

## Second Chance Banking Information and Comparisons

Opening a checking account with a bank or credit union is an important step in managing your money. If you've struggled with bad financial choices in the past, you may struggle with finding the right bank or credit union. Some banks are not willing to do business with people who have bad financial histories. And banks are known to close the accounts of people who have mishandled their finances, such as with frequent overdrafts. So where should you turn?

As I've visited with women who served time in prison, I've found that these three banks are good second chance banks. They have accounts that help a person regain their financial footing. Below is a comparison of the second chance accounts they offer. Credit unions are also good options, so I encourage you to explore them as well.

The information below was taken from <https://www.magnifymoney.com/blog/best-of/top-5-second-chance-bank-accounts45760853/>. This information may be slightly out of date, but the information is useful for comparison. Check with the bank or credit union to verify these details.

### Wells Fargo Opportunity Checking and Savings Accounts

Wells Fargo's Opportunity Checking and Savings Accounts are tailor-made for folks with a lackluster credit or banking history. With a \$25 opening deposit, you'll get access to a second chance bank account that offers most of the bells and whistles of a traditional bank account. The account does come with a monthly fee, although it's possible to waive it if you meet a few requirements (see below).

#### Account features:

- \$25 minimum deposit to open
- Free transfers are available between Opportunity Checking and Savings accounts
- You can choose to opt into overdraft protection
- Free access to bill pay
- "My Spending Report with Budget Watch" is available if you want to pay extra attention to where your money is going
- Free debit card with access to more than 13,000 Wells Fargo ATMs throughout the country

#### Fees to watch out for:

- \$10 monthly service fee, waived if any of the following are true:
  - You make 10 posted debit card purchases or payments
  - You keep a minimum daily balance of \$1,500 in the account
  - You receive \$500 total in direct deposits each statement cycle
- \$35 overdraft and returned item fee
- \$12.50 overdraft protection transfer fee

- \$15 fee for excess activity (exceeding withdrawals from your savings account)
- 3% foreign transaction fee with your debit card
- \$5 for money orders
- \$31 for stop payments

### **BBVA Easy Checking**

BBVA's Easy Checking product is available as a second chance account to customers in the Lower 48 (sorry, residents of Alaska and Hawaii, you'll have to look elsewhere). Note that you must open the account at one of the bank's branch locations, or by phone outside of the branch network footprint; you cannot open this account via their website. There is a \$13.95 monthly service charge to maintain the account. You can request that BBVA upgrade your account to one of their regular checking products after 12 months — and ditch that high monthly fee — so long as the Easy Checking account remains active and has a positive balance.

#### **BBVA Easy Checking features:**

- Online and mobile banking, customized alerts, and a free debit card (with option to personalize)
- \$25 minimum deposit to open
- Free BBVA ATM withdrawals

#### **Fees to watch out for:**

- \$3 fee for out-of-network ATM withdrawals
- \$38 insufficient funds fee (\$32 in California)
- \$15 deposit item returned fee
- \$32 stop payment fee made over the phone or in person (\$30 in California); \$25 if made online
- No fee for closing your account within 180 days of opening

### **Woodforest National Bank Second Chance Checking**

This regional bank has a checking account aptly named Second Chance Checking, to help people rejected by other banks access — provided they live in one of the 17 states where a physical branch exists and can meet the \$25 minimum opening deposit requirement. Those states are: Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Mississippi, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Texas, Virginia, and West Virginia.

#### **Fees to watch out for:**

- \$9.95 monthly maintenance fee if you use a direct deposit (or \$11.95 without a direct deposit), \$3.00 monthly paper statement fee (which can be avoided if you sign up for electronic statements)

- \$9 one-time account set-up fee
- \$2.50 ATM withdrawal fee when used at a non-Woodforest network ATM
- \$15 debit card set-up fee
- \$29 overdraft fee (for each charge)

<https://www.magnifymoney.com/blog/best-of/top-5-second-chance-bank-accounts45760853/>

Additionally, look on the DU website for the article: [Questions to Ask a Bank or Credit Union.](#) Make sure that whatever bank or credit union you use is not taking unexpected fees. And remember to review your bank statement often to verify charges.