

# FIRST FORUM

Your Source for Financial Solutions

## All You Need to Know About One-Time Password Scams

One-time passwords (OTPs) – sometimes referred to as passcodes – are a crucial security feature in our digital age as an extra layer of protection for online transactions and account logins. But scammers are often trying to hijack these codes so they can steal sensitive info, money or both.

Here's what to know about OTP scams and how to avoid them.

### What is an OTP scam?

OTP scams seek to trick individuals into sharing their OTPs, which are then used by scammers to gain unauthorized access to accounts. Here are the various ways these scams go down:

- **Phishing scams.** Here, cybercriminals send fake emails or text messages appearing to be from legitimate sources, such as credit unions or banks, online retailers or social media platforms. These messages often contain urgent requests to verify your account or resolve an issue, prompting you to enter your OTP on a fraudulent website.
- **Vishing (voice phishing).** In this scam, scammers call victims and pretend to be from a reputable organization. They may claim there is suspicious activity on your account and request your OTP to secure it, all the while exploiting your trust with a sudden sense of urgency.
- **Man-in-the-middle attacks.** In this method, attackers intercept communications between you and a legitimate service provider. When you request an OTP, the attacker captures it and uses it to gain access to your account.

Whichever method is used to steal your OTP, the scammer will then use it to access your accounts and possibly to steal your identity.

### Red flags

Avoid falling victim to a one-time password scam by watching out for these red flags:

1. **Unexpected requests.** Be cautious of unsolicited messages or calls asking for your OTP. Legitimate organizations typically won't ask for your OTP unless you're actively engaged in a transaction or login process.
2. **Urgency and threats.** Scammers often create a false sense of urgency, claiming that immediate action is required to prevent something bad from happening, like an account suspension or fraud.
3. **Unusual sender information.** Check the sender's email address or phone number carefully. Scammers often use addresses or numbers that are slightly altered versions of legitimate ones.

4. **Suspicious links.** Hover over links in emails or messages to see and verify the actual URL before clicking.

5. **Generic greetings and language.** Scammers often use generic greetings like "Dear Customer" in their mass emails, which also tend to have spelling or grammatical errors.

### Protect yourself

Staying safe from OTP scams requires vigilance and adopting best practices for online security. Here are some steps you can take:

- Never share your OTP.
- If you get a request for your OTP, verify legitimacy by directly contacting the organization.
- Use multi-factor authentication whenever possible.
- Be wary of links in unsolicited emails or text messages.
- Install security software.

### If you've been targeted

If you think you've been scammed or shared your OTP, take quick action.

First, change the passwords on all affected accounts and those that have similar login credentials. Next, inform the host organization of the account that it's been compromised. They can help secure your account and guide you on additional steps. Monitor your accounts in the ensuing weeks and months, watching for any unauthorized activity. Finally, help stop fraud in its tracks for yourself and others by filing a report with your local consumer protection agency, the FTC and the Internet Crime Complaint Center.

You may also want to consider identity theft protection at this time if sensitive information was compromised.

Stay safe!

## WHAT'S INSIDE

Save on Energy Costs This Summer

Get Your Checking in Check at MembersFirst

Tips & Tricks for Financial Plans

Holiday Closings

CU Happenings

CU Succeed Scholarship Drawing

# HOW CAN I SAVE ON ENERGY COSTS THIS SUMMER?

Summer's here, and so is the possibility of high energy bills burning right through your budget. It's hot out, but you can keep your cool with our energy-saving tips! Follow these hacks to save on energy costs this summer.

## Have your HVAC system professionally inspected.

First, you'll want to make sure your home is being cooled efficiently. You can do this yourself, but it may be worth hiring a professional to check your HVAC system for leaks and other problems.

## Use your A/C efficiently.

Don't waste any of that cold air! In addition to regular maintenance, ensure you're using your A/C system as efficiently as possible. Avoid placing heat-inducing lamps or large TV screens near your thermostat, clean your air intake vents regularly and keep doors and windows closed when running the A/C.

## Get smart.

If you haven't already done so, consider using smart technology to keep your home cool and your costs down. Connecting your thermostat to a mobile device will enable you to control it from a distance and avoid cooling an empty home. You can also use smart technology to set your thermostat on a schedule that suits your family's needs.

## Get grilling.

Your oven and stovetop can heat up much more than your food this summer. Make it a habit to take your cooking outside and keep your home cooler.

## Time your chores.

Using large appliances, like a dryer and dishwasher, can add extra heat to your home, especially if you live in a small space. Use these machines after dark when it's generally cooler.

## Use appliances efficiently.

- Only wash full loads of laundry. If possible, use cold water.
- Use glass pans in the oven when possible since they retain heat better and can shorten cooking time.
- Use appropriately sized pots and pans on your burners.
- Only run your dishwasher when it's full.
- Unplug small- and medium-sized appliances when not in use.

**Use these tips to save on energy costs this season so you can keep yourself cool, and your budget too.**



## NOTICE: Change of Credit Union Mailing Address

The mailing address for all correspondence and payments has changed, as the P.O. Box previously used by MembersFirst is no longer active. **Effective immediately, please update your records with the following permanent mailing address:**

**MembersFirst Credit Union  
2476 Lawrenceville Hwy.  
Decatur, GA 30033**



## Tips & Tricks FOR FINANCIAL PLANS

- ✓ Know your financial accounts
- ✓ Include investments in your plan
- ✓ Set goals & stick to them
- ✓ Work with a Financial Advisor

Credit Union Wealth Group is a registered investment advisor with the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission. Investments in securities: Not FDIC Insured - Not NCUA Insured - No Bank Guarantee - May Lose Value.

