Financial Institutions Today

July 2026

News and topics of interest to financial institutions regulated by the Department of Banking and Finance

NASCUS EXECUTIVE FORUM

On September 10, 2026, the National Association of State Credit Union Supervisors (NASCUS) and the Department of Banking and Finance are offering a full-day networking and educational event at the Atrium at Vinings, Smyrna, Georgia. The forum is designed for Georgia credit union board members, committee members, executives, and staff from both state- and federal-chartered credit unions.

During the forum, attendees will be able to connect with industry peers, exchange ideas, and gain practical insights on the trends, challenges, and opportunities shaping today's credit union landscape.

Opportunities for participants include:

- Strengthening leadership and governance skills through focused educational sessions.
- Expanding professional networks and sharing best practices with industry peers.
- Staying informed on emerging trends, regulatory developments, and industry challenges.

Additional information on the forum and registration information can be found here.

FINCEN Section 314(b) Fact Sheet

The U.S. Department of the Treasury's (Treasury) Financial Crimes Enforcement Network (FinCEN) has issued a new fact sheet in support of Treasury's efforts to promote greater information sharing between and among financial institutions to identify fraud, money laundering, terrorist financing, narcotics trafficking and related crimes, sanctions evasion, and other criminal activity. The fact sheet provides clarification and expands on information sharing under section 314(b) of the USA Patriot Act. The fact sheet replaces FinCEN's December 2020 fact sheet. A link to the new fact sheet can be found here and additional resources on information sharing under section 314(b) can be found here.

ANNUAL ASSESSMENT NOTICES – BANKS, CREDIT UNIONS, AND HOLDING COMPANIES

The bank and credit union annual assessments are due no later than September 30, 2026. An email will be sent to each institutions' primary contact from GADBF@micropact.com at the beginning of September, with the annual assessment invoice. The Department will initiate an ACH debit for the assessment fee for regulated banks and credit unions unless stated otherwise in the body of the assessment notice.

The assessment fee for holding companies will need to be paid through the Department's online portal. Holding company assessments are due no later than September 15, 2026. If you do not receive the annual assessment invoice email at the beginning of September or have any questions on using the online portal, please contact Director for Supervision Mathew Robinson at MRobinson@dbf.state.ga.us or Business Analysis Director Heather Ensminger at HEnsminger@dbf.state.ga.us.

COMMUNITY BANK LEVERAGE RATIO FRAMEWORK GUIDE UPDATE

The Office of the Comptroller of the Currency, the Federal Reserve Board, and Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (together, the agencies) issued an updated community bank leverage ratio (CBLR) framework compliance guide on July 30, 2026. The updated compliance guide is consistent with the changes made to the framework in the CBLR final rule published in April of 2026.

The compliance guide incorporates the recent changes the 2026 CBLR final rule made to the CBLR framework. Highlights in the final rule include:

- Lowers the CBLR requirement from 9 percent to 8 percent, allowing more community banks to qualify for the CBLR framework.
- Extends the grace period from two quarters to four quarters, in order to provide additional time for community banks to either satisfy the definition of a qualifying community banking organization under the CBLR framework, or to achieve compliance with risk-based capital requirements.
- Limits a community bank to using the grace period for a maximum of eight out of the prior twenty quarters.

The updated compliance guide can be accessed here.

SECOND QUARTER 2026 COMMUNITY BANK SENTIMENT INDEX RELEASED

The Conference of State Bank Supervisors (CSBS) released the second quarter 2026 Community Bank Sentiment Index (CBSI) results on July 13, 2026, which reflect data collected from community banks across the nation during the month of June. The CBSI registered at 129, which is a slight decline from the previous quarter's results of 131. Notwithstanding the decline, the index remains firmly in positive territory. The profitability indicator notably returned to its peak level and continued to signal higher future profitability. However, the results showed a continued decline in the monetary policy and regulatory burden indicators.

"The results suggest that regulatory conditions might not be easing as much as last quarter's survey indicated, and bankers have a slightly pessimistic outlook regarding the future impact of monetary policies. Their primary concerns center on the potential negative macroeconomic outcomes that might arise from geopolitical uncertainties due to the ongoing war in Iran," said CSBS Chief Economist Tom Siems.

