ICE RAIDS AND OFFERING SAFE HARBOR BEGINNING RIGHT NOW!

URGENT REQUEST FOR FAITH COMMUNITIES TO OFFER SHORT TERM SANCTUARY

In light of the ICE Raids which are quickly bearing down on us, our partner, the New York Sanctuary Coalition in collaboration with congregations of every faith, has asked the New York State Council of Churches to put out an urgent appeal to congregations in New York City and across the state, to commit to offering short term sanctuary. This needs to go before the body in your church (congregation, governing board etc.) that handles rushed asks.

This week, "Short-Term Sanctuary" would practically mean:

1. Displaying the "S" symbol (found by clicking here) In your windows on your doors, and on your church signs, so that Friends who are looking for a safe space in your neighborhood can find your building and know that they can come inside and be shielded from ICE.

1. Equipping your congregation with the the "How to be a Buddy" cards by clicking here and educate your congregation in what they mean.

2. Offering the "Beyond Your Rights" and "I Know My Rights!" cards by clicking here to any Friend who seeks safe space at your church.

3. Being willing to shelter Friends who come to your space for a day or two (short-term, not long-term), while you then contact New Sanctuary Coalition at 903-884-4357 or 908-791-5309, so that we can help them with longer-term arrangements, legally and beyond.

4. Considering the more expansive packet "How to Be a Sanctuary Congregation," by clicking here with understanding that "Short-Term Sanctuary" is all your congregation is committing to in this immediate moment.

Essentially, for NSC, "Short-Term Sanctuary" is defined as follows:

"Taking Sanctuary in a house of worship may be useful for a short time (a few hours, one day, or a short overnight stay) to help the immigrant feel safe and become calm rather than panicked, and to get information on what to do next, so they can make good plans. This usually would happen in the event of immigration raids or acts of hate occurring in the area. Immigrants also face day-to-day struggles that faith communities should be ready to address through short-term sanctuary."

In addition, we also urge you to report any ICE activity which you personally witness. Do not rely on 2nd hand reports. Take pictures, show up if you are contacted about a raid, while being careful to not cross into their space, politely ask officers for their names and ids and a warrant signed by a judge. You are a citizen who has the right to ask these questions. Report out incidents and pictures on this twitter feed @NewSanctuaryNYC.
GUIDANCE FROM NEW YORK OFFICE FOR NEW AMERICANS

Here is specific guidance from the Governor Cuomo’s Office for New Americans which is most helpful and applies to communities in every part of New York State including New York City.

NEW YORK STATE OFFICE FOR NEW AMERICANS ISSUES TIPS ON WHAT TO DO IF ENCOUNTERED BY ICE

Governor Cuomo’s Office for New Americans has issued the following tips and guidelines so that residents know their rights if they are confronted by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE).

The tips, available below and in a printable flyer in English and Spanish, ensure immigrants fully understand their legal rights if they are confronted and/or intimidated by ICE agents. Reports indicate that the Trump Administration is planning raids across the country to arrest undocumented families on Sunday, July 14.

“Immigrants across New York have clearly defined rights – despite what the Trump Administration and other anti-immigrant forces may want them to believe,” said Secretary of State Rossana Rosado, who oversees the Office for New Americans and the Liberty Defense Project. “We urge all New Yorkers to know their rights so if they are targeted or intimidated by law enforcement, they know the legal system is there to provide necessary protections.”

The Office for New Americans and the Liberty Defense Project advise individuals if they are confronted by federal immigration enforcement officers from ICE:

- Stay calm. Do not run, argue, resist or obstruct the police.
- Ask if you are free to leave. If ICE answers yes, tell ICE that you do not want to answer their questions and calmly and silently walk away. If you are under arrest, ask why. You have the right to know the reason for your arrest.
- If ICE/CBP tells you that you are not free to leave, you have the right to remain silent and not answer questions from ICE. Tell ICE “I am using my right to remain silent and I want to speak to a lawyer.” Your right to remain silent starts from the moment ICE confronts you.
- Do NOT consent to a search of your belongings or your pockets. ICE/ may “pat down” your clothing if they suspect a weapon. Do NOT physically resist. If ICE agents begin to search your person, say out loud, “I do not consent to a search.”
- Do NOT give false information if you choose to answer questions. Do NOT show any expired or false immigration documents to ICE
- You do NOT have to share any information about where you were born, where you live, where you work, where you go to school, any information about your family, what your immigration status is, or your criminal record.
- You have the right to seek legal assistance and may ask to speak to a lawyer instead of answering questions. If you do not have an attorney, call the New Americans Hotline at 1-800-566-7636.
• You have the right to contact your consulate, or to have ICE inform the consulate if you are being detained.
• You do NOT have to sign anything.
• Make sure that someone you trust knows where you are at all times and that you know how to reach them in case of an emergency (if you have been detained).
• In general, it is a good idea to keep a copy of your important papers (birth certificate, any immigration papers, etc.) at the home of a friend or relative whom you trust and can call in case you are detained.

If ICE comes to an individual’s home:

• If an officer knocks on your door, do NOT open it. Ask the officer through the closed door to show their identification and if they have a warrant.
• If the officer says “yes,” to the warrant, still do not open the door but ask the officer to show you the warrant by slipping it under the door.
• A warrant issued by ICE is NOT a valid warrant. Only a warrant signed by a court or judge is valid. When examining the warrant, look for your name, your address, and a signature. A valid warrant will have the name of a court at the top of the page, and a section on the top left-hand corner that says, “United States of America v. (name of person to be arrested).”
• If ICE presents a valid warrant, you should let them into the house. Do NOT provide any false information to ICE. See above
• If the warrant looks like it was issued by ICE but not a court or judge, you have the right to NOT to let the ICE enter your house. Immediately call your attorney or the New Americans Hotline (1-800-566-7636) to report that ICE is at your door.

If ICE comes to an individual’s place of work:

• Immigration officers are NOT allowed to enter your workplace without the approval of the owner or manager.
• If the owner or manager grants ICE permission to enter, the officer is free to ask you questions about your immigration status. See above.

Any immigrant that needs free legal assistance is urged to call the New Americans Hotline at 1-800-566-7636. All call information is confidential. Assistance is available in over 200 languages.

If you have questions, please contact

New Sanctuary Coalition, 903-884-4357 or 908-791-5309

The Reverend Micah Bucey, Multi-Faith Coordinator, New Sanctuary Coalition, micah@newsanctuarynyc.org

The Reverend Peter Cook, Pcook@NYSCOC.org or 508-380-8289.