



# NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## FDIC CONSUMER HOTLINE SERVICE EXPANDED

The Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation hotline to assist consumers has been expanded by the addition of a telecommunication device for the deaf. Those who cannot hear on the telephone and who have Baudot or ASCII equipment now can communicate with FDIC through teletype messages over the telephone lines.

The FDIC maintains a toll-free Consumer Telephone Hotline to allow the public to ask questions or present views and complaints about consumer protection or civil rights matters in banking. The toll-free number is (800) 424-5488. It is in daily service, Monday through Friday, from 8:30 a.m. to 4:45 p.m., Eastern Standard Time. In the Washington, D.C., metropolitan area the number is (202) 389-4473. These numbers also reach the teletypewriter for the hearing impaired.

This service is designed to help consumers learn what their rights are and to broaden their general knowledge of banking.

The consumer hotline helps the FDIC evaluate its administration of the consumer protection statutes and be responsive to the general public. Banks also benefit because the hotline helps forestall disputes stemming from customer confusion or misunderstanding of proper banking practices.

The FDIC advises persons having individual problems or questions involving specific banks to first contact senior bank managers to resolve the problem before contacting the appropriate FDIC Regional Office.

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A brochure entitled "Consumer Information" highlights the federal consumer protection statutes enforced by the FDIC in those banks that are under its supervisory jurisdiction and provides a detachable postage-paid complaint form for customers' use. Copies of the brochure may be obtained from the FDIC Warehouse, 550-17th Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20429 in bulk quantities without charge.

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