



# HERITAGE SOUTH

YOUR COMMUNITY CREDIT UNION

SPRING 2019 NEWSLETTER • WWW.MYHSCU.COM

## BE PREPARED FOR THE UNEXPECTED WITH THESE PRODUCTS

### GAP

Can you imagine having a car that you've financed declared a total loss? GAP Insurance is a type of auto insurance that car owners can buy to protect themselves against losses that can arise when the amount of compensation received from a TOTAL loss does not fully cover the amount the insured owes on the vehicle's financing. HSCU is here to help protect you, so please discuss with one of our Loan Officers on your next automobile purchase to see if you would qualify.

### Warranty

Should you get a Warranty on your next auto purchase? Automobile repairs are very expensive, and we have an extended service contract that will protect our Members from high repair costs. Please discuss with one of our Loan Officers on your next automobile purchase to see if you would qualify.

### Credit Life/Disability Insurance

HSCU offers credit life and credit disability that can protect your loan. Credit life pays the remainder of your loan in the event of death and if you are unable to work, credit disability will pay your monthly payments if you become totally disabled and unable to work. HSCU is here to help protect you during these times, so please discuss with one of our Loan Officers the next time you apply for a loan to see if you would qualify.

### Credit Involuntary Unemployment Insurance

HSCU offers Credit Involuntary Unemployment Insurance in the event you are unable to work due to result of involuntary unemployment. Under this plan, your payments could be paid while out of work to avoid delinquency or a loss. Please discuss with one of our Loan Officers the next time you apply for a loan to see if you would qualify.



## RATES AS LOW AS 1.25%<sup>\*APR</sup> UP TO 60 MONTHS!

Receive car sale loan rates on new purchases from April 1st-13th and refinancing rates the entire month of April!

Join us as we partner with local dealers for our 8th Annual Car Sale Event. We will have a team onsite to assist with questions and financing. The two-day event is happening at our main office on HWY 280 - but don't forget we can also help with your auto re-financing needs at any of our five locations from April 1-30. Trust us - you don't want to miss this opportunity! Get pre-approved today by calling, visiting us online, or coming by one of our branches.

## 8 DEALERS / 200+ VEHICLES



APR = Annual Percentage Rate. Rates as low as 1.25% on new purchases April 1st-13th. Special refinancing rates available all month. Contact the Credit Union for further information.

# PHISHING



**You're sitting down at your computer one morning and you open your email.** You notice something odd. There is a strange email that looks like it was sent by someone you know. When you open it, the email is odd and threatening. It is trying to get you to click a strange link or open an unfamiliar attachment. It's saying that its demands are urgent and needs you to respond as soon as possible or face consequences.

## **Congratulations! You have become the target of phishing.**

Phishing is the most common form of Social Engineering, an umbrella term used to describe methods where information is gained by deception through human interaction. Phishing itself is when someone electronically pretends to be someone they are not to obtain information from their targets. This usually takes the form of someone pretending to be someone's bank or credit union and asking for information that will allow the thief to access the user's account (like a password).

Phishers play on fear and unawareness to get information from their victims. If you can recognize the signs or methods of the phisher, then they have no power. They can only get what you give to them. Luckily, there are many ways to determine if the email being sent to you is "off."

The first way you can tell it is a potential phisher is if something is off about the sender of the email. If you suspect something, ask these questions:

- Do you communicate with this person regularly?
- Do you have a personal or professional relationship with the sender? If not, can someone vouch for their validity?
- Was it sent by someone you recognize but the content is unusual or out of character? (Ex: A colleague or friend who is very cordial and reserved in his emails is suddenly typing in a very excited and disjointed way)
- If at work, is the email from someone outside the company or is unrelated to the job?
- Is the sender from your company's domain or from a suspicious external domain?

