

# FIRST FORUM

*Your Source for Financial Solutions*

## Beware of Tech Support Scams

Tech support scams are some of the most nefarious forms of hacks.

In these scams, fraudsters contact victims and attempt to trick them into granting access to their computers. The crooks may reach out to people through a fear-mongering phone call or by sending a popup to the victim's computer, warning of an impending or existing virus that can be "fixed" by clicking on a link.

There are several outcomes of tech support scams. Sometimes, you'll be tricked into installing malware on your computer or into purchasing expensive "software" to supposedly heal your computer. The scammer might direct you to a bogus tech support website where you'll be asked to input sensitive information.

And they'll oftentimes simply help themselves to the data they find on your computer.

### Federal Trade Commission (FTC) Scams

Tech support scams are nothing new, but a recent wave of these scams has taken on an ironic twist. The very organization that leads the battle in taking down scammers is being exploited for a particularly heinous hack.

Scammers posing as FTC employees are calling victims and asking for remote access to their computers. They assure victims they can restore affected devices to their previous working conditions. Many of them claim to represent the FTC's Advanced Tech Support Refund program, which helps victims of scams collect their refund money.

The scammers will convince victims that they are just moments away from receiving their money – they only need to grant the alleged FTC employee remote access to their device. They may also ask for an upfront payment before the refund can be issued or for checking account information, claiming it's necessary for the refund to clear.

Of course, none of this is true; the FTC will never request remote access to your device or ask you to pay to receive a refund. Also, their refunds are sent in check form via snail mail, and do not require any checking account information.

The FTC has alerted the public that the only number to call for information about the Advanced Tech Support Refund program is (877) 793-0908. If someone calls you on their own, end the call immediately and alert the FTC.

### Recognizing Tech Support Scams

The FTC tech support scams are easy to spot if you know that the FTC will never request remote access to your computer, ask for payment in exchange for a refund or reach out to you on the phone.

### Here's how to prevent other variations of tech support scams:

- Never click on a pop-up box that claims your computer has a virus and offers to clean it.
- Always call tech support on your own.
- Never purchase expensive software online to fix an alleged virus.

If you think you've been scammed, alert the FTC. It's also a good idea to give us a call to make sure your account information and funds are still secure. Remember, MembersFirst will never call to request personal or account information.

### Let's help put scam artists out of business!

## WHAT'S INSIDE

The Best Time to Buy

Swap & Drop

Surviving Summertime Back-to-School Shopping

CU Succeed Drawing

More Credit Card Debt Than You Care to Carry?

CU Happenings

Balance Transfer

# THE BEST TIME TO BUY

You don't have to spend a ton if you time your purchases right. Here are the best things to buy during each month of the year!

**January:** Christmas Decorations

**February:** Winter Gear

**March:** Exercise Equipment

**April:** Tech

**May:** Home Improvement

**June:** Thrift

**July:** School Supplies

**August:** Cooling Appliances

**September:** Major Appliances

**October:** Cars and Cruises

**November:** Games and Gaming Consoles

**December:** Gift Cards

Visit our blog to find out how you'll save in these categories and why at [membersfirstga.com/blog](http://membersfirstga.com/blog).

## Lower your payment. Keep your car.



**SWAP** your auto loan to MembersFirst  
and we'll **DROP** your rate by **2% to as low as 2.9% APR\***

Beginning August 14, 2018, refinance your auto loan from another lender with MembersFirst and we'll help you:

- Drop your rate by 2% to as low as 2.9% APR\*
- Enjoy no payments for 90 days\*\*

Lower your payment, keep your car... it's that simple!

Low loan rates on RVs and Motorcycles, too!

**As low as 3.9% on RVs**

**As low as 4.9% on Motorcycles**

Offer ends November 30, 2018.

### Apply today!

- Call (404) 978-0080 or (912) 352-2902.
- Click and apply online at [membersfirstga.com](http://membersfirstga.com).
- Visit a branch near you.

