



There is heightened anxiety amongst market participants, and understandably so. We find ourselves in uncharted waters with the unfolding COVID-19 crisis. We have witnessed a sudden and dramatic shift in the investment landscape and volatility has spiked to levels last seen in the 2008 Global Financial Crisis (GFC).

Global economic activity has ground to a halt and growth expectations have been revised. Early signs point to a sharp contraction in global growth, which may extend beyond the first quarter of 2020. Based on how previous natural disasters have played out, we hold the view that the virus will have a sharp, but short negative impact on economic growth, followed by a subsequent rebound further out, considering the monetary and fiscal support being put in place.

For now, markets are responding very negatively. Market declines and the associated uncertainty under these conditions can be unsettling. Keep in mind that the very nature of investing involves decision-making under uncertainty. We firmly advocate the approach of maintaining an appropriate level of diversified exposure across asset classes to cover any eventuality or scenario playing out.

As always, we will continue to assess the evolving prevailing risks and will take prudent action in our portfolios, where required.

[Click here](#) to read more on the markets, and our current portfolio positioning in a note by David Crosoer, Chief Investment Officer.

### **Business continuity and operations**

Our comprehensive business continuity plan has ensured that we have been able to continue operating effectively during this time, without impacting on our ability to operate and provide servicing to you. To date, we have implemented several measures, including travel prohibitions, social distancing, self-isolation, increased office sanitation and remote work with large numbers of our team working away from the office as a risk mitigation.

With the announcement on Monday evening of a National Lockdown, all of our teams will now be working remotely including our team of investment professionals, as well as our core operations and servicing teams. For many of our team members, the avoidance of the morning and evening commute will put a few hours back into their diaries daily, so they'll no doubt now have more time to support our investors!

### **Our interactions with you**

Our call, email and digital servicing channels remain fully operational. In particular, we encourage you to utilise our digital servicing channels, such as our Secure Site [www.ppsisecure.co.za](http://www.ppsisecure.co.za) to monitor and manage your investments securely online. For those of you who have not yet registered, please take some time during the National Lockdown to register and acquaint yourself with the functionality that is available within the Secure Site, as well as on the "PPS for Professionals" mobile app.

As always, we encourage you to remain in close contact with your financial adviser who is best placed to provide guidance on your financial planning requirements and help you to make informed decisions. Alternatively, our client services team is available to support you via our traditional or digital channels and can be contacted on 0860 468 777 or [clientservices@ppsinvestments.co.za](mailto:clientservices@ppsinvestments.co.za) or via live chat accessible at [www.pps.co.za/invest](http://www.pps.co.za/invest).

We thank you for your continued support, and pledge ours during these uncertain times. Let's unite and share in undertaking necessary precautions and demonstrating responsibility.

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