



VISITATION MANUAL



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“They tell us that we help lighten the burden of detention -with our daily visits. Above all this... They want our friendliness... No one can speak the 25 odd languages in which aliens speak who pass through Ellis Island, but by dividing the social services on a language basis, almost all the people who need it get the friendly attention they crave” - Ludmilla K. Foxlee, Ellis Island Social Worker

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OUR MISSION:

First Friends of NJ and NY upholds the inherent dignity and humanity of detained immigrants and asylum seekers. We provide compassion and hope through volunteer visitation, resettlement assistance and advocacy.

OUR HISTORY:

- 1998- Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS), began a volunteer visiting program at the EDC.
- 2001- JRS withdrew from offering services in the area and willingly handed over this program to FIRST FRIENDS, organized by veteran volunteer visitors and representatives of local churches, who developed and expanded the program. We owe a special debt of gratitude to St. Mary of the Assumption Parish in Elizabeth who granted us office space and financed us through some difficult times.
- 2005- Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) closed the Wackenhut Detention Facility in Queens, New York announcing that all asylum seekers would be detained in the EDC facility. They also increased the number of asylum seekers in New Jersey county jails.
- The visiting program was expanded to include Hudson County Correctional Center. In 2011, Essex County, NJ entered into an agreement with ICE to triple the bed capacity for immigrant detainees to a total of more than 1,500 beds — a five-fold increase in the number of beds with five detention centers in New Jersey.

ABOUT US:

First Friends' main office is in Kearny, NJ with staff members and volunteer help to oversee the program. The project is directed by a Board of Trustees and is a 501c3 organization. Thus, all donations and support given to First Friends are tax deductible.

We are grateful to the many organizations that have supported us with grants in the past. The Sojourners Ministry of Riverside Church and Seafarers and International House in NY, Reformed Church of Highland Park, NJ and the Morrow Methodist Church, Maplewood, NJ are staunch allies in the effort to support immigrants in detention.

First Friends does recruitment, training, and mentor volunteer visitors throughout the metro area. Veteran volunteers will assist First Friends in mentoring new volunteers on their initial visits. First Friends sponsors "Stamp Out Despair" a semiannual program to mobilize broad community support for immigrant detainees and asylum seekers detained in 4 facilities (1 detention center and 3 county jails). For many of the detainees even this simple pleasure of having contact with family and friends is denied, since they do not have money to purchase stationery or phone cards. We collect and supply detainees twice a year with a folder of stationery which includes; stamped

GLOSSARY OF TERMS: IMMIGRATION CHEAT SHEET

Department of Homeland Security (DHS): is in charged with “protecting” the United States. In 2003, the Department of Homeland Security Act, DHS absorbed most of the former Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) and took on its duties. DHS split immigration related duties between three separate agencies: (CIS)-Citizenship and Immigration Services, (ICE)-Immigration and Customs Enforcement, and (CBP)-Customs and Border Protection.

Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE): oversees and administers all matters relating to enforcement of US immigration laws.

Immigrant: a person who comes to the U.S. in order to establish their residence here for economic betterment, family re-unification, etc.

Undocumented: An informal term to describe noncitizens who have no government authorization to be in this country.

Refugee: an individual who is outside their country and unwilling to return because of persecution or a well-founded fear of persecution on account of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group or political opinion. (1951 Geneva Convention and U.S. Immigration Law).

Asylum seeker: an individual seeking asylum in another country based on similar characteristics as a refugee. US immigration law requires that people who ask for asylum at an airport or point of entry into the U.S. must be detained. Affirmative asylum seekers are those who ask for asylum after entering and within 1 year of residing in the US. They are not detained.

Asylee: a person granted asylum in the United States.

Asylum office: the branch of ICE that makes decisions on asylum cases and does ‘credible fear’ interviews in the detention centers.

EOIR: The Executive Office of Immigration Review is a separate agency from the ICE and part of the Department of Justice. It administers the immigration courts inside the detention centers.

Detention: People are detained at every step of the “immigration process”: (1) awaiting adjudication of asylum or adjustment applications; (2) picked up and jailed without charges; (3) pending immigration proceedings; (4) after being ordered deported, while ICE is actively trying to remove them; and (5) sometimes indefinitely, when ICE knows it may not be able to deport someone with an order of deportation.

Criminal Alien: a noncitizen legally in the U.S. who has committed a felony at some time in the past and is deportable. The definition of a felony was drastically broadened by the 1996 Immigration Act.

Deportation/Removal: Expulsion of a noncitizen from the United States. People who can be deported include noncitizens (including green card holders) with past criminal convictions; visa overstays; refugee/asylum seekers; and those who entered without inspection (for example, by crossing the border unlawfully). Once removed, a noncitizen faces a time period that prevent his or her return or sometimes they are permanently barred.

Parolees: non-citizens to whom the Attorney General has granted temporary stay for humanitarian or public interest purposes and who can be detained at any time. Status expires after one year (renewable at the U.S. government's discretion), and most parolees are prohibited from applying for legal permanent residency (LPR) "green card" or citizenship.

Expedited Removal: An individual can be removed on an order issued by an immigration officer, without the opportunity to go before an immigration judge. The US Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) began implementing the expedited removal provisions of Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act of 1996 (IIRIRA) on April 1, 1997.

Intensive Supervision Assistance Program (ISAP): An Alternative to Detention program that ensure close and frequent contact by ICE with someone granted supervised release. A person subjected to these programs typically must make regular visits to an ICE officer or subcontractor and check in through telephone calls. Many people are also required to wear an ankle bracelet and are subject to curfew and other reporting requirements. These programs are frequently utilized for people who have final orders of removal but who ICE cannot deport (for example, because of lack of travel documents, or a country's refusal or inability to accept an immigrant).

Prosecutorial Discretion: The authority of the Departments of Justice and Homeland Security to refrain from placing a potentially deportable person in deportation proceedings; suspend or even terminate a deportation proceeding; postpone a deportation; release someone from detention; or de-prioritize the enforcement of immigration laws against someone because it does not serve enforcement interests.

Voluntary Departure: DHS may, in its discretion, allow a person to depart from the US at his or her own expense in lieu of being subject to proceedings. DHS will allow someone no more than 120 days to depart the US. If the person fails to depart, s/he will be subject to fines and a 10-year period of ineligibility for other forms of relief. Immigrants with aggravated felonies are ineligible for voluntary departure.

WHO ARE IMMIGRATION DETAINEES?

The detention of immigrants is the fastest growing prison industry in the United States. Every day, 42,000 immigrant detainees are held in detention centers throughout the country. Each year, between 280,000 and 300,000 immigrants are held in over 250 detention facilities, operated by the federal government, by private prison corporations or local county jails (detentionwatchnetwork.org). Detainees include both individuals and whole families, including children and asylum seekers.

- Immigrants from across the world are detained (imprisoned) for a variety of reasons which include but are not limited to:
- Asylum seekers fleeing persecution in their homeland because of their race, religion, nationality, political opinion, or membership in a particular social group.
- Border crossings, for economic reasons, or waiting many years to be reunited with a family member.
- Undocumented workers who were caught in a raid and are awaiting deportation.
- Visa overstays
- Individuals who have committed a crime, served their time, found to be without correct documented papers and are detained waiting for deportation.
- Lawful permanent residents are subject to deportation for minor offenses such as buying stolen jewelry or possession of marijuana, which are misdemeanors for U.S. citizens but deportable offenses for lawful permanent residents.

Many immigrants in detention are married to U.S. citizens and have U.S.-born children. Most immigrants face civil charges relating specifically to their immigration status. However, some immigrants have been charged with identity fraud for using false social security cards, which is a criminal offense. Depending on these charges, detained immigrants may proceed to either civil or criminal court. Whatever their circumstances may be, detainees suffer from inhumane treatment in all aspects of their detention.

This is just one of the many stories of people left in the shadows to fight an unjust system.

HOPE.