\*APR=Annual Percentage Rate. Qualifications are based on an assessment of individual creditworthiness and our underwriting standards. Lowest rate of 2.9% APR is good for financing up to 36 months. Longer terms are available at higher loan rates. To receive the 2% reduction on your existing rate, loan must be transferred from a lender other than MembersFirst Credit Union. Finance charge begins from date of funding and is repaid over the term. Offer not available on existing MembersFirst auto loans. Loan amount must be a new MembersFirst CU auto, RV or motorcycle loan of \$5,000 or more to qualify for 90-Day No Payment Offer. \*\*90-Day No Payment Offer is based on individual creditworthiness and is not available on loans refinanced outside of the Swap-And-Drop Program guidelines. First payment due date may vary based on repayment terms. Offer ends November 30, 2018. All loans are subject to credit approval. Program, terms and conditions are subject to change without notice. Visit [membersfirstga.com](http://membersfirstga.com) for all available rates and terms.

## Surviving Summertime Back-to-School Shopping

Back-to-school time – it's the second largest shopping season of the year. If all that spending makes your head pound, take heart. MembersFirst has your back! We'll help you navigate it with your budget and sanity intact. Read on for eight back-to-school saving tips.

### 1. Do a house-wide sweep.

Before you spend a penny, scour your closets and drawers to see what you have lying around the house. Round up all the supplies and list everything you've found. Keep the list handy so you don't end up buying things you don't need.

### 2. Get the teacher-approved list.

By sticking to the official list, you won't have to later repurchase supplies to fit the teacher's criteria.

### 3. Spread out your purchases.

Shopping throughout the summer will allow you to take advantage of weekly sales.

### 4. Organize a clothing swap with other parents in your area.

Choose a date and venue and instruct all attendants to show up with three or more items of gently used children's clothing to exchange.

### 5. Find the best prices.

Hunt for specials in weekly circulars and look up coupons and deals online on sites like RetailMeNot.

### 6. Time it right.

Purchase what your child needs now and save the rest for later. You'll find deep discounts on fall clothing just a few weeks into the school year.

### 7. Pay with cash or debit card only!

These payment methods will help you stay within your budget. Resist the urge to charge so you won't be paying interest long after the pencils have broken.

### 8. Plan ahead.

When school supplies and backpacks are ridiculously discounted a few weeks into the school year, stock up for next year.

Don't forget – you can set up a special savings account for expenses like these. Use payroll deduction to make saving simple! ***Have a great school year!***

## CU Succeed Drawing



The CU Succeed Scholarship drawing will be held on Friday, August 31, 2018. Please turn in all report cards and transcripts to your local branch by Wednesday, August 29.

# More Credit Card Debt Than You Care to Carry?

For many, debt caused by rising credit card balances and high interest rates is a common stressor. It can feel as though you're up to your eyeballs in debt with multiple payments on several cards – and getting nowhere when you can't make more than the minimum payment. Using a personal loan to refinance your existing debt can make your debt more manageable. You'll have one monthly payment at one interest rate instead of many smaller bills due on different days of the month. But, will a personal loan work for your situation? Ask yourself...

## **What caused the debt problem?**

If a medical bill, job loss or some other temporary hardship describes your situation, the fact that you have the means to pay the bills means you've identified the problem that caused the debt in the first place. It's fixable. If, on the other hand, you accumulated debt by overspending on credit cards, a debt consolidation loan may not be the answer just yet. First make a budget you can stick to, and gain responsibility in your use of credit.

## **Can I commit to a repayment plan?**

If you're struggling to make minimum monthly payments on bills, a debt consolidation loan can only do so much. It's possible that the lower interest rate will make repayment easier, but bundling all that debt together could result in a higher monthly payment over a shorter period of time. How much can you realistically put toward getting out of debt? Knowing what your budget and debt look like beforehand can help you determine if consolidation works for you.

## **Is my interest rate the problem?**

For some people, the biggest chunk of their debt is a student loan. Debt consolidation for student loans, especially subsidized PLUS loans, may not make a great deal of sense. You're better off negotiating the repayment structure with your lender. If you're dealing with credit card debt, interest rate could be part of the problem. Credit card rates are often variable and change with the prime rate.

