

## WHAT IS THE “18 – 65” LAW?

The Massachusetts “18 – 65” law allows any person who is 65 years of age or older or 18 years of age or younger to have a savings account and a checking account at a Massachusetts state-chartered savings bank, co-operative bank or trust company without having to pay a service, maintenance or similar charge.

Accounts covered by the “18 – 65” law are not subject to minimum balance requirements, a charge for a deposit or withdrawal, or fees for the initial order or subsequent refills of the basic line of checks offered by the bank.

However, the “18 – 65” law does allow a state-chartered bank to charge a reasonable fee, determined by the Division of Banks, when a payment has been refused due to insufficient funds (commonly referred to as bouncing a check), or when payment is made from the account despite insufficient funds (commonly known as “bounce protection”).

A full listing of all Massachusetts state-chartered savings banks, co-operative banks and trust companies subject to the “18 – 65” law and their branch locations may be found on the Division of Banks’ website as [www.mass.gov/dob](http://www.mass.gov/dob). For additional assistance you may also contact the Division’s Consumer Assistance Unit at 617-956-1501.

## Benefits of an 18 – 65 Account

- No minimum balance requirements
- No charges for deposits or withdrawals
- No fees for initial or subsequent basic checks associated with an 18 – 65 account
- Limited insufficient funds fee

## For More Information

Visit the Division of Banks website, [www.mass.gov/dob](http://www.mass.gov/dob), for more details about the 18 – 65 accounts and more information about state-chartered banks.



# 18 – 65 Accounts

Savings & Checking Accounts *FREE*  
for Teens & Seniors



Massachusetts Division of Banks  
1000 Washington Street, 10<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Boston, MA 02118  
[www.mass.gov/dob](http://www.mass.gov/dob)



## Frequently Asked Questions

### **Are all banks located in Massachusetts required to offer the 18 – 65 accounts?**

No, the “18 – 65” law specifically states that only Massachusetts state-chartered banks are required to offer these accounts. Banks which are federally-chartered, often designated by the N.A. or F.S.B. after their names, are not required to offer such accounts. Credit unions are also not required to offer 18 – 65 accounts. However, some credit unions and federally-chartered banks may offer similar programs, so you should inquire with your financial institution.

### **How can I obtain an 18 – 65 account?**

You must notify the bank of your eligibility if you wish to open an 18 – 65 account. A bank is required to post notice of the availability of the 18 – 65 account in all banking locations. It must also provide an annual disclosure to all depositors regarding the “18 – 65” law.

### **How many 18 – 65 accounts can I open?**

If you are eligible, you may open ONE checking and ONE savings account. Eligible savings accounts include: regular passbook accounts, statement savings, or NOW accounts.

### **Can a state-chartered bank impose fees on 18 – 65 accounts for some services?**

Yes, a state-chartered bank may charge fees for stop payment orders, wire transfers, certified or bank checks, money orders, deposit items returned, and transactions at electronic branches and through other electronic devices.



### **What has the Division of Banks determined to be the reasonable fee that can be charged by the bank if I bounced a check or if the bank honors a check even if there are insufficient funds?**

The Division has set the fee which a bank can impose on an 18 – 65 account at \$5.00 per transaction. This includes overdrafts caused by paper checks or electronic funds transfers such as debit card transactions.

### **Are ‘premium’ accounts, those based on a higher minimum balance, subject to the “18 – 65” law?**

As long as there is another full service, smaller minimum balance savings and checking account offered by the bank, then no, a ‘premium’ account would not be covered by the “18 – 65” law.

### **Can the bank require a co-signer for my account if I am under 18?**

Yes, the bank can require an adult to co-sign on the account opened for a minor.

### **If I am eligible for an 18 – 65 account, can I open a joint account with my spouse who is not?**

Yes, if you are eligible, you may open a joint account with your spouse as a depositor regardless of the age of your spouse.

**Official Website of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts** | [www.mass.gov](http://www.mass.gov)

**Office of Consumer Affairs & Business Regulation** | [www.mass.gov/ocabr](http://www.mass.gov/ocabr)

**Division of Banks** | [www.mass.gov/dob](http://www.mass.gov/dob)