

Tuesday, October 5, 2021  
To: New York Community Banks

## FROM ICBA

### USPS quietly launches postal banking pilot

The U.S. Postal Service last month quietly launched a financial services pilot program to test ICBA-opposed postal banking.

**Reports:** According to [NBC News](#) and [The American Prospect](#), the pilot offers check cashing, bill paying, ATM access, and expanded money orders and wire transfers. Customers may reportedly cash payroll or business checks to buy single-use gift cards worth up to \$500 for a flat fee of \$5.95.

**Locations:** The pilot launched Sept. 13 in Washington, D.C.; Falls Church, Va.; Baltimore; and the Bronx, New York.

**ICBA Position :**ICBA strongly opposes postal banking and has offered alternatives for reaching the unbanked, as it told Congress this year in a hearing [statement](#), a three-part series of [issue briefs](#), and a [letter](#) opposing a postal banking pilot project under fiscal 2022 spending legislation.

**More:** “This is just a bad idea that doesn’t seem to want to go away,” ICBA’s Paul Merski told NBC News. “The Postal Service is in no way, shape or form equipped to compete in the financial services space.”

### Independent Banker offers guide to building trust

This month’s ICBA [Independent Banker magazine](#) features the complete guide to building trust.

**Details:** The October issue covers how community banks can use technology to strengthen their brand, such as implementing strong data security practices and humanizing online customer interactions.

**More:** The latest edition of IB also includes articles on open banking, overcoming hurdles for Native American customers, serving active-duty personnel, and more.

**Access:** The magazine is available on the [Independent Banker](#) website and via the [digital edition](#).

[READ MORE](#)

### IRS campaign continues making news

ICBA’s campaign against the reconciliation package’s IRS reporting proposal continued generating headlines in recent days.

**Press Hits:** Following last week’s appearance by ICBA’s Paul Merski on [The Glenn Beck Program](#), the campaign has also been covered by [Bloomberg](#), [Newsweek](#), and the [Daily Mail](#). Meanwhile, Citizens Bank President and CEO Jeffrey Standafer continued the campaign with a Milwaukee [BizTimes](#) op-ed.

**Campaign:** ICBA continues calling on community bankers to use its customizable [email and social media content](#) to urge consumers to [contact Congress in opposition](#) to the plan.

**Call Alert:** In addition to the consumer campaign, community bankers can call their lawmakers using an ICBA [call alert and customizable script](#).

### Crapo op-ed targets ICBA-opposed tax hikes

Senate Finance Committee Ranking Member Mike Crapo (R-Idaho) spoke out against efforts to eliminate the “stepped-up basis” tax policy, whereby capital appreciation during a decedent’s lifetime is not subject to tax.

**Op-ed:** In an Idaho Falls Post Register [op-ed](#), Crapo said [ICBA-opposed](#) proposals to do away with the policy while raising capital gains taxes and broadening the estate tax would harm small businesses and job creation.

**Grassroots:** ICBA's [Be Heard grassroots action center](#) allows community banks to send customizable messages to their lawmakers opposing these proposed tax hikes.

### **Call reports due Oct. 30**

The [FDIC said](#) call reports for the Sept. 30 report date are due Saturday, Oct. 30. The agency noted new call report data items related to brokered deposits and interest rate restrictions are effective as of the Sept. 30 report date for FFIEC 031 and FFIEC 041 filers and with the Dec. 31 report date for FFIEC 051 filers.

### **USDA planning loan guarantee initiative for food supply chain**

The [USDA announced](#) plans to use \$100 million from the American Rescue Plan Act to support lending that will address meat processing and food supply chain infrastructure issues.

**Notice:** The department said it will issue a notice announcing eligibility requirements and the application window for the lending initiative to expand meat and poultry processing capacity.

**More:** USDA said it will host a lender training webinar Oct. 14 and encouraged lenders and other interested stakeholders to sign up for email updates to receive updates on the program.

### **USDA raises guaranteed farm loan limit**

The [USDA](#) increased the loan limit for borrowers seeking a guaranteed farm loan. The higher loan limit of \$1.825 million—up from \$1.776 million—is effective as of Oct. 1.

**Index:** The 2018 farm bill set the guaranteed loan limit at \$1.75 million and tied it to an inflation index, which led to the increase.

**ICBA Position:** ICBA has repeatedly advocated higher loan limits to reflect rising input costs and agricultural land values.

### **CFPB issues debt-collection FAQs**

The Consumer Financial Protection Bureau issued [frequently asked questions](#) on limited-content messages and the call frequency provisions under the Debt Collection Rule in Regulation F.