Today my heart screams for hope...
The hope of waking up one day free of bars and chains... The hope of living a life without these problems...
The hope that one morning I will be able to smile again...
The hope of dreaming of a peaceful future full of happiness...
The hope of never again stumbling upon an obstacle so difficult to overcome...
The hope of waking up, only to find that everything that has happened to me would only be a dream...
This hope, like the word itself, is only a hope.

Written by a Colombian female detained at Elizabeth Detention Center and Hudson County Jail for more than a year in December 2007

REASONS TO VISIT AND SUPPORT PEOPLE IN IMMIGRATION DETENTION

“Some detained friends appear to handle the process with an outward appearance of strength and acceptance. Some people are on the edge of emotional breakdown. Some people are somewhere in between but all have specifically contacted First Friends and asked for a visit from a stranger outside their world of lockdown and uncertainty.”

- Helen Donaldson is a volunteer visitor with First Friends of NJ and NY.

The rapid transition from the street into detention is deeply unsettling. It can result in confusion, distortions of reality, withdrawal, apathy, and ultimately psychological breakdown. More importantly, asylum seekers who find themselves detained undergo entry shock, and fall into despair and are retraumatized. Detainees in immigration detention often have no idea when their imprisonment will end. In these cases, each day is permeated by this concern and it is difficult for people in immigration detention to cope with all that is unknown regarding their future in detention.

In addition to the psychological impact of detention, many people in immigration detention have previously experienced psychologically stressful conditions and in many cases may be recovering from torture, human trafficking, and other instances of trauma. Under these circumstances, it is extremely helpful for individuals to have a positive person in their life and to establish a meaningful relationship in the absence of support when their friends and family cannot visit them.

A friendly visitor can help detainees cope with the stress and isolation of detention and be a link to the “outside world”. A consistent visitor can provide a thread of stability in a situation of seeming chaos: for example, officers changing shifts and rules, dorm mates suddenly leaving, round-the-clock “counts” and searches, delays in the detainee’s scheduled court appearances, etc. Visitors can affirm an individual’s humanity in the midst of a dehumanizing scenario.

By visiting people in detention, you demonstrate that you care about their situation and that others do as well. Your visits may also be able to provide individuals with the knowledge that there is someone with whom they can share their concerns and who cares for their welfare amidst hopelessness and confusion.

UNDERSTANDING THE NEEDS AND CONCERNS OF DETAINEES

To understand the needs and concerns of detainees, First Friends offers this conceptual framework (especially for asylum seekers):

- 1. Helping to endure entry shock:** the detainee usually begins on a 'high' with a very positive attitude full of hope. As they learn from those detained with them about the reality of their plight, they tend to 'crash', weep, withdraw, sleep a lot and feel despair.
- 2. Maintaining outside links:** in detention, a detainee suffers from a profound sense of isolation. Apart from the shock of an interrupted journey, s/he suffers from being confined to a dormitory in prison-like facilities. Difficulties in understanding English and cut off from any connection with the outside world (families, friends) is over-whelming.
- 3. Securing stability in a situation of seeming chaos:** detainee will make friends usually with those who speak his/her own language, may engage in very little, but restricted recreation, attend law library.
- 4. Finding activities to fill empty time:** each detainee must build a routine of activities to pass time. This can be reading, writing, exercise, prayer or conversation. Watching TV and sleeping frequently occur. There are limited opportunities to work for \$1.00 per day. It is difficult for family and friends to visit.
- 5. Be aware of human rights violations:** Asylum seekers are all fleeing one form of persecution or another. Many are shocked by the prison like conditions of detention and the inhumane treatment.

**Visitors seek to provide a compassionate face and an affirmation of humanity
in the midst of a dehumanizing scenario.**

**We don't visit as social workers or lawyers,
but simply as friends.**

**We urge visitors to recognize their role as listeners,
allowing the detainee to guide the conversation.**

GENERAL INFORMATION

A detainee can be searched through an Online Detainee Locator System that is accessed at www.ice.gov. Under US immigration and customs Enforcement, you will select, detainee locator. In order to locate your detainee, you will need the Alien number and country of birth.

FOR ALL FACILITIES:

- ICE Classifies Detainees: Level I– Lowest threat, Level II—medium threat, Level III– Highest threat
- Visitors must present a valid verifiable government-issued identification card to enter the facility.
- Cell phones or electronic devices are not permitted. No knives or tools.
- The dress code is the usual for penal institutions. No provocative attire. No tights or shorts more than 4 inches above the knee, no sleeveless shirts, no bare shoulders or bosom, no flip flops.
- The facilities are non-smoking facilities.
- Visitors are subject to search, scanned through metal detector
- Don't send books or periodicals, however paperback books directly from a publisher or book store are allowed.
- Religious representatives are normally scheduled visits; however, they may visit any time with advance notification and approval.
- Detainees may legally leave the facility by posting a bond, supervised release, paroled due to humanitarian reasons, granted relief, or they may be deported back to their country of origin.
- Detainees can purchase stamps, food, among other items at their own expense through a commissary account.
- Be careful accepting collect calls, they may be very expensive.
- Detainees are not permitted to have in their possession money of any type, valuables, or items not issued by the facility. Persons attempting to provide detainees with unauthorized items lose privilege to the facility.
- Pro-bono lawyers provide **“Know Your Rights” and Legal Orientation Programs** and screens individuals to see if any free lawyer would be able to take their case.
- Detainees are subject to a discipline process which is explained to them in a handbook provided when they arrive at the facility. Penalties imposed are based on the severity of the violation. Detainees who pose a risk of physical harm to themselves or others may be separated from general population.
- The facility provides all meals, recreation activities, access to telephones, medical services, and commissary items to detainees who have enough funds, as well as clothing and laundry services.
- A law library is available to the detainees, not the best collection.
- A grievance process is also available to the detainees should they choose to use it. The facility maintains interpretation services. The services may be used for legal proceedings and discipline hearings.
- Detainees receive 3 meals per day in the dorms. Detainees are permitted to sign up for work details that would earn them \$1.00 per day which is deposited into their account.
- Mail entering and exiting the facility is screened/opened by a designated mail clerk.

ELIZABETH DETENTION CENTER

Location: 625 Evans Street
Elizabeth, NJ 07021

Phone Number: (908) 282-5700
Facility Leader: Orlando Rodriguez, Warden

Males

Monday, Wednesday and Friday 5:00PM - 8:45PM
Tuesday and Thursday 6:30PM - 10:00PM
Saturday and Sunday 9:00AM - 3:45PM

Females

Monday, Wednesday and Friday 9:00PM - 10:00PM
Tuesday and Thursday 5:00PM - 6:00PM
Saturday and Sunday 4:00PM - 5:00PM

Holiday Schedule

Males 9:00AM - 3:45PM
Females 4:00PM - 5:00PM



The Elizabeth Detention Center is a converted warehouse, window-less facility that it operated by Corrections Corporation of America, a private company contracted by the Department of Homeland Security to hold immigrants.

What type of identification do I need to be allowed into the facility?

Valid government issued photo ID such as driver's license or passport

How long can I visit?

Elizabeth Detention Center provides an opportunity for you to have up to one (1) hour of visitation with family and friends according to the Visitation Schedule. If there are more visitors than the visitation room can accommodate, it may be necessary to limit visits or its duration.

Where do I park when I arrive at the facility?

Parking Lot across the street from facility is for Staff and Visitors. "CCA Parking" sign indicates available parking spots.

Please inform your detained friend that she/he may contact First Friends through our toll-free hotline. Our hotline is safe and confidential service offered at no cost to them. They may utilize their dorm-phone to contact the office by dialing: **8996#** or **#8996** We are available to take calls from 09:00-4:00 on weekdays.

ORIENTATION INFORMATION FOR VOLUNTEER VISITORS TO ELIZABETH DETENTION CENTER (EDC)

Addressing correspondence properly

All incoming and outgoing mail must be properly addressed and include the detainee's full name, Immigration A# and dorm/bed number. If all information is not included, mail will be returned.