Regarding the final point, recognizing a suspicious domain (what lies after the @ in an email address) can be tricky. For example, you may receive an email from micorsoft-support rather than microsoft-support. Notice the difference? Phishers are hoping that you will only take a glance at the domain name and suspect nothing. All web addresses must have unique names. The same is true with email addresses within a domain. You may regularly communicate with johnsmith@yourbank.com but a phisher may try to fool you by using johnsrnith@yourbank.com. Once again, notice the small but significant difference. Phishers can only mimic web/email addresses but not fully duplicate them. Being able to recognize suspicious domains and sites will help you stay ahead of the phisher's tricks.

Another way you can tell if it's a phisher is by the body of the email. While these can be separate, a phishing email generally shows suspicious signs both in the identity of its sender and the body of the email. Here are things to consider if you think the email is suspicious:

- Is the sender asking you to click a link or open an attachment, often with some form of threat or negative consequences?
- Is the email out of the ordinary? (As in very unusual for the perceived sender)
- Does it have bad grammar and spelling errors?
- Does something seem off about the link or attachment they are asking you to click/open?
- Do you simply have an uncomfortable gut feeling about the email in general?

You have probably heard this advice multiple times, yet it is something that always needs repeating. **DO NOT** click on any link or attachment if you do not know who sent it to you and you do not know where the link leads. These links and attachments will often lead to viruses that will infect your computer. It should be noted that opening an email will not activate a virus. The virus is either in the attachment or the link. If you open the email and read it, you will not be in danger unless you click anything. Sometimes these links will take you to the "site" that is created by them to receive your username and password when you "sign in."

A common myth you hear is that if a website has a lock in the URL or it begins with https then it is a safe and secure site. That is a half-truth. The lock and https does mean it is secure, but that only means the connection is secure, meaning that the data cannot be read by third parties. It does not mean the site itself is safe. Phishers have been setting up sites with secure connection for fooling people who have heard of this myth, as well as making sure no one intercepts the data they're trying to receive.

While no one can stop phishers from trying to fool people and get their data, they are powerless if you do not respond. If you don't click that link or open that attachment or put your username and password in, they have nothing. Phishers rely on the fear and unawareness of the people they target. The best way to combat phishers and protect your data from them is to be discerning and know how they approach you. If you recognize the bait and don't take it, then there is nothing they can do to you.

# WHAT'S GREAT ABOUT

# BROADWAY

Well, there are lots of great things about Heritage South Credit Union's Broadway office. Let's start with location. Did you know that Sylacauga was incorporated as a city in 1838? This city has more history than you might expect. Sylacauga's main thoroughfare is, you guessed it, Broadway Avenue. The first building was constructed on this road in 1890. This means that the Broadway branch is in one of the oldest parts of town. Residential developments were built around this downtown area, thus making Broadway central to our membership. Located near the J. Craig Smith Community Center, Blue Bell Creameries, and Sylacauga High School, the Broadway office is at the heart of this great city.

Secondly, here at Broadway we have over a century of financial experience shared between our staff members. Now, all employees of Heritage South are top quality, but here at Broadway we strive to be as multiskilled as we can be. In turn, this typically means less wait time in the lobby for whatever services or needs you may have. If you have a member service issue, a teller could quite possibly take care of you. Do you want to open an account and/or apply for a loan? Jessica, Adam, or April can help you with either of those requests. We take pride in the strengths of our cross trained employees and their ability to be of better service to our membership.

Finally, when you come through our door, you become part of our family. A true family always takes care of and protects one another. Here at Broadway, that is our top priority; to help and protect you financially. So, come on by and let us welcome you to the Broadway family.



**April Morris**  
Branch Manager



**Carolyn Bivin**  
Teller



**Seth Harris**  
Teller



**Adam Keeton**  
Loan Officer



**Jenny Miller**  
Teller



**Jessica Sawyer**  
Member Services Rep



**Cristina Sims**  
Teller



**Amber Wheeler**  
Teller



## WHAT DOES NIGHT DEPOSITORY MEAN?

A night depository is a drop box located at all 5 of our credit union locations where members and merchants can deposit their daily cash, checks and make loan payments. Anyone can make drops after 7:30am, and the following morning each branch will post all night drop transactions to the members account.

