

Know Your Rights: What to Do If ICE Officers Are at Immigration Court



Updated: June 2025

By Figeroux & Associates, Immigration Attorneys

855-768-8845 | www.askthelawyer.us

Why This Matters?

Since May 2025, ICE has been arresting people outside immigration courts—even those attending mandatory hearings. If you or a loved one has a court date, **read this now** to protect your rights and avoid unnecessary risks.

Who Needs to Read This?

- Individuals with upcoming immigration hearings
- Family and friends supporting someone at court
- Advocates, clergy, and community leaders

What's Happening?

ICE officers are stationed outside many immigration courts. In some cases, after a person's hearing is dismissed, ICE arrests them at the courthouse exit and places them into **expedited removal**—a fast-track deportation process with **no right to another hearing**.

Who Is Most at Risk?

You may face **expedited removal** if you:

- Entered the U.S. without authorization and **can't prove two years of continuous presence**
- Were **paroled** into the U.S. (e.g., CBP One or humanitarian parole) and your **parole has expired or was canceled**

Even if you've been here for years, **losing parole status can place you at risk**.

Who Is Generally Protected?

You're likely **not subject** to expedited removal if:

- You entered the U.S. legally, even if your visa has since expired
- You can **prove two or more years** of continuous presence
- You are a minor under 18, or a Cuban national who arrived by plane

Note: Parolees were never "admitted" under the law. Once parole ends, ICE may target you—even with years of residence.

Documents That Can Help You

Bring **photocopies** (not originals) of proof you've lived in the U.S. for two years or more, such as:

- Lease/rental agreements
- Utility bills or bank statements spanning two years
- Medical, school, or work records
- Postmarked letters from over two years ago

Keep these in a folder and bring them to court.

If You Fear Going Back to Your Country

You may be eligible for an **asylum screening**. Tell the ICE officer:

“I am afraid to return to my home country.”

“I would like a fear-screening interview.”

“I fear persecution or torture.”

Saying these phrases can **pause removal** and allow you to speak to an asylum officer.

Before You Sign Anything

Do **not** sign any papers labeled:

- *Voluntary Departure*
- *Stipulated Removal*
- *Waiver*

Instead, say:

“I want to speak with a lawyer first.”

Signing may result in **immediate deportation** without further hearings.

What to Ask in Court If Your Case Is Being Dismissed

- Why is the government requesting dismissal?
- What has changed in my case?
- What are the consequences for me?

You have the right to:

- Request the motion in **writing**
- Ask for **10 days to respond**
- Get time to **find a lawyer**

If You're Arrested by ICE You Still Have Rights.

- **Remain silent** – You don't have to answer questions without a lawyer
- **Ask to speak to an attorney**
- **Call your consulate**
- **Refuse a home search** unless ICE shows a warrant signed by a judge

What Expedited Removal Means

- You may be deported **within 24 hours**
- No right to a hearing or appeal
- A **five-year ban** on returning to the U.S.
- Difficulty getting future visas or being reunited with family

Action Checklist

Save key numbers to your phone:

- Emergency Immigration Help: 2150# or (202) 442-3363
- Court-Date Info Line: 1-800-898-7180
- Family Support Hotline: 1-855-435-7693
- ICE Detainee Locator: [ice.gov/odls](https://ice.dhs.gov/odls)

Speak with a Qualified Immigration Lawyer

Collect proof of two years of U.S. residence

Share this blog with your community

Prepare Your Family

- Discuss potential outcomes with loved ones
- Arrange for child care
- Keep emergency contacts updated
- Store passports and key documents securely
- Have emergency cash ready

Legal Challenges Are Underway

Multiple lawsuits, including *Make the Road NY v. Noem* and *CHIRLA v. Noem*, are challenging these courthouse arrests. Legal outcomes are still pending. **Stay informed.**

Final Note

This information is provided for general purposes and **is not legal advice**. For help with your specific case, contact a trusted immigration attorney.

Call the Law Firm of Figeroux & Associates at 855-768-8845

Visit www.askthelawyer.us