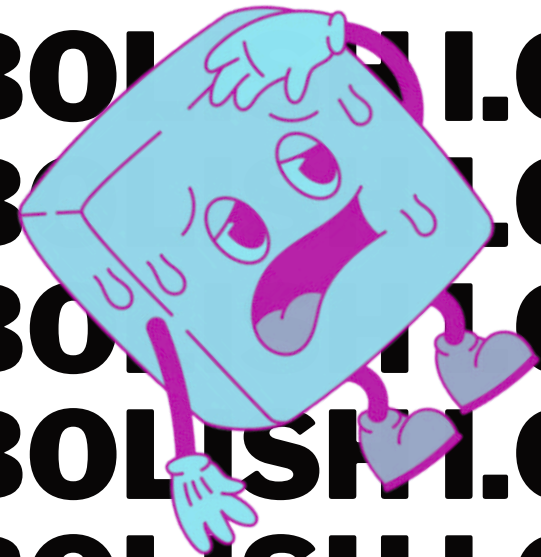




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ABOLISH I.C.E.**



RESOURCES FOR SOLIDARITY AND ABOLITION

ABOLISH ICE

Created 11/3/2025

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Written by Bædger Oaks

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ABOLISH ICE

Resources for Solidarity and Abolition

To skip to the resources and actions section, go to page 19.

Since ICE was founded in 2003, **7,125,818** human beings have been forcefully deported from the United States. This is more people than were deported in the previous 100 years in the United States (2,430,184).¹ 2025 alone is projected to see 600,000 people deported (as of October),² in one year we will deport 25% of the number of people deported in the entire century prior.

Under the Trump administration, ICE has expanded like never before. We have almost doubled the projected deportations from any other year in ICE's 25-year history, ICE has received over 150,000 applicants from people seeking to join their enforcement operations. The Department of Homeland Security has signed over 1,000 partnerships with local agencies in over 40 states. This is an era of deportation, militarization, and fascism like we have never seen in the United States.

It is easy to hear these numbers in abstract. It is harder to conceptualize each of those 7 million people as a human being with a family, hopes, dreams, and fundamental human rights. But read the stories of people who have been taken by ICE - sometimes seized from courtrooms, chased on public streets, detained at their place of work, or taken from places that used to be known as sanctuaries. Even churches, once considered safe havens, are no longer immune.

Citations listed at the end of this zine, page 44.

Read about Cary López Alvarado, a US citizen married to a Guatemalan man, who was taken into custody alongside her husband while 9 months pregnant. After release, “she began to experience sharp pains in her stomach, according to a claim she filed against the federal government. She gave birth a few days later.”⁴ Read about Rümeysa Öztürk, a doctoral student who was seized because of her political beliefs and held for 45 days in an ICE detention center.⁵ After release, she described her experience inside: “Even God Cannot Hear Us Here.”⁶

These are not isolated incidents. They are part of a systematic campaign that echoes some of the darkest chapters in human history. We often ask ourselves: *What would I have done during historical moments of state persecution and mass displacement?* The uncomfortable truth is that we are living in such a moment right now. The question is not hypothetical - it is immediate, and it demands an answer.

But here is what matters: **we have the power to respond.**

We can push for the abolition of ICE and support people who have been seized by making clear that ICE is not welcome in our communities. We can educate ourselves so we can educate others about what is happening and how it has been building since 2001. We can stand in solidarity with undocumented immigrants, not as saviors, but as accomplices in the fight for human dignity.

A Final Word

These resources are a starting point, not an endpoint. The best way to learn is to show up, listen, and take action alongside undocumented people leading this movement.

Remember: undocumented people have been organizing for their own liberation for decades. They are not waiting to be saved. They are fighting. Your role is to join that fight - to be an accomplice, not a savior.

Educate yourself, then organize. Abolition is not a dream, it is work. And the work is now.

- **Freedom for Immigrants** (freedomforimmigrants.org) - Abolishes immigration detention through monitoring, advocacy, and visitation programs.
- **Black Alliance for Just Immigration (BAJI)** (blackalliance.org) - Centers Black immigrants and the connections between anti-Blackness and anti-immigrant violence.