## **Will a personal loan cover all my debts?**

The average American household has nearly \$15,000 in credit card debt. If you have more than \$25,000 in credit card debt, it's going to be difficult to put together a personal loan that can finance the entire amount. Prioritize the highest interest cards and consolidate

those instead of trying to divide your refinancing evenly between accounts. Debt consolidation doesn't work for everyone, but it can be a viable solution for some.

## **Will a debt reduction loan work for you? Do you...**

*Have fair to excellent credit?*

*Have credit card debt on two or more major credit cards?*

*Have less than \$25,000 in credit card debt?*

*Have an interest rate higher than 8.9% on one or more credit cards?*

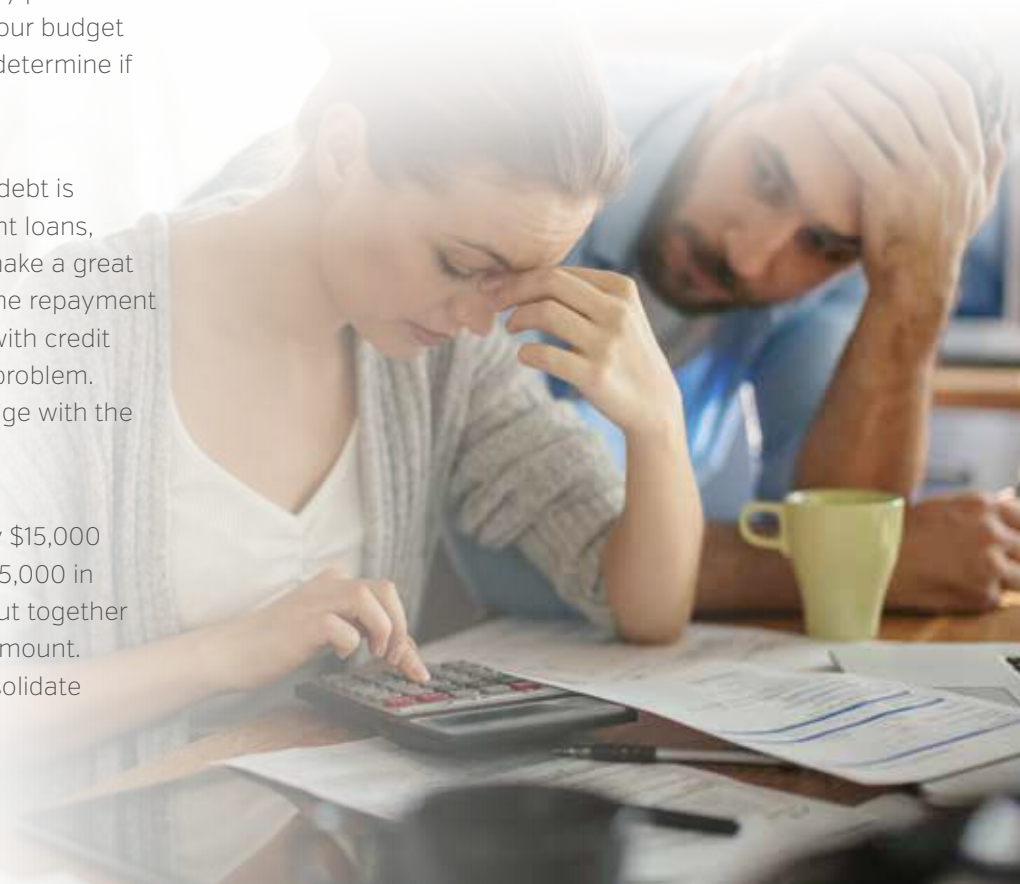
*Make only the minimum payments on your cards?*

*Have credit card balances you've been carrying for more than five years?*

Answering YES to two or more of these questions could mean a debt reduction/consolidation loan is your solution. At MembersFirst, we offer a loan program designed to convert that challenging debt to manageable debt. Ask about our **Save As You Pay** Loan which features:

- Non-variable rates as low as **8.9% APR**
- Fixed Terms up to five years
- And loan amounts up to \$25,000

**If you feel you're drowning in credit card debt, let us throw you a lifeline by starting a conversation with your member advisor about a Save As You Pay Loan today.**





