



Northern Illinois Conference

OF THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

WHEN ICE SHOWS UP IN PLACES OF WORSHIP

Law Enforcement/ICE Interaction Guidelines

General Policies

- There will be a sign posted on the front door stating that only authorized personnel or individuals with appointments will be allowed entry.
- Only front desk staff should open the door. Must verify if individuals are staff/volunteers or applicants prior to entry.
- Law enforcement agents are not allowed to enter unless they provide a judicial warrant.

Prepare Before They Arrive

- Establish a response team with assigned roles (e.g., spokesperson, legal liaison, recorder).
- Train all staff and volunteers on legal rights, protocols, and de-escalation techniques.
- Learn the difference between an administrative and judicial warrant.
- Partner with legal counsel and immigrant advocacy organizations for support.
- Designate public and private areas within the building and clearly communicate these boundaries to staff.

When ICE Agents arrive

- Your trained spokesperson should approach the agents respectfully to de-escalate tensions.
- Ask for identification (name, badge number, and agency affiliation).
- Request a warrant, then verify that it is signed by a judge (not just an ICE official) and specifies the name(s) of the individual(s) and area(s) to be searched.
- Verbally deny access to private areas – politely but firmly – unless a judicial warrant explicitly permits entry.

During the encounter with ICE agents

- Remain calm and professional
- Do not run or resist.
- Inform affected individuals of their rights to remain silent, to decline to answer questions without a lawyer, and to sign nothing without legal advice.
- Activate your response team for coordination, inform senior leadership, and alert local immigrant advocacy organizations and community networks.
- Avoid providing any information to ICE about individuals unless legally required.
- Document details of the interaction including date, time, and location, names and badge numbers of agents, and any documents presented or actions taken.
- Take photos or videos without interfering with agents.
- Contact your legal counsel immediately for guidance.
- Take note of names, badge numbers, and the agency they represent.
- Do not engage further until you are instructed by the designated personnel.

This is not intended as legal advice. Please seek your own legal counsel.



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After ICE leaves

- Support affected individuals by offering emotional, spiritual, and legal support to anyone targeted.
- Connect immigration attorneys or legal aid organizations with affected individuals.
- Provide a safe space for those impacted to recover and regroup.
- Debrief with staff and volunteers to review the incident and identify areas for improvement. Update the response plan based on lessons learned.
- Share the incident (with consent) with the congregation and trusted media to raise awareness.
- Mobilize advocacy efforts for immigrant rights and policy change.

Other Important Information

✓ **Public vs. Private Spaces**

- **Public Areas:** Sanctuaries during open services, hallways, and parking lots are generally accessible to anyone. ICE agents do not need a warrant to walk into these areas.
- **Private Areas:** Offices, daycare facilities, and non-public rooms are protected. Places of worship should clearly mark these restricted zones with physical signs.

✓ **Do not obstruct agents** - Avoid actions that could be interpreted as interfering. Never provide false information.

✓ **Ensure privacy** - Protect the confidentiality of individuals and do not share personal information.

✓ **Document everything** - Log all communications and actions taken during the incident.

*** WHO TO CALL ***

(855) 435-7693

Report ICE Activity – Deportation Legal Support – Immigrant Healthcare Resources / Legal & Social Service Referrals

*** ADDITIONAL RESOURCES ***

- [Know Your Rights Toolkit](#) (Immigration Law & Justice Network)
- [Find immigrant legal resources](#) (Immigration Law & Justice Network)
- [Family Preparedness Plan](#) (Immigrant Legal Resource Center)
- [Red Cards](#) (Immigrant Legal Resource Center)

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