

PREPARING FOR RAIDS

Preparation for a raid is critical. The more time and energy that goes into preparation for a raid, the larger the possibility of reducing trauma, loss and hardship. Don't wait for a raid to start preparing!

1 Assign a coordinator or a small team who can organize and direct a response.

Establishing a point person or a small group is important to minimize any confusion or disorganization that may occur during a raid. They can help with delegating, verifying information, and role-playing.

2 Collect contact information.

Obtain contact information for foreign consulates in your area, local [ICE detention centers](#), ICE special agent in charge (SAC) and other detention centers in case of transfer. Create an emergency list of lawyers that would be ready at a moment's notice, law students able to help in other areas, and persons able to assist with translation and transportation. Try to make the list electronic to facilitate distribution.

3 Form or strengthen relationships.

The relationships you form with local, state, and federal officials and politicians are critical during a raid. Establish contact or strengthen your relationship with the local Executive Office for Immigration Review (EOIR) chief counsel and Office of the Federal Public Defender, the media, local law enforcement and community leaders, local ICE officials by meeting ICE agents.

4 Develop a rapid response team of attorneys, media, and community leaders.

After establishing contacts within the community, compose a "rapid response team". They should be reliable and informed. It would be helpful and vital to conduct role-playing with these individuals for if a raid occurs.

5 Establish a central location and set aside easily accessible funds.

It is important to keep a consistent central location for a least the first couple of weeks in the event of a raid. If possible, the location should be open for extended hours and on weekends. Have funds set aside for a raid, this is useful particularly if it takes place in a city that is a couple hours away is important.

6 Prepare a press release to have on hand.

Have model press releases ready in case of a raid to rapidly spread the information. Also set up a centralized intake system so that people filter their stories through one path in order to mitigate redundancy when reporting to the press. Have a relationship in place with a national organization to help spread the press release.

7 Create a [document authorizing another adult to take care of minor children](#).

Avoid issues of childcare responsibility during a raid by creating this document. This information could also be shared with schools or child care providers in advance so everyone is informed.

8 Make sure you 'Know Your Rights' in the event of a raid.

Give workshops, perform role playing exercises and also distribute 'Know Your Rights' cards. Confrontation with immigration authorities can happen in the street, vehicle, at home or in the workplace.

9 Have families develop a preparedness plan.

Each family should have a plan in case of a raid. This could include the contact information collected, copies of relevant documents (immigration, criminal records, tax returns, etc.), contact information for family members, friends and others that could help in addition to keeping an emergency phone with prepaid minutes and emergency money. Designate persons you trust to make decisions on your behalf if you are detained. You can sign a power of attorney agreement to give this power to someone if you are arrested.

RESPONDING TO A RAID

After an immigration raid takes place in your community, trauma continues for many persons. Schools, child care providers and extended families need to act as swiftly as possible as support systems for those impacted. They need to ensure that children are not left in empty homes or stranded at school.

Actions that should be taken while preparing for and after a raid in your community include:

1 Report the raid to social service agencies, churches, and the media.

It is important to inform the community as soon as possible so assistance can be provided by as many entities as soon as possible. Creating a phone tree or email listserv of organizations and individuals willing and able to assist after a raid can ensure a quick and thorough response.

2 [Set up a help line.](#)

Often loved ones of those arrested and detained do not know how to find information on where people are being held, where to go for assistance and what rights they have. Children should carry pictures of their parents with them at all times and all family members should have an emergency prepaid cell phone.

3 Provide food relief and shelter.

Many persons arrested and detained are the main source of income for their families. After a workplace raid, family members are often afraid to leave their homes, much less obtain food and other necessities. After a home raid, family members may have nowhere to sleep and be without their possessions. Community groups, schools, and places of worship should work together to offer food, shelter, and other necessities.

4 Make copies of immigration documents.

Urge people to carry copies with them and keep copies around their home that are easily accessible. Gather complete immigration files of those arrested and detained, criminal history, Notice to Appear, school records, letters from employers or religious/community leaders, etc. Make sure to not have fake documents and do not carry them.

5 Mobilize legal representation.

Always keep information on local legal counsel versed in deportation defense. Possible sources for legal representation include [Justice for our Neighbors](#), [National Lawyers Guild](#), [American Immigration Lawyers](#), [American Bar Association](#), [Catholic Legal Immigration Network](#).

6 [Locate detained persons](#) and inform them of their [rights in detention](#).