Example:

John Doe

A# 123456789

625 Evans Street

Elizabeth, NJ 07201

General Correspondence

Detainees may send or receive general mail from anyone they know. All general correspondence must be received in a standard legal or letter size envelope.

Procedures for Sending Money

Detainees will be allowed to have funds sent to them while in detention. Funds received must be in the form of a money order or cashier check made payable to the inmate/resident.

Funds may be sent to detainees through one of the following methods:

To the company's bank lockbox at:

CCA Inmate Trust

Inmate First & Last Name, Inmate Commissary Number

Facility: EDC

P. O. Box 933488

Atlanta, GA 31193-3488

Western Union transfer services

1. Walk– in Cash Payments
 - a. Fill out the BLUE section of the Western Union form at agent location
2. Call 1-800-325–6000 or visit westernunion.com
3. Telephone Payments
 - a. 24/7 by calling 1800-634-3422
 - b. Credit or debit card accepted
4. Online Payments
 - a. 24/7 at westernunion.com/corrections
 - b. Credit or debit card accepted



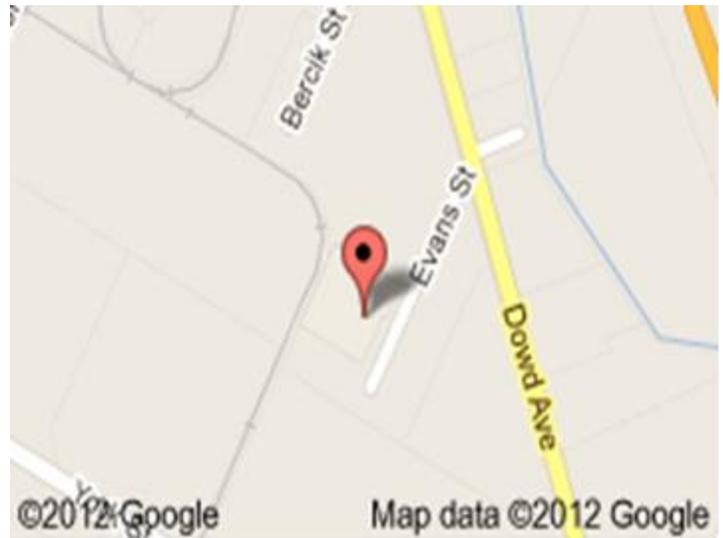
DIRECTIONS TO ELIZABETH DETENTION CENTER (EDC)

625 Evans Street, Elizabeth, NJ 07201

FROM NEWARK

By Train

- From Newark Penn Station, take NJ Transit train to Elizabeth -not North Elizabeth. Trains every thirty minutes.
- Check www.njtransit.com for fares and times.
- From Elizabeth train station, take a taxi (\$4 one-way).
- Telephone numbers: 908-451-3972
908-353-2121
908-352-8294



By Bus

- From Broad Street, take NJ Transit Bus #62 to corner of Division St and Dowd Avenue, near McDonald's. (\$1.55 one-way).
- Walk 1/4 mile down Dowd Avenue.
- Turn right on Evans Street, walk another three blocks.
- The detention center is the last building on your right.

FROM MANHATTAN

Driving

- Go over the George Washington Bridge or the Lincoln Tunnel to the New Jersey Turnpike south (Highway 95)
- Take the Turnpike to Exit 13A, take middle exit after tollbooth
- Follow the signs for Dowd Avenue, get over one lane to the right but stay straight under the bridge
- At the first light make a left onto to Dowd Avenue, McDonald's will be on your right.
- Immediately go straight through another light and go approximately 1/4 mile
- Make a right on Evans Street, across from the Peterbilt sign.
- The detention center is the last building on your right
- The entrance is on the far side, next to the parking lot and facing the Shop Rite building.

BERGEN COUNTY JAIL (BCJ)

Location: 160 South River Street
Hackensack, NJ 07061

Phone Number: (201) 527-3000
Facility Leader: Steve Ahrendt

S2 – Housing Unit

Saturday 4:00pm – 6:00pm
Tuesday 10:30am – 11:30am

S4 – Housing Unit

Tuesday 10:30am – 11:30am
Sunday 4:00pm – 6:00pm

S5 – Housing Unit

Thursday 10:30am – 11:30am
Saturday 08:30am – 11:00am

S7 – Housing Unit

Friday 1900-2130
Sunday 1900-2130

C3 – Housing Unit

Wednesday 10:30am – 11:30am
Saturday 12:30pm – 12:00pm

C4 – Housing Unit

Sunday 11:30am – 1:00pm
Wednesday 4:00pm – 6:00pm

N1 – Housing Unit

Friday 10:30am-11:30am
Saturday 7:00pm – 09:30pm



The detainees must provide a list of visitors to the Facility Staff. If you need information about a detainee that is housed at this facility, you may call (201) 527-3000, 24 hours a day or visit www.bcsd.us to check detainee's status.

To ensure adequate time to process visitors through security, all visitors must arrive 45 minutes prior to the scheduled visit time.

What type of identification do I need to be allowed into the facility?

Valid government issued photo ID such as driver's license or passport

How long can I visit?

Visits shall not exceed 30 minutes.

Where do I park when I arrive at the facility?

The facility parking lot is in front of the main entrance within the facility.

Please inform your detained friend that she/he may contact First Friends through our toll-free hotline. Our hotline is safe and confidential service offered at no cost to them. They may utilize their dorm-phone to contact the office by dialing: *9011# or *9012#. We are available to take calls from 09:00-4:00 on weekdays.

ORIENTATION INFORMATION FOR VOLUNTEER VISITORS TO BERGEN COUNTY JAIL (BCJ)

- BCJ opened in 1965 and is owned by the County, operated by the Bergen County Sheriff. Office of Enforcement and Removal Operations (ERO) began housing ICE detainees since September 2001, pursuant to an IGSA agreement.
 - It is a medium and minimum-security jail for criminals and those being held on criminal charges awaiting trial or sentencing. Total bed space: 1,236 with 131 beds available for ICE detainees. Additional 100 beds can be made available if required.
 - Immigration and Customs enforcement (ICE) currently has around 195 immigrant detainees, female and male, 18 years and older held in 2 dorms (60 detainees in double deck bunks in 2 units that have jail cells)
 - There is access to fresh air and an exercise area for each dorm. C3 detainees have all day access to an exterior area, C4, N1/N2 only has an hour a day.
 - Detainees are generally restricted to the dorms 22 hours per day.
 - Detainees held at the BCJ are subject to deportation, may already have deportation orders issued, and are awaiting answers to Board of Immigration Appeals or awaiting receipt of travel orders for removal.
 - Most detainees held in BCJ have been residents in the United States, living in New York surrounding area. New York Field Office responsible of ensuring facility compliance with ICE policies and National Detention Standards (NDS)
 - BCJ provides medical care, contracted physician., Aramark food services, and Keefe Commissary.
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- 30-minute non-contact visits, through a phone and plex-glass in an open cubicle or bay. You and the detainee will sit on small steel stools.
 - All visitors are subject to metal-scan search.
 - Do not carry items to the facility-best to lock them in your trunk- there are lockers which require a quarter.
 - Registration is at the reception desk in front of the main entrance of the jail.
 - You MUST inform the officer that you are a First Friends visitor, so that your name can be checked against the list of approved visitors.
 - The detainee's name and Jail ID number will be provided by First Friends to you. We recommend you have the name and number on an index card to give to the officer and to use for identification in the visitation room.
 - You will be asked for the name and jail number of the detainee (s) you are visiting and your state photo ID /Driver's license or valid passport.
 - After registration, a guard will pass you through the metal detector and then admit you to the inner waiting room where you are to wait for your detainee.
 - At the first visit it may be necessary to hold it up the index card to the glass for identification.
 - Visiting time is the lesser of about 25 minutes or the remaining time of the visiting period. Time calculation begins when you are accepted at reception. A delay in clearance will decrease visiting time.
 - The officer will return your state photo ID/Driver's license or valid passport to you after your visit.
 - Detainees cannot receive incoming calls. If you need to get in touch with a detainee to leave an urgent message, you must call (201) 527-3000 to leave a message.

