



CSCU Insights

Newsletter from Central State Credit Union



Deck The Halls With Great Rates

- Rate: 4.50%*
- Term: 9 months
- Minimum: \$1,000, Maximum \$250,000

*APY = Annual Percentage Yield. Rates are effective as of 11/1/2024 and are for a limited time only. The minimum opening deposit is \$1,000 and the maximum deposit per certificate is \$250,000. The annual percentage yield of 4.50% APY is fixed and will be effective for a 9-month term. Offer is subject to 180-day early withdrawal penalties that may result in fees and/or reduce earnings on your deposit. Offer is subject to change.



**Serving The Central
Valley Since 1936**

209.444.5300

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Keeping Your Bank Account and Credit Cyber-Smart



Financial institutions and hacking go hand-in-hand these days and keeping your bank account and credit from being the next victim is more important than ever. The safest approach, although the least favorite, is assuming if your data has not yet been hacked, at some point it will be. Hacking banks and their account holders is the most direct cash infusion a hacker can get... and they know it. According to Kaspersky Lab, attacks on ATMs alone hit an all-time high in 2017 with Malware-as-a-Service (MaaS) opportunities. With this service, even hackers who have no cybercrime experience can watch an instructional “how to” video on how to target an ATM successfully. With all the relentless email phishing attacks and step-by-step advice on hacking, guarding our finances with common sense protection is something we all need to do. It all starts by being proactive with your accounts.



- Password security. It's time to put passion into passwords! Assuming your account will at some point be breached, there's no reason to make it easier for hackers to crack your passwords. Every account deserves a unique password that is eight characters or longer and is a combination of numbers, upper and lowercase letters, and symbols. Try to create a sequence with meaning to make it easier to remember, though not easy to guess or dictionary words. If necessary, write the passwords down. Remember not to leave your written passwords somewhere they are easily found by others.
- Always use two-factor authentication (2FA) or also referred to as, multi-factor authentication (MFA). In the wake of massive financial hacking, most banks and social media provide 2FA as a second security step and can be easily set-up with accounts. When logging into an account, the bank sends a security code to your phone. To complete the login process, the code is needed as the second verification. It's a great and easily added security layer, with the idea being that even if a hacker cracks your password, unless they have your phone, they'll never get the 2FA needed to login.
- Check your accounts often. No more waiting for your monthly statements. With easy online access, keeping tabs on the financial comings-and-goings is an easy way to spot suspicious transactions. Should anything look questionable, it's much more effective to alert your bank or provider immediately. Taking fast, proactive steps can prevent further damage to your account should it be breached.
- Of course, always be on the lookout for phishing scams. These are still common and frequent and are getting more difficult to detect all the time. If you are not expecting a link or attachment, regardless of the sender, just don't click it.
- When using ATMs, take a quick look to ensure there isn't a skimming device attached to it. If there is, don't use it and report it to the financial institution. Also, make sure you use ATMs in well-lit areas and where there is plenty of traffic. Hidden ones or those in dark areas are easier targets for ATM scammers.
- Keep tabs on your credit reports. The big three credit bureaus—TransUnion, Equifax, and Experian allow a free credit report annually, so take advantage of getting one free every four months. Doing so allows you to see what's going on in the background with your credit, and quickly report any nefarious credit-oriented movement.
- Finally, don't be afraid to freeze your credit. By law, the big three credit bureaus now must offer free credit freezing and un-freezing. Should you spot something suspicious with your credit, a quick freeze can prevent a whole lot of financial heartache by keeping hackers from doing further damage. Just remember that frozen credit prevents access to your reports for anyone, including you.

CSCU Cares



Supporting Local Farmworkers: Our Annual Shred Event a Success

Dear Members,

On September 28, 2024, we held our annual Shred Event at Central State Credit Union, and we are thrilled to share that it was a resounding success! This year, we partnered with local businesses and organizations to raise support for farmworkers and their families, while providing our members with a secure way to dispose of sensitive documents.

How We Made an Impact

The event was an opportunity for our members to bring up to three banker boxes of documents for safe shredding in exchange for non-perishable food items or cash donations. Thanks to the generosity of our members and local businesses, we were able to collect over 3 weeks of food, as well as over \$500 in cash donations, all of which went to a local organization dedicated to helping farm workers and their families.

Local Businesses Came Together

The event was not just about shredding—our local community really came together to make the day special. Local businesses and organizations participated by setting up tables, providing information about their services, and contributing exciting raffle prizes. Their involvement made the event even more engaging for everyone who attended, and we are grateful for their support in making this a true community affair.

Good Food and Great Fun

In addition to shredding and supporting a great cause, attendees enjoyed a fun, family-friendly atmosphere with hot dogs, chips, and refreshments available for all. We loved seeing so many familiar faces come out for a worthy cause, enjoying good food and even better company.

