

## Finding a Financial Institution

### Credit Unions

*Advantage:* A non-profit organization created to serve its members, which generally results in fewer fees. Insured by the National Credit Union Administration (NCUA).

*Disadvantage:* Must meet certain qualifications (hold a certain type of job, live in a certain area, etc.) to join and usually has a limited number of branches within a defined area.

### Banks

*Advantage:* Often have larger networks of branches and ATMs making access easier and convenient. Insured by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC).

*Disadvantage:* Possibly more restrictions on use of accounts with fees attached when limits are overstepped.

### Thing to Remember

1. Convenience and access to location make banking easier. Find a bank near your home or work.
2. Ask your family members if they belong to a credit union. If they are, you are likely eligible.
3. Banks are businesses. They may be willing to waive fees if you opening a transaction/checking account in addition to a savings account.
4. Electronic transactions (online banking, direct deposit, automatic transfers) save banks money. Fees and minimum balances may be waived if you use direct deposit with part of your paycheck automatically transferred to your savings account.
5. When you go to open an account, ask the clerk to explain all possible fees including maintenance, withdrawal, overdraft, and ATM fees.
6. If you have bad history with banks (unpaid fees, involuntarily closed accounts), then you may be in the Chex System and another bank might deny you an account. Learn more about [ChexSystem](#).