Social Media Accounts to Follow

Follow undocumented activists and organizers who are leading this movement:

- **@joseiswriting** (Jose Antonio Vargas) - undocumented journalist and activist
- **@julissaarce** (Julissa Arce) - undocumented activist, author, and advocate
- **@_IndefensibleAct** (Ravi Ragbir) - immigrant rights activist facing deportation who continues organizing
- **@UndocuBlack** - Network of currently and formerly undocumented Black people
- **@UnitedWeDream** - Largest immigrant youth-led organization
- **@ConMijente** - Latinx organizing hub
- **@CosechaMovement** - Undocumented immigrant-led movement
- **@ImmCivilRights** (NILC) - National Immigration Law Center
- **@immdefense** - Immigrant Defense Project
- **@RAICESTEXAS** - RAICES Texas

This zine will seek to give you the tools to do that work. The first section details the history of ICE in the United States, tracing its origins from pre-9/11 into its modern human rights abuses. The second offers concrete ways to engage in solidarity with undocumented folks nationally and in your community. The third provides resources to learn more and to center undocumented perspectives in this fight.

The work of abolition begins with understanding. It continues with action. And it succeeds when we refuse to look away.

Part One: How We Got Here

The Roots of Displacement: America's "Century of the Refugee"

To understand ICE, we must first understand why people migrate. As scholar Justin Akers Chacón writes, we are living in the “century of the refugee”⁷- and the United States has authored much of this story.

For over a century, U.S. foreign policy has systematically destabilized Latin America, creating the conditions that force people to flee. This is not a conspiracy theory. It is documented history.

Guatemala, 1954: The CIA orchestrated a coup that toppled the democratically elected government of Jacobo Árbenz, whose crime was implementing land reform that threatened the profits of the United Fruit Company (now Chiquita). The coup installed a military dictatorship that led to a 36-year civil war. Over 200,000 people were killed, the majority of them Indigenous Mayans. Villages were massacred. Children were taken. The United States provided training, weapons, and funding to the military throughout. When Guatemalans flee violence today, they are fleeing the legacy of a coup staged to protect banana profits.

- **The Immigrant Defense Project** (immdefense.org) - Focuses on the intersection of criminal and immigration law. Excellent resources on how the criminal legal system feeds deportation.
- **Freedom for Immigrants** (freedomforimmigrants.org) - Monitors detention center conditions, publishes investigative reports, and supports people inside detention.
- **Detention Watch Network** (detentionwatchnetwork.org) - Coalition working to abolish immigration detention. Great research and advocacy resources.

Organizations to Support or Connect With

These organizations are led by or center undocumented people:

- **National Day Laborer Organizing Network / NDLON** (ndlcn.org) - Improves the lives of day laborers and migrant workers. Strong abolitionist stance.
- **Movimiento Cosecha** (lahuelga.com) - Grassroots movement led by undocumented immigrants fighting for permanent protection and dignity for all.
- **RAICES** (raicetexas.org) - Texas-based organization providing legal services to immigrants and refugees. Very active in abolitionist work.
- **Never Again Action** - Jewish-led organization mobilizing against ICE detention. Regularly does direct actions at detention centers.
- **Immigrant Defense Project** (immdefense.org) - Works to end the criminalization of immigrants. Strong analysis and legal support.

Podcasts and Audio

- *No One Is Coming to Save Us* - A podcast about abolition, migration, and solidarity. Great for understanding connections between prison abolition and ICE abolition.
- *Radio Ambulante* - Spanish-language podcast (with English version available) telling Latin American stories, many focused on migration. Produced by journalists from the region.
- *The Guia by Fernanda Santos* - A podcast about the volunteers who leave water in the Arizona desert for migrants crossing. Explores the humanitarian crisis at the border.