Thank You for Your Support

We want to extend our heartfelt thanks to all our members who came out to participate, shred their documents, and support farm workers and their families. Your contributions made a meaningful difference in the lives of those who work tirelessly to keep our community thriving.

We'd also like to thank the local businesses and organizations that set up tables, donated raffle prizes, and helped make this event a memorable one. It is thanks to the combined efforts of our members and partners that we're able to continue supporting important causes in our community.

Stay Connected

As always, we're committed to giving back and making a positive impact on the lives of our members and the greater community. Keep an eye out for future events and thank you for being a part of the Central State Credit Union family!



Walking for a Cause: Over \$9,000 Raised for the Alzheimer's Association

Dear Members,

At Central State Credit Union, we believe in the power of community, and this fall, we had the privilege of joining forces with our members and neighbors to support a worthy cause. We are proud to announce that, with your help, we raised over \$9,000 for the Alzheimer's Association and participated in the Walk to End Alzheimer's on October 19, 2024.

A Day of Giving and Community

The Walk to End Alzheimer's was a truly inspiring event, bringing together people from across our community to raise awareness and funds for Alzheimer's care, research, and support. At our booth, we enjoyed connecting with attendees, sharing our commitment to fighting Alzheimer's, and offering treats as a small token of appreciation.

We passed out cookies and donuts to fuel the walkers and even held a gift basket raffle giveaway for those who stopped by to chat with us. It was a wonderful opportunity to share smiles, stories, and support for a cause that touches so many lives.

Walking Together for a Cure

In addition to our fundraising efforts, our team of staff and members proudly joined the walk itself, uniting with hundreds of others to honor loved ones affected by Alzheimer's and to show our collective commitment to finding a cure. The sense of community was undeniable, and it was heartening to see so many people come together for such a meaningful cause.

Thank You for Your Support

We want to extend a sincere thank you to all our members who contributed to our fundraising efforts, stopped by our booth for a sweet treat, or participated in the walk. Your generosity and enthusiasm made all the difference, and together, we've taken important steps toward a future without Alzheimer's.

Looking Ahead

Although the Walk to End Alzheimer's has passed, our dedication to this cause remains unwavering. We will continue to support Alzheimer's research and advocacy, and we encourage you to stay connected with us for future fundraising and community events.

Thank you again for your incredible support and for being part of a community that cares deeply about making a difference.



Closures

Christmas

Tuesday, December 24th
(Open 9am-1pm)

Wednesday, December 25th
(All Day)

New Year's Day

Wednesday, January 1st
(All Day)

Happy Holidays!

Introducing GreenPath Financial Wellness

When it comes to debt and finances, you do not have to go it alone. Central State Credit Union is pleased to announce the newest member benefit –GreenPath Financial Wellness.

As a valued member, we are providing you with access to certified financial counseling and housing experts, who will empower you to eliminate financial stress, get out of debt, increase savings, and achieve your financial goals.

GreenPath Financial Wellness is a trusted national nonprofit with more than 60 years of helping people build financial health and resiliency. Caring counselors are ready to:

- Explore options for easing financial stress and achieving financial goals
- Discuss your credit and provide tips for improving your credit score
- Look at student loan repayment options, including the pros and cons
- Discuss debt repayment options
- Assist with housing issues, including purchasing a home, or avoiding foreclosure
- Provide you and your family with financial education, through online resources and tools

Get free, personalized answers to your individual needs. For issues ranging from debt and budgeting, to saving a home from foreclosure, advice is only a phone call away.

Contact GreenPath today! To use this service, simply call 877-337-3399. Hours are Monday through Thursday 5 am - 7pm (PST), Friday 5am - 5 pm, and Saturday from 6am - 3pm. You can also visit them at <https://greenpath.com/Partner/centralstatecu>.

Employee Spotlight



Courtney Tofanelli

San Andreas Branch Manager

I started with Central State Credit Union as a part-time teller at the San Andreas branch in 2018. Throughout my 6 years of employment with the credit union, I have enjoyed learning as much as I can and growing professional relationships with members and coworkers. I am very grateful for the positive influence this job has had on me and all I have been able to learn while being here. When not at work, I enjoy watching the same few tv shows repeatedly and baking cookies, cakes, or cinnamon rolls only. Also, seeing how happy my dog is after I throw the ball for the 1,000,000th time.



Transitioning from Summer to Fall: How a HELOC Can Help You Prepare for Holiday Shopping and Home Projects

Dear Members,

As we bid farewell to summer and welcome the crisp, cooler days of fall, many of us start thinking ahead to the changes this season brings—whether it's preparing for the upcoming holidays, making home improvements, or reorganizing finances for the new year. One financial tool that can help you take on these fall projects and holiday preparations with confidence is a Home Equity Line of Credit (HELOC).

What is a HELOC?

