

Know Your Rights: Immigration Raids

January 07, 2016

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Unfortunately, as many of you heard, a string of Immigration raids began to take place across the country. According to the government, these raids were focused on individuals who entered the United States without inspection through the southern border after May 1, 2014, who have final orders of removal (deportation), and who have no pending applications for relief or appeals. (For the full government statement, click [here: http://www.dhs.gov/news/2016/01/04/statement-secretary-jeh-c-johnson-southwest-border-security](http://www.dhs.gov/news/2016/01/04/statement-secretary-jeh-c-johnson-southwest-border-security).)

There are several important things you should know in order to protect yourself and your family:

1) DO NOT OPEN THE DOOR TO POLICE OR IMMIGRATION AUTHORITIES UNLESS THEY HAVE A WARRANT.

If immigration officials or the police come to your house, you **do NOT have to open the door and allow them entry unless they have a warrant**. If the officer says that he or she has a warrant, you should ask to see it before opening the door. You can ask the officer to hold it up to the window or put a copy under the door for your review.

2) DO NOT GIVE INFORMATION TO THE POLICE OR IMMIGRATION AUTHORITIES, ESPECIALLY ABOUT WHERE YOU WERE BORN.

If stopped by the police or Immigration authorities, **you have the right to remain silent**. In particular, you should NOT answer questions about where you were born, or about your legal status in the United States. Even if you have

no legal status, you have the right to remain silent and advise the officer that you wish to consult with an attorney before answering questions. (It is important to note that you should not give false information or false documents to the police, as this can lead to criminal charges.)

3) DO NOT SIGN ANY PAPERWORK BEFORE CONSULTING WITH AN ATTORNEY.

If you are detained and given paperwork to sign, **you should refuse to sign any papers until you can review them with an attorney.**

4) KEEP ALL IMPORTANT DOCUMENTS IN A SAFE PLACE, AND MAKE SURE YOUR FAMILY KNOWS WHERE THEY ARE.

Make sure that important documents, such as your passport, birth certificate, identity documents from your country of origin, and any immigration and/or criminal paperwork, are in a safe place and that your family can access them if you are detained.

5) CONSULT WITH AN IMMIGRATION ATTORNEY

You should consult with an immigration lawyer to see if you have any options to fight your case. This is especially important if you know that you have a prior removal (deportation) order or a criminal history.

For information about what to do if a loved one is detained, please see our blog post from April 2015, available here: <http://www.immigrationlawseattle.com/blog/2015/4/30/what-to-do-if-a-friend-or-family-member-is-detained-at-the-northwest-detention-center>