth. Of course, there is also a risk that the converted assets will go down in value.

Using Conversions to Make "Annual Contributions"

Finally, if you are not eligible to contribute to a Roth IRA because your modified adjusted gross income (MAGI) is too high (see table), a Roth conversion may offer a workaround. You can make nondeductible contributions to a traditional IRA and then convert traditional IRA assets to a Roth. This is often called a "back-door" Roth IRA.

As this history-making year approaches its end, this is a good time to think about last-minute moves that might benefit your financial and tax situation. A Roth conversion could be an appropriate strategy.

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

If your federal tax filing status is:	Your 2020 Roth contribution is reduced if your MAGI is:	You can't contribute to a Roth IRA for 2020 if your MAGI is:
Single or head of household	More than \$124,000 but less than \$139,000	\$139,000 or more
Married filing jointly or qualifying widow(er)	More than \$196,000 but less than \$206,000	\$206,000 or more
Married filing separately	More than \$0 but less than \$10,000	\$10,000 or more

Note that your contributions generally cannot exceed earned income for the year. (Special rules apply to spousal IRAs.)

Incapacity and Advance Medical Directives

At some point in your life, you may lose the ability to make or communicate responsible health-care decisions for yourself. Without directions to the contrary, medical professionals are generally compelled to make every effort to save and sustain your life. Depending on your attitude toward various medical treatments and your views on the quality of life, you may wish to take steps now to control future health-care decisions with one or more advance medical directives.

What Is an Advance Medical Directive?

The laws of your state may allow you to adopt one or more advance medical directives to manage your future medical care. There are three main types of advance medical directives: (1) a living will, (2) a durable power of attorney for health care, and (3) a do-not-resuscitate order. Each has unique characteristics and is useful under specific circumstances. You may find that one, two, or all three advance medical directives are necessary to express all your wishes regarding medical treatment.

Living Will

A living will is a legal document that specifies the types of medical treatment you would want, or not want, under particular circumstances. In most states, a living will takes effect only under certain circumstances, such as a terminal illness or injury. Generally, one can be used solely to decline medical treatment that "serves only to postpone the moment of death."

Durable Power of Attorney for Health Care/Health-Care Proxy

A durable power of attorney for health care (DPAHC), also known as a health-care proxy, is a legal document in which you appoint a representative to make medical decisions on your behalf if you become unable to make or communicate them yourself. It allows you to exercise control over your health care through this representative, who will have the authority to make most medical care decisions for you.

You may want to appoint such a representative to act on your behalf. If you don't, medical professionals will generally be compelled to do everything possible to save and sustain your life. A DPAHC can resolve conflicts and help ensure that your choices regarding medical treatment are respected. A DPAHC may not be practical in an emergency — your representative must be present to act on your behalf.

Do-Not-Resuscitate Order

A do-not-resuscitate (DNR) order is a legally binding order, signed by both you and your physician, that directs medical personnel not to perform cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) or other invasive procedures on you if you stop breathing or your heart stops beating. A DNR is the only advance medical directive specifically intended for use in an emergency. There are two types of DNRs: One is effective only while you are hospitalized; the other is used by people outside the hospital. ID bracelets, MedicAlert® necklaces, and wallet cards are some methods of noting DNR status.

More to Consider

- The laws on advance medical directives vary considerably from state to state. If you spend a significant amount of time in a state other than where you live, you may want to research that state's laws as well.
- Review your advance medical directives periodically to ensure they reflect your current wishes and attitude.
- Discuss your advance medical directives with appropriate persons (perhaps your doctor, your DPAHC representative, your family, and your friends).
- If you have multiple advance medical directives, make sure your instructions are stated consistently throughout. In many states, the most recent document prevails in case of a conflict.

Incapacity and Advance Medical Directives

ADVANCE MEDICAL DIRECTIVE

Living will

Durable power of attorney for health care

Do-not-resuscitate order



USED TO

Decline medical treatment for terminal illness or injury

Appoint representative to make medical decisions for you

Direct medical personnel not to perform CPR

Three Questions to Consider During Open Enrollment

Open enrollment is your annual opportunity to review your employer-provided benefit options and make elections for the upcoming plan year. You can get the most out of what your employer offers and possibly save some money by taking the time to read through your open enrollment information before making any benefit decisions. Every employer has its own open enrollment period (typically in the fall) and the information is usually available online through your employer.

What are your health plan options? Even if you're satisfied with your current health plan, it's a good idea to compare your existing coverage to other plans being offered next year. Premiums, out-of-pocket costs, and benefits often change from one year to the next and vary among plans. You may decide to keep the plan you already have, but it doesn't hurt to consider your options.

Should you contribute to a flexible spending account? You can help offset your health-care costs by contributing pre-tax dollars to a health flexible spending account (FSA), or reduce your child-care expenses by contributing to a dependent-care FSA. The money you contribute is not subject to federal income and Social Security taxes (nor generally to state and local income taxes), and you can use these tax-free dollars to pay for health-care costs not covered by insurance or for dependent-care expenses. Typically, FSAs are subject to the use-it-or-lose-it rule,

which requires you to spend everything in your FSA account within a calendar year or risk losing the money. Some employers allow certain amounts to be carried over to the following plan year or offer a grace period that allows you to spend the money during the first few months of the following plan year.

Tip: As a result of unanticipated changes in the need for medical and dependent care due to the coronavirus pandemic, the IRS announced it will allow employers to amend their employer-sponsored health coverage, health FSAs, and dependent-care assistance programs and allow employees to make certain mid-year changes for 2020. The carryover limit for unused 2020 FSA dollars is now \$550 instead of \$500. For more information, visit [irs.gov](https://www.irs.gov).

What other benefits and incentives are available? Many employers offer other voluntary benefits such as dental care, vision coverage, disability insurance, life insurance, and long-term care insurance. Even if your employer doesn't contribute toward the premium cost, you may be able to pay premiums conveniently via payroll deduction. To help avoid missing out on savings opportunities, find out whether your employer offers other discounts or incentives. Common options are discounts on health-related products and services such as gym equipment and eyeglasses, or wellness incentives such as a monetary reward for completing a health assessment.

[Schedule an appointment](#)

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