Individuals will place their transaction in an envelope, which are kept onsite at the night depository. Business members may choose to use a zipper bag or tamper evident bag for larger drops. The night depository shoot opens slightly for envelope transactions, where larger drops may require a key for the member to open the shoot completely.

A night depository provides additional security for our members and our merchants. No need to keep money at the place of business or with the individual overnight, when you can make the drop after normal credit union hours. It's simple and convenient.

# WHAT IS SHARED BRANCHING?



CO-OP Shared Branching allows members of one credit union to do a range of transactions at another credit union. Through the CO-OP Shared Branch network, participating credit unions can serve members in diverse geographical locations, even when they move or travel.

The Shared Branch networks consists of more than 5,600 locations from coast to coast. Access to convenient branches is high priority for consumers.

- CO-OP Shared Branch is the second largest branch network in the country, with more than 5,600 credit union branches and hundreds of self-service Shared Branch express terminals in all 50 states.
- The CO-OP Shared Branch network allows members of one credit union to do a range of transactions at another credit union. Through the CO-OP Shared Branch network, participating credit unions can serve members in diverse geographical locations, even when they move or travel.
- CO-OP Shared Branch express terminals provide after-hours member access, reduce teller traffic, and can help you leverage your existing investment in ATMs.

Sprig by CO-OP is the ultimate virtual credit union wallet with P2P payments to anyone plus all your accounts from all your credit unions together in one spot. You can access Sprig on all your mobile devices, and it's accessible anytime, day or night.



With Sprig, you can access your accounts, make deposits, transfer between accounts, pay loans from one credit union to another, and make person to person payments from virtually anywhere.

Visit: [www.getsprig.com](http://www.getsprig.com)



**HERITAGE SOUTH**  
YOUR COMMUNITY CREDIT UNION

## CONTACT US:

Phone: 256-245-4776/Email: [msr@myhscu.com](mailto:msr@myhscu.com)

Or visit us at one of our locations:

Sylacauga – Broadway Ave. / Sylacauga – Hwy 280

Childersburg – Hwy 280

Moody – Moody Parkway

Alexander City - Hwy 280

# People Helping People.

At Heritage South Credit Union, we always strive to put our members in a better financial situation. It is the primary concern of our loan department to assess each member's finances and determine the best way to help them with their financial needs. Although we want to be your primary lender, lending is only part of the process that our loan officers complete when you stop by. Our members are more than just a loan to us. We want to develop a financial plan for each member that is personalized, in office, with a loan officer.

A common question presented to our lenders is "How can I build or repair my credit?" Although there are several solutions to these problems, it is the duty of our loan officers to uncover the best course of action specific to the member they are helping. For example: Members with no credit may best be served with a share secured loan or credit card. These products both help the member establish credit without the need for a co-signer and have very low risk to the credit union. On the other hand, members who have established credit history, but would like to improve their score might benefit more from a credit card or personal line of credit.

Both products give you control in building and repairing your credit.

At Heritage South Credit Union our loan department stands by the credit union philosophy of "people helping people."

We view our members as individuals with individual needs and it's our job to help take care of those needs. Next time you are in one of our branches, stop by and see your community loan officer. We will be more than happy to help you with your financial goals.

## A QUICK WORD FROM OUR COLLECTIONS DEPARTMENT REGARDING PAST DUE LOANS...

**Being past due on a loan is not the end of the world and you are not alone.**

In fact, there are over six million Americans today that are past due on a loan. Tomorrow, there will be six million more. This holds true 365 days a year. Nobody wants to be past due on a loan, but sometimes it happens. When you become past due, there are many emotions that you may feel, such as embarrassment, anger, sadness, and helplessness.

When you become past due, it is important to remain focused. Now is the time to swallow your pride and reach out for help. Give us a call or stop by for a visit. The Collections Department at Heritage South Credit Union is here for you. We have many different solutions to help you through this difficult time.

