



## **The Blind will soon be able to bank with BECU through Mobile and Online Banking**

*National Federation of the Blind and Boeing Employees' Credit Union Reach Accessibility Agreement*

**SEATTLE (June 6, 2018):** The National Federation of the Blind (NFB), its Washington affiliate, and three blind individuals have reached an agreement with the Boeing Employees' Credit Union (BECU). As a part of this agreement, BECU will work in collaboration with NFB and its members to make its website and mobile banking app fully accessible to blind customers.

The work to achieve full accessibility of the website is expected to be completed by March 31, 2019. Improvements to the mobile app will begin this summer and will be completed by May 31, 2019. BECU has also committed to long term policies and procedures (such as an employee training program) to ensure that accessibility is maintained, and pay an undisclosed settlement amount without any associated admission of liability.

Blind people access websites and mobile apps with what is known as screen reader software, which speaks text aloud or outputs it to a refreshable Braille display and will be used for BECU's website and mobile app. However, websites and mobile applications that are not coded according to the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines version 2.0, or other accessibility guidelines, do not interact well with screen reader technology, making it difficult or impossible for blind users to access some or all of a website or app's information or functions.

"Blind people must budget, keep track of our accounts, pay our bills, make deposits, and transfer funds just like everyone else," said Mark Riccobono, President of the National Federation of the Blind. "Since these functions are now increasingly and sometimes exclusively performed via web or mobile applications, the blind must have full and equal access to these modern financial tools. We commend Boeing Employees' Credit Union for agreeing in good faith to aggressive steps that will ensure access to its website and mobile applications now and into the future. We particularly appreciate that BECU has agreed to the testing of these services by blind people throughout the process, and we look forward to working with this institution to achieve the goal of equal access. We urge other banks across the country to meet the same standard of access for their customers and invite them to work closely with us in doing so."

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### **About the National Federation of the Blind**

The National Federation of the Blind (NFB), headquartered in Baltimore, is the oldest and largest nationwide organization of blind Americans. Founded in 1940, the NFB consists of affiliates,

chapters, and divisions in the fifty states, Washington DC, and Puerto Rico. The NFB defends the rights of blind people of all ages and provides information and support to families with blind children, older Americans who are losing vision, and more. We believe in the hopes and dreams of blind people and work together to transform them into reality. Learn more about our many programs and initiatives at [www.nfb.org](http://www.nfb.org).

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