## **FROM OTHER SOURCES**

- U.S. Postal Service customers at select locations in Baltimore, the Bronx, Falls Church, Va., and Washington, D.C., have access to paycheck-cashing services as part of a pilot program quietly launched in September that enables them to redeem those checks for Visa gift cards of up to \$500, according to an agency spokesperson. Some of the financial services rendered would put the Postal Service in competition with community banks, whose advocates say a government agency's entrance into the marketplace would disturb local credit markets. [The Washington Post](#)
- A study published on Monday in The Lancet medical journal found that the efficacy of the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine fell below 50 percent after about six months after the second dose. [https://thehill.com/policy/healthcare/575279-study-shows-pfizer-covid-19-vaccine-effectiveness-declines-after-six-months?mkt\\_tok=ODUwLVRBQS01MTEAAAF\\_720Hs\\_xIKU7PS7TMI4OwOROzyHe8QpPxg\\_sWUBSUiHmbvRZWgQ4ot\\_s4W9Nq-gNihZkrxTwpxi\\_WiXiaOg6DstqWAKBXZzoU0vdmJyI9vlsGU](https://thehill.com/policy/healthcare/575279-study-shows-pfizer-covid-19-vaccine-effectiveness-declines-after-six-months?mkt_tok=ODUwLVRBQS01MTEAAAF_720Hs_xIKU7PS7TMI4OwOROzyHe8QpPxg_sWUBSUiHmbvRZWgQ4ot_s4W9Nq-gNihZkrxTwpxi_WiXiaOg6DstqWAKBXZzoU0vdmJyI9vlsGU)

- National Institute of Health (NIH) Director Francis Collins, 71, will announce his resignation today after three decades at the agency, including 12 years at the helm, the geneticist confirmed to The Washington Post. Collins headed the government's effort to map the entire human genetic code, and two decades later became one of the most recognizable leaders in the battle against the coronavirus pandemic. He will leave his post by the end of this year.
- With just weeks remaining before federal workers must be vaccinated against COVID-19, the federal government on Monday outlined procedures for employees to request medical or religious exemptions from President Biden's mandate. [https://apnews.com/article/coronavirus-pandemic-joe-biden-centers-for-disease-control-and-prevention-religion-health-3f3a55b7d8791c385ab920729e474691?mkt\\_tok=ODUwLVRBQS01MTEAAAF\\_720Hs2h62ILZ\\_XFZ9jwuBMksJQs4ThehNsBYUf9KTer4J\\_YfbHABv828pTmdO80qxJ0yA4DaexgIfsKDeXE\\_vaqWgh0rMKU4mci4oZpMRy6N5](https://apnews.com/article/coronavirus-pandemic-joe-biden-centers-for-disease-control-and-prevention-religion-health-3f3a55b7d8791c385ab920729e474691?mkt_tok=ODUwLVRBQS01MTEAAAF_720Hs2h62ILZ_XFZ9jwuBMksJQs4ThehNsBYUf9KTer4J_YfbHABv828pTmdO80qxJ0yA4DaexgIfsKDeXE_vaqWgh0rMKU4mci4oZpMRy6N5)
- JPMorgan Chase & Co said on Monday it will restrict business travel for U.S. employees who are unvaccinated or have not disclosed their vaccination status to the bank, according to an internal memo seen by Reuters. [https://www.reuters.com/business/aerospace-defense/jpmorgan-bans-business-travel-unvaccinated-us-employees-memo-2021-10-04/?mkt\\_tok=ODUwLVRBQS01MTEAAAF\\_719ZnZ8MwL7OwpELxM3cEUfui0\\_tYxAZ8cK8\\_JUibNr0THnFZ148VImwLdZ6MIpDYPMEgUwB772aDSCM0OrcbWQnfcB1gHzBY-tDGZo-olfc](https://www.reuters.com/business/aerospace-defense/jpmorgan-bans-business-travel-unvaccinated-us-employees-memo-2021-10-04/?mkt_tok=ODUwLVRBQS01MTEAAAF_719ZnZ8MwL7OwpELxM3cEUfui0_tYxAZ8cK8_JUibNr0THnFZ148VImwLdZ6MIpDYPMEgUwB772aDSCM0OrcbWQnfcB1gHzBY-tDGZo-olfc)
- The Treasury Department is set to soon "claw back" federal rental assistance from groups that haven't acted to spend enough of the money so it can be given to other communities with greater need, according to new guidance published Monday. [https://www.wsj.com/articles/treasury-to-begin-redistributing-rental-assistance-funds-to-high-need-communities-11633359674?mod=lead\\_feature\\_below\\_a\\_pos1&mkt\\_tok=ODUwLVRBQS01MTEAAAF\\_719ZnPtMDU2\\_7MiqNzVsKnvV7cKxmq318gfuBkF8bKDIOYwhdPMjwk\\_CI5V-Q2z0iyaiGaulQvK82vuA2d\\_yQMkM--7Mj0KpAr5ourxITFyk](https://www.wsj.com/articles/treasury-to-begin-redistributing-rental-assistance-funds-to-high-need-communities-11633359674?mod=lead_feature_below_a_pos1&mkt_tok=ODUwLVRBQS01MTEAAAF_719ZnPtMDU2_7MiqNzVsKnvV7cKxmq318gfuBkF8bKDIOYwhdPMjwk_CI5V-Q2z0iyaiGaulQvK82vuA2d_yQMkM--7Mj0KpAr5ourxITFyk)
- Democrats risk settling for a less generous expansion of the state and local tax deduction than previously hoped after President Joe Biden conceded that lawmakers will have to scale back his economic agenda to get it enacted. [SALT-Cap Relief Faces Rollback as Democrats Eye Less Spending](#)
- Lael Brainard has emerged as the "great dissenter" on the Federal Reserve Board of Governors. In multiple decisions, she has voted against the board's deregulatory agenda — challenging its positions on matters such as liquidity requirements, trading rules and capital buffers for banks — and detailed her reasoning in forceful terms. Brainard has been mentioned as a possible successor to Powell as chair of the Fed in the event that President Biden chooses not to nominate Powell for another four-year term when his current term expires in February. [https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/04/opinion/lael-brainard-fed.html?mkt\\_tok=ODUwLVRBQS01MTEAAAF\\_719ZnVOdz5nRJNCzxpPeI4\\_Jpfphul3ls7nDzKhb06SdQVUZwO6PSy5e02VvoxwChM7Z2JYaHK1tQp0sPkccI4S2sivMsP\\_L99EuuACY0zP](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/04/opinion/lael-brainard-fed.html?mkt_tok=ODUwLVRBQS01MTEAAAF_719ZnVOdz5nRJNCzxpPeI4_Jpfphul3ls7nDzKhb06SdQVUZwO6PSy5e02VvoxwChM7Z2JYaHK1tQp0sPkccI4S2sivMsP_L99EuuACY0zP)

