

Immigration Raids Rapid Response: For Faith Allies

Immigration Workplace Raids Are Happening Under the Trump Administration

As the faith community, we must continue to stand in solidarity with immigrants and refugees as increased attacks come down from the Administration. We know from Trump's Executive Orders and announcements that immigration enforcement are increasing immigration arrests and dramatically expanded who is a priority for deportations that have led to small and large scale raids. This has taken place through workplace raids, home raids, neighborhood-wide raids, and checkpoints. As faith allies, we are called to be in solidarity through rapid response mobilization to stop these raids, stop these deportations and support impacted communities. In the face of President Trump's extremist anti-immigrant agenda we must respond with a prophetic and bold voice.

As part of the Trump administration's policies to "crackdown" on undocumented immigrants, Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) has begun arresting immigrants at their workplaces in [dramatically higher rates](#) than in the past. Between October 2017 and July 2018, immigration officials made 1,659 workplace-related arrests. These numbers do not include the most recent large-scale workplace raid, which happened in August during which Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) conducted a massive workplace raid across Minnesota and Nebraska and arrested 133 immigrant workers. This is over five times the number of arrests made in the previous year.

These workplace raids are often occurring in rural areas where the major employers are often isolated and employ mainly immigrant labor, such as meatpacking plants or garden centers. Often, the communities in which these businesses reside are not prepared to deal with the impacts of such large and indiscriminate immigration raids. While the immediate shock and trauma of these raids is visible, there are also longer-term impacts on communities. Raids also have the power to be galvanizing forces, bringing together communities across party lines in order to reshape the meaning of community and create ways to stand up for immigrant rights. For this reason, we have updated and improved our Rapid Response Toolkit particularly for rural faith communities that may be in communities at risk for workplace raids.

Goals

- Stand in solidarity and accompany families targeted by raids
- Respond to the Trump Administration's' attack on immigrants through faithful witness to disrupt raids and immigration enforcement through prayerful and prophetic presence
- Put public pressure on ICE and the Trump Administration to stop all raids and deportations.
- Counter this wave of terror through the immigrant community with a message of hope, faith and planned action in immigrant communities.
- Support the families who are victims of raids through service provision and necessary organizing capacity building among the broader community

Rapid Response as Disaster Response

It may be helpful to think about responding to ICE raids in terms of how one would response to the emergency relief to other disasters, such as hurricanes or tornadoes. Just like emergency management responds to natural disasters in four phases, community disasters caused by human forces, such as the destruction of a community at the hands of ICE, recovery workers (i.e. community members) can follow the same four phases: mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery.

Phase One: Mitigation

Mitigation involves any activities that prevent future emergencies or minimizing their effects. For immigration raids, mitigation is about creating and evaluating relationships. Consider your local law enforcement's relationship with ICE. Does your local community participate in any partnerships with ICE such as 287g or Secure Communities? Ask for a meeting with your local sheriff and put together a team of concerned immigrants and community members to talk to him or her about what they are prepared to

do to protect the immigrant community. This toolkit from CLINIC, "[Do You Want ICE In Your Neighborhood?](#)," may also be useful.

Mitigation also involves building relationships with your local congregations and local immigrant-led and refugee groups- examples include local refugee resettlement office, Hispanic centers, AFSC, CIVIC, immigration attorneys, JFON, Catholic Charities, worker's centers, etc. Begin the process of education in your faith community and invite immigrants and refugees to share a meal and their story. Examples of possible events include:

- Uniting Communities and Bridge Building Fun!
- Potlucks,
- Documentary at a local theater,
- Community Presence (tables at public events),
- Immigration Simulation,
- Know your rights training,
- Book Guest speakers and hear personal stories.
- History of immigration laws
- Vocabulary training: - illegal vs undocumented, immigrating vs seeking asylum vs begin a refugee, criminal vs civil (no due process, no attorneys assigned)

It is important to note that mitigation occurs both before and after a disaster, and that the work of building and sustaining relationships is ongoing. Be prepared to hold local law enforcement accountable for their actions and be committed to working with the immigrant community as a continual ministry of the congregations, not merely a seasonal activity.

Phase Two: Preparedness

Preparedness refers to plans or preparations made to save lives and to help response and rescue operations. First steps for preparing for a raid include:

1. Make sure you are part of an organized network of faith communities who are working closely with immigrant-led organizations.
2. Identify or create communications mechanisms such as a hotline number or phone tree where faith allies can be reached in case of an emergency, but don't just wait to be contacted. Especially when there are rumors of raids, keep an eye on the social media accounts of local immigrant rights organizations and/or watch for key hashtags like #ICEin[city name] and #MigraWatch
3. Make a plan, in consultation with immigrant-led organization, for how allies can show up together to a raid and what you can do to help stop the raid from happening.
4. Make sure you know your rights and that you know the rights to which all immigrants are entitled (see below).

