



**BANK ON
ARKANSAS+**

Arkansas
Asset Funders Network

Bank On Arkansas+

A partnership among financial institution, nonprofits, philanthropists, government agencies, and other stakeholders to reduce and remove barriers to mainstream banking

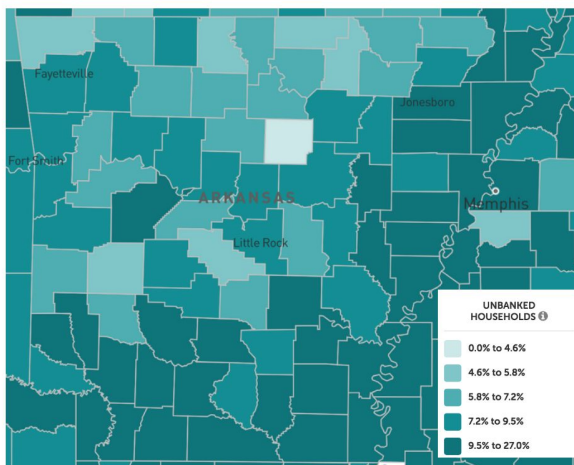
The Challenge: Too Many Arkansans are Unbanked and Underbanked

Families who do have bank accounts often live paycheck to paycheck, which limits their economic mobility. Without bank accounts, families are often forced to rely on predatory lenders or check cashing establishments to cover monthly expenses and basic necessities, like rent, electricity, utilities, food, and medicine—paying more for basic services.

When lower-income families have access to bank accounts, they are more likely to own assets than families of similar means without bank accounts. Unfortunately, millions of families lacking access to mainstream financial services fall victim to high-risk, costly financial situations that trap them in a cycle of debt, dependency, and potential poverty.

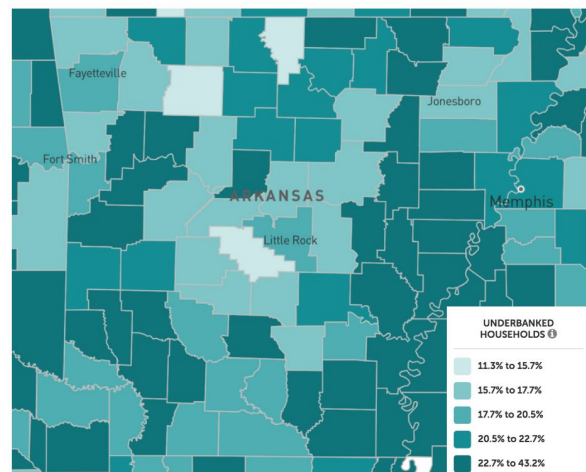
This cycle of “barely scraping by” is not uncommon among the unbanked community in Arkansas. According to the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation’s survey, Arkansas has 9.7 percent unbanked households and 22.6% underbanked households, which are those that have a checking or savings account but also use other, often high-cost, alternative financial services.

Unbanked Households



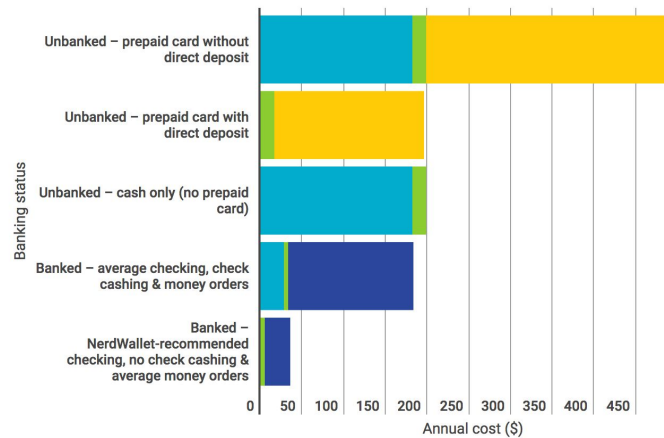
Highest percentage unbanked: Phillips County - 17.9%

Underbanked Households



Highest percentage underbanked: Lee County, 29.8%

Annual costs: unbanked vs. banked households



\$196.50

Average annual cost of not having a bank account for individuals who use a prepaid debit card that features direct deposit.

\$497.33

Average annual cost of not having a bank account for individuals who use a prepaid card that does not feature direct deposit.

The Solution: Bank On Arkansas+

The goal of Bank On Arkansas+ is for all Arkansans to have safe, trusted, and affordable banking so they have the opportunity to save for themselves, build wealth for their families, and improve quality of life in their communities.

Bank On coalitions are local partnerships among municipal officials; city, state, and federal government agencies; financial institutions; and community organizations that work to improve the financial stability of unbanked and underbanked residents in their communities.

The Bank On model is housed at a national nonprofit organization—the Cities for Financial Empowerment (CFE) Fund—which helps support local coalition efforts to connect consumers to safe and affordable bank accounts. In Arkansas, the Arkansas Asset Funders Network (Arkansas AFN) recognizes the benefits resulting from the Bank On model initiative and seeded the first-ever statewide Bank On Arkansas+ Coalition.

How You Can Be Part of the Solution

Accounts meeting the Bank On National Account Standards are now available at 22,000 branches across 49 states and the District of Columbia. The goal of Bank On Arkansas+ is to expand that reach to meet the needs of the unbanked and underbanked in every region of Arkansas. It is critical that we have committed partnerships from financial institutions across the state.

If you are interested in meeting the needs of your community by partnering with Bank On Arkansas+, here are the next steps:

□ Schedule a call with Kara Wilkins, director of Bank On Arkansas+, to discuss the account validation process and how you can engage in the coalition.
(Email: kara@assetfunders.org | Cell: 501-712-0818)

□ Design an account that meets the Bank On National Account Standards.

□ Kara will set up a technical assistance call for you with the CFE Fund to help troubleshoot any challenges you are facing or answer questions you have regarding the creation of an account.

□ Using the free CFE Fund web portal (goo.gl/pjgbfq), submit your account terms and contact information, as well as any additional information that demonstrates that the account meets Bank On National Account Standards core features.

The CFE Fund's independent evaluator, the National Consumer Law Center (NCLC), compares account features to the "core features" outlined in the Standards. The validation process is "up or down," accounts either meet all core Standards features or they do not.

The CFE Fund will contact you promptly with the results of the validation process.

Join the coalition's efforts to promote Bank On Arkansas+ and the certified accounts

What Are the Benefits of Offering a Certified Bank On Account?

In addition to providing appropriate and safe accounts to customers in need, financial institutions whose accounts are validated as meeting Bank On National Standards are officially and publicly certified as a Bank On Approved Account. Benefits of a certified account for financial institutions include:

1. A basis for robust coalition affiliations and programming opportunities
2. Using your product-specific national certification seal provided by the CFE Fund in online marketing, branch signage, and other collateral materials to communicate and highlight that your account meets these widely-accepted standards
3. Promotion of your certified account through the CFE Fund's Bank On materials and in communication with Bank On coalitions, as well as through assets such as the CFE Fund websites and social media outlets
4. Eligibility to participate voluntarily in a streamlined, national data collection effort
5. Alignment with nationally recognized product options designed to meet specific needs of the unbanked, underbanked and financially underserved populations and potential eligibility for favorable CRA consideration

Financially empowered families lead to financially empowered communities where everyone in the state of Arkansas, not just the few, can set and achieve their financial goals. Will you join us?

For more information, contact Kara Wilkins, director of Bank On Arkansas+, at kara@assetfunders.org or 501-712-0818.