Try to stop detainees from being transferred to other facilities, which can occur as soon as within the first 72 hours of detention. Detention facilities could be administered by Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), private contractors, or local county jails. Make sure undocumented immigrants do not visit detention centers.

7 Identify vulnerable populations.

Work with local social service providers and hospitals to provide psychological support for [children](#), victims of violence, the elderly, and mentally disabled persons.

8 Document what happened and your response.

Documentation can be very helpful to individual cases claiming misconduct in immigration raids, inhumane detention conditions, and unnecessary family separation. Keep record of your actions as well so that others can be even more prepared for a raid in their community.

9 Call attention to the raid.

[Contact sympathetic local officials, Congress members, the DHS Secretary](#), consulates and [embassies](#) to report the raid, air grievances, and ask for their assistance. Hold a [press conference](#) or contact/inform press about the raid. Examples to learn from: [Video on a Immigration raid press conference in Cedar Rapids, Iowa](#) [Press Advisory sent out by the MIRA Coalition on a raid](#).

MAKE SURE TO KNOW YOUR RIGHTS

① Carry a [rights card](#) and exercise your right to remain silent.

The rights card is important as it allows you to remain silent while the card explains this right and it states that you want to speak to your attorney, with the attorney's contact information. Staying silent restricts you from giving any information to the authorities which may later work against you.

② Stay calm, do not run, this can be construed as an admission of guilt.

If you try to run, the agents could interpret this as admission of guilt. This type of suspicious act is enough evidence for them to detain you.

③ Don't lie or carry false documents or documents from another country.

If you show documentation from another country it could be used as evidence of your nationality and give officials reason to question your legal status. False documents are incriminating.

④ If immigration authorities come to your home or work, ask for a signed warrant.

You have a right to see the warrant, ask them to pass it under the door. If you open the door it could be considered permitting them to enter. Make sure it is signed by a judge and says in detail the places the agent(s) are authorized to enter. If it is signed by an officer you cannot stop them from entering your home but can state you do not consent to the search, which limits it to the areas listed on the warrant. If they are looking for a person listed on the warrant, they must go with the agents and others in the home have a right to remain silent. Never interfere physically with the agents, you could be detained.

⑤ If stopped on the street you cannot be arrested unless there is evidence that you are a non-citizen.

If they approach you with questions, ask if you may go. If they say yes, walk away slowly. If they say no, do not go. You are only required to give your name and nothing else. *Remain* silent and ask to speak with a lawyer. Police and Immigration have the right to search you to make sure you are not carrying weapons or illegal materials. Do not resist this inspection.

⑥ If you get arrested, don't sign anything, especially if it's in a language you cannot read.

Present your work permit, if you have one. Don't sign a "voluntary departure" or "stipulated orders of removal" without first talking to a lawyer. Signing a voluntary departure agreement means that you won't get a hearing, you will have to leave the U.S., and you may never be allowed to enter the U.S. again or get legal immigration status. Signing a stipulated order means that you waive your rights to a hearing before a judge and serves as a final order of removal (deportation) signed by the judge.

⑦ Collect information on who has arrested you.

This information can be the officer's badge number, license plates, their names, the location that it occurred and names and contact information of potential witnesses. Ask for copies of all documents, such as your "Notice to Appear".

⑧ Contact a family member or an attorney.

Try to memorize a number of an attorney or carry a 'Know Your Rights' card with your immigration attorney's name and contact information. Make sure your family has your immigration number, which starts with an "A." You have the right to contact your attorney and your consulate.

⑨ You have a right to be treated with dignity and respect and not be discriminated against.

Even though the above are your rights, the officer may not necessarily comply with them and you have a right to complain about mistreatment.

RESOURCES TO PREPARE FOR RAIDS

Raids Preparedness Checklist; Lessons Learned from New Bedford, MA Raid, American Immigration Lawyers Association: <http://www.aila.org/Content/default.aspx?docid=23285>

How to be Prepared for an Immigration Raid, National Immigration Law Center (NILC): http://www.nilc.org/ce/nilc/immraidsprep_2007-02-27.pdf

Preraid Community Safety Plan, Detention Watch Network, Families for Freedom, and National Immigration Project of the National Lawyers Guild, Inc.: <http://detentionwatchnetwork.org/sites/detentionwatchnetwork.org/files/Pre%20Raid%20Community%20Safety%20Plan.pdf>

How Advocates Prepared for and What They Learned from the Recent Workplace Raid in Van Nuys, National Immigration Law Center: http://www.nilc.org/immsemplymnt/wkplce_enfrcmnt/iru-2008-06-18.pdf