Get started with a free wealth management consultation at [membersfirstga.com/wealth-management](https://membersfirstga.com/wealth-management)



# THERE'S STILL TIME FOR THAT VACATION!

Summertime fun is just around the corner! Will you make it a fun-filled getaway or the ultimate staycation? Whatever you do, make it easy and affordable with a Vacation Loan from MembersFirst.

## Now through July 15, 2024:

- Borrow up to \$5,000
- Low rate of 8.9% APR\*
- Terms available up to 24 months

**Apply online at [membersfirstga.com/vacation-loan](https://membersfirstga.com/vacation-loan).**

\*APR = Annual Percentage Rate. Qualifications are based on an assessment of individual creditworthiness and our underwriting standards. Loan amounts available from \$1,000 to \$5,000. Rate of 8.9% APR is good for financing up to 24 months and applies only to Vacation Loan promotion. Offer valid through July 15, 2024. Visit [membersfirstga.com](https://membersfirstga.com) for all available loan rates and terms. Finance charge begins from the date of funding and is repaid over the term. Must be a member of MembersFirst Credit Union. Members with a charged-off account or loan or those in an active bankruptcy may not be approved. Program, rate, terms and conditions are subject to change without notice.



## Get Your Checking in Check at MembersFirst

Don't have a checking account with MembersFirst? Here's what you're missing.

### Perks like:

- No monthly maintenance fees
- Easy, 24/7 access to your account
- Free Visa® debit card with no purchase requirements
- No minimum balance or deposit requirements
- Free ATM use at non-MembersFirst ATMs\*
- And more!

We make it simple to switch with our free Bill Payment system and mobile app. Add a checking account today at [membersfirstga.com](https://membersfirstga.com).

\*MembersFirst does not charge a foreign ATM fee; however, you may be charged a terminal fee by other financial institutions for use of their ATMs.

## Beware of Fraudulent Phone Calls That Appear to Be From MembersFirst

Members have received fraudulent calls that appear to come from the credit union. The caller claims there are specific fraudulent transactions on the member's account. MembersFirst will never call, text or email you to ask for your checking or savings account number, ATM, debit or credit card password or your PIN. If you receive a call, hang up and call your credit union directly.



# CU

## HAPPENINGS!



MembersFirst takes great pride in making a positive difference in the lives of our members, team members, partner hospitals, schools and businesses in the communities we serve. Check out some of our activities as we CU in our community!

### 2024 SCCPSS Commencements

Savannah-Chatham County School Board of Directors and community leaders prepare to watch students walk across the stage at one of the 2024 SCCPSS commencement ceremonies. At each commencement, Ashley DuBois (MFCU), member of the Educate Chatham Foundation board, awarded the Inspirational Educator Award to a teacher that was selected by their senior class. Congratulations, 2024 SCCPSS Graduates!



### Total Wellness at Wellstar

LeeAnn Sims joined Kara Ward (pictured), Wellness Consultant for Wellstar, to speak to team members at the Wellness Day event at Avalon Health Park about the financial aspect of total wellness.



### Piedmont Hosts Employee Appreciation Week

What a week it was for Piedmont Healthcare employees! Each campus was celebrated in the way only Piedmont can with fun, food and plenty of fellowship with others. Here, employees of Piedmont Henry visit the credit union's table and grab a few goodies to pair with their lunches and learn a little more about their financial benefit. We, too, appreciate all you do for each community you serve, Piedmont!



## HOLIDAY CLOSINGS

**Independence Day**  
Thursday, July 4, 2024

**Labor Day**  
Monday, September 2, 2024

**Columbus Day**  
Monday, October 14, 2024



## Locations and Contact Information

### Call Center

**METRO ATLANTA**  
Phone (404) 978-0080  
Fax (404) 978-0095

**COASTAL GEORGIA**  
Phone (912) 352-2902  
Fax (912) 352-0838

### Branch Locations

Visit a branch near you.

Atlanta, Austell, Decatur, Douglasville, Hiram, Marietta, Newnan, Pooler, Sandy Springs and Savannah.

**Main Office**  
2476 Lawrenceville Hwy.  
Decatur, GA 30033-3226

**Mortgages**  
(404) 978-0080

**Mailing Address**  
2476 Lawrenceville Hwy.  
Decatur, GA 30033-3226

**Phone Banking**  
**Metro Atlanta**  
(404) 978-0089  
**Coastal Georgia**  
(912) 352-0059

**24-Hour Lending Service**  
membersfirstga.com

**Website**  
membersfirstga.com

This credit union is federally insured by the National Credit Union Administration.



Download our free Mobile Banking App from Google Play™ or the Apple® App Store. Just search "membersfirstga."



## CU SUCCEED SCHOLARSHIP DRAWING

Hey, CU Succeed members! There's still time to submit your report card for our next scholarship drawing! Be sure to get your grades in by **Friday, August 30, 2024**, for our August 2024 drawing.

Is your student a CU Succeed member? Learn more about this student account benefit at [membersfirstga.com](http://membersfirstga.com).