DIRECTIONS TO BERGEN COUNTY JAIL (BCJ)

160 South River Street, Hackensack, NJ 07601



DRIVING FROM NEWARK

- Head east on County Road 510/Market St/Rte. 510 toward Broad St
- Take NJ-21 N to Bridge St to Harrison Ave
- Merge onto I-280 E Partial toll road
- follow signs for I-95 N/US-46/Fort Lee/G Washington Boulevard and merge onto I-95 N
- Exit onto US-46 W
- Take 1st exit onto Bergen Turnpike to S River Street
- County jail will be on the right at 60 South River Street, Hackensack

By Bus

- Broad St at West Park St take the 76 bus towards Hackensack
- Bus Stops at Court St. at Main St, County Court
- Walk to Bergen County Jail on South River Street to destination

DRIVING FROM MANHATTAN

- Follow signs for I-95/George Washington Bridge toward Cross Bronx Expressway/W 178 St. and merge onto Interstate 95 Upper Level S/George Washington Bridge
- Take the exit onto I-95 S/New Jersey Turnpike S toward Hackensack/I-80/New Jersey Turnpike
- Bear slight right onto I-80 W and take exit 66 toward Hudson St/Hackensack/Little Ferry
- Merge onto E Kennedy St and left on Turn left onto S River St to destination on the right

By Bus

- 42 St - Port Authority Bus Terminal, take 165 bus towards 165 Oradell N. Milford Avenue
- Get off at Hudson St at Lafayette Street.
- Walk to Hudson towards Marion St. and make a right on S. River Street to the
- Bergen County Jail, 160 South River Street, Hackensack

HUDSON COUNTY CORRECTIONAL & REHABILITATION FACILITY

Location: 30-35 Hackensack Avenue
Kearny, NJ 07032

Phone Number: (201) 395-5600
Director: Ronald P. Edwards



Housing Units:

Delta 300 East and West

Tuesday: 08:00-08:30 and 08:30-09:00

Delta 500 East and West

Tuesday: 09:00-09:30 and 09:30-10:00

Bravo 300 East and West

Tuesday: 11:00-11:30 and 11:30-12:00

Echo 300 South (Females Only)

Thursday: 08:00-08:30 and 08:30-09:00

Echo 400 North and South

Thursday: 09:00-09:30 and 09:30-10:00

Echo 300 North

Thursday: 10:00-10:30 and 10:30-11:00

Echo 600 North and South

Thursday: 11:00-11:30 and 11:30-12:00

To ensure adequate time to process visitors through security, all visitors must arrive 45 minutes prior to the scheduled visit time.

If you need information about a detainee that is housed at this facility, you may call (201) 395-5600 ext. 5084 between the hours of 08:00am to 04:00pm.

What type of identification do I need to be allowed into the facility?

Visitors must present a valid verifiable government-issued identification card to enter the facility.

How long can I visit?

Visits shall not exceed 30 minutes.

Where do I park when I arrive at the facility?

Free Parking is in the rear parking lot at entrance to the facility grounds.

Please inform your detained friend that she/he may contact First Friends through our toll-free hotline. Our hotline is safe and confidential service offered at no cost to them. They may utilize their dorm-phone to contact the office by dialing: ***9006#** or ***9008#**. We are available to take calls from 09:00-4:00 on weekdays.

ORIENTATION INFORMATION FOR VOLUNTEER VISITORS TO HUDSON COUNTY CORRECTIONAL AND REHABILITATION FACILITY (HCCRF)

- The HCCRF is a 2,100-bed facility, a medium and minimum-security jail for criminals and those being held on criminal charges awaiting trial or sentencing, 512 beds set aside for ICE detainees both men and women 18 years and older in dorms and cell units.
- Since 1996– IGSA has an agreement to house ICE detainees. Facility contracts with CFG for medical, Aramark for food services.
- The dorm is to open view all beds, including its bathroom facilities most dorms containing “outside” recreation (30 ft by 40 ft by 30 ft “wedge” with open screening). This is the only access to fresh air and an exercise area.
- Detainees are generally restricted to the dorms 22 to 24 hours per day.
- Detainees held at the HCCRF are subject to deportation, many already have deportation orders issued and are awaiting answers to appeals or receipt of travel orders for removal.
- Most if not all detainees at the HCCRF have been resident in the United States and speak English. HCCRF has fewer asylum seekers and those are usually using asylum as a defense to avoid deportation

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- All visitors coming to visit an inmate/detainee must bring a lock in order to securely store personal belongings. The department assumes no responsibility for visitor items lost or stolen within the perimeter of the Hudson County correctional Center.
 - Registration is to the right of the main entrance. You will be called from line to the desk. You will be asked for the name and jail number of the detainee (s) you are visiting and your state photo ID, Driver’s license or valid passport.
 - You MUST inform the officer that you are a First Friends visitor, so that your name can be checked against the list of approved visitors.
 - The detainee’s name and Jail ID number will be provided by First Friends to you. We recommend you have the name and number on an index card to give to the officer and to use for identification in the visitation room. The clerk will return your ID to you.
 - After registration, a guard will pass you through the metal detector and then admit you to the inner waiting room where you are to wait to hear the announcement of your detainee’s last name and the number of the booth, she/he will be in the visitation area. At the first visit it may be necessary to hold it up the index card to the glass for identification
 - 30-minute non-contact visits speak on a telephone through plexi-glass.
 - Detainees cannot receive incoming calls. If you need to get in touch with a detainee to leave an urgent message, you must call (212) 863-3401 and leave the detainee’s full name, alien registration number and your name and telephone number where you can be reached. We hope, the detainee will be given your message.

DIRECTIONS TO HUDSON COUNTY CORRECTIONAL CENTER

30-35 South Hackensack Avenue, Kearny, NJ 07032

FROM JERSEY CITY

Bus from Jersey City

- Take NJ Transit Bus 1 Newark via River Terminal
- Exit Hackensack Ave.
- Walk one block south

Driving

- Communipaw Ave to Lincoln Highway
- This is Route 1 & 9 South TRUCK
- Turn left at Hackensack Ave, one block on right

FROM NJ TURNPIKE

- Exit 15E and go North on 1 & 9 TRUCK
- Turn right at Hackensack Ave, one block on right

FROM NEWARK PENN STATION

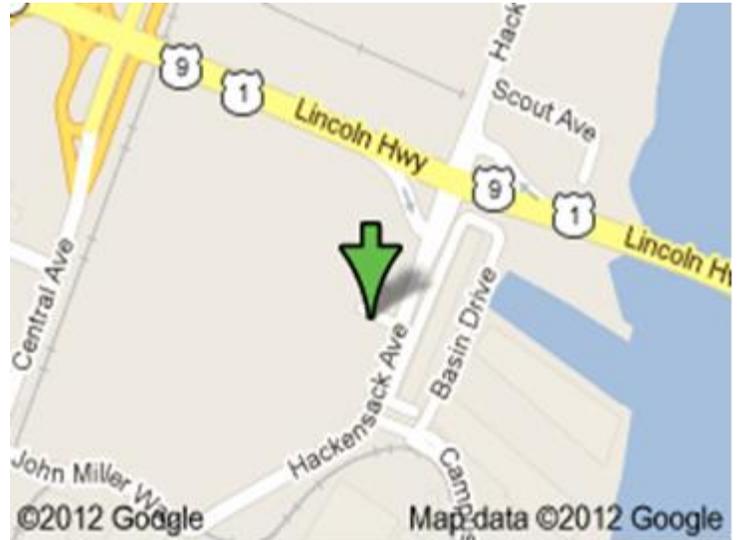
- Bus at Market St & Alling St,
- NJ Transit Bus 1 Jersey City via River Terminal Exit Hackensack Ave, go south one block

Driving

- East on Raymond Blvd to Market St,
- To Ferry Street, to Raymond Blvd and 1 & 9 TRUCK North
- Turn right at Hackensack Ave, one block on right

FROM HOLLAND TUNNEL NYC

- Take 1 & 9 TRUCK South
- Turn left at Hackensack Ave, one block south on right



ESSEX COUNTY CORRECTIONAL FACILITY (EECF)

Location: 354 Doremus Avenue
Newark, NJ 071505

Phone Number: (973) 274-7818
Director: Alfaro Ortiz



Hours of Visitation

Wednesdays
10:15AM – 01:30PM
02:30PM – 05:45PM.

