

What should you do if ICE or CPB come to the door?

Guidance for parish staff and volunteers

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) are official police and so it is important to be respectful of them and understand that often they may arrive for valid reasons.

ICE and CBP do not have consent to enter a building.

Parishes and schools are considered private property, and they must have a signed judicial warrant to do so.

No staff or volunteers should answer questions posed by the agents without permission from the pastor or principal – or their delegates..

Please see steps below for handling this situation

- Remain calm and respectful.
- Ask about the purpose of their visit. Then ask for the identity of the agents.
- Inform the agents that you are not authorized to give consent to enter the premise or respond to questions and that they must wait for the pastor.
- If there is a waiting room or private conference room, ask them to wait there for the pastor.
- Alert the pastor and principal that agents are present.
- Let the waiting agents know how long they may need to wait.
- Do NOT alert an individual of the presence of ICE/BCP so that the individual can escape since that is considered obstruction of justice and may result in prosecution.
- Here is sample language:
 - I am now contacting the pastor/principal who can speak with you.
 - I am not authorized to answer questions, review a warrant, or allow entry.
 - I apologize for declining to answer any additional questions.
 - A supervisor will be with you in just a moment.
 - Please wait in this private conference room (if one is available)

If an agent insists on entering the building despite your request for them to wait, do not try to stop them.

Please note that this is unlikely. However, in the unlikely event that this does happen, do not resist. Instruct everyone in the building to remain calm and silent. Please know that individuals have the right to remain silent and should not sign any documents without consulting a lawyer.

Archdiocesan Contact

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