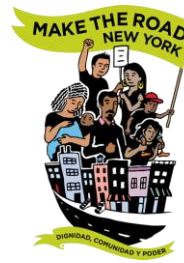




BROOKLYN  
DEFENDER  
SERVICES



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**\*\*\*FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE\*\*\***

***Immigration Advocates Reaffirm Call on ICE to Cease Sudden Transfers, Release Recently Transferred Clients and those Currently Detained in NYC Area***

***Since Jan 1., ICE has Transferred At Least 22 Detained Immigrants With Zero Notice to Attorneys, Families or Support Networks***

(NEW YORK, NY) – The Legal Aid Society, Brooklyn Defender Services, and The Bronx Defenders – New York City’s defender organizations providing free legal representation to detained immigrants through the New York Immigrant Family Unity Project (NYIFUP) – as well as Make the Road New York and UnLocal, groups that also provide free legal representation to immigrants through the Rapid Response Legal Collaborative (RRLC) – [reaffirmed calls](#) on U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) to end its recent practice of abruptly transferring detained clients in the New York City area to detention centers in other parts of the country, including Louisiana, Alabama, and Pennsylvania, with zero notice to attorneys. Since January 20, 2021, between these organizations, at least 22 clients have been transferred without any notice.

The organizations also again called on ICE to immediately release all recently transferred individuals as well as all those currently detained in the NYC area.

The transfer concerns were first raised with ICE in [correspondence](#) issued June 4, 2021. ICE has yet to reply.

As the letter detailed, in many cases, detained individuals seemed to have simply disappeared, with ICE deportation officers refusing to respond to reasonable inquiries from counsel about their clients’ whereabouts.

Additionally, ICE/jail correctional officers have spread inconsistent and misleading information among detained people about mass transfers, especially at the Hudson County Correctional Facility. These transfers, which happened without notice to the attorneys of record or even to detained individuals themselves, have serious implications for an immigrant’s ability to access counsel, evidence, and witnesses for their cases, and to contact and be supported by their family members and other loved ones.

“President Biden promised to roll back the draconian immigration policies and practices of the previous administration but instead has permitted ICE to randomly transfer our clients to facilities throughout the country

with absolutely zero notice and at great detriment to our clients,” said **Sharone Schwartz Kaufman, Esq., Deputy Attorney-in-Charge of NYIFUP & the Federal Practice with Immigration Law Unit at The Legal Aid Society**. “We demand that ICE cease this practice, and immediately release those individuals who have been transferred and our other clients still languishing at facilities in the tri-state region.”

“By transferring detained immigrants without notice to unknown locations without explanation and refusing to provide information, ICE has effectively disappeared people away from their families, counsel, and communities,” said **Sophie Dalsimer, Supervising Attorney with Brooklyn Defender Services’ NYIFUP Practice**. “Immigration detention is inhumane and immoral, and these transfers compound an already harrowing and dehumanizing experience for immigrants that are incarcerated. ICE must cease these transfers at once and free all detained immigrants.”

“Immigration detention is designed to dehumanize people and increase the likelihood of deportation,” said **Sarah Deri Oshiro, Managing Director of The Bronx Defenders’ Immigration Practice**. “DHS’s new leadership has pledged their commitment to rolling back many of the harms inflicted on immigrant communities by the prior administration. However, ICE’s recent pattern of suddenly transferring immigrants thousands of miles away from their loved ones and counsel reveals the shape-shifting nature of the types of harm it can unleash. This practice must cease, immediately, while we continue to fight for a world in which ICE detention no longer exists.”

**Luba Cortés, Immigrant Defense Coordinator of Make the Road New York**, said, “It is deeply alarming that ICE continues to refuse to provide clear information about recently transferred community members. It is unacceptable for this agency, which has a history of inhumane treatment of immigrants, to continue to inflict harm in our communities and keep on carrying on without any accountability. We demand transparency and the release of all detained immigrants now.”

“It should come as little surprise that ICE has discovered new and terrible ways to terrorize this country’s immigrant communities. Under the cloak of darkness, and with no notice to the individual, their family, or their attorneys, ICE has begun to transfer people from detention facilities close to their communities to facilities thousands of miles away. Nothing justifies this added terror. ICE detention is always inhumane and these transfers simply compound the inhumanity. We continue to demand the release of all people caged by ICE,” said **Rebecca Press, Legal Director of UnLocal**.

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