

## INSURANCE INDUSTRY NEWS

### Life Insurers Outlook Upgraded Despite COVID

Starting in September 2021 and continuing through the fourth quarter, the COVID virus became more prevalent among Americans aged 35-54 and was one of the leading causes of death among all Americans. Many life insurers reported excess mortality and corresponding losses in the third quarter, primarily driven by the increase in cases. However, AM Best revised its outlook for the life and annuity industry to stable in December. They had previously downgraded the outlook in 2020 around pandemic uncertainty. AM Best's updated Market Segment Report stated their belief that, "the industry will be able to address these challenges because of the improvement in capitalization, profitability, and ERM practices..."

Source: AM Best

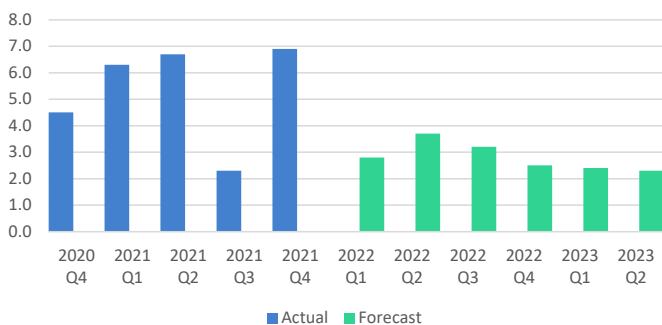
## FEATURED MARKET DATA

### Economic Growth, Market Volatility

Economic data in January was largely in line with PMA's forecast and market performance reflected our assessment that volatility may be high this year. Our base forecast was for strong economic growth and persistent inflation in 2022, as well as projected bouts of market volatility as policy and economic events unfold. We see these trends continuing throughout this year and remind our clients of the importance of a disciplined approach to investing. The chart below shows the strong GDP growth experienced in 2021 and lower, though continued healthy growth forecast in a Bloomberg survey of economists. For markets, we saw stocks sell off 5.3% in January as interest rates rose and corporate spreads widened.

Sources: Bloomberg, PMA Asset Management

U.S. Quarterly GDP



Source: Bloomberg

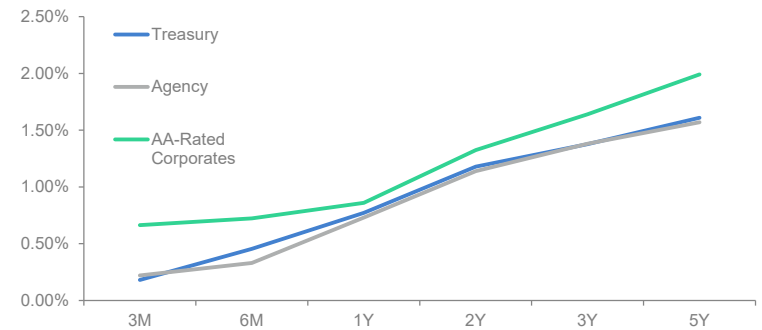
## RECENT NEWS

### Fed Liftoff Nears

At the Fed's January meeting, Federal Reserve Chairman Jerome Powell indicated the central bank was ready to raise rates as soon as its March meeting. Importantly, Mr. Powell said the Fed isn't likely to offer forward guidance on the pace of hikes, which opened the potential for hikes in consecutive meetings. The Fed has not raised rates in consecutive meetings since 2006. The central bank also approved one final round of asset purchases in March, but discussed plans to shrink the Fed's \$9 trillion securities portfolio, which unsettled markets.

Source: Wall Street Journal

## Market Yields



Source: Bloomberg Finance L.P. 12/31/21

## U.S. Economic Indicators

Event	Event Date	Period	Survey	Actual	Prior / Revised (R)
Consumer Price Index (YoY)	01/12/22	DEC	7.0%	7.0%	6.8%
Retail Sales Ex. Auto (MoM)	01/14/22	DEC	0.1%	-2.3%	0.1% (R)
Consumer Confidence	01/25/22	JAN	111.2	113.8	115.2 (R)
Personal Income	01/28/22	DEC	0.5%	0.3%	0.5% (R)
Personal Spending	01/28/22	DEC	-0.6%	-0.6%	0.4% (R)
Core PCE (YoY)	01/28/22	DEC	4.8%	4.9%	4.7%
ISM Manufacturing	02/01/22	JAN	57.5	57.6	58.8 (R)
Change in Nonfarm Payrolls	02/04/22	JAN	150K	-	199K
Unemployment Rate	02/04/22	JAN	3.9%	-	3.9%

Source: Bloomberg Finance L.P. 12/31/21. Glossary terms on following page.

## Contact Information

### COURTNEY CLARKE

Vice President, Institutional Portfolio Manager  
515-224-2722 | cclarke@pmanetwork.com

# Glossary of Terms

Term	What is it:
<b>Building Permits</b>	Records the number of permits for future housing construction.
<b>Capacity Utilization</b>	Tracks the extent to which capacity is being used in the production of goods and services.
<b>Change in Nonfarm Payrolls</b>	This indicator measures the change in the number of employees on business and government payrolls.
<b>Chicago Fed National Activity Index</b>	A nationwide measure of economic activity and inflation pressures. An index value of zero indicates that the national economy is expanding at its historical trend rate of growth.
<b>Consumer Confidence</b>	Index examines how consumers feel about jobs, the economy and spending.
<b>Consumer Price Index (CPI)</b>	Measures the average change in retail prices over time for a basket consisting of more than 200 categories of assorted goods and services paid directly by consumers.
<b>Core Consumer Price Index (Core CPI)</b>	This measure of CPI excludes food and energy costs.
<b>Durable Goods Orders</b>	A measure of new orders placed with domestic manufacturers for durable goods, which are items that last three years or more.
<b>Existing Home Sales</b>	Measures monthly sales of previously owned single-family homes.
<b>GDP Annualized QoQ</b>	Measures the annualized quarterly growth of the final market value of all goods and services produced within a country. GDP is the foremost report on how fast or slow the economy is growing.
<b>Housing Starts</b>	Records the number of new housing units started during a period.
<b>Index of Leading Economic Indicators (LEI)</b>	An index designed to predict the direction of the economy.
<b>Initial Jobless Claims</b>	Tracks new filings for unemployment insurance benefits.
<b>ISM Manufacturing</b>	Measures manufacturing activity based on a monthly survey of purchasing managers.
<b>MBA Mortgage Applications</b>	The Mortgage Bankers Association's weekly mortgage application survey includes home loan application activity for conventional and government loans for home purchases and refinances.
<b>Mortgage Delinquencies</b>	A measure of the percent of total conventional and government loans which are at least one payment past due, but not in the process of foreclosure.
<b>Personal Consumption Expenditure (PCE)</b>	The Federal Reserve's preferred measure of inflation tracks overall price changes for goods and services. Core PCE excludes food and energy.
<b>Personal Income and Spending</b>	Index records the income Americans receive, how much they spend, and what they save.
<b>Retail Sales</b>	Tracks the sale of new and used goods for personal or household consumption.
<b>Retail Sales Ex. Auto</b>	Retail sales excluding motor vehicles and parts.
<b>S&amp;P Case-Shiller Home Price Index</b>	Tracks the value of single-family housing within the U.S. There are multiple indexes including the 20-City Composite.
<b>Unemployment Rate</b>	The U-3 unemployment rates tracks the percentage of the civilian workforce that is unemployed.

Source: Bloomberg, The Secrets of Economic Indicators by Bernard Baumohl; PMA Asset Management, LLC

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