

# APPROPRIATE INTERACTIONS WITH IMMIGRATION AND CUSTOMS ENFORCEMENT (ICE)

*NOTE: This is general information, not legal advice. Knowing this information, however, can benefit you.*

Interacting with U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) involves knowing your rights: stay calm, don't run or resist and politely state you're exercising your right to remain silent and that you wish to speak with an attorney; do not open your door without a judicial warrant and if outside, ask if you're free to leave, walking away if yes, while never lying or signing anything without legal counsel.

This video provides a concise overview of your rights when interacting with ICE:  
[https://www.youtube.com/shorts/jmf16H\\_Hdk](https://www.youtube.com/shorts/jmf16H_Hdk)

## At Your Door

- **Don't Open the Door:** Do not open your door unless they show you a valid judicial warrant signed by a judge. Ask them to slide the warrant under the door or hold it up to a window or peephole.
- **Ask for ID & Warrant:** Through a peephole or window, ask for identification and for them to slide a warrant under the door.
- **Check the Warrant:** Ensure the judicial warrant is signed by a judge and lists the correct address and names of people in the home. An administrative warrant (often on Form I-200 or I-205) is not valid for entering a home.
- **State Your Rights:** If they don't have a warrant, say, "I do not consent to your entry".
- **If They Enter:** Do not resist, but state, "I do not consent to your entry or search. I am exercising my right to remain silent. I wish to speak with a lawyer".

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# APPROPRIATE INTERACTIONS WITH ICE, continued

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## In Public

- **Stay Calm:** Do not run or argue; it can escalate the situation.
- **Exercise Your Rights:** Politely state, "I choose to remain silent," and "I do not consent to a search," as you have the right to not answer questions about your status or allow searches.
- **Ask if You're Free to Leave:** If they say yes, calmly walk away.
- **No False Info:** Do not lie or provide fake documents.

## General Tips

- **Carry Documentation:** Have your passport or legal documents with you, but don't show them unless you choose to.
- **Don't Sign Anything:** Don't sign documents you don't understand without a lawyer.
- **Record:** You can record interactions if you don't interfere with their actions.
- **Have a Plan:** Create a safety plan and know who to call.
- **Carry a Know Your Rights card.**

Additional information can be found by reviewing the pages below:

***Know Your Rights, How to Interact with ICE and ICE Conversations with Children.***

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# KNOW YOUR RIGHTS

## General Information

- National Immigration Law Center
  - <https://www.nilc.org/resources/everyone-has-certain-basic-rights/>
- Florence Immigrants and Refugee Rights Project
  - <https://firrp.org/?bblinkid=281617817&bbemailid=56218588&bbejrid=-1185685823#>
- ACLU:
  - <https://www.aclu.org/know-your-rights/immigrants-rights#law-enforcement-asks-about-myimmigration-status>
- PALawHelp.org:
  - <https://www.palawhelp.org/resource/know-your-rights-with-the-police-and-immigrationagents#:~:text=When%20you%20are%20detained%20on,your%20imprisonment%20by%20immigration%20authorities.>
- One America:
  - <https://weareoneamerica.org/resource/know-your-rights/>
- Stop Street Harassment/When to Report:
  - <https://stopstreetharassment.org/strategies/sshlaw-whyreport/>
- Stop Street Harassment/Engaging with Police:
  - <https://stopstreetharassment.org/strategies/sshlaw-police/>
- PA Attorney General/Hate Crime:
  - <https://www.attorneygeneral.gov/protect-yourself/civil-rights/hate-crime/>

## Always Reduce Personal Risks

- When you interact with a police officer or an immigration officer
  - Stay calm.
  - Don't run.
  - Don't argue.
  - Do not resist or obstruct the officer.
  - Keep your hands where police can see them.
  - Always be polite.

## You Have the Right to Remain Silent

- You may say that you want to remain silent. [reference Know Your Rights (KYR) Cards]
- You do not have to answer questions. Ex.
  - where you were born or
  - how do you enter the U.S.
- Do not discuss your immigration status with the law enforcement officer.
- You may refuse to speak to Immigration Officers.

# KNOW YOUR RIGHTS

## *continued*

### **If You Are Stopped by Police or ICE**

- You can ask police officers or immigration agents “May I go?”
  - If they say yes, you have the right to remain silent and leave.
  - If they say no, you are being detained for questioning.
- You may say that you want to remain silent. [KYR Cards]
- In Pennsylvania, you do not have to give the police information such as your name, address, ID or immigration status.
- If you are lawfully present in the United States, you may wish to show your ID or provide your name. You could be detained longer if you choose not to show ID or provide your name [while the police attempt to identify you.]
- If you are undocumented, showing your ID or providing your name may result in your imprisonment by immigration authorities.
- If you carry valid immigration documents, you can show them to the officer.
- If you are undocumented do not lie or give false documents to officers.
- You do not have to consent to a search of yourself or your belongings.
- Police may pat down your clothing if they suspect a weapon.

### **If You Are Stopped in Your Car**

- If police officers or immigration agents signal you to stop your car, you must pull over.
- Police officers may ask for your name, driver’s license, vehicle registration and proof of insurance. You must show these documents if you have them.
- You do not have to answer any other questions or show any other documents.
- You do not have to answer questions about your immigration status.
- Police could ask you to sign a citation, that only means that you receive it.
- If *you are a passenger*, ask if you may go.
  - If the answer is yes you may go or stay there without obstructing the officers (you should be silent).
  - If the answer is no.
    - You may say you wish to remain silent and ask for a lawyer
- In Pennsylvania, the passenger does not have to give information such as their name, address or immigration status.
- If the police officer phones immigration and puts you on the phone with an immigration officer, you should only say “I am going to remain silent.” [If you are undocumented].