What type of identification do I need to be allowed into the facility?

Visitors must present a valid verifiable government-issued identification card to enter the facility.

To ensure adequate time to process visitors through security, all visitors must arrive 45 minutes prior to the scheduled visit time.

How long can I visit?

Visits shall not exceed 30 minutes

Where do I park when I arrive at the facility?

Free parking is available within facility grounds.

If you need information about a detainee that is housed at this facility, you may call (973) 645-3666 between the hours of 8 a.m. and 4 p.m. When you call, please have the individual's biographical information ready, including first, last and hyphenated names, any aliases he or she may use, date of birth and country of birth.

Please inform your detained friend that she/he may contact First Friends through our toll-free hotline. Our hotline is safe and confidential service offered at no cost to them. They may utilize their dorm-phone to contact the office by dialing: **908-469-7337** or **908-469-5844**. We are available to take calls from 09:00-4:00 on weekdays.

ORIENTATION INFORMATION FOR VOLUNTEER VISITORS TO ESSEX COUNTY CORRECTIONAL FACILITY (EECF)

- The EECF is a 3000-bed capacity, a medium and minimum-security jail for criminals and those being held on criminal charges awaiting trial or sentencing. EECF, like many local jails has contracts with the federal government to hold various detainees. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) currently has approximately 600 immigrant detainees, men only in 7 dorms and 2 cell units.
- The dorm is to open view all beds. Shower and toilets are private with door and shower curtains.
- Each dorm opens to an outside space with open screening on the top roof. This is the only access to fresh air.
- Detainees have access to indoor recreation, a gym area for an hour a day.
- Detainees are generally restricted to the dorms 22 to 24 hours per day.
- Law library is open 7 days a week. Detainees have access twice a week.
- Detainees held at the EECF are subject to deportation, many already have deportation orders issued and are awaiting answers to appeals or receipt of travel orders for removal.
- Most if not all detainees at the EECF have been resident in the United States and speak English.

-
- Registration at the desk of the main entrance. You will be asked for the name and jail number
 - of the detainee (s) you are visiting and your state photo ID /Driver's license or valid passport.
 - The detainee's name and Jail ID number will be provided by First Friends to you.
 - After registration, a guard will pass you through the metal detector and then admit you to the designated visitation areas.
 - 30-minute non-contact visits, visitors speak on a telephone through plexi-glass
 - Handshaking or embracing permitted only at the beginning and end of the visit
 - Visitors shall not exchange any article or property with detainee.
 - Detainees are permitted to receive books, magazines, newspapers or other printed matter mailed directly from the publisher or reputable book store

May receive Western Union Funds, Postal Money Orders, Bank (redeemable) Money orders, Cashier's Checks, or Certified Checks. NO TRAVELER'S EXPRESS OR STORE MONEY ORDERS

USPS Money Order:

Detainee Name and Jail ID#
354 Doremus Avenue, Newark, NJ 07105

Cash accepted at Visitors Lobby Window
M – F 9am – 12pm and 1:15pm – 3:30 pm.
No personal checks or debit cards accepted.

Western Union Guidelines:

Pay to: Essex County Correctional Facility
City and State Code: EC Jail, NJ Inmates Name and Serial Number:
Attention: Inmate AKA Name, Inmate date of birth and Purpose: Bail or Commissary

Online: If you want to transfer money to a commissary account or add money to an account, please go to www.offenderConnect.com (24 hour-a-day access)

DIRECTIONS TO ESSEX COUNTY CORRECTIONAL FACILITY

354 Doremus Avenue, Newark, NJ 07105



BUS FROM NEWARK PENN STATION

- At Eastbound Market Street, take Bus #25 towards 25 SPRINGFIELD AVE ESSEX COUNTY CORRECT CTR
- Get off at Wilson Ave at Doremus Ave
- Walk to 354 Doremus Ave, Newark, NJ 07105

DRIVING FROM ELIZABETH

- Slight right onto U.S. 1 Truck N/US-9 Truck N
- Take the exit toward Delancy St, Turn left onto Delancy St
- Take the 1st right onto Stockton St
- Take the 1st right onto Wilson Ave
- Turn left onto Doremus Ave, arrive at 354 Doremus Ave, Newark, NJ

FROM NEW YORK CITY PENN STATION

- Northeast Corridor Train towards Trenton,
- Arrive at Newark Penn Station and follow bus directions from above

DRIVING DIRECTIONS FROM NEW YORK

- Follow directions for I-78 W/Holland Tunnel and bear slight left onto NJ-139 W
- Continue onto U.S. 9 S
- Take the exit toward Newark/Raymond/Boulevard
- Turn left onto Lockwood St
- Turn left onto Ferry St
- Continue onto Raymond Blvd
- Take the Doremus Ave ramp
- Turn right onto Doremus Ave and arrive at 354 Doremus Ave, Newark, NJ 07105

THE CARDINAL RULE: CONFIDENTIALITY

For all who work in refugee assistance, from lawyers and social workers to asylum seekers themselves, confidentiality is important. Many asylum seekers fear for their own lives or the lives of their family members whom they left behind. They are also painfully aware of what might happen if word gets out (especially to their home country) that they are seeking asylum in the US. Asylum seekers may also be very sensitive about personal details from their experience. Only they should decide with whom to share this information.

As a volunteer with First Friends, your behavior can affect the reputation of the whole group. Therefore, it is important for you to maintain the confidentiality of the person you visit in immigration detention.

Here are a few guidelines to keep in mind.

Always maintain the confidentiality of your conversation with the detainee, unless instructed otherwise by the detainee or if the detainee says something indicating that he/she might be a danger to himself/herself or to others (at that point you should call the First Friends Coordinator).

If you tell other people about the experience of visiting, use pseudonyms (i.e. 'Rose' or 'Frank') and only speak in general terms about the detainee's story. Identifying details should not be discussed (i.e. The man from Madagascar who was a journalist and came here as a stowaway....).

As a volunteer with First Friends, you may share any concerns or questions with our office. Together we will maintain the confidentiality of the detainee 'within the organization'. However, it is preferable that you not discuss confidential matters with other volunteers. You can seek support from other volunteers on general concerns you encounter.

Specific concerns about individual detainees should be shared with the FIRST FRIENDS Coordinator or members of the Board.

Enclosed: Please sign confidentiality agreement and send to First Friends via e-mail or regular mail.

THE ROLE OF THE VOLUNTEER VISITOR

Detainees need contact with people outside of detention. Volunteers provide an important support for detainees without friends or family nearby. Visitation not only transform the hearts and minds of individual visitors by providing them with opportunities to build sustained relationships with persons in immigration detention, but also ensure that persons in immigration detention can maintain family and community ties.

As a volunteer, your visits provide:

A boost to the morale of a detainee through friendship and a smiling face.

A time when the detainee can relax and chat with someone.

A sense that someone outside of the official world of detention knows and cares about 'me.'

A way to discuss cultural differences or incidents that occur in detention.

A help to FIRST FRIENDS by listening to detainee problems and, when appropriate, calling the office to discuss what was heard.

An opportunity to learn about the legal process asylum seekers face and about other cultures and countries.

As a volunteer, you are:

NOT visiting as a lawyer to figure out how to get someone out of detention.

NOT visiting as a mental health professional to assess or treat symptoms of mental illness.

NOT visiting as a social worker to access how to hook a detainee up to social services (for example: housing upon release, etc.)

