

Two-factor Authentication Provides Improved Online Security to Access Your LFCU Account

Accessing a computer account requires that you have a user id and a password. LFCU has made a significant change to improve password security in their new online banking system. You will need to change your online password the first time that you login to the new system.

The days of using password for your password are gone. LFCU requires passwords to be at least 12 characters with a mixture of uppercase letters, lowercase letters, numerals and special characters (i.e. &, %, #, @, ! and others – check with LFCU to see if your favorite special character is allowed). Now hackers have almost no chance to crack your password. If you use 12 unique characters then the number of possible combinations that represent your password are about $80 \times 79 \times 78 \times 77 \times 76 \times 75 \times 74 \times 73 \times 72 \times 71 \times 70 \times 69$ – and that is a very big number, about 2.7×10^{20} .

If your password is ever compromised, change it immediately and never use it again! This type of user authentication is called one-factor authentication and relies on something you know, your password. But it can still be intercepted by the bad guys, especially on unsecured wireless networks.

To help protect your account from compromised passwords, LFCU now offers two-factor authentication, which means something you know plus something that you have, which is a one-time use 6-digit code which is sent to you via text (highly recommended) or e-mail when you request to login. The code has a very short life span, so if you don't login immediately, you will likely need to request a new code.

If someone has intercepted your password, they can probably also intercept e-mail with your one-time use code and beat you to the login. This is the reason I recommend using text messages to receive your one-time code.

As your former Center IT Security Manager, I highly recommend that you set up two-factor authentication for your LFCU login by clicking on the User Setting icon in the upper right corner of the LFCU home page for On-line Banking web and clicking on Security. On the next screen, click on authentication and turn on Two-Factor Authentication. The system will prompt you on how you want to receive the second step of your login process. Once you have done the two-factor authentication the first time, it should only add 10-15 seconds to the process of logging into your account but adds considerable strength to your online security.

If you have any questions about two-factor authentication, just e-mail me at gtennille@cox.net.