



# Legal Access in Detention AT A GLANCE



U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) Enforcement and Removal Operations (ERO) seeks to enhance individuals' access to legal resources and representation while in ICE custody. This information is meant to assist immigration legal representatives who represent individuals who are detained in ICE custody.

*The following information is based on ICE detention standards. For further information on those standards, see below.*

## Communicating with Your Client Or Prospective Client

**Locating an individual:** Information regarding the location of detained individuals may be accessed using the [Online Detainee Locator System](#) (ODLS).

*Please note: Use of the ODLS requires the individual's full name and A-Number or Date of Birth and Country of Origin. If you cannot locate the individual using ODLS, please contact the appropriate [ICE field office](#) using the contact information below.*

**Legal Mail:** Legal mail includes mail to/from legal representatives, courts, and embassies/consulates. Legal mail must be labeled as "special correspondence" or "legal mail" and the title and office of the sender (or addressee) must be unambiguously written on the envelope. **Legal mail is forwarded to detainees when they are released or transferred. Legal mail is subject to inspection, but cannot be read.**

*Please note: The mailing address may differ from the physical address of the facility. To obtain the correct mailing address for the facility in which your client is housed or facility-specific mailing instructions, please use the [Detention Facility Locator](#) on ICE.gov to locate the facility and look under the "Sending Items to Detainees" tab.*

*Also, some facilities may have additional protocols for receiving legal mail. Please check with the [facility](#) before sending to ensure your correspondence meets the facility requirements.*

**Legal Visits:** Legal representatives, legal assistants, and their interpreters may visit clients or prospective clients. Please note that the same rules and requirements for in-person legal visitation also apply to virtual/remote legal visitation.

**Hours:** Legal visitation is permitted 7 days a week for a minimum of 8 hours a day on business days and 4 hours a day on weekends and holidays. To obtain the visiting hours for a specific facility use the [Detention Facility Locator](#) on ICE.gov to locate the facility and look under the "Hours of Visitation" tab. Facilities may also consider requests for extended visits or visits outside normal hours.

**Identification of Detainee:** Although preferred, identification of a detainee by A-number is not required. The facility must make a good-faith effort to identify the specific detainee if provided with other personal identifying information.

**Documentation and Identification:** A DHS Form G-28, [Notice of Entry of Appearance as Attorney or Accredited Representative](#), form is required when providing legal representation to an individual in immigration removal proceedings. A DHS Form G-28 is not required for legal representatives representing detainees on non-immigration legal matters or for pre-representational meetings. In addition to a government-issued photo ID, legal representatives may be required to show a bar card or other documentation reflecting their status as an active legal representative, such as a state bar card, attorney license, paralegal license, or similar legal status. For law students or legal assistants, a letter from the legal representative under whom they are working may also be required.

**Privacy:** Visits between a legal representative and an individual detainee are confidential and not subject to auditory supervision. Private consultation rooms may be available for these meetings. For safety and security purposes, detainees are supervised within eyeshot but out of earshot during legal visitation.

**Documents and Materials:** Documents and materials provided to a detainee during legal visitation shall be inspected but not read. Detainees may retain these materials for their personal use.

**Legal Calls:** Detainees are unable to receive incoming calls. To leave an urgent message for a detainee, please see instructions on the facility's page on ICE.gov. In locations where tablets are in use, some detainees may be able to receive a non-confidential text message from legal representatives.

**Requests for unmonitored calls:** All calls from housing unit phones are subject to monitoring unless otherwise stated. Each facility must have a written procedure for obtaining unmonitored legal calls. Please contact the facility for additional information.

**Cost of Detainee-Initiated Calls:** Each facility shall provide detainees with access to reasonably priced telephone services based on federal and state regulations at rates comparable to those charged to the general public. Please contact the facility for additional information on the procedure for adding funds to a detainee's phone account. Special considerations exist for indigent detainees with regard to phone calls.

**Accommodations for Detainees with Communication Disabilities:** Consistent with ICE detention standards, the facility shall engage in an interactive and individualized process that considers whether a detainee with a disability needs any accommodation to access facility telephones or communicate with counsel. Auxiliary aids and services, such as TTY devices or Accessible telephones, shall be provided to detainees with communication disabilities on the same terms as provided for detainees without any communication impairment. Consistent with the order and safety of the facility, the facility shall ensure that the privacy of all communications between detainees with communication disabilities and their legal counsel is the same as provided for detainees without communication impairments.



