

Know Your Rights

Places of Worship and Motherhouses

Everyone in the United States, including undocumented immigrants, has Constitutional rights.

It is important that you understand your rights and how you can prepare your place of worship or motherhouse if you are approached by law enforcement. *Note: This resource does NOT constitute legal counsel. In these uncertain times, please consult with your congregation's attorney or local immigration advocacy groups for further guidance for your local area.*

1. Designate private areas.

Though ICE can enter public spaces in your place of worship, **ICE cannot enter areas marked as "private" without a judicial warrant that is signed by a judge and lists a correct address.** Clearly mark private areas as "PRIVATE." This could be a sacristy or a collection room of a food distribution area where only registrants go. Take a photo of the signage with a timestamp.

2. Check warrants.

Even if ICE has an enforcement warrant that lists the name of someone in your community, you are **NOT** obligated to allow ICE into the private area without a **judicial** warrant that is signed by a judge and that has the correct address and space listed. You can say, *"This is a private area. I need to see a judicial warrant before I let you inside."*

3. Train your community.

Train all staff and community members to NOT allow law enforcement into private spaces without a proper judicial warrant, and to REMAIN SILENT when interacting with officers. Train community members to say, *"I can't give you permission to enter. You must speak with the congregation's leader,"* and to not answer any questions besides confirming one's own name when asked. Distribute Know Your Rights red cards. Reach out to a local immigration advocate or attorney and have their contact information accessible.

4. Make a plan and assign roles.

Make a plan in the case of law enforcement arriving. Assign someone to speak to ICE when they arrive, someone to check warrants, someone to spread the word that ICE is present, and someone to video record the encounter. Practice the plan like a fire drill.

5. Watch the area around your premises.

ICE and other agents often come in unmarked cars. Train community members to refrain from discussing someone's immigration status outside or answering questions like "where are you from?" even from someone who appears to be dressed in plainclothes. If ICE is making arrests outside your premises, video the arrest and report it to your local immigration advocates.

6. Report ICE encounters.

After an encounter with law enforcement, report it to local community immigration advocates or attorneys. Use the **S.A.L.U.T.E.** method to report activity: include Size (number of officers), Activity (what are they doing?), Location, Uniform/clothes, Time and date, and Equipment and weapons. Include photos and videos.

For more information, visit networkadvocates.org/issues/immigration