The CBSI captures on a quarterly basis what community bankers nationwide think about the future. Participants' answers are analyzed and compiled into a single number; an index reading of 100 indicates a neutral sentiment. Anything above 100 indicates a positive sentiment, and anything below 100 indicates a negative sentiment.

For more on the CBSI results, visit here.

SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS

Commissioner Oscar "Bo" Fears will be speaking at Fintech South 2026 on August 18, 2026. The session Commissioner Fears will be speaking at is "Think Tank – From Charter to Compliance: Making Next Generation Financial Regulation Work in Practice." Information on the event and registration can be found here.

Deputy Commissioner for Supervision Kevin Vaughn will be presenting at the Community Bankers Association of Georgia Advanced BSA: AML/CFT School on August 17, 2026. The School will be held August 17, 2026 – August 21, 2026, at the Omni Amelia Island Resort, Fernandina, Florida. Additional information, including registration, can be found here.

ACTION ON APPLICATIONS FOR THE MONTH

The following is a summary of official action taken by the Department on certain applications by Georgia state-chartered financial institutions, petitions for certificate of incorporation of financial institutions, and other matters of recent interest:

Applications For Financial Institution Mergers

Survivor	Merged Institution	Approval Date	Effective Date
Robins Financial Credit Union Warner Robins, Georgia	Harris Employees Credit Union Cordele, Georgia	07/14/2026	
First Community Bank Lexington, South Carolina	Signature Bank Sandy Springs, Georgia	10/17/2025	01/08/2026
Ascend Federal Credit Union Tullahoma, Tennessee	LGE Community Credit Union Atlanta, Georgia	Pending	

Applications to Change Branch Locations

Financial Institution	Branch Office	Approval Date	Effective Date
Vallant Bank Elberton, Georgia	From: 809 Carroll Street Perry, Georgia 31069 To: 800 Main Street Perry, Georgia 31069	Pending	

Applications To Establish a Branch Office

Financial Institution	Branch Office	Approval Date	Effective Date
Vallant Bank Elberton, Georgia	4361 Rivoli Drive Macon, Georgia 31210	06/24/2026	
American Pride Bank Macon, Georgia	18 S. Markley Street, Suite A Greenville, South Carolina 29601	07/10/2026	
American Pride Bank Macon, Georgia	450 N. Patterson Ave, Suite 200 Winston-Salem, North Carolina 27101	07/10/2026	

American Pride Bank Macon, Georgia	2033 Main Street, Suite 101 Sarasota, Florida 34237	07/23/2026	
South Coast Bank & Trust Brunswick, Georgia	475 Canal Road Brunswick, Georgia 31525	07/20/2026	
River City Bank Rome, Georgia	940 North Wall Street Gordon, Georgia 30701	07/20/2026	
Georgia United Credit Union Duluth, Georgia	2221 Pooler Parkway Pooler, Georgia	Pending	
Georgia United Credit Union Duluth, Georgia	308 Magellan Boulevard Port Wentworth, Georgia	Pending	

Applications For New Financial Institutions

Financial Institution		Approval Date	Begin Business Date
Checkout.com MALPB Atlanta, Georgia		09/15/2025	07/16/2026

Applications to Form A Bank Holding Company

Financial Institution		Approval Date	Effective Date
Private Financial, Inc. Gainesville, Georgia		07/27/2026	

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The Department is the state agency that regulates and examines Georgia state-chartered banks, state-chartered credit union, state-chartered trust companies, foreign banking organizations, and bank holding companies that own Georgia state-chartered financial institutions. The Department also has responsibility for the supervision, regulation, and examination of merchant acquirer limited purpose banks and payment stablecoin issuers.

In addition, the Department has regulatory and/or licensing authority over mortgage brokers and lenders, mortgage loan originators, consumer installment loan companies, check cashers, money transmitters, and litigation finance companies.

Our Mission is to promote safe, sound, competitive financial services in Georgia through innovative, responsive regulation and supervision.