

Checks and Balances: Bank Practices in California

Checks and Balances: 2014 Update studied 44 of the nation's 50 largest banks, as determined by volume of deposits, (six did not provide account information to Pew) and documented their use of best and good practices in the areas of disclosure, overdraft, and dispute resolution. The following information reflects data from banks operating in California that made their account disclosures available to Pew. The data do not represent all banks operating in the state. Of the 44 banks Pew studied, 14 operate in California and account for 70 percent of all deposits in the state. Of the six banks that did not provide information, two operate in California and account for 2 percent of all deposits in the state.

Best Practices								
Bank name	Total best practices (out of 7)	Disclosure	Overdraft			Dispute resolution		
		Complete disclosure box	No ATM overdrafts	No point-of-sale overdrafts	No high-to-low reordering	No mandatory arbitration	No class-action waiver	No loss, costs, and expenses clause ¹
First Republic Bank	★ = 6	★	★	★	★	★	★	★
Bank of America	★ = 5	★	★	★	★	★	★	★
Citibank	★ = 5	★	★	★	★	★	★	★
City National Bank	★ = 4	★	★	★	★	★	★	★
OneWest Bank	★ = 4	★	★	★	★	★	★	★
JPMorgan Chase Bank	★ = 3	★	★	★	★	★	★	★
Bank of the West	★ = 3	★	★	★	★	★	★	★
HSBC	★ = 3	★	★	★	★	★	★	★
BBVA Compass Bank	★ = 3	★	★	★	★	★	★	★
Wells Fargo Bank	★ = 2	★	★	★	★	★	★	★
Union Bank	★ = 2	★	★	★	★	★	★	★
Comerica Bank	★ = 2	★	★	★	★	★	★	★
First Citizens Bank	★ = 2	★	★	★	★	★	★	★
U.S. Bank	★ = 1	★	★	★	★	★	★	★
Banco Popular de Puerto Rico			Documents unavailable					
East West Bank			Documents unavailable					
U.S. average¹	2.6	73% of banks studied engage in this best practice	16% of banks studied engage in this best practice	15% of banks studied engage in this best practice	27% of banks studied engage in this best practice	24% of banks studied engage in this best practice	24% of banks studied engage in this best practice	82% of banks studied engage in this best practice

Good Practices												
Bank name	Total good practices (out of 11)	Disclosure				Overdraft				Dispute resolution		
		Incomplete disclosure box	Overdraft default identified	Overdraft penalty fee [‡] disclosed	Overdraft transfer fee [§] disclosed	Some high-to-low reordering	Threshold before overdraft fee	No extended overdraft fee ^{**}	Limits number of overdraft fees/day	Arbitration opt-out	No jury trial waiver	Small-claims exemption
First Republic Bank	✓ = 8	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Bank of America	✓ = 8	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Citibank	✓ = 8	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
City National Bank	✓ = 7	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
OneWest Bank	✓ = 7	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
JPMorgan Chase Bank	✓ = 9	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Bank of the West	✓ = 8	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
HSBC	✓ = 8	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
BBVA Compass Bank	✓ = 7	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Wells Fargo Bank	✓ = 9	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Union Bank	✓ = 8	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Comerica Bank	✓ = 7	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
First Citizens Bank	✓ = 6	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
U.S. Bank	✓ = 7	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Banco Popular de Puerto Rico		Documents unavailable										
East West Bank		Documents unavailable										
U.S. average [†]	8.1	90% of banks studied engage in this good practice	75% of banks studied engage in this good practice	100% of banks studied engage in this good practice	98% of banks studied engage in this good practice	87% of banks studied engage in this good practice	76% of banks studied engage in this good practice	34% of banks studied engage in this good practice	97% of banks studied engage in this good practice	60% of banks studied engage in this good practice	3% of banks studied engage in this good practice	95% of banks studied engage in this good practice

Notes: Banks ordered by number of best then good practices, and alphabetically when tied.

* "Loss, costs, and expenses" clauses require the consumer to pay the bank's costs should the consumer pursue a dispute, no matter the outcome.

† U.S. average weighted by each of the 44 studied institution's domestic deposit volume.

‡ A fee charged per overdraft covered by an advance from the bank.

§ A fee charged per overdraft covered by a transfer from a linked savings account, line of credit, or credit card.

** A fee charged if an account remains overdrawn for more than a specified number of days.

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For further information, please visit:

pewtrusts.org/projects/consumer-banking

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