

This page has been automatically translated. Please refer to the page in French if needed.

# Bank Account Closure

Verified 27 July 2023 - Directorate for Legal and Administrative Information (Prime Minister)

Wondering if your bank can close your bank account and how it can do so? It depends on whether your account is **active**, that is, if you are trading on that account or another account of the same bank. Here is the information to know about the closing of your bank account by the bank.

## Active Account

### What is an active bank account? ^

Your account is active when you trade on this account or another account of the same bank.

#### Example :

You have a current account A on which you regularly perform operations and a current account B that you do not use. As long as account A is active, account B remains active.

An account is also active when an heir conducts transactions on a deceased's account within 1 year of his death.

### How can the bank close your bank account? ^

The bank can close your account, even if it is operating properly, in compliance with the account agreement (<https://www.service-public.gouv.fr/particuliers/vosdroits/F2909?lang=en>) . **The bank must inform you in writing.**

It must meet a time limit of **2 months minimum before closing the account**. This period of notice should allow you to open another account and perform the last operations necessary for the continuity of your accounting.

The bank must justify its decision only if the account has been opened after activation of the account entitlement procedure (<https://www.service-public.gouv.fr/particuliers/vosdroits/F2417?lang=en>) .

### What are the consequences of closing your bank account? ^

The closure of the account shall put a definitive end to its operation.

The banker must pay the checks you issued before the account closes. For that, you have to have sufficient provision, that is to say enough money.

If the provision on your account is insufficient, this will result in payment incidents (<https://www.service-public.gouv.fr/particuliers/vosdroits/F18777?lang=en>) .

You must return to your bank all the means of payment you have (unused checks, bank card).

**If the account has an overdraft**, which is a negative balance, the bank sends you a letter asking you to pay the amount due.

**If there is money left in your account**, itThe bank will refund the amount at the time of closing. The bank sends you a document called *balance of any account*, specifying the amount that was transmitted to you at the time of closing the account.

The bank must communicate the closure of the account to the Banque de France and archive the documents for **5 years**.

If the account has an overdraft, i.e. a negative balance, the bank will send you a letter asking you to pay the amount due.

She has to you **inform free of charge**, during **13 months after closing**, where a check, direct debit transaction or transfer occurs for payment to the closed account.

## Does closing your bank account require a fee? ^

**No, no, no.** The closing of the account is free of charge.

You must pay the payment service fee (e.g. card fee) until the account termination date. If you have paid these fees in advance, they will be refunded to you.

### Example :

You pay the credit card fee on 1<sup>er</sup> January for the whole year. However, the account is closed on April 30. The bank will have to return you 2/3 of the amount of the contribution paid.

## Can you dispute the closure of your bank account? ^

**No**, you cannot dispute the closure of your bank account.

You can claim damages in writing if your bank has not complied with the notice period of **2 months**. You can do this by using the following letter template:

Request compensation for closing a bank account without notice (<https://www.service-public.gouv.fr/particuliers/vosdroits/R13155>)

If you are denied these damages, you can appeal to the banking ombudsman (<https://www.service-public.gouv.fr/particuliers/vosdroits/F20523?lang=en>) . You can also enter the civil courts (<https://www.service-public.gouv.fr/particuliers/vosdroits/N269?lang=en>) .

### Who shall I contact

Judicial Tribunal [↗ \(http://www.annuaires.justice.gouv.fr/\)](http://www.annuaires.justice.gouv.fr/)

## Inactive Account

### What is an inactive bank account? ^

An account is inactive if you have not made a transaction in it for a certain period of time.

#### Current account

Your current account is considered **inactive** if **for 1 year** you fill **the following 3 conditions**:

- You did not perform any operations there
- You have not registered with your bank (e.g. by sending a letter or e-mail or by logging into your online customer area or by having a telephone interview)
- You have not made a transaction to another account opened in your name in this bank

#### Please note

If the absence of a transaction on your account is due to a court order or law (e.g. embargo, receiver), the account is not considered inactive.

#### Other accounts

Other accounts (accounts and savings books (<https://www.service-public.gouv.fr/particuliers/vosdroits/F34393?lang=en>) , securities accounts) are considered inactive if **for 5 years** you fill **the following 3 conditions** :

- You did not perform any operations there
- You have not registered with your bank (e.g. by sending a letter or e-mail or by logging into your online customer area or by having a telephone interview)
- You have not made a transaction to another account opened in your name in this bank

#### Please note

If the absence of a transaction on your account is due to a court order or law (e.g. embargo, receiver), the account is not considered inactive.

## Account of a deceased person

The account of a deceased person is considered inactive if **1 year after death** no heir has informed the bank of his wish to assert his rights.

### Warning

The total withdrawal of money from a bank account is not a closing of an account.

## Should the bank inform you before closing your bank account? ^

**Yeah. Yeah.** If your account is inactive, the bank must inform you (or your legal representative or the authorized person or your heirs if they know them) by any means. They have to renew that information **6 months before the account is closed**.