# KNOW YOUR RIGHTS

## *continued*

### **Police or ICE Are at My Home**

- Stay calm and keep the door closed. You do not have to open the door.
- You may ask if they are immigration agents and what they are there for.
- You may ask the agent or officer to show you a badge or identification through the window or peephole.
- If you do not understand the police officer or immigration agent, you have the right to an interpreter.
- Ask the agent or officer, through the closed door, if he has a search or arrest warrant.
- If they say they do, ask them to slide it under the door or hold it up to a window so you can inspect it.
- Must be a judicial search or arrest warrant. [Sign by a judge].
- A warrant of removal/deportation (Form I-205) does not allow officers to enter a home without consent.
- If agents force their way in, do not resist.
  - To exercise your rights, state: I do not consent to your entry or to your search of these premises.
- I am exercising my right to remain silent and I wish to speak with a lawyer as soon as possible.
- If you are on probation with a search condition, law enforcement is allowed to enter your home.

### **Prepare Yourself In Case You Are Arrested**

- Memorize the phone number of a friend, family member, or attorney that you can call if you are arrested.
- If you take care of children or other people, make a plan to have them taken care of if you are detained.
- Keep important documents such as birth certificates and immigration documents in a safe place where a friend or family member can access them if necessary.
- Make sure your loved ones know how to find you if you are detained by ICE.
  - They can use ICE's online detainee locator
  - (<https://locator.ice.gov/odls/homePage.do>) to find an adult who is in immigration custody, or
  - They can call the local ICE office (<https://www.ice.gov/contact/ero>).
  - Make sure they have your alien registration number written down, if you have one.
- Make emergency plans in case you have to take medication.
- The National Immigration Law Center has a table with the document lawfully present immigrants should carry: <https://www.nilc.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/11/Typical-Documents-10-29-2024.pdf>

# Guidance if you See or Interact with Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) ONLY FOR REFUGEES, SIVs, or/and GREEN CARD HOLDERS

Because some current government policies are not friendly to immigrants, we want to help you understand what to do if you meet immigration (ICE) officers.

## Important Things to Remember:

- You entered the United States as a refugee or SIV. This gives you special rights. You can:
  - Apply for permanent residency after one year
  - Have a work permit that allows you to work in the United States
  - Obtain a Social Security number
- ICE officers may not know you are a refugee, SIV or have a Green Card. They might stop people based on how they look. To protect yourself, always carry copies of one of these documents:
  - Your I-94 document. If you do not have a Green Card yet. Reach out to your JFCS caseworker if you need a copy of your I-94
  - Your Employment Authorization Card if it has not expired
  - Your copy of Green Card application confirmation (I-485)

## You have legal rights when dealing with ICE officers:

- You do not have to open your door
- You do not have to answer questions
- You do not have to sign any papers without talking to a lawyer first
- If you are outside and they stop you, ask if you can leave
- Give them the card attached to this letter (show it through a window or slide it under your door if you are at home)

## What to do if you are detained by ICE wrongly:

- Say you wish to remain silent and ask for a lawyer immediately.
- You have the right to call a lawyer or your family if you are detained, and you have the right to be visited by a lawyer in detention.
- When you call a relative or friend, tell them you were wrongly detained by ICE and ask them to contact JFCS.

## Stay Safe

- Make sure your employer has copies of your current work permit. You may work with individuals who have a different immigration status than yours. If ICE goes to your workplace, ensure you have documents that show you are in Pittsburgh under refugee or SIV status or you are a green card holder.
- Make sure you have emergency contacts listed in your children's school other than yourself.
- Make sure your children know who to contact in case of emergencies (911 and another friend or relative).
- Learn U.S. laws (use the SettleIn App or attend JFCS sessions).
- If you drive, keep your license valid and follow traffic rules.
- If someone attacks you, especially if they say negative things about your appearance, accent, clothing, or identity:
  - Call the police immediately
  - Report it to the FBI - this may be a hate crime (412- 432 - 4000)
  - Reporting helps protect you and others



# WHAT TO SAY TO KIDS ABOUT ICE

Even if a child isn't directly affected, they may hear about ICE at school or online. Avoiding the topic can cause more fear. Calm, honest conversations help children feel safe and supported.

## START THE CONVERSATION

Begin by asking: "What do you know about ICE?" This gives you insight into what they've heard or seen. If they say "I don't know," you can gently explain:

"ICE is a government group that checks if people are following immigration laws. Some families are scared of them because they help decide who can stay in the U.S. Have you heard about people moving to new countries?"

### AGES 3-6

"Some families are being treated unfairly because of where they were born. You're safe, and I'm here with you."

- Keep it simple and comforting
- Provide extra hugs, reassurance, and routines.

### AGES 7-11

"Some families are being separated because of how they came to the U.S. Even kids are getting hurt, and that's not okay."

- Be honest without overwhelming

### WHAT **NOT** TO SAY

- "Don't worry about it." Dismisses their feelings
- "That won't happen to us." Creates false reassurance

### AGES 12-18

"It's not right for people to be treated unfairly because of where they're from. This hurts kids and families."

- Acknowledge their awareness
- Encourage healthy ways to process: writing, talking, art, advocacy.

### EMOTIONAL SUPPORT FOR ALL AGES

"It's okay to feel scared or frustrated. What matters is we talk about it and help each other feel better."

- Encourage breathing, drawing, or journaling

### WHAT TO SAY **INSTEAD**

"You're not alone in this. People are trying to help, and I'm one of them. If you ever feel scared, we can talk about it together."

Plan for emergencies. Use our Family Preparedness Toolkit: [childnet.org/immigration-resources](https://childnet.org/immigration-resources)