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You can quickly add bank charges and take a bite out of the profits from your savings account or check interest. Fortunately, some of the country's lowest-income earners will no longer be charged for withdrawing cash from off-grid ATMs. Nationally, consumers with state-issued EBT cards will not be charged for using the Wells Fargo, Chase or Bank of America ATM - even if they are not customers of those banks. ATM fees are already waived for RECIPIENTS OF EBT BENEFITS WHO USE CITIBANK ATMs. We have reached the decision thanks in part to conversations with consumer advocates and policymakers about the importance of providing free and open access to EBT funds. We have a clear goal of making the financial lives of those we serve better, and we are committed to ensuring that all our policies, practices, products and programs are in line with this purpose. The policy changes follow years of work by groups in California and across the country collectively known as the EBT Avengers. Ultimately, it's the right thing to do to make sure that families get full use for every ten cents they need instead of allowing taxpayer money to be withdrawn to pay ATM fees, said Paulina Gonzalez Brito, executive director of the California Reinvestment Coalition in a press release. We hope that other banks will move forward to track the leadership of these banks and that California leaders will continue to strengthen policies that ensure access to non-predatory financial services at affordable prices for all Californians regardless of income. ATM fees are cumbersome ATATM fees are on the rise. A recent survey by Bankrate found that the average cost of withdrawing funds from off-grid ATMs (\$4.68) was 36 per cent higher than in 2008. The average ATM surcharge (fees charged by ATM owners) was the highest level for the 14th consecutive year. ATM fees are higher in some areas than in others. For example, of the 25 large U.S. markets, Detroit has the highest average ATM fee (\$5.28). In California, ATM fees cost EBT recipients millions of dollars each year, according to data from the California Reinvestment Alliance. If we knew that in California it is \$20 million a year that was coming out of the pockets of the poor for the pocketline of the richest banks, what does that look like nationally? Compared to their wealthier counterparts, low-income Americans are more likely to spend money on bank fees. The most common minimum balance to avoid monthly maintenance fees is \$1,500 - a maximum for many poor families. In an average bank survey from late 2017, nearly 1 in 3 respondents who earn less than \$30,000 reported paying monthly fees associated with their main account (including ATM fees and regular service charges and Fees). Only 18 percent of Americans earning more than \$75,000 said they paid this type of fee. Other obstacles to ATM fees is a good start, but there is a lot of work to be done to make banking services less expensive for the poorest Americans.Bartholow points to some of the problems that low-income families can face just because of having a bank account. For example, all the money they have in their cheque accounts can be taken at any time and used to cover old debts. Making banking safe and affordable for all should be a goal. I think waiving bank surcharges for public benefit payments is part of that. Adding some level of protection against debt bank charges is another part of that. Also, make sure that people have the right to direct deposit. Not every State allows this for public benefits. While they will not be responsible for the use of ATMs at some of America's largest banks, EBT cardholders should be careful when using other ATMs. Plan for the future so you have a lot of money. Look for free ATMs or choose the bank that pays you off-line ATM fees each month. LEARN MORE: Photo (c) artran - Getty ImagesThe end of a long-running class action involving the lack of seats for the Wal-Mart cashier could soon now be that Wal-Mart has agreed to pay \$65 million as part of the proposed settlement. The suit, originally filed by former Wal-Mart employee Nisha Brown in 2009, alleges that the retailer was in violation of a 2001 California wage order that specifies the need to give employees proper seats when the nature of work reasonably permits. If approved, about 100,000 current and former California Wal-Mart tellers are eligible for part of the payments, depending on how long they were employed, the Los Angeles Times reported on Friday. Walmart countergumentWalmart does not agree that it is wrong with regard to this matter. The retailer has confirmed that the nature of the work as a cashier does not allow the cashier to sit down. Benton, Arkansas, has argued that cashiers need to move around to greet customers, stock racks and bag items. Among other reasons, the company says that tellers are less efficient when they sit, preferring customers who stand, and providing seats for the patient will result in a loss of revenue, according to LA Times.As part of the settlement, Wal-Mart will commit to starting a pilot program that will provide seats for cashiers who express a desire to use it. The retail giant also promises not to discriminate or retaliate against workers who choose to sit down. Wal-Mart spokesman Randy Hargrove said in a statement that both sides were pleased with a proposed decision, noting that the judge had yet to approve the settlement amount. If approved, any California treasurer used by Wal-Mart June 11, 