**Accommodations for Detainees with Communication Disabilities (continued):**

Consistent with the order and safety of the facility, the facility shall ensure that the privacy of all communications between detainees with communication disabilities and their legal counsel is the same as provided for detainees without communication impairments. The facility shall maintain other auxiliary aids and services, such as video relay service and video phones, to ensure effective communication options for all detainees with communication disabilities.

**Exchange of Documents:**

**In-Person:** Documents and materials provided to a detainee during legal visitation are inspected but not read. Detainees may retain these materials for their personal use. The written facility legal visitation procedures describe the exchange of documents between a detainee and legal representative even when contact visitation is not available.

**Legal Mail:** See “Legal Mail” section above.

**Electronic Means:** Some facilities have implemented procedures to allow electronic exchange of documents between detainees and legal representatives. Please contact the facility or visit the [facility page](#) on ICE.gov for additional information.

## Communicating with ICE

**Submission of G-28:** G-28s should be submitted to the Field Office or facility where your client is detained or, for non-detained, to the Field Office where the docket is located. [For a general list of Field Office Outreach email addresses, please see below.](#) Please note: A G-28 is not required for a pre-representational meeting with a prospective client.

**Obtaining Case Status Information:** For information on ICE-related case matters (status of parole requests, status of travel documents, the scheduling of a credible fear or reasonable fear screening, etc.), please contact your client’s Deportation Officer. If the identity of the deportation officer is not known, contact the [Field Office](#) or [facility](#) to obtain that information. Please note that a G-28 must be on file for any information to be disclosed.

**Submission of Parole or Bond Request:** For information about the method by which parole or bond requests are to be submitted, please contact the relevant Field Office. [For a general list of Field Office Outreach email addresses, please see below.](#)

**Posting Bonds:** Bonds for detainees may be posted at ICE ERO bond acceptance offices nationwide, Monday through Friday (except public holidays) between the hours of 9:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m., local time. A list of [ICE ERO bond acceptance offices](#) nearest you can be found on ICE.gov. Additional information is available on each facility website on ICE.gov.

**Bond Refunds:** To determine the status of your bond, please contact your local ERO office. For information regarding how to obtain a refund on a bond that has been cancelled or breached, email the Financial Operations of the Department of Homeland Security Debt Management Center at [bondrefund.helpdesk@ice.dhs.gov](mailto:bondrefund.helpdesk@ice.dhs.gov) (make sure to include your bond number or A number with your request) or call (802) 288-7600 Monday through Friday from 8:00 to 4:00 p.m. EST and follow the prompts for bond information to speak with someone.

## Other Legal Resources Available to Individuals Detained in ICE Custody

- **Virtual Attorney Visitation (VAV):** In an effort to facilitate improved detainee access to legal representatives, ICE has implemented Virtual Attorney Visitation (VAV) in many ICE detention facilities nationwide. Utilizing platforms such as Microsoft Teams and Cisco WebEx, the VAV program allows legal representatives to meet with their clients or prospective clients virtually using video technology in private rooms or booths to ensure confidentiality of communications during remote legal visits. Please note VAV does not substitute for in-person meetings, but it does provide an alternative for attorneys to communicate with clients in a timely and efficient manner. Currently, VAV is available at the following [ICE facilities](#). Additional information on the procedures for scheduling virtual attorney client visits is available under the Hours of Visitation tabs of those facility webpages on ICE.gov
- **Tablets:** Tablets are currently available at certain dedicated facilities nationwide. Tablets can be used to exchange non-confidential messages with legal representatives. The tablets can be used to conduct phone or video calls from the housing units. Instructions for how to schedule or pay for video visits can be found [here](#). Note that these calls are monitored and recorded. Please contact the specific facility to inquire about tablet availability and call monitoring.
- **Scheduling calls/visits with your client:** Some facilities may have processes in place through which legal representatives may schedule confidential communications via phone calls, video teleconference, or in-person visits with their clients and prospective clients. These calls and meetings are private and not subject to auditory monitoring. Please contact the specific [facility](#) for more information.
- **Law Library:** Individuals in ICE detention centers have access to law libraries for at least 5 hours per week. These libraries often contain comprehensive legal materials (see [Appendix A of PBNDS 2011 Section 6.3](#)) and are equipped with computers, printers, and photocopiers. Additionally, detainees are able to electronically store legal research and documents.
- **Detainee Telephone System (DTS) Free Call Platform:** All detainees have access to a free call platform that includes telephone numbers of legal service providers who are listed on the EOIR List of Pro Bono Legal Service Providers (see below for more information on this list). Free calls are also available to consular officials and various government agencies and non-governmental organizations. Each facility is required to post updated free call lists in all housing units.

