

Immigrants: Know Your Rights

Interactions with ICE and Law Enforcement

At Home

Police officers and ICE can only enter your home under specific conditions:

1. They Have a Valid Warrant Signed by a Judge or Magistrate

- Always request to see identification and examine the warrant from a safe vantage point. Ask to see the warrant through a window or pass it under the door.
- Verify that the warrant:
 - Is signed by a judge or magistrate (a warrant signed by a DHS official is not valid).
 - Includes the correct address.
 - If it is an arrest warrant, ensure it names the correct person.

2. They Have Your Permission

- Do not open the door. Granting permission allows them to enter without a warrant.

If Officers Have a Valid Warrant

- You must allow them to enter your home.
- A warrant does not mean you have to answer questions.
- State clearly: “I do not consent to you searching my home.”
- If the warrant is for an arrest:
 - If the named person is home, they should step outside alone and close the door behind them to protect others inside.
 - If the named person is not home, inform the officers and do not open the door.

If Officers Do Not Have a Valid Warrant

- You are not obligated to allow officers into your home.
- Politely ask them to leave.

Your Rights

- Always exercise your right to remain silent.

In the Street or a Public Area

Stay Calm

- Do not run or make sudden movements.

Sharing Your Name

- You are not required to give your name unless you are riding a bike or driving a car.

Remember

- You can always ask: “Am I free to go?”
- You have the right to remain silent.

Arrests

- In most cases, an officer needs a warrant to arrest you.
- You could be arrested if the officer has evidence of you committing or having committed a crime.

Searches

- Officers may pat you down to check for weapons or illegal materials if they have reasonable suspicion.
- Do not resist but remember that you can state: “I do not consent to a search.”

Sensitive Locations

- Immigration officers have historically avoided detaining people in sensitive public places, such as:
 - Schools
 - Hospitals
 - Places of worship
 - Funerals, weddings, and public religious ceremonies
 - Public demonstrations (marches, rallies, parades).
- You could still be stopped on your way to or from these locations.
- These policies may change, stay updated on changes.



Get free legal help with immigration issues on the Immigrant Defense Hotline:

(617) 988-0606



Updated: January 2025

In a Car

If You Are the Driver:

Provide Documents

- Hand over your license, registration, and proof of insurance when requested.

Searches

- Anything illegal in “plain sight” can be seized by the officer.
- Do not consent to a search. Clearly state: “I do not consent to a search.”
- However, your car may be searched without your consent if the officer has reason to believe it contains evidence of a crime.

If You Are the Passenger:

Leaving the Scene

- You may ask: “Am I free to leave?”
- If the officer says yes, you can either sit silently or calmly leave.

Providing Identification

- You are not required to provide your name or ID unless the officer is issuing you a citation.

Always Remember

- You have the right to remain silent.
- Do not answer questions about your immigration status.
- Do not carry documents from your home country unless absolutely necessary. If stopped by officers, do not show these documents.

At Your Workplace

Officers can only enter your workplace:

- With a valid warrant.
- In public areas such as a lobby or reception. They cannot enter areas that are clearly marked “private” or “restricted”.
- If someone gives them permission. Everyone at your workplace should understand who can authorize law enforcement to access private spaces.

Your Rights

- A warrant does not require you to answer questions.
- You have the right to remain silent. Stay calm and do not run.

Emergency Preparedness

- Create an emergency plan with your coworkers.
- Designate someone to speak with officers in case of a raid.

Dealing with Officers

- If your employer is not present or has given permission for officers to enter, the designated person should:
 - Ask for identification.
 - Review the warrant carefully to ensure it is valid.
- Be aware that officers may use tactics to trick, intimidate, or frighten you. Stay composed and focused on your rights.