Detainees who have filled out a Visitor Request Form are eagerly awaiting a visitor. As a result, First Friends recommend that you plan on visiting a detainee **more than once, preferably twice a month for the next 3-4 months**. Let us know if you are unable to visit the minimum of 2 times per month.

Some visitors sign up as a team of two so they can spell each other in the twice monthly visits to their assigned detainee.

Please PROVIDE First Friends weekly updates/logs about your visit and/or concerns about facilities/detainees.

If, for any reason, you are unable to follow through on visiting the detainee assigned to you, please call the office and share that information.

STEPS FOR A GOOD VISIT

Keep these suggestions in mind when visiting people in immigration detention.

Introduce yourself and state why you are there: First Friends gave me your name saying you would like a visitor. Tell them who you are, where you live, something about your family.

Find out what name the person likes to go by. Take your time to get it right. Ask about what country he/she comes from and what area of that country.

Don't worry if the first visit is a little shorter than you might expect. You are just meeting each other. Let the conversation flow as naturally as possible.

Invite the detainee to talk about:

- daily life or current events of the past week
- Ask whether she/he watches much TV
- Ask about she/he health, the food, etc.
- Differences in US culture and detainee's country
- Share about Volunteer's life

Keep in mind that the detainee may prefer to talk about the present – not the past. Don't ask about details of their flight from their country since they may be uncomfortable remembering painful experiences. The detainee will tell you their story when they are ready. Alternatively, they may never feel comfortable doing it, especially for those seeking asylum.

Be aware of the non-verbal communication taking place between the two of you. Listen to feelings as well as the content of the conversation.

Convey what you understand: Listen and reflect not just the content but also the tone and emotions of the conversation. Use non-verbal communication yourself. Your expressions, smile, and gestures can be powerfully encouraging.

Know your limits. Determine which needs you can meet and which you cannot. FIRST FRIENDS ask you simply to talk to the detainee as a morale booster. At their request, (only if you feel comfortable in doing so), you can call someone (their family or lawyer) on the detainee's behalf. Be cautious about giving money for their account at the beginning lest the relationship be misunderstood. You also may mail them a magazine or book through publisher/Amazon. Concerns or questions beyond this should be referred to the FIRST FRIENDS Coordinator. (See giving gifts, pg. 29)

End the visit. Let them know when you will be back, if you know for sure. Say something encouraging and affirming and that you look forward to talking more soon. Don't make promises that cannot be kept because detainees will be waiting for your visits.

KEEPING IN TOUCH WITH FIRST FRIENDS

There are many reasons why it is important that First Friends know who is receiving visits in the detention center. We want to ensure that all detainees who ask for a visitor get one. Volunteers let us know how detainees are doing and how FIRST FRIENDS can be improved. If we know that a volunteer is not visiting a detainee, we can then find another visitor for them.

FOR THESE REASONS, IT IS IMPORTANT TO:

- **Keep some record of your visits** (Ex: in your appointment book, calendar, etc.)
- **Exchange Information with First Friends:** Keep some notes of your visit. You should send an e-mail to FIRST FRIENDS that you have begun to visit this person and continue with report-backs on your visits. Share weekly/monthly record with us about your detainee's status.
- **If you establish a monthly Volunteer Exchange meeting with other volunteer visitors in your area,** please share the results of this meeting with us. These meetings offer an opportunity to share your experience with other volunteers and can be a help in addressing concerns.
- **If a person has been (or is about to be) released, transferred, or deported,** please let your coordinator know immediately so that s/he can provide resources and determine if a partner visitation program can be of assistance to that individual.
- **Send First Friends an e-mail with questions or concerns.** This e-mail can be a record of your visit.
- **Leave a message with First Friends** about your questions or concerns.

BECOME A TEAM LEADER

- Help support other new volunteers by calling them to see how it's going.
- Accompany a new volunteer to a detention center (**mentoring**).
- Organize monthly local meetings with other team members in your area. Communicate with FIRST FRIENDS about successes, challenges and issues that FIRST FRIENDS can help volunteers with.

STAYING WITHIN BOUNDARIES

As a visitor, you will be provided with consistent support from your visitation program's coordinator. The coordinator will have continuous communication with all visitors and will address any concerns that arise promptly. Coordinator serves as the liaisons between the detention facilities and visitors so visitors should expect to receive support regarding any issues that arise due to the visits at the detention facilities.

What are Personal Boundaries?

- **Physical Boundaries:** refers to personal space and physical touch. Be aware of what's appropriate and what's not.
- **Intellectual Boundaries:** refers to thoughts and ideas. Please respect others' ideas and be aware of appropriate discussion. This boundary can be violated when someone is dismissive or belittles another person's thoughts or ideas.
- **Emotional Boundaries:** refers to a person's feelings. Create a limitation on what to share or what not to share. Do not criticize, belittle or invalidate another person's feelings.

Know your boundaries and limits regarding which needs you can meet and which ones you cannot:

- It is important to learn to distinguish what visitor volunteers can and cannot do regarding supporting someone in their immigration case. It is **NOT APPROPRIATE TO CONTACT THE DETAINED FRIEND'S ATTORNEY**. If there appears to be a problem with communication or the quality of representation, please instruct your detained friend to contact First Friends. There should be a poster in each dormitory which has a toll-free code to call First Friends.
- Do not discuss or communicate information regarding a person's case with or within hearing distance of detention facility employees, immigration authorities at the facility, other people in immigration detention, or anyone outside the detention facility except other volunteers in your visitation program
- Do not contact the embassy or consulate of the person in detention unless asked to. For example, asylum seekers are fleeing a country where their government persecuted them or where the government could not or would not protect them. They may not want someone to inform their governments that they are in U.S. detention. Similarly, do not contact local expatriates from the detained immigrant's home country without being asked to.
- Throughout the week, people in detention have authority figures telling them what to do, when to do it, and where to be. Ensure that you, as a visitor volunteer, do not become another negative authority figure.
- If you become romantically involved with your detained friend, you must change your visiting status from a First Friends' visitor to an unaffiliated friend. Depending on the rules of the facility, it may mean that the friend will have to add your name to his/her visitors list. You may contact me to find out how to proceed.

GIVING GIFTS TO DETAINEES

Visiting can cause volunteers to feel obligated to “help” and sometimes to “give gifts” to detainees. Volunteers may be asked for additional gifts once he/she sets a precedent, especially if the detainee is in detention for a very long time. While this is the volunteer’s decision, FIRST FRIENDS recommend using **CAUTION**.

Take some time to get to know the detained friend first until there is a bond of friendship which makes it easier to discuss this kind of help. First Friends does not want to promote a sense that there is a material advantage to have a visitor or create comparisons between how generous this visitor might be compared to another.

Remember that your visit to a detained friend is a gift and you should not underestimate the impact it has for people in detention.

No gifts are allowed when visiting.

Since visits must be conducted through a glass partition, it is physically impossible to exchange gifts. Facilities accommodate requests to provide detained friends reading glasses, paperback books etc. according to each facility.

Sending Gifts through the Mail:

FIRST FRIENDS’ experience has been that most paper items are acceptable, such as photocopied materials, and cards. If you give a tablet of paper, be sure there is no wire in the binding as it will be refused. Food is never accepted.

Other items such as clothing, electronic items, etc. are placed directly in the detainee’s luggage, no more than 50LBS may be given to the facility, not to the detainee. For New York detainees in Hudson and Bergen, luggage is taken to Varick Street, NY. FIRST FRIENDS have TOLL FREE lines in each facility that allow detainees to call us and provide a way to link detainees to family and lawyers.

Giving Money:

Even though it is possible to give money through USPS money orders, or online to detained friends’ account, we recommend using your discretion.

FIRST FRIENDS may provide a money order to detained friend to buy phones cards, if they have no support from family or friends.

See each facilities procedure on sending money orders.

INFORMATION ABOUT BONDS AND COURT HEARINGS

People in immigration detention may request a bond hearing in order to be released from detention by paying a bond. The bond serves as a guarantee to the government that, once out of detention, the individual will attend all Immigration Court hearings. Not everyone is eligible for a bond. People with certain criminal convictions or who have previously been deported are not eligible. The bond amount is technically based on a “risk classification assessment,” which measures the risk to public safety and the risk of flight.