Articles, Essays, and Online Resources

- **The Abolitionist** (abolitionistpaper.com) - Newspaper focused on abolition of prisons, police, ICE, and borders. Free to read online.
- **Mijente** (mijente.net) - Latinx and Chicanx organizing hub with excellent resources, analysis, and campaigns. Their "Free Our Future" campaign specifically targets ICE and CBP.
- Undocumented Student Resources Many of these organizations provide free guides, know-your-rights info, and personal essays:
 - United We Dream (unitedwedream.org)
 - Immigrants Rising (immigrantsrising.org)
 - Define American (defineamerican.com) - founded by Jose Antonio Vargas

El Salvador, 1980s: The U.S. poured over \$6 billion into funding right-wing death squads and a brutal military regime during the Salvadoran Civil War. American-trained soldiers massacred entire villages, including the infamous El Mozote massacre where over 800 civilians, mostly women and children, were killed. Archbishop Óscar Romero, who spoke out against the violence, was assassinated. The U.S. knew about the atrocities and continued funding anyway. By the war's end, 75,000 people were dead and over a million were displaced. The gang violence that plagues El Salvador today, often cited as a reason to deny asylum, grew directly from the destabilization and militarization the U.S. funded.

Honduras, 2009: The U.S. supported a military coup that overthrew democratically elected President Manuel Zelaya. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, in her own memoir, acknowledged the US's role in ensuring the coup's success by refusing to call it a coup (which would have triggered a cutoff of aid). What followed was a wave of violence, corruption, and state repression. Honduras became one of the most dangerous countries in the world, with activists, journalists, and Indigenous leaders assassinated with impunity. Environmental activist Berta Cáceres, who opposed U.S.-backed dam projects, was murdered in 2016. Her killers were trained at the U.S. School of the Americas. When Hondurans flee, they are fleeing a crisis the United States helped create.

Chile, 1973: The CIA backed the coup that overthrew Salvador Allende, Latin America's first democratically elected socialist president, installing the dictatorship of Augusto Pinochet. Thousands were tortured and disappeared. The University of Chicago-trained economists who designed Pinochet's economic policy - the so-called "Chicago Boys" - implemented neoliberal policies that enriched elites while devastating workers. This became the model exported across Latin America.

Nicaragua: The U.S. funded the Contras, right-wing paramilitaries who terrorized civilians throughout the 1980s, mining harbors and destroying infrastructure in an attempt to overthrow the Sandinista government. The International Court of Justice ruled that the U.S. violated international law. The U.S. ignored the ruling and continued funding the violence.

Haiti: The U.S. has intervened in Haiti repeatedly - supporting dictators, orchestrating coups, occupying the country militarily, and undermining democratic governments. When President Jean-Bertrand Aristide, elected by Haiti's poor majority, demanded reparations for the debt France imposed after Haiti's revolution, the U.S. backed his ouster in 2004. After the devastating 2010 earthquake, the U.S. prioritized corporate interests over reconstruction. Today, Haiti is in chaos - and the U.S. still refuses to accept Haitian refugees.

- *Undocumented: How Immigration Became Illegal* by Aviva Chomsky - Historical analysis of how "illegality" was constructed and who benefits from it.
- *The Land of Open Graves: Living and Dying on the Migrant Trail* by Jason De León - Anthropological study of the Sonoran Desert borderlands. Devastating and essential.
- *Border and Rule: Global Migration, Capitalism, and the Rise of Racist Nationalism* by Harsha Walia - Connects borders to capitalism, colonialism, and climate change. Strong abolitionist framework.

Documentaries and Films

- *Documented* (2013), directed by Jose Antonio Vargas - Vargas's own documentary about coming out as undocumented and the immigration debate in America.
- *The Infiltrators* (2019) - A hybrid documentary/narrative film about the National Immigrant Youth Alliance members who deliberately got themselves detained to organize from inside and help others get released.
- *Harvest of Empire* (2012) - Based on Juan González's book, this documentary traces the history of U.S. intervention in Latin America and the resulting migration.
- *Living Undocumented* (2019, Netflix) - An intimate docuseries following eight undocumented families facing deportation. Deeply humanizing and essential viewing.
- *Which Way Home* (2009) - Follows unaccompanied child migrants as they journey through Mexico toward the U.S. Heartbreaking and urgent.
- *Icebox* (2018) - An animated short film based on true accounts of children detained in ICE's "hieleras" (freezing detention cells). Only 12 minutes but devastating.

