

# Know Your Rights!



## Can a Debt Collector Take Money out of My Bank Account?

We all have rights when it comes to debt collection, under state and federal law.

In general, debt collectors cannot take your money if your only income is government benefits. That's because under federal law most benefits are legally "exempt" from debt collection.

And if you live in New York State, you have additional rights and protections, under state law.\*

Here's how it works:

- Debt collectors cannot take money out of your bank account, if your account contains only government benefits.
- In addition, debt collectors cannot take money out of your account – or even freeze your account – if:
  - You have **\$3,840** or less in the account, and the account contains no government benefits
  - or -
  - You have **\$3,425** or less in the account, and the account contains government benefits (even if your account also contains income from other sources, such as wages).

\*New York passed the Exempt Income Protection Act in 2008 to prevent debt collectors from leaving New Yorkers without enough money to cover basic needs.

**For more info, call the NYC Financial Justice Hotline: 212-925-4929**

**The hotline provides free legal advice to low-income NYC residents.**

**Hotline hours: M 4-6 pm | T, W, Th 12-2 pm** *Se habla español.*



Find more Know Your Rights info for New Yorkers at [fjhotline.nyc](https://fjhotline.nyc)

This flyer is intended to provide general information to New Yorkers, and is not intended as legal advice.

New Economy Project operates the NYC Financial Justice Hotline, a free legal assistance hotline for low-income New Yorkers. New Economy Project's mission is to build a just economy that works for all, rooted in racial and gender justice, cooperation, neighborhood equity, and ecological sustainability.

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