# CU HAPPENINGS!

**We know what gems we have on staff at MembersFirst,** but it sure is great when our staff members are recognized for their achievements by the communities we serve! Recently, Mrs. Angie Holland accepted the award for Ambassador of the Quarter for the Paulding County Chamber of Commerce. Great job, Mrs. Holland! Thank you for what you do in Paulding and abroad! We are proud to have you on our team! (Pictured: Mrs. Stacy Hamby, Paulding Chamber President, left, with Mrs. Holland, Business Development Officer)



**Work. Save. Play.** That's what students participating in the City of Savannah's Summer 500 program are practicing. Almost 300 students went to work this summer to learn employability, communication and other important life and work skills. MembersFirst is the proud credit union sponsor of this program, teaching students how to balance financial responsibilities once they begin earning a paycheck. Congrats to these students for taking big steps to enhance their education and work-life skills! Here, Savannah's Business Development Coordinator, Mrs. Ashley DuBois, presented to students on understanding how their newly acquired financial skills can work to help them reach their savings and budgeting goals.



**Congratulations to the 2017-2018 Marketing Crew and MFCU@HHS Student-Employees!** This group of students not only worked hard all year on their studies, but they also served members at our Hiram High School credit union branch and helped plan and execute several initiatives and events at Hiram High School. We're so proud of this "Crew," their MembersFirst support staff and teachers at HHS – you've had a great year!



**Follow us on social media and check out our blog for more CU Happenings!**

## Get a Better Rate

WHEN YOU BRING YOUR BALANCES TO US

Beginning July 20, 2018, transfer credit card balances to a MembersFirst Visa® credit card and enjoy a rate of 3.99% APR\* for one year! Plus, you can make purchases during the promotional period at this low rate when you use your MembersFirst Visa. You'll enjoy:

- Low, non-variable rates after the promotion period ends starting at 8.99% APR\*
- 25-day grace period on purchases
- Rewards points for every purchase
- No balance transfer or annual fees!

Apply today and get a better rate! Click, Call or Come by a branch near you!

\*APR=Annual Percentage Rate. 3.99% APR promotional rate applies to balances transferred and purchases made between 07/20/18 and 9/30/18. Offer expires 9/30/18. Subject to credit approval. See membersfirstga.com for complete terms and conditions.



## Main Office and Call Center

### METRO ATLANTA

Phone (404) 978-0080  
Fax (404) 978-0095

### Chatham County

606 East 67th St.  
Savannah, GA 31405

### Cobb County

#### WellStar-Cobb Hospital

3950 Austell Rd.  
Austell, GA 30106

#### WellStar-Kennestone Hospital

675 Campbell Hill St.  
Marietta, GA 30060

### DeKalb County

2476 Lawrenceville Hwy.  
Decatur, GA 30033

### DeKalb Medical

2701 North Decatur Rd.  
Decatur, GA 30033

### Douglas County

7475 Douglas Blvd.  
Suite 206  
Douglasville, GA 30135

### Fulton County

#### Atlanta Medical - Main Campus

303 Parkway Dr.  
Atlanta, GA 30312

### Sandy Springs

8010 Roswell Dr.  
Suite 150  
Sandy Springs, GA 30350

### SAVANNAH

Phone (912) 352-2902  
Fax (912) 352-0838

### Paulding County

44 Highland Falls Blvd.  
Hiram, GA 30141

### Satellite Locations

(Part-Time Hours)

Atlanta Medical Center - South Campus

WellStar Admin Building

WellStar Corporate Office

### Mailing Address

PO Box 33189  
Decatur, GA 30033

### 24-Hour Lending Service

membersfirstga.com

### Mortgages

(404) 978-0080

### Phone Banking

Metro Atlanta  
(404) 978-0089

### Savannah

(912) 352-0059

### Website

membersfirstga.com

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



**NCUA**

## HOLIDAY CLOSINGS

### Independence Day

Wednesday, July 4, 2018

### Columbus Day

Monday, October 8, 2018

### Labor Day

Saturday, September 1, 2018  
Monday, September 3, 2018

### Veterans' Day

Monday, November 12, 2018