

INVESTMENTS

Developing achievable saving and investing goals can help you on your road to freedom, security or affording the kind of lifestyle you want. Take the time to create a personal investment plan. Ask yourself these questions before you get started:

- **What do I want to accomplish?** Set specific investment goals. Be sure to include target dates and dollar amounts so you have a realistic idea of how long it will take to achieve your goals.
- **How much risk am I willing to take?** Are you willing to risk losing some or all of your money in order to earn higher returns, or will you accept lower returns for the peace of mind of knowing your initial investment is safer? Understanding how much risk you are comfortable taking determines your “risk tolerance,” which in turn informs which types of investment products are most suitable for you.
- **What type of investment is right for me?** Each investment comes with certain characteristics, risk levels and potential returns. Understanding your situation, risk tolerance, time horizon and specific goals will make it easier to choose the right investment for you.
- **Am I comfortable enough to do this on my own?** How much time are you willing to spend sorting through investment choices and keeping up with the markets? How confident are you in your investment knowledge and ability to carry out your decisions? If you need some guidance, you may want to seek the services of a financial service professional. Investing, especially with significant amounts of money, can be a complicated process. Many people seek the help of one or more financial services professionals.

Investors should independently verify any investment opportunity as well as the background of the person and company offering the investment. State regulators provide detailed background information about those who sell securities or give investment advice, and about the products being offered. Investors should insist on working only with licensed brokers and investment advisers when dealing with both traditional and alternative securities investments, and should quickly report any suspicion of investment fraud. For more information regarding investing, contact the South Dakota Department of Labor & Regulations, Division of Securities, at 605-773-4823.

SOUTH DAKOTA OFFICE OF ATTORNEY GENERAL

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