Chart describing the process from a raid to deportation, Families for Freedom, National Immigration Project of the NLG, NYSDA Immigrant Defense Project, and Detention Watch Network: http://www.nationalimmigrationproject.org/ImmRightsRes/crkit_files/raidcrimmapfinal.pdf

On the lookout for immigration raids, LA Times article on preparing for raids: <http://www.latimes.com/news/nationworld/nation/la-na-immig14-2008sep14.0.5069395.story>

RAID RESPONSE PLANS

National Enforcement Response Plan, Catholic Legal Immigration Network, Inc.: <http://www.cliniclegal.org/Enforcement/CLINICENFORCMENTRESPONSEPLANFINAL.pdf>

Workplace Raids Action Plan, American Immigration Lawyers Association: <http://www.cliniclegal.org/Enforcement/AILAcommunityresponseguide.pdf>

Maryland Raid Response Plan, CASA de Maryland. For a copy of the plan or for more information, contact Eliza Leighton at (301) 431-4185.

From Raids to Deportation: A Community Resource Kit, National Immigration Project of the National Lawyers Guild, Inc. and Detention Watch Network: <http://www.nationalimmigrationproject.org/commresourcekit.html>

Immigrants' Rights Project, ACLU: the government manual for lawyers representing immigrants arrested for identity theft and scripts for plea and sentencing hearings: <http://www.aclu.org/immigrants/workplace/36219prs20080731.html>

Supreme Court update on United States v. Flores-Figueroa, American Immigration Law Foundation http://www.ailf.org/lac/supremecourt_112806.shtml

KNOW YOUR RIGHTS MATERIALS

ICE Humanitarian Guidelines: <http://www.cliniclegal.org/Enforcement/ICEWorksiteEnforcementGuidance.pdf>

WARNING: Protect Yourself From Immigration Raids, CASA de Maryland. (English and Spanish): www.immigrantrights.org/CASAofMaryland.pdf, http://www.nilc.org/ce/nonnilc/raidsrights_dwn&nlq&casa.pdf

How to be Prepared for an Immigration Raid, National Immigration Law Center. (English and Spanish): <http://www.nilc.org/ce/ceindex.htm#know-rights>

Community Responses to Immigration Raids: A Collection of Resources

WHAT TO DO IF You Are Stopped By Immigration Agents Or Police While On Foot. Your Car Is Pulled Over By Immigration Agents Or Police. Immigration Agents Or Police Come to Your Home, ACLU of Southern California. (English and Spanish: <http://www.aclu-sc.org/Action/KnowYourRights>)

KNOW YOUR RIGHTS: What to Do If Questioned by Police, FBI, Customs Agents or Immigration Officers, ACLU: http://www.aclu.org/kyr/kyr_english.pdf. A similar version is available in Spanish, Arabic, Urdu, Hindi, Punjabi, Farsi and Somali: <http://www.aclu.org/safefree/general/17444res20040528.html>

What to do in the event of a Raid, National Day Laborer Organizing Network, Legal Aid Justice Center – Immigrant Advocacy Project, Tenants and Workers United, Central American Resource Center, Catholic Charities Hogar Hispano, Virginia Organizing Project, El Pueblo Unido. (English and Spanish): http://www.justice4all.org/our_programs/vjc/links

If I am Stopped ...A Know Your Rights Guide, National Korean American Service and Education Consortium (Korean and English): <http://www.nakasec.org/blog/968>

Know Your Rights, Canal Street Alliance (English, Spanish, Portuguese, Mayan): http://www.canalalliance.org/Immigration_Resources.shtml.

Know Your Rights Video, Coalition for Humane Immigrants Rights of Los Angeles (CHRLA) (English and Spanish): <http://www.chirla.org/node/151> or order the full length video by calling (213) 353-1339.

Guide for Community Training on Raids and Detentions, Immigrant Defense Committee (coalition of immigrant advocates, religious organizations, and unions) (English and Spanish) Order the Guide by contacting Tim Bell at timobell@yahoo.com.

Various Know Your Rights Publications, Florence Immigration & Refugee Rights Project: <http://www.firrp.org/kyrindex.asp>

Why the ICE Raids are a Human Rights Issue, Mississippi Human Rights Report: <http://mississippihumanrightsreport.net/2008/08/why-the-ice-raids-are-a-human-rights-issue/>

To include another resource in this list, please email Jen Smyers at jsmyers@churchworldservice.org.