Analysis & History:

- *The Border Crossed Us: The Case for Opening the US-Mexico Border* by Justin Akers Chacón - Sharp analysis of migration, borders, and U.S. imperialism. Chacón connects the “century of the refugee” to U.S. foreign policy and makes the case for open borders.
- *No One Is Illegal: Fighting Racism and State Violence on the U.S.-Mexico Border* by Justin Akers Chacón and Mike Davis - A concise, powerful book that dismantles anti-immigrant myths and argues for migrant justice as part of working-class struggle.
- *Harvest of Empire: A History of Latinos in America* by Juan González - Essential historical context on U.S. intervention in Latin America and how it created migration flows.
- *Migra! A History of the U.S. Border Patrol* by Kelly Lytle Hernández - Academic but accessible history of how border enforcement became what it is today. Crucial for understanding the roots of ICE.
- *Deportation Nation: Outsiders in American History* by Daniel Kanstroom - Traces the history of deportation in the U.S. and its connection to racism, nationalism, and empire.
- *Abolish ICE* by Natasha Lycia Ora Bannan - This book makes the clear case for abolition and what comes after.

Additional Academic and Policy Resources

- *Violent Borders: Refugees and the Right to Move* by Reece Jones - Academic but accessible examination of how borders create violence.

Mexico and NAFTA: In 1994, the North American Free Trade Agreement devastated Mexican agriculture. U.S. subsidized corn flooded Mexican markets, making it impossible for small farmers to compete. Over 2 million farmers were driven off their land. Many migrated to cities or to the United States out of economic desperation. Meanwhile, NAFTA enabled U.S. corporations to exploit Mexican labor in maquiladoras (factories with poverty wages and horrific conditions) while extracting profits across the border.

The War on Drugs: Since the 1970s, the U.S. “War on Drugs” has militarized Latin America, funneling billions in weapons and military aid to governments fighting cartels that exist because of U.S. drug demand and U.S. gun supply. Programs like Plan Colombia and the Mérida Initiative armed governments and paramilitaries, escalating violence while doing nothing to reduce drug trafficking. The result: tens of thousands dead, entire regions controlled by cartels, and a refugee crisis the U.S. then claims is not its responsibility.

The pattern is undeniable. The United States topples governments, funds death squads, arms militaries, destroys economies, and militarizes regions—then calls the people fleeing this devastation “illegal” and treats them as criminals.

Climate displacement is also coming. The Global North, led by the United States, has driven the climate crisis that is making vast regions of the Global South unlivable. Droughts, floods, failed harvests, and rising seas are forcing millions to migrate. The places that contributed least to climate change will suffer most. And the countries most responsible are building walls to keep climate refugees out.

The Founding of ICE and the Creation of the Modern American Gestapo

The Beginning of ICE

ICE was founded on March 1, 2003, as part of the Department of Homeland Security, which itself was created in response to 9/11. The “War on Terror” provided the perfect cover to transform immigration enforcement into a militarized, surveillance-driven operation. By merging the enforcement arms of the former Immigration and Naturalization Service with customs enforcement, ICE became the largest investigative agency in the Department of Homeland Security, with sweeping powers and minimal oversight.

This was not an accident. ICE was designed to treat immigrants as threats to national security. The rhetoric of “protecting our borders” became inseparable from the rhetoric of terrorism, conflating migrants seeking safety with enemies of the state. Fear became policy.

And the numbers tell the story. In the two decades before ICE, annual deportations averaged around 25,000. By 2009 under President Obama that number reached 400,000. Under Trump's second term, we are on track for 600,000 in a single year.

