

# GUIDE TO BEST'S BANK DEPOSIT RATINGS

A Best's Bank Deposit Rating is an independent opinion of a bank's ability to meet its ongoing financial obligations to depositors. The rating is based on a comprehensive quantitative and qualitative evaluation of a bank's capitalization, asset quality, management, earnings, liquidity and sensitivity to market risk.

## Bank Deposit Ratings

	Rating	Descriptor	Definition
<b>Secure</b>	aaa	Exceptional	Assigned to companies with, in our opinion, an exceptional ability to meet their ongoing obligations to depositors.
	aa	Very Strong	Assigned to companies with, in our opinion, a very strong ability to meet their ongoing obligations to depositors.
	a	Strong	Assigned to companies with, in our opinion, a strong ability to meet their ongoing obligations to depositors.
	bbb	Adequate	Assigned to companies with, in our opinion, an adequate ability to meet their ongoing obligations to depositors.
<b>Vulnerable</b>	bb	Speculative	Assigned to companies with, in our opinion, speculative credit characteristics and vulnerability to adverse changes in economic and other conditions.
	b	Very Speculative	Assigned to companies with, in our opinion, very speculative credit characteristics and extreme vulnerability to adverse changes in economic and other conditions.
	ccc, cc, c	Extremely Speculative	Assigned to companies with, in our opinion, extremely speculative credit characteristics and/or limited ability to withstand adverse changes in economic and other conditions.
	rs	Regulatory Supervision	Assigned to companies (and possibly their subsidiaries/affiliates) that have been placed under a significant form of regulatory supervision, control or restraint whereby they are no longer allowed to conduct normal ongoing operations. This includes cease and desist orders, rehabilitation and liquidation.

A Best's Long-Term Issuer Credit Rating is an opinion of an issuer/entity's ability to meet its ongoing senior financial obligations. A.M. Best also uses its Long-Term Credit Rating Scale when assigning Issuer Credit Ratings.

Ratings from "aa" to "ccc" may be enhanced with a "+" (plus) or "-" (minus) to indicate whether credit quality is near the top or bottom of a category.

## Rating Outlooks

Assigned to a Best's Bank Deposit Rating (aaa to c) to indicate its potential direction over an intermediate term, generally defined as 12 to 36 months.

Positive Indicates possible rating upgrade due to favorable financial/market trends relative to current rating level.

Negative Indicates possible rating downgrade due to unfavorable financial/market trends relative to current rating level.

Stable Indicates low likelihood of a rating change due to stable financial/market trends.

## Rating Modifier

Modifier	Descriptor	Definition
u	Under Review	Indicates the rating may change in the near term, typically within six months. Generally is event driven, with positive, negative or developing implications.

## Not Rated Designation

The Not Rated (nr) designation may be assigned to companies that previously were rated.

## Rating Disclosure

A Best's Bank Deposit Rating is an opinion of the relative ability of a bank to meet its ongoing financial obligations to depositors. The ratings are not assigned to specific deposit accounts or contracts and do not address the ability of the bank to repay any other financial obligation issued by the bank. A Bank Deposit Rating is not a recommendation to buy, sell or hold financial obligations of a bank, nor does it address the suitability of any particular financial obligation for a specific purpose or purchaser. In arriving at a rating decision, A.M. Best relies on third-party audited financial data and/or other information provided to it. While this information is believed to be reliable, A.M. Best does not independently verify the accuracy or reliability of the information. For additional details, see A.M. Best's *Terms of Use* at [www.ambest.com](http://www.ambest.com).

Best's Bank Deposit Ratings are distributed via press release and/or the A.M. Best Web site at [www.ambest.com](http://www.ambest.com), and are published in the *Rating Actions* section of *BestWeek*®. Best's Bank Deposit Ratings are proprietary and may not be reproduced without permission. Copyright © 2009 by A.M. Best Company, Inc.

**Version 060208**

