

## Skip a Trip to the MVD

### Coming Soon: Renew Your NM Vehicle Registration (and More) at Select SLFCU Branches

In early 2022, our Juan Tabo, Cottonwood, and Jefferson branches are unveiling an exciting new feature: New Mexico MVD Direct Kiosks! At these select SLFCU branches, you'll soon be able to quickly renew your vehicle registration, check for valid emissions inspections, and pay traffic citations.

#### Save Time and Money on Registration Renewal

A trip to the MVD isn't most folks' cup of tea. With the new MVD Direct Kiosks, you can easily couple your vehicle registration renewal with a trip to an SLFCU branch. Only one of the following identifiers is needed:

- Current registration document
- Registration renewal postcard
- Vehicle Identification Number (VIN), plus plate number or ZIP code

The average transaction takes less than two minutes<sup>1</sup> – but time isn't all you'll be saving. Kiosk users get 5% off the base registration rate, and aside



from any applicable late fees, the service charge for using an MVD Direct Kiosk is only \$3.95 plus a 2.3% processing fee for debit and credit card payments. Most importantly, your new registration document and license plate sticker will print immediately, right from the kiosk.

#### Go Beyond Convenience

Member access matters most, which inspired our decision to install these new, helpful kiosks in our branches. And while a portion of the service fee benefits the host company or organization, SLFCU will proudly donate its kiosk earnings to selected community organizations. The New Mexico Credit Unions Connected Academy (NMCUCA) will be the first organization to which we donate 100% of kiosk earnings until our fundraising goal is met.

#### Even More Under the Hood

As any Bernalillo County motorist should know, routine emissions inspections are a legal requirement. MVD Direct Kiosks can check for your valid emissions documents on the spot. Traffic citation fees can be paid at the kiosks as well – quickly, conveniently, and without judgment. The kiosks will be open to the public, so tell your friends and family! More kiosk users at SLFCU branches means more donations and a greater impact on the causes in which we believe. Plus, using a kiosk is easy! With key placement near branch entrances and access from Monday through Saturday during branch hours, you'll be glad you dropped by, especially if you're pressed for time.

MVD Direct Kiosks are scheduled to debut at our Juan Tabo and Cottonwood branches in early 2022. A third kiosk will be available at our new Jefferson branch location next spring. Have questions? Visit [NMMVDKiosk.com](http://NMMVDKiosk.com). ■

<sup>1</sup>New Mexico MVD Direct, Renew Vehicle Registrations Instantly!, [nmmvdkiosk.com](http://nmmvdkiosk.com) [accessed October 2021].

<sup>2</sup>Based on information collected from customer service representatives, 11/02/2021.

\*Fees from third-party companies are applied in addition to the base rate for New Mexico MVD vehicle registration renewal.

How Do MVD Direct Kiosks Stack Up? <sup>2</sup>		
Provider	Fees*	Discounts
SLFCU's MVD Direct Kiosk	\$3.95 + 2.3% for debit/credit cards	5% off NM base registration fee
MVD Express	\$36.67	No discount on base registration
MVD Now	\$32.21 + \$2.25 for debit/credit cards	No discount on base registration

## Baking Up Sweet Success

### SLFCU Business Member Highlight

Imagine preparing and baking 500 dozen cookies at one time – a daunting task for most of us. For Celina Grife, owner of Celina's Biscochitos, baking that many cookies (or more) is just an average day at the office.

November 10, 2021 marked Celina's Biscochitos' 11th anniversary – and business is really cooking. "My business began as a happy accident," notes Celina. "I was a real estate agent for 15 years. I often baked cookies for my clients as a thank you. When the housing

crisis hit in 2008, I needed an additional way to make money, and so I began selling my biscochitos."

For the next four years, Celina would essentially wear two hats: real estate agent by day, and cookie baker by night. "It was really hard, not quite being able to fully commit to either occupation," she says. And, as the saying goes, half measures lead to half results. By 2012 she had made the leap to full-time business owner and

*Continued on page 2*

was all in as a professional baker. "Early on, I had the opportunity to work with Albuquerque's South Valley Economic Development Center. I rented their commercial kitchen by the hour, which allowed me to produce my product and save money while getting my new business going."

In 2014 she moved into her current bakery/retail shop at 404 Osuna Rd. NW, Ste A in Los Ranchos de Albuquerque. She quickly outgrew her first 700-square-foot space less than a year later and started renting the space next door for a total of 2,200 square feet. "We've just about outgrown this space, too," Celina says with a laugh.