Some of the tools that we offer are:

- Extensions – some loans qualify for a one-time extension. By paying the interest due, we can advance your due date and buy you some time to come up with a regular payment.
- Refinance – It may be time to look at your current debt and income. There may be an option to refinance your current loan or combine multiple loans to lower your payments each month.
- Skip a Pay – During the holiday season, we offer our skip a pay option that allows you to skip one month's payment for a small fee.
- Payment Plan – We would also look at arranging a payment plan with you until you get things turned around and back on schedule.

Our goal is to help you! We want to make sure that your credit remains intact or improves. We also want to make sure that the business relationship between member and credit union remains in good standing, so we can fulfill your needs in the future.

*- Matt Herbinger, Collections Manager*

## Simplify Your Life with **BILL PAY**

How many of you pay your bills online? Are you aware that you can pay all your bills from one website instead of logging into multiple sites? You can do this with Bill Pay! Bill Pay is a free service offered to our members as part of your online banking package. With Bill Pay there are no checks to write, no postage to pay, and no envelopes to buy. Payments can be scheduled to work with your budget as a recurring payment or a single payment. With Bill Pay, you can send money to friends and family with ease. You can pay an electronic payment to an individual, mail a gift check with a simple message written on it, or transfer funds from one account to another. Bill Pay makes paying your bills convenient. It's easy to set up, and it's available on the mobile app! Just log in to home banking and select the bill pay tab to get started.

**Your question is:** When can I get my debit or credit card from Heritage South?

**Answer:** At our main branch on Hwy 280 in Sylacauga, you can walk in and out with a new card the same day. The same goes for our Alexander City and Moody branches. The Broadway and Childersburg branches are able to order new cards for members that will be ready the next business day.

# Detecting



Heritage South Credit Union takes an active approach to stopping fraud and scams for our membership. Our first line of defense is our front-line teller staff.

Many times, through casual conversation, these employees can uncover clues that point to a potential issue with an item. The discovery of those red flags helps the employees safeguard the member as well as the credit union from possible loss. Some tactics used for protection are: verification of the check from the drawing bank, authentication of the maker of the check, and depositing the item with an extended hold to ensure collection of the funds.

There are many ways to measure the success of a scam. A couple of common ways are by the number of reported incidents or the dollar amount of the losses sustained. According to Fraud.org and The Better Business Bureau the following are some of the top scams in our area:

## **Debt Collection**

Most of the complaints under this category involve debt collectors. Consumers tell of receiving calls from harassing collectors who are threatening and will repeatedly call attempting to collect a debt. Other complaints that fall under this category involved credit/debit card fees, pay day loans, credit repair companies, and unauthorized use of credit/debit cards. Some of these complaints involved hidden fees and billing disputes as well.

## **Fake Government Officials**

If you received an email, letter or phone call from a government agency (typically the IRS or FBI) and it instructs you to wire, Western Union or MoneyGram money someplace, or follow a link and enter information - don't believe it! The U.S. government would never instruct anyone to use those methods to pay any bill or carry out a financial transaction, particularly with an overseas bank or agency.

## **Identity Theft, Phishing and Pharming**

Scammers gain access to your confidential information, like social security numbers or date of birth and then use it to apply for credit cards, loans, and financial accounts. Typically, the victim receives an email that appears to be from a credible, real bank or credit card company, with links to a website and a request to update account information. But the website and email are fakes, made to look like the real website.

## **Phone Scams**

This includes telemarketers violating the Do Not Call list, Rob dialers, scammers calling up pretending to be from a bank or credit card company. The National Do Not Call Registry (U.S.) or the National Do Not Call List (Canada) offer consumers a free way to reduce telemarketing calls. Scammers call anyway, of course, and they've even found a way to scam consumers by pretending to be a government official calling to sign you up or confirming your previous participation on the Do Not Call list! A good example of this is the "Your Microsoft license key has expired" scam call.

## **Loans Scams / Credit Fixers**

False promises of business or personal loans, even if credit is bad, for a fee upfront. Or a scam that promises to repair your credit for a fee.

The bottom line is if it's too good to be true, it probably is. With use of current policies and procedures, it is our top priority to help protect you financially. If you have any questions regarding a suspicious check or financial transaction, feel free to call/stop by any of our offices.