You might be asked by your detained friend to write a letter of support about his/her good moral character. If you would like to do so, please contact First Friends and we will guide you on writing a letter of support.

If the individual can afford to pay the bond amount set by ICE, they will be released upon payment. If the individual cannot afford to pay the bond amount set by ICE, they can ask the Immigration Judge to review and lower the bond amount. If your detained friend is granted an immigration, please notify First Friends as we have worked with people who have been granted a bond.

If you choose to attend a court hearing, you are serving as a public witness to the broken immigration justice system. In addition, the presence of community members at a hearing to show support may influence Immigration Judges, who have wide discretion to grant or not grant certain forms of relief.

You may initially be surprised using videoconferencing in immigration court system. Beginning in the mid-1990s, EOIR began using videoconferencing equipment in Immigration Courts across the country. As a result, frequently people facing deportation are deprived of the opportunity to appear in person before an Immigration Judge. Video hearings are more common in cases where the individual is detained.

PRO SE MATERIALS

Unfortunately, not everyone will be able to secure legal representation while in detention. While extremely difficult, it is possible for people to represent themselves pro se (“on their own behalf”) until they find representation or are released. You can assist people by offering to bring or mail them pro se legal resources in a language that they can read. You must always make it clear that you are not giving legal advice.

It is important to learn to distinguish what visitor volunteers can and cannot do regarding supporting someone in their immigration case. When nonlawyers practice law, i.e. advise someone about the pros and cons of various legal options, not generally but with recommendations as to specific choices in that individual’s case, it is called unauthorized practice of law. The unauthorized practice of immigration law endangers the integrity of our immigration system and victimizes members of the immigrant community, even if the person providing the advice engaged in the unauthorized practice of law with the best of intentions.

The [Florence Immigrant & Refugee Rights Project](#) has the greatest breadth of pro se resources. We have starred the ones that you may find most useful.

- “Pleadings & Establishing Eligibility for Relief” – this guide should be distributed to clients with problematic charges of removability or criminal convictions that present a challenge to seeking Adjustment of Status, 10-year Cancellation of Removal, LPR Cancellation of Removal, VAWA, or Termination of Proceedings.
- “BIA Appeals” and “Ninth Circuit Appeals” – these guides should be provided to clients who intend to appeal an adverse IJ Decision in the removal proceeding.
- “BIA Appeals” and “Writs of Habeas Corpus” – these guides should be provided to clients who intend to appeal a negative decision on bond.”
- General Resources
 - Advocating for your Rights in Immigration Proceedings: [English](#), [Appendix](#) | [Español](#)
 - Guide for Immigrants in Criminal Custody: [English](#) | [Español](#)
 - *Medical Care in Immigration Custody: [English](#) | [Español](#)
 - Integrating Social Services (a publication prepared in 2002 on how to integrate legal and social services to immigrants in ICE custody): [English](#)
 - How to Protect Your Parental Rights from Detention: [English](#) | [Español](#)
 - Resources for Asylees Released from Detention: [Documents You Need to Work in the United States](#) | [Social Security Cards](#)
 - *Voluntary Departure: [English](#) | [Español](#)
- Release from Detention
 - *90 Day Custody Review: [English](#) | [Español](#)
 - *Bonds: [English](#) | [Español](#)
 - *Habeas Corpus: [English](#) | [Español](#)
 - *How to Request Humanitarian Parole: [English](#) | [Español](#)
 - How to Apply to the Department of Homeland Security for Release from Immigration Custody: [English](#) | [Español](#)
 - *Prolonged Detention Bonds: [English](#) | [Español](#) (for bonds based on Casas Castrillon v. DHS, Rodriguez v. Robbins, Diouf v. Napolitano)
- Fighting Deportation in front of an Immigration Judge

- *10 Year Cancellation: [English](#) | [Español](#)
- Adjustment of Status: [English](#) | [Español](#)
- Next Steps After Winning Adjustment of Status: [English](#) | [Español](#)
- *Asylum, Withholding of Removal, and the Convention Against Torture (Seeking Protection in the United States): [English](#) | [Español](#)
- *Expedited Removal – The Credible Fear and Reasonable Fear Process: [English](#) | [Español](#)
- *Instructions for People Who Win Asylum and Are Released From Custody: [English](#)
- *Cancellation of Removal for Lawful Permanent Residents: [English](#) | [Español](#)
- Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA): [English](#), [Appendix](#) | [Español](#)
- Motions to Reopen: [English](#) | [Español](#)
- Padilla v. Kentucky Guide: [English](#) | [Español](#)
- *Pleadings & Establishing Eligibility for Relief: [English](#) | [Español](#)
- Prosecutorial Discretion Guide: [English](#) | [Español](#)
- Temporary Protected Status (TPS) for Haitians: [English](#) | [Kreyole](#)
- *U Visas: [English](#) | [Español](#)
- US Citizenship: [English](#) | [Español](#)
- U.S.C. [Attachments](#) for English and Spanish Booklets
- U.S.C. Acquired Citizenship Chart: [English](#)
- U.S.C. Derivative Citizenship Chart: [English](#)
- *Violence Against Women Act (VAWA): [English](#) | [Español](#)
- **Appealing Cases**
 - *BIA Appeals: [English](#) | [Español](#)
 - Ninth Circuit Appeals: [English](#) | [Español](#)

Vera Institute of Justice Center on Immigration and Justice Legal Orientation Program

- These resources are available in several languages, including English, French, Portuguese, Spanish, Haitian Creole, Arabic, Simplified Chinese/Mandarin, Hindi, Farsi, and others.
 - *Asylum Packet
 - *LPR Cancellation Packet
 - *10 Year Cancellation
 - *Bond Packet
 - Voluntary Departure
 - U.S. Citizen
 - *Expedited Removal & Reinstatement
 - T Visa
 - *U Visa
 - Adjustment of Status

Immigrants' Rights Clinic of Stanford Law School and Centro Legal de la Raza

- *Pro Se Manual for U Applicants in Detention: [English](#) | [Español](#)

UC Hastings Center for Gender & Refugee Studies

- *Support for Domestic Violence Survivors Seeking Protection in the United States: English ([here](#)), Spanish ([here](#)), Haitian Creole ([here](#))

ISSUES THAT SHOULD BE REFERRED TO FIRST FRIENDS

When visiting detainees, remember that you are not alone.

Please call FIRST FRIENDS with any concerns you encounter, such as the following:

- **Legal matters:** (upcoming court dates, need for a lawyer, filing appeals, etc.) We can answer questions about the process but cannot give opinions or secure legal assistance.
- **Mental and physical health concerns:** depression, suicidal symptoms, prolonged illness, sudden weight loss, etc. Urge the detainee to file a written request for medical attention. It would be good to share your concerns with FIRST FRIENDS for the record.
- **Urgent detainee needs:** contact with family, immediate or impending release.
- **Allegations of mistreatment or abuse of a detainee inside the facility.** If the detainee makes allegations, note the time, place, a brief description of what happened with as much detail as possible. Call FIRST FRIENDS quickly and let us follow up. Encourage detainee to file a grievance report.
- **Unprofessional conduct of detention center/county jail staff** towards the volunteers such as:
 - Lengthy wait time
 - Visit cut short or denied
 - Inappropriate officer conduct
 - Visitor strip search
- **Acts of kindness by the staff, you would like to praise.**
- **Volunteer may realize he/she is not a good match for detainee,** First Friends Coordinator will provide you a new detainee

Other questions or concerns which the volunteer is uncertain how to deal with your detainee. The FIRST FRIENDS Coordinator may refer these concerns to another group more skilled in handling these concerns.