2008 And the date of approval of the settlement will be eligible to claim part of the settlement funds. It's an article of faith in the new world of work: the best companies are the ones that hire and keep the best people. This principle does not apply only to Java engineers or marketing executives. Companies battle for novice workers too: people who don't make that much money but who make a big difference in the company's relationship with their customers. Dean Curtis, 46, knows what makes novice workers beat. His 500-person company, Curtis & Co., based in Kearney, Nebraska, is training welfare recipients on how to find and maintain jobs. Its main program is a class, usually taught throughout the week, that deals with everything from mastering nuts and bolts from workplace interaction to the development and refinement of professional goals. The company was founded in 1985 and worked with poor people from Milwaukee to New York City, from Detroit to Laramie, Wyoming. In 1998, it helped more than 20,000 social welfare beneficiaries and found jobs for more than 11,000 of them. How does the battle for talent unfold on the bottom of the career ladder? Not all of this is different from how it evolved at the top, says Curtis. If you want to find and maintain great people - whether they make \$10 an hour or \$200,000 a year - you have to count three major issues. The action is a first-class PersonalAT, and participants play the icebreaker game. Take as many M&M's as you like, the coach starts. After the students snatched a handful of candy, the teacher drops the other shoe: for each M&M; M took, tell the class something about yourself. This practice confirms the principle that everyone must abide by and participate. When people go into our ranks, we shake hands immediately, Curtis says. We also keep their names. It is this kind of attention that makes new employees feel wanted - perhaps for the first time in their careers. One of the big reasons for the high turnover among junior employees, Curtis says, is that supervisors don't know their workers. So they are unable to make a case for survival when someone learns about a higher-paying job, or to help solve the simple problems that conspire against reliable performance. If you make it known that you expect people to stay around for a while, it can have a big impact, he says. Back to the basics the more things change in business, the more important the basics become. But for people who haven't taken a real job, even the basics of work can seem strange. What can I say to my boss? What can I wear to work? The ability to answer such questions involves what Curtis calls clock-clock alarm clock skills - skills that people get their jobs and keep them there. In one category, Curtis says, we ask people to develop their Employee manual. And tell them: establish rules that will enable employees to get along better. Then we give everyone a red flag. For the rest of the week, students raise their flags whenever anyone breaks the rules. It's who you know that early is interested in, and trainers at Curtis & Co. have noticed a disturbing dynamic among their students. During the first break on the first day of class, participants gathered to smoke or chat in the corridor, while the teacher stayed behind for the next session. When class resumed, students were returning in a darker mood. In those minutes of break time, a negative network developed: a few hypersensitive students, who play on the nervousness of others, undermined the spirit of the program. Curtis says that as people enter a new environment, they will be attracted to someone. They will look for answers and if they make their way to the wrong network, the social dynamic can reflect everything the teacher or leader is trying to achieve. That's why it's important for every new employee to have an official guide: at a business entry meeting, she says, This is Greg. He can answer any questions. Or, better, hire Greg to take care of five new employees, and his success base is to keep them. Then reward Greg if they stay for a certain period of time. Contact Curtis & Co. (800-658-4399) or visit the web (www.selfsufficiency.com). Jenny Wood, 40, works as a trainer and supervisor at Curtis & Co. Based in Norfolk, Nebraska, is a rural community about 125 miles outside Omaha. She has worked for nine years in the trenches of the battle for talent - training welfare recipients and putting them in jobs. In an interview with Fast, she described how she does it. What's the first thing that happens in your class? We start by building a relationship with the participants. They come through the door, we rise up and shake hands, look them in the eye, and address them by name. This tells people that they're no longer just a number here, they're people. What is the most important thing you can teach someone on welfare? Responsibility. Property. Urgency. Feeling that they need to work now. People think they don't have to get ready for a job until they hear about an opportunity. We have to convince them to be prepared before that happens. I'm always amazed at the number of people who are afraid of success. You think the problem is the fear of failure. But we see participants who, having begun to do their work in their dreams, begin to sabotage themselves. Then, when they lose the job, they say, look? I wouldn't do that anyway. Why are they doing this? Because many of them did not have a role model for success or positive impacts in their lives. They're just waiting for the axe to fall.