A HELOC is a flexible, revolving line of credit that allows you to borrow against the equity in your home. It works like a credit card, offering a credit limit that you can draw from as needed, only paying interest on what you actually use. This makes it a great option for homeowners looking for a smart, cost-effective way to manage large or ongoing expenses.

Why a HELOC Could Be the Right Move for Fall

Fall is a busy time for many families, with back-to-school in full swing, holiday planning on the horizon, and a long list of home maintenance projects to take care of before winter arrives. Here's how a HELOC can help you financially prepare for all of it:

1. Tackle Your Holiday Shopping and Travel

The holidays can be a joyful time, but they often come with significant expenses—from gifts and decorations to travel and hosting. Instead of relying on high-interest credit cards, a HELOC offers a lower-interest alternative for managing holiday costs. Since a HELOC is a revolving credit line, you can use it as needed, whether you're buying gifts in November or covering travel costs in December.

2. Finance Fall Home Projects

Fall is the perfect time to get your home ready for winter and improve your living space for the holiday season. Whether you need to replace drafty windows, install a new furnace, or tackle a kitchen remodel, a HELOC gives you the financial flexibility to make necessary improvements. These upgrades not only make your home more comfortable and energy-efficient but can also increase its value over time.

3. Consolidate High-Interest Debt

With the holidays approaching and the possibility of carrying lingering summer vacation expenses, now is the ideal time to review your finances. If you have multiple high-interest credit card balances, a HELOC can help you consolidate that debt into one lower-interest payment. This not only reduces your monthly interest but can also make managing your finances simpler, giving you peace of mind as the holiday season approaches.

4. Plan for Future Expenses

Fall is also a great time to plan for future financial goals, whether it's covering educational expenses, emergency medical costs, or preparing for large purchases in the new year. A HELOC offers flexibility and long-term access to funds, so you can handle unexpected expenses or plan for upcoming ones without the pressure of a one-time loan.

The Benefits of a HELOC with Central State Credit Union

- **Competitive Rates:** Our HELOCs typically offer lower interest rates than traditional personal loans or credit cards, making it an affordable way to borrow.
- **Flexible Access to Funds:** Borrow what you need when you need it. You won't have to reapply or requalify each time, and you can draw from your credit line for years.
- **Interest Only on What You Use:** You'll only pay interest on the amount you actually borrow, giving you more control over your finances and your payments.
- **Potential Tax Benefits:** In some cases, interest paid on a HELOC may be tax-deductible. (Be sure to consult with your tax advisor to see if you qualify.)

How to Get Started

Applying for a HELOC with Central State Credit Union is simple and straightforward. Our team is here to guide you through the process, answer any questions, and help you determine how much equity you have available. Whether you're gearing up for fall home improvement projects, planning holiday expenses, or looking to consolidate debt, a HELOC can be a valuable financial tool to help you meet your goals.

Ready to Explore Your Options?

To learn more or apply for a HELOC, please call 209-444-5327 or stop by your local Central State Credit Union branch. Our experienced lending team is ready to assist you in making the most of your home's equity, ensuring that you're financially prepared for whatever the fall and holiday season may bring.

Let's work together to make this season one of smart financial decisions and peace of mind.

Tis The Season For Savings

Intro HELOC Rate 5.99% APR for 24 months

*HELOC Promotion good through 1-31-2025. HELOC minimum credit limit is \$25,000 and Maximum Credit Limit is \$250,000. Only Owner Occupied properties qualify within the states of CA, AZ, NV, OR, WA. Property types: Single Family Residence, PUD/Townhome and Condominiums qualify. We are offering a HELOC introductory rate of 2.99% for the first 6-months or 5.99 for the first 24-months from the date the line is established subject to credit qualifications and other conditions. The term is for 25 years - 10 year draw period / 15 year repayment period. All HELOCs have a variable rate. Following the expiration of the Introductory Rate period your Annual Percentage Rate can change on the day that the Introductory Rate period expires, and subsequently, quarterly thereafter. Following the expiration of the Introductory Rate period, the minimum ANNUAL PERCENTAGE RATE at any time is 3.50%. The maximum ANNUAL PERCENTAGE RATE at any time is 14.50%. The Variable rate will be based on the highest Prime Rate as published in the Money Rates Section of The Wall Street Journal in effect on the day the Introductory Rate period expires, and subsequently, on the last day of each calendar quarter ("Index") plus ("Margin"). There is a 24 month fee reimbursement due upon the payoff and closing of the HELOC which will require for you to reimburse the credit union up to \$500 of the amount of fees paid by the credit union.



Serving The Central Valley Since 1936

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Lodi: 363 S. Lower Sacramento Rd., Ste. C, Lodi, CA 95242
San Andreas: 462 W. St. Charles St., San Andreas, CA 95249

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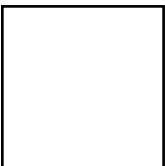
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