

# El Dorado Based First Financial Bank to Acquire Bear State Bank Branch in Mena

*April 2, 2018*

(El Dorado, AR) - First Financial Bank, headquartered in El Dorado, Arkansas, announced today that they have entered into a purchase and assumption agreement to acquire the Bear State Bank branches in Mena, Arkansas and to assume certain deposit accounts and acquire certain loans and other assets at this facility.

The purchase is contingent on the approval of regulatory agencies and the satisfaction of other conditions set forth in the purchase and assumption agreement. The closing of the transaction is expected to occur in early summer, following the finalization of the merger between Bear State Bank and Arvest Bank. The purchase comes as a result of required regulatory divestiture of the Mena locations, and is expected to convey deposits of approximately \$58 million and loans totaling approximately \$29 million.

Customers of the Mena branch should continue to conduct business as normal. Once the date for the closing is established, customers will be notified and First Financial will communicate in advance of any changes customers can expect.

"For over 20 years, First Financial has had a loan production office in Mena and we're excited to expand our retail footprint into Polk County and Western Arkansas," stated Chris Hegi, CEO of First Financial Bank. "As a strong community bank, we look forward to investing in the people and businesses in the Mena area. We expect a very smooth transition for employees and customers alike, and look forward to continued success at this location", he continued.

First Financial Bank currently has six retail locations in Union County, one retail location in Pulaski County, and two in Mississippi. They are one of the nation's leading poultry lenders, and also offer mortgage loans, specialized lending for pharmacists and veterinarians, and a nationwide farm and ranch lending division. They currently employ 299 people and have assets of \$930 million. For more information, visit [www.ffb1.com](http://www.ffb1.com).