

SAMPLE: a MACC member is using this for staff guidance:

Recent ICE activity has created real fear and risk for many people in our community, including people who may be perceived as undocumented regardless of their actual status. You may encounter ICE while transporting clients or while together in public spaces. The guidance below is intended to support you in prioritizing safety, de-escalation, and the protection of clients while also safeguarding your own well-being. This is not legal advice, but shared guidance rooted in widely used know-your-rights practices and our organizations values of XXX.

General Guidance for Any Encounter with ICE

Stay calm and grounded

Maintain a composed, non-confrontational presence. Calm tone, slow movement, and steady body language can reduce the likelihood of escalation and help youth regulate in a frightening moment.

Do not interfere physically

Do not block, touch, or physically interfere with ICE agents, even if the situation feels unjust or alarming. Physical interference can escalate risk for both you and the client.

Remember that everyone has rights

All people in the United States have constitutional protections, regardless of immigration status. This includes the right to remain silent and the right not to answer questions about immigration status, place of birth, or how someone entered the country.

If ICE Approaches While Driving or in Public

Clarify whether you are being detained

Calmly ask, “Am I being detained, or am I free to leave?” If you are told you are free to go, leave the area calmly and without further engagement.

Use the right to remain silent

If asked questions about citizenship, immigration status, or personal history, you may state clearly, “I choose to remain silent.” You can also gently remind the client that they do not need to answer these questions.

Do not consent to searches

If asked to search the vehicle or personal belongings, you may say, “I do not consent to a search.” If a search occurs anyway, do not resist physically.

If driving, prioritize safety

If ICE signals for the vehicle to stop, safely pull over and comply with traffic safety expectations. Sudden movements or refusal to stop can increase risk.

Special Considerations When Supporting Clients**Youth safety comes first**

Your primary role is to protect the client's physical and emotional safety. Use a calm voice, avoid argumentative language, and focus on de-escalation whenever possible.

Avoid providing false information

Do not provide false documents or misrepresent a client's identity or status. This can expose both you and the client to serious legal harm.

Clients have the right to remain silent

Clients have the right not to answer ICE questions. When needed, you can model silence and say, "We are choosing not to answer questions."

If the Situation Escalates**Ask for legal counsel**

If anyone appears to be detained, clearly state, "I want to speak with a lawyer." Do not sign documents or agree to anything without legal guidance.

Document when safe

If it is safe and does not interfere, note the time, location, number of agents, vehicle markings, and what occurred. Documentation should happen after the interaction, not during an active confrontation.

Follow up immediately

If a client is detained or the encounter is distressing or traumatic, contact your supervisor right away to determine next steps and which legal or advocacy resource to reach out to. Supervisors can help coordinate response, documentation, and communication so the client is not navigating the situation alone. Depending on the circumstances, you may be directed to connect with the Minnesota Immigration Law Center or the ACLU of Minnesota for legal guidance, rights-based advocacy, or referrals.