

How to Be Prepared for an Immigration Raid

March 2007

Given increased enforcement activity in recent months by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), it is important that immigrant rights advocates and local communities be prepared in the event of a raid. Before ICE conducts a raid, immigrants' advocates should:

■ Prepare individuals in the community so they know they should . . .

- REMAIN SILENT, or tell the ICE agent that they want to remain silent.
- Ask to speak with a lawyer.
- NOT carry false documents.
- Carry a “know your rights” card (see www.nilc.org/ce/nilc/rightscard_2007-03-15.pdf).
- Find out the name and phone number of a reliable immigration attorney and keep this information with them at all times.
- Know their “alien registration number” (“A” number) if they have one, and write it down someplace at home where their family members know where to find it.
- Prepare a form or document that authorizes another adult to care for their minor children.
- Advise family members who do not want to be questioned by ICE to stay away from the place where the raid occurred or where a detained person is being held.
- NOT sign any documents without first speaking with a lawyer.

■ Prepare immigrant rights advocates and community groups.

- Distribute to unions, workers, and community groups know-your-rights materials about what to do if raids occur or individuals are detained. (Some materials are available at www.nilc.org/ce/ceindex.htm#know-rights.)
- Help individuals who could be detained to practice, through role-playing, the best ways of responding to questioning by ICE agents.
- Advise individuals not to sign any documents or allow ICE agents to coerce them into signing “stipulated orders of removal” or voluntary departure.
- Be prepared to document all the facts about a raid, including any and all actions taken by ICE agents that may be unlawful, the names and badge numbers of ICE agents, and the names and dates of birth of detained immigrants.
- Obtain contact information (e.g., phone numbers) for foreign consulates in your area.
- Obtain contact information, including the phone number, of the local ICE detention center.
- Find out where to obtain contact information for other detention centers in case detained people are transferred out of your local area. (A list of ICE detention centers is available at www.ice.gov/pi/dro/facilities.htm. Detention Watch Network has compiled a more complete mapped list of places where immigrants may be detained, available at http://detentionwatchnetwork.org/dwn_map.)



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- Obtain the name of the local ICE special agent in charge (SAC).
 - Establish contact or strengthen your relationship with the local (1) Executive Office for Immigration Review (EOIR) chief counsel and (2) Office of the Federal Public Defender.
 - With respect to the media:
 - Establish relationships with the local media in advance to increase the likelihood that the public will be alerted immediately when a raid is happening.
 - If you develop such relationships, in the event of a raid on a workplace you may be able to accompany a reporter into the workplace or detention center to observe, for example, whether ICE is turning away attorneys, to deny detainees access to them.
 - Conduct “know your rights” presentations on community radio programs.
 - Consider writing “know your rights” articles in local community newspapers.
 - With respect to local community leaders and law enforcement officials:
 - Establish relationships with local law enforcement officials and community leaders, so you can be in communication with them during a raid and the community can mobilize to support affected workers and their families.
 - With respect to the local ICE office:
 - Establish relationships with local ICE officials.
 - Meet with ICE (1) to ensure that agents who work out of the local office are aware of ICE internal guidance regarding (a) engaging in enforcement activities at workplaces where there are ongoing labor disputes, and (b) releasing detained parents with minor children if there is no other parent to care for the children; and (2) to ask about the local office’s raid protocol and how decisions are made to proceed with a raid.
- **Develop a rapid response team comprised of attorneys, media personnel, and community leaders.**
- The rapid response legal team should include attorneys who specialize in immigration, criminal, and family law who will gather facts about the raid, help locate and represent individuals whom ICE has detained, and assist with caring for minor children whose parents are detained.
 - When creating this team, advocates should also establish relationships with other attorneys who have constitutional, criminal, and family law experience — in case ICE violates individuals’ civil liberties during the raids, or the government files criminal charges against detainees, or detainees have minor children.
 - Advocates should also identify local immigration lawyers who would be available to represent detained individuals.
 - A well organized team that includes members from the media, the community’s leadership, and attorneys can provide a coordinated response to any immigration raid.
 - If ICE denies detainees access to attorneys, members of the rapid response team can call the Executive Office for Immigration Review’s chief counsel to facilitate attorneys’ access to clients.
 - If the federal government files criminal charges against detainees, members of the rapid response team can work with the Office of the Federal Public Defender to help ensure that they obtain adequate legal representation.