How to be Organized

- Make sure you are meeting regularly and outreaching to new congregations interested in immigrants rights or the [Sanctuary Movement](#)
- Always stay linked to a trusted immigrants rights organization. There are many great networks such as [UWD](#), [FIRM](#), [NDLON](#), [Mijente](#), and [DWN](#), but it's always best to be connected to local organizations that will know your local context.
- To be a good ally, make sure to always engage with and take leadership from impacted people.
- Contact local members of the [The National Lawyers Guild](#) to see if they can be legal observers.

Set up Local Hotline and Rapid Response Communication

- Assign a point person to alert the faith community in times of emergency through the following: set up a text thread, phone tree and/or hotline number. [Signal](#) is a recommended secure app to communicate via text.
- Make sure to coordinate with immigrants' rights organizations, there should only be one local hotline per region, and it should be widely publicized so the immigrant community knows to call if there is need for rapid response
- Create a way to rotate volunteers of people who are on-call for the hotline

- Some have bought a cheap cell phone and make sure it's staffed 24/7 by someone who can speak Spanish or any other language that might be needed in your region.
- Another way to set up a hotline is through [google voice](#). The number that people are given stays the same, but you can change the forwarded number on the back end.

Phase Three: Response

- Response addresses immediate threats presented by the disaster, including finding where those who have been picked up and have been taking, meeting humanitarian needs of the family (food, shelter, clothing, public health and safety), case management of children who may be without family members, emotional and/or psychological support, and the start of resource distribution.
- Response is putting your preparedness plans into action and faith communities often become de facto relief centers.
- Raids create panic for families and "first responders" in these cases often include churches, immigration attorneys and other community advocates who scramble to provide legal aid, track down children and missing detainees, and stock food pantries.

What to do once you arrive to the raid

- Gather as a group at a distance.
- Assign roles: Lead, Family Liaison, ICE Liaison, Leader of ritual (or divide into parts), Song lead, Singers, Person filming, those risking arrest, neighbors
- Review plan
- Distribute banners and signs
- If there is a group ready to risk arrest to block a deportation from happening you should set up a specific training around that before moving forward with such plan
- See [action in Phoenix where a group blocked ICE van](#)
- You have the right to offer public witness, but on the sidewalk. If ICE or other law agencies tell you to move you should follow directions unless there is a group prepared and trained to risk arrest
- Consider having specific people designated to de-escalate, should conflict arise.
- You have a right to witness and video record the enforcement action. This will help create public pressure that could help stop the raid, though rights do vary by state, so make sure to [know your rights about video recording](#)
- Record badge numbers, license plates, and everything that happened in the incident by writing it down and video taping. As much as possible, try to learn and document what role ICE officers and local law enforcement played. For local advocacy, it is important to note the role of local law enforcement, including indirect support like blocking traffic.
- Make sure there is space on your phone to hold video recording, and download the ACLU video app to ensure the information is captured and disseminated regardless of what happens to your camera or phone: www.aclu.org/feature/aclu-apps-record-police-conduct

Interfaith Vigil

- [Extended Vigil Liturgy Resource](#)
- Form ourselves as community/ Call to Prayer
- This could be introducing yourself to your neighbor, hugging your neighbor, or simply putting arms around each other's shoulders.
- If we know the name of person in house, we can mention them
- Opening prayer or silence
- Blessing - claiming this space as holy ground.
- Put down candles in perimeter
- Put central altar (box with cloth and objects people can bring)
- If risking arrest line the inner perimeter of the holy ground
- "May a new light shine upon this place"
- Songs
- Reading or mention sacred text

Know Your Rights Resources for Immigrants

See Resources from [United We Dream](#)

1. DO NOT OPEN DOOR: ICE can't come in without a warrant. They can only come in if you let them come in.
2. REMAIN SILENT: Anything you say can be used against you in court. Plead the 5th amendment to remain silent.
3. DO NOT SIGN: Don't sign anything ICE gives you without talking to an attorney.
4. REPORT AND RECORD: If you see a raid happening call your local hotline, alert your community (national hotline is 1-844-363-1423). Record the badge numbers of agents, type of car, and exactly what happened.
5. STAND STRONG! Get a trustworthy attorney, engage the local community to advocate alongside you. If you are detained you may be able to get bail and be released, don't give up hope.