One reason for the company's continued growth could be Celina's self-described pattern of getting bored easily. While traditional biscochitos have remained the company's bestseller, Celina has kept things exciting by creating new flavors and products along the way. "It was a little scary at first," she admits. "I really wasn't sure how red chile, green chile pecan, lemon, or chocolate chip biscochitos would be embraced by my customers. Happily, people are willing to try new flavors - it just needs to still taste like a biscochito!"

There are a few cookies Celina just won't make, such as gluten-free or lard-free biscochitos. "I just don't have the right kitchen setup to do gluten-free correctly, so we don't take that chance," she notes. She insists on



sticking with traditional ingredients, such as Snow Cap lard, real brandy, and anise. While she admits this approach is much more expensive, she says she wouldn't have it any other way.

To what does she attribute her success? Her Grandma Maggie's biscochito recipe for sure, as well as the ability to pivot quickly, when needed. A long relationship with SLFCU has been a big help too. "I became an SLFCU member when I was 15-years-old. It was natural to go to the Credit Union when I needed a business account. The thought of working with a mainstream bank just didn't appeal to me."

Visit Celina's Biscochitos online: [celinasbiscochitos.com](http://celinasbiscochitos.com) ■

## Simplify the Holidays with Zelle®

The holidays are approaching, and all year long, you've heard a loved one talk about wanting a certain something. You know they'd never go out and buy it for themselves, so it's the perfect present to surprise them with this year. Unfortunately, the price tag is a bit frightful.

This year, go in on gifts with others and split the cost of the bill!

### Use Zelle® to Get Paid Back

Splitting the cost of a big gift with your friends or family is easy with Zelle®. Use Zelle® to easily send a request<sup>1</sup> for the money you're owed, and they can quickly and



safely send you money directly from their mobile banking app, even if you bank at different places.<sup>2</sup> And the best part is, the money will be available to you in minutes.<sup>2</sup>

### How to Request Money for the Group Gift

**Step 1:** Log in to SLFCU's mobile app.

**Step 2:** In the main menu, select "More."

**Step 3:** Select "Send money with Zelle®."

**Step 4:** Enroll your U.S. mobile number or email address.

**Step 5:** Once you've enrolled, select "Request," then add a new recipient (or choose someone from your Zelle contacts), then type in the requested amount, add a little note such as "Mom and Dad's Gift," and click "Request."

**Pro-tip:** For an even easier experience, have them enroll with Zelle® before sending your first request. You can send money to someone not yet enrolled, and they'll get an email with instructions on how to do so.

That's it! No need to ask anyone to run to the ATM or search for that checkbook they never use. ■

<sup>1</sup>Payment requests to persons not already enrolled with Zelle® must be sent to an email address.

<sup>2</sup>U.S. checking or savings account required to use Zelle®. Transactions between enrolled consumers typically occur in minutes.

## Thanks for the Turkeys!

### Your Donations Are Supporting Families in Need.

A big thank you to everyone who participated in Sandia National Laboratories' annual Take a (Frozen) Turkey to Work (or the Credit Union) Day! Select SLFCU branches served as collection sites for the turkey drive. Together, we received 186 turkeys and more than \$6,000, all of which will go to benefit local food banks. Pictured is Lisa Fernandez from Rio Grande Food Project.



## Home for the Holidays Photo Contest



Photo by Patrick Ponsardin  
2020 Photo Contest Winner

### Enter to Win a \$200 Lowe's Gift Card!

Thanksgiving, Chanukah, Christmas, and Kwanzaa – we love them all! Visit our Facebook or Instagram page before December 31, 2021, to participate in our Home for the Holidays photo contest! To enter, share a festive photo of your holiday or winter decorations, add a note about what you like best about this time of year, and tag your post with #SLFCUHoliday. The winner will receive a \$200 Lowe's Home Improvement gift card, and two runners-up will each receive a \$50 Target gift card. View the complete contest instructions and rules at [slfcu.org/PhotoContest](http://slfcu.org/PhotoContest). ■

## Thinking of Purchasing a Home or Vehicle?

### Make Sure You Review Your Credit Score First.

Your credit score can have a major impact on your life. Not only do creditors typically check your score when deciding whether or not to approve your loan application and what interest rate to charge you, but landlords, insurance companies, and even employers often check it as well. Having a good score can help you achieve your goals quickly and at the lowest possible cost.

