

Bankrate

Out-of-Network ATM Fees Hit Another Record, As Average Surcharge Sets 23rd Record High in Past 26 Years

Banks continue to eliminate NSF fees, but average overdraft fee moves higher

NEW YORK - August 21, 2024 - According to Bankrate's annual Checking Account and ATM Fee Study, the average ATM surcharge (a fee levied by the ATM owner on a non-customer) is \$3.19, setting the 23rd record high in 26 years of surveys. Bankrate's study has surveyed non-interest and interest accounts and their associated fees going back 26 years. Click here for more information:

<https://www.bankrate.com/banking/checking/checking-account-survey/>

ATM Fees

The average combined ATM fees for an out-of-network withdrawal (the fee paid to your own bank as well as a surcharge levied by the ATM owner) is a record \$4.77, up for the fourth consecutive year, and marking the 19th record high. The average fee charged by your bank for going outside the network - charged on 61% of accounts - is \$1.58, unchanged from last year and 8% shy of 2017's record high of \$1.72.

The cost of combined ATM fees vary by metro, with Atlanta having the highest average ATM fee of \$5.33 and Boston having the lowest of \$4.16.

Highest Average ATM Fee by Metro*	Lowest Average ATM Fee by Metro*
1. Atlanta - \$5.33	25. Boston - \$4.16
2. San Diego - \$5.22	24. Seattle - \$4.34
2. Phoenix - \$5.22	23. Philadelphia - \$4.42
4. Detroit - \$5.18	22. New York Metro - \$4.47
5. Cleveland - \$5.10	21. Baltimore - \$4.52

**Reflect both ATM fees combined (those charged by the out-of-network ATM operator and those charged by the consumer's own financial institution); San Diego and Phoenix were tied, coming in at 2 overall*

“If you make an out-of-network ATM withdrawal, expect to pay and pay more than ever before,” said Bankrate Chief Financial Analyst Greg McBride, CFA. “Fees have increased again and you’ll typically pay two fees - one to the ATM owner and another to your own bank. Confine cash withdrawals to in-network ATMs or get cash back when using a debit card. See if your bank participates in a nationwide ATM network that can be used free of charge.”

Overdraft and NSF Fees

Following two straight years in declines of both overdraft and non-sufficient fund (NSF) fees, 2024 saw a shift. This year, the average NSF fee dropped a further 11% from last year’s \$19.94 to a new record low of \$17.72. Overall, more than one-third of accounts (36%) do not charge an NSF fee, up from 30% in 2023, as banks continue to eliminate that fee altogether.

While NSF fees declined from last year, overdraft fees did not. The average overdraft fee increased 1.7% from last year’s \$26.61 to \$27.08 this year. Nearly all accounts (94%) still charge an overdraft fee, while the majority (64%) still charge NSF fees, and 6% do not charge either.

Overdraft fees also vary by metro area, with Philadelphia having the highest average overdraft fee of all metros observed at \$32.70, and the Washington, D.C. metro area having the lowest at \$19.63.

Highest Average Overdraft Fee by Metro	Lowest Average Overdraft Fee by Metro
1. Philadelphia - \$32.70	25. Washington, D.C. Metro - \$19.63
2. Pittsburgh - \$30.60	24. Miami - \$19.67
3. Denver - \$30.47	23. San Francisco - \$22.27
4. Milwaukee - \$30.28	22. New York Metro - \$23.58
5. Houston - \$29.35	21. Detroit - \$24.50

“With 24/7 mobile account access, it is important to monitor your available account balance - not just the balance in the account but the amount available for immediate withdrawal - before initiating transactions,” McBride added. “This is the best way to avoid overdraft fees. Do not opt-in to overdraft protection on small-dollar ATM and debit card transactions, and consider declining overdraft protection altogether. Link your checking account and savings account so any shortfall is covered by your own funds,

not the bank's.”

Two-thirds of accounts (66%) offer some flexibility before charging the full NSF or overdraft fee, up from 62% in 2023 and the highest since 2021. However, this latitude can range from overdrawing between \$1 to as much as \$100 before the overdraft fee is assessed, to reversing the first two fees incurred during each calendar year. For those trying to avoid overdraft fees as well as for households on tight budgets, just over 1 in 5 accounts (21%) offer 2-day early access to direct deposit, a new inclusion in this year's study.

Interest and Non-Interest Checking Accounts

Nearly half of non-interest accounts (47%) are free with no minimum balance or monthly fee, up from 45% in 2023. This figure has remained in the 45-48% range since 2020, but is higher than any level observed between 2011 and 2019. Additionally, 46% of non-interest accounts will waive the fee based solely on direct deposit, meaning 93% of non-interest accounts are either free or can become free by having a regular direct deposit into the account.

The average minimum balance that must be maintained to avoid the monthly fee on an interest checking account has reached a new high of \$10,210, which is up 18% from \$8,684 in 2023, 3% higher than the previous record of \$9,897 in 2021, and a staggering 35% since 2020. In the 26-year period that this study has been conducted, the balance requirement to avoid fees on an interest checking account has increased at an average annual rate of 7.5%.

“Avoid balance requirements and monthly fees by seeking out free checking accounts - either an account that is already free or one that can easily become free based on your banking habits, such as having a regular direct deposit,” McBride concluded. “Put your excess cash into an online savings account earning over 5% rather than stranding it in a low-yielding checking account just to avoid paying a monthly fee.”

Methodology:

Bankrate conducted the survey among a total of 10 banks and thrifts in each of 25 large U.S. markets; 1 interest and 1 non-interest checking account, as well as their associated ATM fee policies, were surveyed from 245 financial institutions offering consumer checking accounts; 229 interest checking accounts and 222 non-interest checking accounts were surveyed between May 6 - June 24, 2024.

About Bankrate:

Bankrate has guided savers and spenders through the next steps of their financial journeys since 1976. Whether it's rates or information on mortgages, investing, credit cards, personal loans, insurance, taxes or retirement, the company offers various free resources to help consumers reach their goals. From product comparison tools to award-winning editorial content, Bankrate provides objective information and actionable next steps. Bankrate also aggregates rate information from over 4,800 institutions on more than 300 financial products, with coverage in more than 600 local markets. It's why over 100 million people put their trust in Bankrate every year.

For more information:

Abby Yarber

Public Relations Specialist

abby.yarber@bankrate.com

(704) 697-1372

[Bankrate](#)

