

**Are you financially
prepared for what's ahead?**
It's important to be an informed investor



*June 1 marks the start of **Seniors' Month in Canada** – a perfect time to take stock (no pun intended) of your investments and your relationship with your advisor.*

You've worked hard to save and accumulate your money so it's important that you research and ask questions so you can protect yourself and make informed decisions.

IIROC, the Investment Industry Regulatory Organization of Canada, regulates the activities of all Canadian investment dealer firms and the advisors they employ. These companies and their investment advisors must meet IIROC's high ethical and professional standards.

Here are some tips and tools from IIROC to help you:

1 Check out your advisor

It is critical you find the right advisor for you. Your advisor should recommend suitable investments and provide information on the risks, benefits and costs of the investments being proposed.

Seniors who want to learn more about an advisor's qualifications and background

should take a look at IIROC's online advisor check database – [IIROC AdvisorReport](#).

This free, easy-to-use tool quickly generates reports which list IIROC-regulated advisors' relevant professional background, qualifications and their employment history.

In researching this information, you'll be able to see how much experience your advisor has, how much your advisor has been doing to stay current as new products and investment strategies emerge, and you'll find out whether he or she has ever been disciplined for breaking our rules.

Checking an advisor's registration status is one way you can protect yourself as an investor, since regulators will only register individuals who meet the appropriate education requirements and high ethical and professional standards.

2 Understand your advisor's credentials

How do you know if your advisor has the right skills to meet your investment needs? There are many certifications in use by the financial industry, and it can be difficult to know what an advisor's certification means.

To help you sort through the various financial certifications held by financial advisors, IIROC has created a [Glossary of Financial Certifications](#), containing

information on close to 65 certifications used by financial advisors in Canada.

In the glossary, you can find information on the organization granting the certificate, exams required to be certified and if the issuing organization has a process for taking complaints against its members. You can also use the glossary to research and compare common financial certifications.

3 Working with your advisor

It is important for you to provide your advisor with any information that could affect your personal situation.

For example, as part of preparing or updating your will, you may want to establish a power of attorney (POA) – someone you trust who can make decisions on your behalf should you ever need that support. Another option is to designate an emergency or trusted contact person in the event you don't have a POA. Whoever you approve, you should share these details with your advisor.

Sadly, as we get older, events such as the loss of a partner or illness can impact your personal circumstances and financial goals.

Your advisor should be meeting with you frequently to discuss your financial situation and portfolio to ensure you are meeting your investment objectives. The time horizon for your objectives and how much risk you can take can change as you move into retirement.

4 Managing your investments

Generating a sustainable level of income can become a key priority in retirement. You may be concerned about outliving your investments and not having enough money set aside.

Having enough money to support your retirement while you are drawing from your investments raises the issue of capital preservation and income generation. However, capital preservation and income generation are two different objectives.

You should work with your investment advisor to prioritize which of these objectives best suits your financial situation and will help you meet your retirement goals. You should also be aware of potential risks. There is no one-size-fits-all solution.

5 Take advantage of online resources and don't be afraid to ask questions

Seniors can become the target of fraudsters. The Financial Consumer Agency of Canada, a government agency that protects Canadian consumers of financial products and services, has a wealth of resources on its website: Ipaystoknow.gc.ca. There you can find advice on how to protect yourself from fraud and financial abuse as well as practical guides on managing the financial demands of many life events including planning for and living in retirement.

IIROC also has several helpful resources such as investor bulletins and brochures available on its website: www.iiroc.ca/investors, so you can get the information you need to make informed financial decisions.

If IIROC's rules and standards are broken, we can take disciplinary action. Investors can contact our Complaints & Inquiries team if they have any general questions or those relating to the regulation of a specific firm or advisor at 1-877-442-4322 (toll free) or email us at InvestorInquiries@iiroc.ca. ■