The following are factors that impact your credit score – with ways you can improve them:

#### Payment History (35%)

Making on-time payments on your existing loans or credit cards boosts your score. Conversely, making a late payment will lower it. Payments are considered late 30 days past the due date. Collection accounts and legal actions could have a negative impact on your score, too.

#### Amounts Owed (30%)

Carrying large balances on revolving debt (like credit cards) will lower your score – especially if the balances are close to the credit limits. Increasing your credit limit can help keep your debt-to-credit ratio lower. However, you still want to ensure you keep your credit card usage below 30% of its limit.

#### Length of Credit History (15%)

The longer you have had your accounts, the better, as it shows you have a record of making payments.

#### New Credit (10%)

This factor looks at the number and proportion of recently opened accounts and the number of inquiries. While having many inquiries on your report will lower your score, all mortgage or auto loan inquiries that occur within a 45-day period are considered just one inquiry for scoring purposes using newer versions of the scoring

formula. For lenders using the older versions, it's a 14-day period.<sup>1</sup> The version used to calculate your score varies by lender, so it's best to get your rate shopping done as quickly as possible.

#### Types of Credit Used (10%)

Having a variety of accounts, such as credit cards and loans, boosts your score.

To see your score, you typically have to pay for it. Since a FICO® Score is the one that is most widely used, it generally makes the most sense to purchase your score at [myfico.com](http://myfico.com). However, keep in mind that you may not be seeing the exact same score a lender will see, as different versions of the score are available.

You can check your credit report for free once a year. As your score is based on the information that is in your report, it can be beneficial to review it and look for errors or inaccuracies you may need to address. You can get a copy of your credit report from each of the three major credit bureaus (Equifax, Experian, and TransUnion) at [annualcreditreport.com](http://annualcreditreport.com). Feel free to bring your report to SLFCU and ask a loan officer to review it with you before you begin the home or auto buying process. ■

<sup>1</sup>myFICO, [www.myfico.com/credit-education/credit-reports/credit-checks-and-inquiries](http://www.myfico.com/credit-education/credit-reports/credit-checks-and-inquiries) [accessed November 2021]



## 2021 IRA Contributions

Make the most of your retirement savings by contributing the maximum yearly limit to your IRAs. For the 2021 tax year, you can contribute an aggregated amount of \$6,000 to Traditional or Roth



IRAs. If you are over age 50, you can contribute an additional \$1,000 "catch-up" contribution.

Please submit your IRA contribution in advance of the tax filing deadline to allow plenty of time to complete the necessary paperwork.

IRA contributions for 2021 can be made until the tax filing deadline on April 15, 2022. Please consult your

tax advisor or financial advisor with questions about your individual tax circumstances.

SLFCU offers Traditional or Roth IRAs, Education Savings Accounts, and IRA certificates. Open your IRA account with as little as \$5. Get started today at [slfcu.org/IRAs](http://slfcu.org/IRAs). ■

**Cash-back on purchases just got even better!**

**Visa Signature®: 1.5% monthly rebate**

**Visa Platinum® Rebate: 1.0% monthly rebate**

New cardholders who spend \$1,500 on purchases\* in the first 90 days can get a \$100 statement credit.

\*Accounts that are issued and approved will receive a \$100 statement credit upon spending \$1,500 in purchase transactions within 90 days of account opening. Cash advances, credit card checks, and balance transfers do not qualify as purchase transactions. Each account is eligible for one statement credit of \$100. Please allow four weeks after spending \$1,500 to receive the credit.



PO Box 23040, Albuquerque, NM 87192

### Dollars & Sense

*Renew Your NM Vehicle Registration (and More) at Select SLFCU Branches*

*SLFCU Business Member Spotlight: Celina's Biscochitos*

*Simplify the Holidays with Zelle®*

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## On the Calendar

### **BALANCE Webinar: Ten Steps to Financial Success**

Tues. December 7 • 11:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

Thurs. December 16 • 6:30 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.

### **Christmas Eve and Christmas Day**

Fri. December 24 • All branches and Contact Center close at 1:00 p.m.

Sat. December 25 • All branches & Contact Center closed

### **New Year's Eve and New Year's Day**

Fri. December 31 • All branches and Contact Center close at 3:00 p.m.

Sat. January 1 • All branches & Contact Center closed

For more information on upcoming webinars and events, visit [slfcu.org/Calendar](http://slfcu.org/Calendar).

## Pay for college.



Private  
Student Loans  
and Consolidation

Visit [slfcu.org/StudentLoans](http://slfcu.org/StudentLoans).

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