



Someone Has Been Detained: What Do We Do Now?

A Practical Checklist for Faith Communities

When someone in your community is detained by immigration authorities, you do not have to be an immigration expert to help. Focus on what you can do: gather information, connect the person and family with qualified legal help, provide practical support, and stay in relationship.

1. Gather Basic Information

If the detained person calls, try to get:

- ☐ Full legal name and date of birth
- ☐ A-number, if known
- ☐ When and where the person was detained
- ☐ Where they believe they are being held
- ☐ Whether they already have an attorney
- ☐ Any immediate concern involving children, dependents, medication, or another urgent need

2. Try to Locate the Person

Start with:

- ☐ The ICE Online Detainee Locator: www.locator.ice.gov. If possible, search using the person's A-number and country of birth. You can also search using biographical information.
 - Not finding someone in the locator does not necessarily mean they are not in immigration custody. Information may not appear immediately after an arrest or transfer, and people under 18 do not appear in the locator.

If the person does not appear in the locator:

- ☐ ICE Detention Reporting & Information Line. 1-888-351-4024

If you still cannot locate the person check:

- ☐ The appropriate ICE ERO Field Office: <https://www.ice.gov/contact/field-offices>

3. Learn About the Facility

Every detention facility is different.

- ☐ Check the specific facility's current rules: <https://www.ice.gov/detention-facilities>

Then help the family understand:

- ☐ How they can communicate with their loved one
- ☐ How to deposit money into the person's account
- ☐ Visitation procedures
- ☐ Mail procedures
- ☐ Where the facility is and how the family can get there
- ☐ How to report an urgent medical concern

TIP: Sometimes accompaniment is very practical: helping the family stay in communication with the detained person, fund a commissary account, find an A-number, understand facility instructions, or get to a visitation.

4. Find Qualified Legal Help

If the person does not already have legal representation, help the family find qualified immigration legal assistance. Avoid *notarios* or immigration consultants who are not authorized to provide immigration legal advice in the United States.

- ☐ NGO/Low-Cost Legal Services: www.immigrationadvocates.org/nonprofit/legaldirectory
- ☐ Find an Immigration Attorney: www.aialawyer.com.
- ☐ Help the family locate immigration paperwork and other relevant legal documents and get them to qualified legal counsel.

TIP: Help find the documents. Don't interpret them.

5. Don't Forget the Family

Consider immediate needs such as:

- ☐ Children and caregiving
- ☐ Food
- ☐ Medication
- ☐ Transportation
- ☐ Housing or utilities
- ☐ Communication with legal counsel
- ☐ Pastoral or spiritual care

TIP: You do not have to solve every problem. Help make sure the family is not facing those problems alone.

6. Stay in Relationship

If the person is released, help address immediate needs, reconnect them with family, and get release paperwork to their legal representative.

If the person remains detained or is deported, continue checking on the family. Detention or deportation can affect income, housing, children, transportation, emotional well-being, and spiritual needs.

TIP: Accompaniment means staying in relationship beyond the immediate crisis.



Prepare Before You Need This Checklist!

Don't wait for detention to identify your partners. Know who you will call before you need to call them.