

# Debit Bank Cards For Illegal Immigrants

Many of the nonprofit work centers that assist illegal immigrants nationwide are now offering a special debit card for those who lack the identification papers required to open bank accounts in the United States.

The first-of-its-kind program was launched a few months ago by a nonprofit immigrant work center in New Jersey called New Labor and several others have followed its lead. The New Jersey center alone has distributed 300 cards and similar establishments in Southern California and Chicago have initiated the program and vowed to make it available to thousands of **illegal aliens**.

Immigration advocates say they created the special debit card after a nationwide survey revealed that those in the country illegally lacked the identification papers necessary to open bank accounts. Most American financial institutions require two United States government documents to open an account.

The new debit card, called Sigo (which combines the Spanish word for yes with go) requires just one form of identification from the applicant's home country. It could be a Mexican birth certificate or "matricula" card issued by the country's consulate. The Sigo card, which is affiliated with MasterCard, even has a **bilingual web site** and toll free number to assist applicants.

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Promoters brag about how the new card enables immigrants without checking accounts or credit cards to keep their cash somewhere safer than beneath their mattresses. Their goal is to make the cards available to tens of thousands of illegal immigrants at 140 worker centers throughout the U.S. in the next few years.

Ironically, most of the centers are nonprofits that don't pay taxes and many receive financial aide from their respective city, county, state or the even the federal government. Yet, they reward and assist those who have violated the country's federal laws.

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