

INITIAL STATEMENT OF BENEFICIAL OWNERSHIP OF SECURITIES

Filed pursuant to Section 16(a) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 or Section 30(h) of the Investment Company Act of 1940

OMB APPROVAL	
OMB Number:	3235-0104
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1. Name and Address of Reporting Person <u>Fultz Paul G</u> (Last) (First) (Middle) <u>200 EAST JACKSON ST</u> (Street) <u>MUNCIE IN 47305</u> (City) (State) (Zip)	2. Date of Event Requiring Statement (Month/Day/Year) <u>05/19/2026</u>	3. Issuer Name and Ticker or Trading Symbol <u>FIRST MERCHANTS CORP [FRME]</u>		
		4. Relationship of Reporting Person(s) to Issuer (Check all applicable) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Director 10% Owner Officer (give title below) Other (specify below)		5. If Amendment, Date of Original Filed (Month/Day/Year)
		6. Individual or Joint/Group Filing (Check Applicable Line) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Form filed by One Reporting Person <input type="checkbox"/> Form filed by More than One Reporting Person		

Table I - Non-Derivative Securities Beneficially Owned

1. Title of Security (Instr. 4)	2. Amount of Securities Beneficially Owned (Instr. 4)	3. Ownership Form: Direct (D) or Indirect (I) (Instr. 5)	4. Nature of Indirect Beneficial Ownership (Instr. 5)
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Table II - Derivative Securities Beneficially Owned (e.g., puts, calls, warrants, options, convertible securities)

1. Title of Derivative Security (Instr. 4)	2. Date Exercisable and Expiration Date (Month/Day/Year)		3. Title and Amount of Securities Underlying Derivative Security (Instr. 4)	4. Conversion or Exercise Price of Derivative Security	5. Ownership Form: Direct (D) or Indirect (I) (Instr. 5)	6. Nature of Indirect Beneficial Ownership (Instr. 5)
	Date Exercisable	Expiration Date				

Explanation of Responses:

Remarks:

No securities are beneficially owned.

Jacob Burkett (Confirming Statement on File) 05/22/2026

** Signature of Reporting Person

Date

Reminder: Report on a separate line for each class of securities beneficially owned directly or indirectly.

* If the form is filed by more than one reporting person, see Instruction 5 (b)(v).

** Intentional misstatements or omissions of facts constitute Federal Criminal Violations See 18 U.S.C. 1001 and 15 U.S.C. 78ff(a).

Note: File three copies of this Form, one of which must be manually signed. If space is insufficient, see Instruction 6 for procedure.

Persons who respond to the collection of information contained in this form are not required to respond unless the form displays a currently valid OMB Number.

Confirming Statement for Section 16 Filing Authorization

This statement confirms that the undersigned, Paul Fultz, has authorized and designated Jacob Burkett, Paul Cento, and Melanie Bowling, individually, to execute and file, on the undersigned's behalf, all required filings with the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission, including but not limited to Forms 3, 4, 5, 144, and EDGAR system maintenance, including any amendments thereto, arising from the undersigned's ownership of or transactions in securities of First Merchants Corporation.

This authorization and designation includes management of accounts and shall remain in effect until such time as the undersigned is no longer subject to the filing requirements of Forms 3, 4, 5, and 144 with respect to securities of First Merchants Corporation, unless earlier revoked in writing.

The undersigned acknowledges that Jacob Burkett, Paul Cento, and Melanie Bowling, individually, are acting solely as filing agents and/or administrators and are not assuming any of the undersigned's legal responsibilities for compliance with Section 16 of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the undersigned has executed this Confirming Statement on the date set forth below.

Paul Fultz

Signature:

Paul Fultz

Date:

5/19/26