Also check out raid resources from the [Immigration Defense Project](#)

[Know Your Rights in Spanish from Immigrant Defense Project](#)

[Informed Immigrant Resources](#)

Know Your Rights for Allies

1. If you see a raid happening, call your local hotline (national hotline is 1-844-363-1423). Record the badge numbers of agents, type of car, and exactly what happened.
2. You have a right to be present, observing, bearing witness, praying, photographing and videotaping (though your right to videotape a law enforcement action may vary by state). If ICE warns you and asks you to step back while videoing/photographing, it is best to follow directions, as they may confiscate your camera.

Traditional Media

- Consider advising friendly local media outlets to show up when there is a raid happening
- Make sure to assign a media contact and several media spokesperson who know their talking points ahead of time
- A sample [media advisory](#) and [talking points](#) are available.

Social Media

- Assign someone to record the entire rapid response through Facebook live or the [ACLU app](#)
- Create a common hashtag using the location + #Raids and #Free+name so that people can follow what's happening along with other more well known hashtags like #NoBanNoWall #SanctuaryNotDeportations #Heretostay
- Post photos and updates with ways for people to sign up for alerts so that others can see what's happening and join the struggle

Confirm Raids or Enforcement Actions and Beware of False Alarms

- If your rapid response team receives too many false alarms, they can grow fatigued and start to not take the call to action seriously. It's important to get the most accurate information possible by confirming the reports, try and get photos if possible by witnesses who are present.

Phase Four: Recovery

- The final phase of disaster management, recovery, includes actions taken to return to a normal or an even safer situation following an emergency. These post-raid actions are just as important as the four phases that come before.
- Rapid response is not just about trying to stop a raid, it's also about mobilizing and organizing people to help with the fall out of the raid, when families are being separated
- Recovery occurs in two phases: short-term (several days-1 year) and long-term (one year-10 years).

- Short term recovery includes delivering basic services and continuing to support families as they adjust to their new situation after a family member has been detained. Even if their family member is able to return, the financial and emotional impacts will remain with the family.

Short Term Recovery Steps

1. **Assess the Situation:** Find out who all was impacted. Which children have been left alone? Finding out the names and Alien numbers (A#) of the people affected, especially parents of children is most critical, as they could also be the first to be released. Identify who needs shelter and prepare a local willing congregation to be headquarters for raid response and legal assessment.
2. **Legal Services:** Make sure that pro-bono lawyers and legal service providers have ample safe space to meet with family members to access who was taken in the raid, who has the possibility of being released, and how to launch a campaign to get as many people released as possible.
3. **Shelter and Basic Needs:** Identify the faith community that is willing to open up their space as a temporary shelter for families who are scared to go home. Begin collecting basic needs such as food and clothes as needed. Start a collection to support the families who will experience a loss of income from one of the providers being detained and possibly deported.
4. **Condemn the Raids through media:** As soon as possible organize a public witness event such as a vigil or press conference to send the message to the broader community and to the government officials that raids and deportation policies that create terror and separate families go against our faith tradition and should not be a tactic utilized by the administration.

Long Term Recovery Steps

1. **Consider creating a raid response task force at your church** to continue to be sure that the needs of families are met long terms. Possible teams on the task force might include:
 - a. media (news)
 - b. volunteer coordinator
 - c. legal
 - d. ESL
 - e. program coordinators
 - f. hospitality
 - g. social Media information sharing
 - h. Finance teams (Two teams - One to manage funds and accounts another team to write checks for legal fees such as lawyer fees and retainers, DACA applications, birth certificate applications, work permits etc).
 - i. Fundraising Team
 - j. Government Outreach Team
 - k. Online Giving Platform and maintained website
2. **Continue to put pressure on local, state, and federal officials:** Just because the community slowly returns to a state of normalcy, does not mean that the impacts are over. Do not stop letting your elected officials know that your faith community supports families, workers, and will not let them be taken from your community.
3. **Keep using the media to lift up positive stories of hope:** While raids can harden the hearts of some, immigration raids also highlight the many ways immigrants are part of a community's social fabric. Share stories of impacted workers and families who have been part of your community years. Likewise, after a raid volunteers from all walks of life stepped up to provide assistance. Public interest about the local immigrant population is sure to rise after a raid. Share positive stories of communities coming together with the media in order to push back against the negative narrative of undocumented immigration.
4. **Create new alliances:** Humanitarian responses can transform into political alliances through grass-roots action. Often, many of the volunteers who assist after a raid, do not consider the ways their [political beliefs can impact their own community](#). After a raid, do not be afraid to question human costs of the political fight over immigration policy, and how that interacts with our

faith. Consider hosting a Bible study on immigration with another faith community, inviting immigrants to participate in your worship services, or preaching about immigration and the Bible.