NCLC National Consumer Law Center
Fighting Together for Economic Justice

What States & Local Governments Can Do to Support Immigrants' Financial Stability:

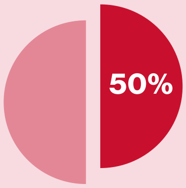
SCAM CALLS & TEXTS

Current aggressive federal immigration enforcement has created massive disruption throughout the U.S. and significant financial hardship in impacted communities. **Racial profiling by immigration officials** means Black and Latino communities are particularly harmed.

People in impacted communities are reasonably concerned that any information they provide in connection with accessing financial services or in interactions with federal, state, or local government could be used to target them for detention and deportation, regardless of immigration status. Immigration officials' access to and use of an unprecedented array of information drives many immigrants out of the formal banking sector and leaves immigrant families exposed to abuse and predation by fringe financial service providers. Mainstream financial service providers may also be emboldened to discriminate against immigrants by the federal government's refusal to enforce fair lending and fair housing statutes. In addition, fear of being in public spaces can lead immigrants to miss court hearings and not assert their rights in debt collection, evictions, and other legal proceedings. Below are ways that states, counties, and local governments can help protect immigrants, their families, and communities from financial exploitation and other consumer abuses.

600%

The Trump Administration has increased the use of **"at-large" arrests in U.S. communities by 600%**, putting families at financial risk when wage earners are arrested.



According to **a Nov. 2025 report**, 50% of immigrants report difficulty paying for essentials — up from 30% in 2023 — and 50% say that it's increasingly difficult for them to earn a living.

The more comprehensive **What States & Local Governments Can Do to Support Immigrants' Financial Stability** issue brief contains NCLC's full list of recommendations. This document highlights the recommendations related to scam calls and texts.

Prevent Fraud that Targets Immigrants

CONSUMER PROBLEMS	STATE SOLUTIONS
Fraudsters contact people in immigrant communities and threaten them with arrest or deportation if they don't pay nonexistent debts.	**Bring enforcement actions against fraudsters and abusive debt collectors. Create multi-lingual campaigns to inform consumers about illegal debt collection and tiplines for reporting abuse.**

Prevent Fraud that Targets Immigrants (cont.)

CONSUMER PROBLEMS	STATE SOLUTIONS
Fraudsters prey upon immigrants seeking assistance with immigration status, charging exorbitant fees for nonexistent immigration programs or ones for which the person does not qualify.	Regulate immigration consultants (“notarios”) (e.g., Cal. Bus. & Prof Code §22440-49). Bring civil (e.g., UDAP statutes) and criminal enforcement. Engage in education/outreach. Increase legal assistance.
Fraudsters and predatory lenders prey on immigrants reluctant to interact with financial institutions.	Bring enforcement actions against fraudsters and predatory lenders. Create multi-lingual campaigns to inform consumers about illegal financial services and tiplines for reporting abuse.

Require Language Access for Public Agencies and Financial Transactions

CONSUMER PROBLEMS	STATE SOLUTIONS
Immigrants receiving notice from state or local government agencies or the courts may not be aware of their rights described in the notice.	Require agencies to provide documents to all recipients in the top two languages used in the jurisdiction, provide them in other top languages upon request, and broadly offer oral interpretation. (NCLC report)
Immigrants seeking loans or facing debt collection may require in-language information to understand the transaction or vindicate their rights.	Require lenders and debt collectors to provide bilingual Spanish-English key notices to all, provide them in other top languages upon request, and broadly offer oral interpretation.
Lending products are pitched to immigrants in their primary language, but federally required Truth-in-Lending disclosures and monthly statements are available only in English.	Require lenders and servicers to provide key disclosures and statements in English and Spanish, provide them in other top languages upon request, and broadly offer oral interpretation.

Protect Immigrant Consumer Data

CONSUMER PROBLEMS	STATE SOLUTIONS
Consumer data — including data shared with financial services companies, landlords, social services, colleges and universities, and utility companies — can be used to target people for immigration enforcement.	Where possible, prohibit collecting information about a person's immigration status. Prohibit sharing personally identifiable data that includes or can be linked to immigration status information. (E.g., MD Data Privacy Act.)

To speak to an expert about any of these problems or solutions, please contact Patrick Crotty, pcrotty@nclc.org.

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The nonprofit National Consumer Law Center® (NCLC®) works for economic justice for low-income and other disadvantaged people in the U.S. through policy analysis and advocacy, publications, litigation, and training.