



FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS TODAY

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

October 2025

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SAVVY SENIOR LITERACY EVENT

The Georgia Secretary of State's Office has partnered with SonSeeker Media LTD, Friendship Community Church, and Senior Medicare Patrol (SMP) for an important financial wellness event. The panelists at the event will discuss essential strategies for retirement planning and fraud prevention. The goals of the event are to help strengthen financial security and build confidence in managing the future with expert insights, resources, and practical tips. The event will be held on Thursday, November 20, 2025, from 8:30 AM to 12:30 PM at Friendship Community Church 4141 Old Fairburn Rd, Atlanta, Georgia 30349. Additional information and registration for the event can be found [here](#).

NCUA ISSUES COMMENT ON RECORDING AND TRANSCRIPTION OF BOARD AND EXIT MEETINGS

On October 24, 2025, the National Credit Union Administration (NCUA) issued a comment regarding recording and transcribing meetings held with the NCUA. The comment also addressed the use of third-party technology solutions, including the use of artificial intelligence (AI) for this purpose. The comment states, in part, that "credit unions may record and transcribe official meetings with NCUA staff and may use third-party technology solutions to do so. There is no prohibition on the type of software, technology, or tool credit unions use for this process, including those enabled by AI. If a meeting is recorded, NCUA exam staff may request a copy of the recording or transcription to include with their exam documentation."

The Department of Banking and Finance (Department) does not allow recordings, which includes the use of third-party technology, during management exit meetings and Board of Director meetings with the Department in accordance with the confidentiality requirements of O.C.G.A. § 7-1-70. Questions regarding confidentiality requirements should be directed to the appropriate Supervisory Manager for your credit union.

SUSPICIOUS ACTIVITY REPORTING FAQ

On October 9, 2025, the U.S. Department of the Treasury's Financial Crimes Enforcement Network (FinCEN) issued answers to four Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) to clarify certain requirements related to suspicious activity reports. By issuing these FAQs, FinCEN is seeking to ensure financial institutions are not needlessly expending resources on efforts that do not provide law enforcement and national security agencies with the critical information they need to detect, combat, and deter criminal activity. FinCEN issued the FAQs jointly with the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, the National Credit Union Administration, and the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency. The Press Release can be accessed [here](#) and the FAQ can be accessed [here](#).

NATIONAL COMMUNITY BANK SURVEY

The twelfth annual community bank survey by the Conference of State Bank Supervisors' (CSBS) canvassed 268 community banks with less than \$10 billion in total assets. The survey captures community bankers' views on key risks, compliance costs, technology, competition, and liquidity and funding, among other areas.

For external risks, regulatory burden fell to the sixth highest concern, which had previously held the top spot in last year's survey. Now, net interest margin holds the top spot for external risk, followed by core deposit growth, then economic conditions, cost of technology, and cost of funds. Cybersecurity remains the top Internal risk, surpassing all other risks — external and internal — by a healthy margin. Technology implementation and related costs rank second, while credit replaces liquidity in the third spot.

Access to the full results can be accessed [here](#). The Department expresses its gratitude to those community bankers that completed the survey and contributed to this very important research.

THIRD QUARTER 2025 COMMUNITY BANK SENTIMENT INDEX RELEASED

The CSBS released the third quarter 2025 Community Bank Sentiment Index (CBSI) results on October 2, 2025, which reflected data collected from community banks across the nation during the month of September. The results showed a sentiment index of 133 points, which is an increase of seven from the previous quarter.

The CBSI captures, on a quarterly basis, what community bankers nationwide think about the future. Participant 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 third quarter 2025 CBSI, visit <https://www.csbs.org/cbindex>.

SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS

Senior Deputy Commissioner Melissa Sneed will be speaking on the Fraud Awareness Panel during the Savvy Senior: Empower Your Financial Wellness Journey event. The event will be held on Thursday, November 20, 2025. Additional information and registration details 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 TO ESTABLISH A BRANCH OFFICE

<u>FINANCIAL INSTITUTION</u>	<u>BRANCH OFFICE</u>	<u>APPROVAL DATE</u>	<u>EFFECTIVE DATE</u>
Planters and Citizens Bank Camilla, Georgia	620 E. Franklin Street, Suite A Sylvester, Georgia 31791	10/23/2025	

APPLICATIONS TO CHANGE MAIN OFFICE LOCATIONS

<u>FINANCIAL INSTITUTION</u>	<u>CHANGE LOCATION OF</u>	<u>APPROVAL DATE</u>	<u>EFFECTIVE DATE</u>
The Claxton Bank Claxton, Georgia	From: 121 West Main Street Claxton, Georgia 30417 To: 1433 Bernie Anderson HWY Bellville, Georgia 30414	09/26/2025	10/14/2025

APPLICATIONS FOR FINANCIAL INSTITUTION MERGERS

<u>SURVIVOR</u>	<u>MERGED INSTITUTION</u>	<u>APPROVAL DATE</u>	<u>EFFECTIVE DATE</u>
American Bancorp, Inc. Macon, Georgia	New Republic Partners, Inc. Charlotte, North Carolina	10/21/2025	
Hope Federal Credit Union Jackson, Mississippi	1st Choice Credit Union Atlanta, Georgia		10/01/2025
Pinnacle Bank Nashville, Tennessee	Synovus Bank Columbus, Georgia	Pending	
SunMark Community Bank Perry, Georgia	Wheeler County State Bank Alamo, Georgia	Pending	
Colony Bank Fitzgerald, Georgia	TC Federal Bank Thomasville, Georgia	10/29/2025	

APPLICATIONS TO ACQUIRE A FINANCIAL INSTITUTION

<u>SURVIVOR</u>	<u>TO ACQUIRE</u>	<u>APPROVAL DATE</u>	<u>EFFECTIVE DATE</u>
SunMark Bancshares, Inc. Perry, Georgia	Wheeler Bancshares, Inc. Alamo, Georgia	Pending	
Colony Bankcorp, Inc. Fitzgerald, Georgia	TC Bancshares, Inc. Thomasville, Georgia	10/29/2025	

APPLICATIONS TO FORM A BANK HOLDING COMPANY**BANK HOLDING COMPANY**

Steel Newco, Inc.
Peachtree Corners, Georgia

TO ACQUIRE

Synovus Financial Corp.
Columbus, Georgia

Pinnacle Financial Partners
Nashville, Tennessee

**APPROVAL
DATE**

Pending

**EFFECTIVE
DATE****APPLICATIONS FOR DISSOLUTION****FINANCIAL INSTITUTION**

State Bank of Cochran
Cochran, Georgia

**APPROVAL
DATE**

09/11/2025

**EFFECTIVE
DATE**

10/01/2025

APPLICATIONS FOR NEW FINANCIAL INSTITUTION**FINANCIAL INSTITUTION**

Georgia Skyline Bank
Roswell, Georgia

**APPROVAL
DATE**

Pending

**EFFECTIVE
DATE**

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The Department is the state agency that regulates and examines Georgia state-chartered banks, state-chartered credit unions, state-chartered trust companies, international 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 chartered in Georgia.

In addition, the Department has regulatory and/or licensing authority over mortgage brokers, lenders and processors, mortgage loan originators, consumer installment loan companies, check cashers, sellers-issuers of payment instruments, and money transmitters.

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