

Know Your Rights: Protection of Assets

Every one should have an emergency plan to protect their assets. This packet helps you create one, regardless of immigration status.

Home

Regardless of your location or immigration status, you have property ownership rights. If you own a home or have a mortgage it remains yours even if you are deported.

- Make mortgage or rent payments on time to avoid foreclosure or eviction.
- Track your home equity as it grows; it is a significant asset
- Familiarize yourself with state foreclosure timelines to plan accordingly.
- Make sure all owners agree on the next step
- Gather Documents

Discuss ownership transfer options with a Real Estate attorney.

Automobile

Title and registration establish ownership of a vehicle.

- If the vehicle is paid in full and your name is on the vehicle title then you are the legal owner. Many states allow individuals without a Social Security number to title and register vehicles with an ITIN.
- If financed auto then request pay off, if you can resolve the debt. Lender holds title until the loan is paid off.
- Liability insurance is legally required in most states to operate the vehicle.
- Gather Documents

If you are unsure about managing vehicle ownership or transfers, consult an attorney or trusted advisor before making decisions

Bank Accounts

Regardless of your location or immigration status, you remain the legal owner of your bank accounts and savings.

- Bank Accounts: Banks are required to safeguard your money under federal or state laws, including for ITIN holders. Confirm if your bank supports international wire transfers and withdrawals.
- Savings Accounts: Designate a beneficiary to ensure savings are passed securely.
- Discuss financial products with your consulate: Open a checking account abroad in your home country.

Understand bank policies. Confirm if the bank accepts Power of Attorney (POA) or adding an authorized user to your account.

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Debt

You are legally obligated to repay debt (credit cards, loans, mortgages) regardless of your status.

- Pay on time. Prioritize payments like mortgages and auto loans to avoid repossession.
- Housing counseling can provide a FREE credit report, review your accounts and identify the type of debt you are responsible for.
- Avoid debt relief scam. Work with reputable organizations to help understand your type of debt and legal actions.

Seek legal advice if you have received a summons or lawsuit from creditor. If you fall behind, debt collectors cannot harass or threaten you.

Earned Wages

You have employment rights that protect an outstanding earning, benefits, or claims from your employer.

- Right to earned wages. Employers are legally required to pay you for all hours worked.
- If your employer withholds wages, you have the right to file a wage claim with your state labor department.
- You are entitled to receive your final paycheck, including any unused vacation pay, per state laws.

Seek legal advice from an attorney or organizations that specialize in workers rights, if you need assistance with wage recovery and claims.

Make a Financial Plan

- Create an inventory of all your assets; property, bank accounts and calculate your net worth. Do you know how much your home is worth? Do you want to keep, transfer or sell your home?
- Review income sources. Identify income streams (job, rental, benefits). Explore remote or freelance work.
- If available, open a bank account in your home country to be able to wire transfer funds.
- Understand the types of debts you are carrying and their liabilities. Identify debts that may affect your assets or credit, if unpaid.
- Discuss and review different protection options, to measure what you will need based on what you own.

Resource Hub

Who can assist with workers rights?

Centro de Trabajadores Unidos

9546 S Ewing Ave, Chicago, IL 60617

773-349-2806

Who can I contact for legal assistance with debt & to discuss a Power of Attorney?

Consult with a lawyer:

Chicago Volunteer Legal Services

9546 S Ewing Ave, Chicago, IL 60617

312-332-1624

Self-guided online help

Illinois Legal Aid

www.illinoislegalaid.org

Need help organizing your finances before consulting an attorney?

Consult with a housing counselor:

The Resurrection Project: Full Circle Homes

1818 S. Paulina St, Chicago IL 60608

312-666-1323

Our Partners



Financial Inventory

Use the following guide to create a financial plan with your family. Keep this in a safe, privately protected space.

Employment Information

Current Employer #1 :

Employer Address :

Start Date : Supervisor :

Phone No : E-Mail :

Current Employer #2 :

Employer Address :

Start Date : Supervisor :

Phone No : E-Mail :

Who will collect my pay in case of an emergency ?

Name : Relation :

Phone No : E-Mail :

Address:

Bank Information

Checking Account #1-
Account number:

Bank Name : Phone No :

Who has access?

Checking Account #2-
Account number:

Bank Name : Phone No :

Who has access?

Checking Account #3-
Account number:

Bank Name : Phone No :

Who has access?

Checking Account #4-
Account number:

Bank Name : Phone No :

Who has access?

Property

Property Address :

City : State : Zip Code :

Year Purchased : Purchased Amount: Current Balance :

Estimated Value : Estimated Equity :

Property Address #2 :

City : State : Zip Code :

Year Purchased : Purchased Amount: Current Balance :

Estimated Value : Estimated Equity :

Auto

Car Make/Model Plate Number

VIN/ID Insurance

Car Loan Balance Blue Book Value

Car Make/Model Plate Number

VIN/ID Insurance

Car Loan Balance Blue Book Value

Household Budget

Bill	Name & Address	Account #	Amount Due	Due Date
Example: Rent/Mortgage	ABC Mortgage/ 123 Main St, Chicago, IL 60608	1234567891	\$1,850.00	1st
Rent/Mortgage				
Light				
Gas				
Water				
Cellphone				
Internet				
Other				
		Total Monthly Due:		

Debt

Bill	Name & Address	Account #	Amount Due	Due Date
Example: Rent/Mortgage	ABC Mortgage/ 123 Main St, Chicago, IL 60608	1234567891	\$1,850.00	1st
Auto Loan #1				
Auto Loan #2				
Installment Loan #1				
Installment Loan #2				
Credit Card #1				
Credit Card #2				
Credit Card #3				
		Total Monthly Due:		

Children

Bill	Name & Address	Contact	Account#	Amount Due	Due Date
Example: School Tuition/Day Care Dues	Chicago Day Care	312-123-4567		\$25.00	10th
Shool Tuition/Day Care Dues					
Medical/Dental (out of pocket, medicine, etc)					
		Total Monthly Due:			

Other Monthly Expenses

Bill	Name & Address	Contact	Account#	Amount Due	Due Date
Other Expense	Auto Insurance (Every 6 months)	800-555-5555	987654	\$66.00	6-Jun-2025
		Total Monthly Due:			