## FROM NEW YORK

- Among the many challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic is that its devastation doesn't move in a straight line, so while experts say the threat of the delta variant may be receding, the virus finds hosts among those who remain unimmunized, [The Buffalo News](#).
- The Nassau County Legislature voted 18-1 to approve County Executive Laura Curran's plan to use federal pandemic aid to send \$375 in payments to individual households with incomes of up to \$500,000, [Newsday reports](#).

- Northwell Health, New York state's largest health care provider, announced that 1,400 employees – less than 2% of its staff – refused to get vaccinated against the coronavirus and had to leave their jobs, [The New York Times reports](#).
- [As vaccine mandate kicks in, 95% of NYC schools staff have received COVID shots](#). New York City's vaccine mandate for more than 150,000 education employees took effect Monday morning, requiring those without at least one dose to be put on unpaid leave. By Monday, 95% of education department employees had received at least one dose, including 96% of teachers and 99% of principals. About 43,000 education department employees received a vaccine dose after the mandate was announced on Aug. 23.
- More apartments sold in Manhattan in the third quarter than at any other time in the last 32 years," the N.Y. Times' Stefanos Chen [reports](#) (*subscription*). It's a new sign New York real estate "is set for a faster-than-expected recovery."
- Gov. Kathy Hochul secured a key endorsement in her bid for a full term next year. New York State Democratic Party Chairman Jay Jacobs made his endorsement official, saying Gov. Hochul has proven herself to be a leader in a tumultuous time and has earned his support. [Read More](#)
- New York Democratic Party Chairman Jay Jacobs, of Long Island, sent a warning Monday to other possible gubernatorial contenders, specifically those who hail from swing districts, according to former Newsday columnist Larry Levy. [Read More](#)
- Democratic leaders on Long Island are **endorsing Gov. Kathy Hochul** in a 2022 gubernatorial race that is **increasingly national in scope**.
- Attorney General Letitia James is **still thinking about announcing** her own campaign.
- [Cuomo's 'dangerous moment' statement roils the Democratic waters](#) Former Governor Cuomo further roiled the Democratic waters yesterday with a statement to his past campaign supporters that 'the state is in a dangerous moment' because of 'government incompetence,' setting off a barrage of speculation about whether he is thinking about running for the seat from which he resigned in August.
- [Rochester Mayor Lovely Warren will resign](#) from office after accepting a plea deal in the campaign fraud case against her. Warren pleaded guilty to violating election law in Rochester City Court on Monday, the day jury selection was set to begin in her trial.
- One of the state's most senior judges has refused to get vaccinated or seek a medical exemption — and can no longer enter the courthouse, The Post has learned. Associate Court of Appeals Judge Jenny Rivera is the only state jurist out of a total of approximately 1,300 who declined the jab and failed to apply for a medical or religious waiver. <https://nypost.com/2021/10/04/this-unvaxxed-ny-judge-is-now-barred-from-entering-the-courthouse/>

###

**IBANYS will continue to provide updates as additional information becomes available. Thank you all for your continued participation and support.**

- John J. Witkowski, President & CEO ([Johnw@ibanys.net](mailto:Johnw@ibanys.net); 716.880.0518)
- Stephen W. Rice, Director, Communications & Government Relations ([Stever@ibanys.net](mailto:Stever@ibanys.net))