



# FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS TODAY

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

October 2023

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## Update to Ransomware Self-Assessment Tool

The Bankers Electronic Crimes Taskforce (BECTF), state bank regulators, and the United States Secret Service have updated the Ransomware Self-Assessment Tool (R-SAT). The tool was developed to help financial institutions to periodically assess their efforts to mitigate risks associated with ransomware and identify gaps for increasing security. While the Department does not require financial institutions to use the R-SAT, the Department highly encourages all regulated entities to incorporate the R-SAT to provide executive management and the board of directors with an overview of the institution's preparedness towards identifying, protecting, detecting, responding, and recovering from a ransomware attack. Moreover, some of the same principles may be used to strengthen systems and processes from other cyber related events.

[R-SAT](https://www.csbs.org/ransomware-self-assessment-tool)

<https://www.csbs.org/ransomware-self-assessment-tool>

## FinCEN Issues Compliance Guide to Help Small Businesses Report Beneficial Ownership Information

The U.S. Department of the Treasury's Financial Crimes Enforcement Network (FinCEN) published a [Small Entity Compliance Guide \(Guide\)](#) to assist the small business community in complying with the beneficial ownership information (BOI) reporting rule. Starting in 2024, many entities created in, or registered to do business in, the United States will be required to report information about their beneficial owners—the individuals who ultimately own or control a company—to FinCEN. The Guide is intended to help businesses determine if they are required to report their beneficial ownership information to FinCEN.

Among other items from the Guide:

- Describes each of the BOI reporting rule's provisions in simple, easy-to-read language;
- Answers key questions; and
- Provides interactive checklists, infographics, and other tools to assist businesses in complying with the BOI reporting rule.

The Guide is now available on FinCEN's BOI reporting [webpage](#).

## National Community Bank Survey

The tenth annual community bank survey by the Conference of State Bank Supervisors' (CSBS) canvassed 462 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. The findings have

implications for researchers, regulators, bankers, and policymakers.

Net interest margins, cost of funds, and core deposits rated as the highest external concerns for community bankers. More than 86% of respondents named the cost of funds as either extremely or very important, up from 48% last year. Core deposits were not far behind, with 83% of respondents naming core deposit growth extremely or very important, up from 38% a year ago. However, while the majority of respondents viewed the challenges created by inflation as likely to persist, three-quarter of participants viewed these challenges as manageable.

Meanwhile, community bankers ranked cybersecurity threats as their top internal concern once again. And 83% of respondents cited liquidity concerns as extremely or very important compared to 35% a year ago. Nearly all banks surveyed identified adopting new or emerging technologies as important but cited costs and implementation as the largest impediments, followed by core service provider limitations.

The full results can be accessed here: <https://www.csbs.org/survey2023>. The Department expresses its gratitude to those community bankers that completed the survey and contributed to this very important research.

### Third Quarter 2023 Community Bank Sentiment Index Released

The Conference of State Bank Supervisors (CSBS) released the third quarter 2023 Community Bank Sentiment Index (CBSI) results on October 10, 2023, collecting data from community banks across the nation during the month of September. The results showed a sentiment index of 86 points, which is an increase from the all-time low of 73 experienced during 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 2023 CBSI, visit <https://www.csbs.org/cbindex>.

### Speaking Engagements

Commissioner Kevin Hagler will be speaking at the Georgia Bankers Association Credit Conference on December 1, 2023. The event will be held at The Westin Buckhead in Atlanta, Georgia. Further information on the event and registration can be found [here](#).

Director for Supervision Kevin Vaughn will be speaking on the Regulatory Panel during the NetConnect 2023 Conference. The Conference will be held November 7 – 8, 2023, in Alpharetta, Georgia. 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**

<b><u>FINANCIAL INSTITUTION</u></b>	<b><u>BRANCH OFFICE</u></b>	<b><u>APPROVAL DATE</u></b>	<b><u>EFFECTIVE DATE</u></b>
Coosa Valley Credit Union Rome, Georgia	152 Prominence Point Pkwy Canton, Georgia 30114	03/02/2023	10/30/2023
The Piedmont Bank Peachtree Corners, Georgia	2243 Lewis Street Kennesaw, Georgia 30144	10/03/2023	
Georgia Banking Company Atlanta, Georgia	2827 Peachtree Road NE Atlanta, Georgia 30305	09/28/2023	10/03/2023
VyStar Credit Union Jacksonville, Florida	980 Eagles Landing Pkwy Stockbridge, Georgia 30281	10/16/2023	10/16/2023
VyStar Credit Union Jacksonville, Florida	477 Johnny Mercer Blvd Savannah, Georgia 31410	07/03/2023	07/11/2023
VyStar Credit Union Jacksonville, Florida	3838 Johns Creek Pkwy Suwanee, Georgia 30024	Pending	

### **APPLICATIONS TO ACQUIRE A FINANCIAL INSTITUTION**

<b><u>SURVIVOR</u></b>	<b><u>MERGED INSTITUTION</u></b>	<b><u>APPROVAL DATE</u></b>	<b><u>EFFECTIVE DATE</u></b>
LGE Community Credit Union Atlanta, GA	Greater Community Bank Rome, GA	08/29/2023	09/30/2023

### **APPLICATIONS TO CHANGE LOCATIONS**

<b><u>FINANCIAL INSTITUTION</u></b>	<b><u>CHANGE LOCATION OF</u></b>	<b><u>APPROVAL DATE</u></b>	<b><u>EFFECTIVE DATE</u></b>
Glennville Bank Glennville, GA	From: 246 South Main Street Suite F Reidsville, GA 30453	10/11/2023	
	To: 248 South Main Street Reidsville, GA 30453		

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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.