

# CHECKLIST: PROTECTING MONEY AND BENEFITS FOR YOUR CHILDREN

This checklist is part of a larger Manual titled “Protecting Assets and Child Custody in the Face of Deportation,” released by Appleseed in 2017. For more info and to read the full Manual, please visit [www.AppleseedNetwork.org/DeportationManual](http://www.AppleseedNetwork.org/DeportationManual).

This checklist is not legal advice. You can search for a lawyer at <http://www.ailalawyer.org/>.

- Start by deciding whether you want to take your kids with you if you need to leave the country. You can check out Chapter 1 of Appleseed’s Manual for help deciding.
  
- Create a list of all your bank accounts, credit cards, health insurance accounts, insurance policies, phone and utility bills, leases, cars, etc. Write down account numbers and passwords. Keep this list in a safe place.
  
- If your kids are leaving the country with you:***
  - Start the process of selling your things and your kid’s things or figure out how you will take stuff out of the country.
  - If you have property or money in your kid’s name, consider giving those to someone you trust who will remain in the U.S. if you leave.
  - Consider giving “power of attorney” to someone who will remain in the U.S. to take care of your property, money, or possessions (see Chapter 11 of Appleseed’s Manual for help).
  - Get your kid’s paperwork together before you leave including birth certificates, passports, medical records, etc.

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## *If your kids are staying in the U.S.:*

- You will need to set up guardianship paperwork so a trusted adult can take care of your kids. You can check out Chapter 1 of Appleseed's Manual for help.
- Plan for your kid's finances:
  - Review the list you created with the adult who will take care of your kids. Decide how they will access these accounts. Think carefully about who you trust with your passwords.
  - Look at the list you created and if possible, make sure all accounts have both your kid's name and the name of an adult on them.
  - Think about creating an agreement to transfer things to another trusted adult under the Uniform Transfer to Minors Act (UTMA). The agreement can either start right away or sometime later. See Chapter 2 of Appleseed's Manual for help.
  - You can always ask for information on how your possessions or money are being handled.
- Plan for your kid's healthcare and benefits:
  - Make a list of the services and benefits your kids use or need; include health insurance, Medicaid or Medicare, disability services, SNAP, day care vouchers, bus tokens, or other services. Write down account numbers, passwords and contact information and add them to the first list you created.
  - Find out how to make sure those services will continue. Talk through these benefits with the person who will take care of your kids.

**Remember: The plan is to have a plan. You are taking the right steps to protect your family. Don't be afraid to ask for help so you get answers you can trust: try your lawyer or caseworker, or ask your child's school or doctor's office.**