## Did You Know... ?

ICE.gov has the following information about ICE detention centers:

- Visitation Hours
- Mailing Address
- Posting Bonds
- Parking
- Facility Phone Numbers
- Urgent Messages for Detainees

Some ICE detention facilities have Virtual Attorney Visitation

ICE detainees have access to free calls to:

- Consulates
- Pro Bono Legal Representatives on the EOIR List
- Oversight Entities
- ICE Detention Reporting and Information Line (DRIL)

ICE detention facilities have law libraries that contain:

- Primary Sources
- Secondary Sources
- Self-Help Materials in Several Languages
- Relevant Government Forms

You can locate an ICE detainee online using an [online search](#) webpage.



## Contact Information and Additional Resources

### Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) Enforcement and Removal Operations (ERO)

- **ERO Field Offices and Outreach Email Boxes:** <https://www.ice.gov/contact/ero>
- **ICE Detention Facilities:** <https://www.ice.gov/detention-facilities>
- **ICE Headquarters:** Prior to contacting headquarters, you must first try to resolve your request or concern at the Field Office level. If you need further assistance after contacting the field, you may contact ERO at [ERO.Info@ice.dhs.gov](mailto:ERO.Info@ice.dhs.gov)

### Executive Office of Immigration Review (EOIR)

- **Immigration Court:** For information about a matter before the immigration court, please call 1-800-898-7180. Applications for relief from removal and other forms or documents requested by the immigration judge must be filed directly with the immigration court.
- **Pro Bono Legal Service Provider List:** To be included on the List of Pro Bono Legal Service Providers, please see the [EOIR website](#) for more information on eligibility and procedure. You may also download the application ([Form EOIR-56](#)) from the EOIR website.

### United States Citizenship and Immigration Service (USCIS)

For information on matters before USCIS (Special Immigrant Juvenile Status, Status of a U or T Visa application, etc.), contact the local field office which can be found on <http://www.uscis.gov/about-us/find-uscis-office/field-offices>. If there is no response, call the USCIS Customer Service Center at 1-800-375-5283. If problems continue, contact the Ombudsman <https://www.dhs.gov/case-assistance>

### Detention Reporting and Information Line (DRIL)

The DRIL is a toll-free service that provides a direct channel for agency stakeholders to communicate with ERO to answer questions and resolve concerns. Stakeholders may reach the DRIL by dialing 1-888-351-4024. Live operators are available Monday through Friday (excluding holidays) from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. (EST). Language assistance, including Spanish operators, is also available. Detained individuals are also able to call the DRIL from facility phones using the DTS free call platform.

### For more information on current ICE detention standards related to the information above

To see which set of detention standards applies to a detention facility, see:  
<https://www.ice.gov/doclib/facilityinspections/dedicatedNonDedicatedFacilityList.xlsx>

For specific standards, please see:

- **National Detention Standards 2019**
  - [Correspondence and Other Mail – Section 5.1](#)
  - [Telephone Access – Section 5.4](#)
  - [Visitation – Section 5.5](#)
- **Performance Based National Detention Standards 2011 (revised 2016)**
  - [Correspondence and Other Mail – Section 5.1](#)
  - [Telephone Access – Section 5.6](#)
  - [Visitation – Section 5.7](#)
  - [Law Libraries and Legal Material – Section 6.3](#)
- **Performance Based National Detention Standards 2008**
  - [Correspondence and Other Mail – Section 5.26](#)
  - [Telephone Access – Section 5.31](#)
  - [Visitation – Section 5.32](#)
  - [Law Libraries and Legal Material – Section 6.36](#)

### For other questions related to Legal Access issues

Email the Legal Access Team at ICE Headquarters at [Detention.LegalAccess@ice.dhs.gov](mailto:Detention.LegalAccess@ice.dhs.gov). The Legal Access Team coordinates with all Field Offices on inquiries and provides assistance to the field on issues related to legal access.