COMMONLY ASKED QUESTIONS FROM DETAINEES

1. I don't have a lawyer. I have a court date soon. What can I do?

Unlike US citizens, there is no 'right' to a lawyer for asylum seekers. While it is possible for someone to seek asylum and go through the process without a lawyer, it dramatically diminishes the possibility of success. Several voluntary agencies offer pro bono (free) legal representation. In most of the facilities, except for Elizabeth Detention Center, agencies work together in meeting to 'screen' all newly arrived asylum seekers/immigrant detainees. They do not have enough lawyers to offer one to every asylum seeker. In each dormitory in all the facilities that we serve, there should be a pro-bono list of these agencies. It should be posted on the bulletin board or next to the telephone. Detainees can make free telephone calls (NOT collect and NOT with a phone card) directly to these agencies with the numbers provided.

When you call or email First Friends, be sure to include the fact that your detainee asked about a lawyer. First Friends can make sure that the legal service agencies know that they need help. We cannot guarantee a lawyer in every case. That is not our role.

2. I haven't seen my lawyer in weeks, and I can't speak to him/her on the telephone! Why won't he/she come see me?

Unfortunately, there are not enough lawyers to represent detained immigration cases. Those attorneys who do work with detainees are often strapped for time. From the detainees' perspective, their cases do not move as quickly as they would like them to. Many detainees do not understand that their lawyer can best help them from their office and not necessarily by visiting them. Encourage the detainee to continue to call their lawyer themselves and leave a message or call FIRST FRIENDS to link them to their lawyers.

3. Can I have your home telephone number or home address?

It is not possible to make telephone calls to detainees at the detention centers. First Friends DOES NOT recommend, however, that volunteers give their home telephone numbers to detainees. Since detainees have different schedules and pressing concerns, you may receive many phone calls (most collect and very expensive due to the prison phone charges) and at odd hours.

Wait until you are comfortable enough with the person you visit to set limits on the calls. You also may give the detainee the FIRST FRIENDS' telephone number. You may feel more comfortable in corresponding with the detainee. As such you may wish to use the FIRST FRIENDS office address. Mail will be forwarded to you.

COMMONLY ASKED QUESTIONS FROM DETAINEES (CONTINUED)

4. I don't feel well. I saw the doctor, but I don't know what's wrong.

Detainees often complain about medical services in immigration detention. Often complaints hinge on lack of communication. The clinics inside the facilities have access to telephone interpreters but seem to use them rarely. Inform the detainee to insist on having a telephone interpreter. You can help them write a note for the doctor which says, "I don't understand. I would like an interpreter on the telephone." Inform the detainee about filling out requests for medical, and the need to request assistance if needed. You can also document the detainee's story for First Friends and advocates with consent from detainee. Advocates can use this information to advocate for better medical care.

5. What will I do when I am released? I don't know where to go!

When the person you visit has a final court hearing, the judge may or may not make a final decision about his/her release. Sometimes a decision is postponed, which can mean waiting another month. Sometimes a case is denied and then appealed, which can mean waiting another eight to twelve months. When the judge grants asylum or parole, the individual goes through 'out-processing' which can take 1- 4 hours or more before being released. Sometimes, lawyers will take an interest in where detainees might go.

The detainee should contact family and friends in the US seeking help on a place to live. If the individual does not have a place to go or financial resources, either he/she or the lawyer should call First Friends to share ideas on transportation and/or housing. There is no easy solution, and no one seems to have the resources to provide a secure path to life in the USA. Through a Post-Release Program, First Friends works on placing individuals with host families, or in temporary housing options with Seafarers International House while they fight their case, in efforts to give them time to get back on their feet.

Asylees receive a social security card and permission to work, food stamps and Medicaid while they wait for their documents to be processed and they look for employment.

Parolees can obtain food stamps and Medicaid for 8 months, while they fight their case on the outside.

Housing is a challenge. If you, or you know someone that may be willing to house asylum seekers, please contact FIRST FRIENDS.

SECONDARY TRAUMA, SELF-CARE AND BOUNDARY SETTING

It is crucial that visitors understand that immigration detention is a traumatic experience for most people. The experience of being detained indefinitely, knowing the risk of possibly being deported, takes a severe psychological toll. People in immigration detention often do not fully understand why they are being detained or what are their legal rights. Many people in immigration detention are asylum seekers who have survived abuse, torture, human trafficking, or other severe abuses. Detention worsens mental health problems associated with past trauma and risks re-traumatizing survivors of abuse, torture and human trafficking.

While some trauma survivors prefer to discuss the traumatic experience, others may need distance and to avoid reminders of the trauma. People have their own pace for processing trauma, and it is important for volunteers to let survivors know that they should listen to and honor their own inner pace. As explained in the National Center for PTSD's "Working with Trauma Survivors," approaching trauma survivors with genuine respect can give them a positive experience that will increase their chances of seeking help in the future and decrease the chance of doing harm.

It is important for volunteers to watch for signs of secondary trauma in themselves. These symptoms include heightened reactivity, intrusive symptoms, avoidance or emotional numbing, anxiety, depression, helplessness, and confusion. You might experience an enhanced sense of meaning, respect for the strength and resiliency of others, and connection with humanity, for some individuals, working with trauma survivors may have negative effects as well.

Secondary traumatic stress is the phenomenon of "burnout," or the cumulative psychological strain of working with many different stressors, which often manifests as a gradual wearing down over time. The factors contributing to burnout include emotional drain from empathizing, ambiguous success, and failure to live up to one's own expectations for effecting positive change. The symptoms of burnout include depression, cynicism, loss of compassion, and discouragement.

It is recommended that visitor volunteers proactively take steps toward self-care and lifestyle balance to avoid experiencing symptoms of secondary traumatic stress and burnout.

Here are some tips for preventing and managing symptoms of secondary traumatic stress and burnout, derived from the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)'s Manual on Human Rights Monitoring:

- Regular debriefing sessions with your coordinator and/or other volunteers can be extremely helpful. Whether the debriefings are done formally, as part of regular meetings, or informally between colleagues, the following are useful questions to discuss:
 - How are you being affected by this work?
 - How well are you doing in separating this work from the rest of your life?
 - Have you been distressed by anything that came up in a recent visit?
 - Are you experiencing any symptoms of secondary trauma, burnout, or other forms of stress?
 - What kind of self-care are you practicing? Is it helping?
 - Can you remember why you wanted to do this work in the first place? List the reasons.
- Bolster tolerance to stressors by building skills that promote good health, strong interpersonal ties, healthy self-esteem and a sense of meaning. Examples: getting adequate sleep, following a healthy diet, and having a strong social network.
- Engage in activities that induce relaxation to help the body recover. Examples: going for a walk, being in nature, listening to music, looking at art, meditating, doing breathing exercises, practicing yoga, and taking a hot bath.
- Find outlets for the excess energy that is generated by stress that take the mind away from the source of stress. Examples: exercise, hobbies that require focus and attention, reading books, watching films, writing, and creating art.
- Take note of accomplishments, no matter how small. Reflect on the positives in your life.
- Have realistic expectations of yourself and others. Be aware of and respect personal limits. Maintain appropriate boundaries will help to keep you focused on what you are able to achieve.
- Reflect on your personal experiences with trauma and how might you be affected by hearing about another person's trauma if you have your own personal trauma history.
- Consider speaking to a mental health professional.

IMPORTANT REMINDERS AND ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Please keep First Friends informed about your detainee's status. You are obligated to visit a minimum of 2 times per month and must notify us if you cannot. Always make it clear to your detainee when you will return and notify him or First Friends if you are unable. Use First Friends as the return address on any communication.

Remember that you are not a lawyer or a social worker. You are just a friend. Do report any problems to us.

First Friends welcomes suggestions for other questions which volunteers encounter at the facilities that can be included in the handbook.

THANK YOU FOR VOLUNTEERING!

Your participation in First Friends means a great deal to detainees. You are showing them that they are not forgotten which in turn is a tremendous boost to their morale. *Thank you and please keep in touch!*

Additional Resources

To learn more about detention:

www.firstfriendsnjny.org

www.detentionwatchnetwork.org

www.rightsworkinggroup.org

www.nationalimmigrationproject.org



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