## When does the bank close the bank account? ^

The bank keeps the inactive accounts for a certain period of time, depending on the nature of the account. After this period, she closes the account.

**Tableau - Bank retention period for inactive accounts**

Account Type	Retention period
Current account	10 years
Other account	10 years
Account whose holder has died	3 years

When the account contains securities (shares, bonds, etc.), the bank sells them before closing.

## What happens to the balance of a closed bank account? ^

The bank transfers the balance of the account **the Caisse des Dépôts et Consignations (CDC)**.

Where the account contained securities (shares, bonds, etc.) that were sold by the bank before closing, the sum is also transferred to the CDC.

The CDC keeps the balance of the inactive accounts for a certain period of time. It depends on the nature of the account.

**Tableau - CDC's retention period for inactive accounts**

Account Type	Retention period
Current account	20 years
Other account	20 years
Account whose holder has died	27 years

At the end of the retention period by the CDC, if you or your heir have not claimed the amounts from the account, they are **definitively recovered by the State**.

## How do I claim the balance of a closed bank account? ^

You can claim the balance of inactive accounts until the end of the retention period by the CDC.

**Tableau - CDC's retention period for inactive accounts**

Account Type	Retention period
Current account	20 years
Other account	20 years
Account whose holder has died	27 years

You can search for an inactive account that you think you own or inherit. To do so, log on to the CDC website:

Find Inactive Account (<https://www.service-public.gouv.fr/particuliers/vosdroits/R50258>)

If the search is successful, you can claim the money from the CDC. You will need to create a personal space and download supporting documents. After considering this request, the CDC will give you a definitive answer and return the money.

Apply for restitution of amounts from an inactive account (<https://www.service-public.gouv.fr/particuliers/vosdroits/R50268>)

#### Warning

To access the online claim form, your inactive account search must have completed successfully.

## Does closing your account require a fee?

**No**, closing the account is free.

However, the bank may charge fees and commissions for the time the inactive account is kept until the money is transferred to the CDC. This depends on the nature of the inactive account:

- For regulated savings products (livret A, livret jeunesse, etc.) and home savings products, no fees or commissions are charged.
- For stock savings plans (PEAs), and securities accounts, fees and commissions may not exceed those which would have been charged if the account were active.
- For the deposit account and other accounts, the total amount of fees levied annually per account may not exceed **€30**.

## Can you dispute the closure of your account?

**No**, you cannot appeal the closing of an inactive account.

### Who can help me?

Find who can answer your questions in your region

**Info Service Savings Bank Insurance**  (<https://www.abe-infoservice.fr/qui-sommes-nous/nous-contacter>)

## Statute and miscellaneous references

Monetary and Financial Code: Article L312-1 (<https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/codes/id/LEGISCTA000006170365/?lang=en>)

Account Entitlement

Monetary and Financial Code: Articles L312-1-1 to L312-1-8

(<https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/codes/section/lc/LEGITEXT000006072026/LEGISCTA000020866609?lang=en>)

Relationship of credit institutions with the customer

Monetary and Financial Code: Articles L312-19 to L312-21-1

(<https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/codes/id/LEGISCTA000029098936?lang=en>)

Inactive Accounts

Monetary and Financial Code: Article D312-5 (<https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/codes/id/LEGISCTA000033688457?lang=en>)

Basic banking services

Order of 21 September 2015 on fees and commissions on inactive accounts

(<https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/loda/id/JORFTEXT000031204207/?lang=en>)

## Online services and forms

Find Inactive Account (<https://www.service-public.gouv.fr/particuliers/vosdroits/R50258?lang=en>)

Form

Apply for restitution of amounts from an inactive account

(<https://www.service-public.gouv.fr/particuliers/vosdroits/R50268?lang=en>)

Online service

## FAQ

Banking Ombudsman: how to use it? (<https://www.service-public.gouv.fr/particuliers/vosdroits/F20523?lang=en>)  
What happens to a bank account in case of death? (<https://www.service-public.gouv.fr/particuliers/vosdroits/F1451?lang=en>)  
How do you prove that you are the heir of an estate (certificate, notoriety certificate)?  
(<https://www.service-public.gouv.fr/particuliers/vosdroits/F12697?lang=en>)  
What is a bank account agreement? (<https://www.service-public.gouv.fr/particuliers/vosdroits/F2909?lang=en>)

## Additional topics

The bank account (<https://www.inc-conso.fr/content/banque/le-compte-bancaire?lang=en>)

National Institute of Consumer Affairs (INC)

Account closure and bank mobility

(<https://www.abe-infoservice.fr/banque/compte/cloture-de-compte-et-mobilite-bancaire?lang=en>)

Supervisory and Resolution Authority (ACPR)

How do I search for an inactive account? (<https://ciclade.caissedesdepots.fr/vos-questions?lang=en>)

Caisse des Dépôts et Consignations (CDC)