

## WHAT IS A CREDIT UNION?

Credit unions are not-for-profit financial cooperatives owned by their members. Unlike banks that operate for shareholder profit, credit unions return earnings to members in the form of reduced fees, higher savings rates, and lower loan rates.

## MEMBERSHIP

Members share a common bond, also known as the credit union's **'field of membership.'** You may be able to join based on your employer, family, geographic location, and membership in a group or association.

**Credit unions play a critical role in rural and under-served areas where traditional banks have closed branches, maintaining local access to financial services and personal customer relationships.**

## BENEFITS



## FIELD OF MEMBERSHIP

**IN NEW YORK, THERE ARE 270+ CREDIT UNIONS SERVING 7 MILLION MEMBERS.**

## POLICY CONSIDERATIONS FOR ELECTED OFFICIALS



### Financial Inclusion

Credit unions often serve under-banked communities and provide services to members regardless of credit history.



### Economic Development

Credit unions keep capital local, supporting small businesses and community development initiatives.



### Field of Membership

Ongoing policy discussions about expanding or restricting who can join credit unions.



### Tax Status Debate

Banks argue credit union tax exemption creates unfair competition; credit unions cite their mission-driven, member-focused structure. Credit unions do pay property taxes, school taxes, and employer taxes.



### Regulatory Framework

Credit unions are regulated by the National Credit Union Administration (NCUA) and state regulators, with deposits insured by the National Credit Union Share Insurance Fund (NCUSIF).

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