Resources for Learning and Action

This section provides resources to deepen your understanding and connect you with organizations doing this work. I have prioritized resources created by undocumented people and those with lived experience of migration. Their stories, analysis, and leadership are essential.

Books

Memoirs & Narratives by Undocumented Authors:

- *Dear America: Notes of an Undocumented Citizen* by Jose Antonio Vargas - A powerful memoir by an undocumented journalist who came to the U.S. from the Philippines as a child. Vargas chronicles his life in the shadows and his decision to publicly come out as undocumented.
- *Solito: A Memoir* by Javier Zamora - A stunning memoir of Zamora's journey as a nine-year-old migrating alone from El Salvador to the U.S. to reunite with his parents. Poetic, heartbreaking, and essential reading.
- *The Distance Between Us* by Reyna Grande - A memoir about Grande's childhood in Mexico and her undocumented journey to the U.S. Beautifully written and deeply moving.
- *Underground America: Narratives of Undocumented Lives* edited by Peter Orner - Oral histories from undocumented people across the U.S., telling their stories in their own words. Essential for hearing directly from those most affected.

3. **Network activates.** Depending on the situation, members of the network may:

- Show up on scene to observe and document
- Alert community members in the area to stay inside or avoid the location
- Provide legal support or connect people with lawyers
- Physically intervene if someone is being detained
- Provide childcare for families whose parents are taken
- Raise bail funds immediately

Building or joining a rapid response network:

- **Join an existing network.** Many cities already have these. Ask around at protests, organizing meetings, or immigrant rights groups.
- **Start one if none exists.** Begin with a small group of trusted people. Create a secure group chat. Develop a phone tree or alert system.
- **Train your network.** Everyone should know their rights, know how to document ICE activity safely, and have a clear understanding of roles and protocols.
- **Build relationships with the community.** Rapid response only works if community members trust you enough to call when they see ICE. Build those relationships before a crisis.
- **Have resources ready.** Know which lawyers to call, which bail funds to tap, where people can go for immediate safety.

Rapid response networks have successfully prevented deportations, interrupted raids, and made it much harder for ICE to operate freely. They turn isolated individuals into a coordinated community that protects its own.

Modern ICE

ICE today operates with near-total impunity. It runs over 200 detention facilities across the country, many of them privately operated for profit. Conditions inside are brutal: inadequate medical care, rotten food, sexual abuse, solitary confinement, and deaths that go uninvestigated (so far 20 people have died this year - the highest number since 2005).⁸

Take “Alligator Alcatraz,” the informal name for the ICE detention center in St. Gabriel, Louisiana. Surrounded by swamps and alligators, the facility is deliberately isolated to prevent access by lawyers, journalists, or advocates. People detained there report freezing temperatures, inedible food, and guards who mock their suffering. Detainees say they are treated like rats in an experiment, with one saying, “we’re human beings, we’re not dogs.”⁹

This is not an outlier. It is the norm.

ICE conducts raids that terrorize entire communities. Agents wait outside schools, stake out courthouses, and storm workplaces. They separate families, detain U.S. citizens by mistake, and deport people to countries they have never known. They have increasingly targeted activists, journalists, and organizers - anyone who dares to speak out.

And ICE is expanding. Under Trump's second term, the administration has recruited over 150,000 applicants eager to join enforcement operations. DHS has signed partnerships with over 1,000 local agencies in over 40 states, turning police, sheriffs, and even campus security into immigration enforcers. The deportation machine is becoming inescapable.

A Bipartisan Machine

This is not just a Republican problem. It is a bipartisan one.

President Obama deported more people than any president in U.S. history - over 3 million during his tenure. He expanded the use of “Secure Communities,” a program that turned local police into ICE agents by requiring them to check immigration status during arrests. He built family detention centers, caging children alongside their parents. His administration pioneered the policies that Trump would later weaponize.

President Biden promised to be different. He ended some of Trump's most cruel policies, yet continued others. His administration maintained Title 42 expulsions, expanded ICE detention, and deported thousands of Haitian refugees. When Republican governors bused migrants to Democratic cities, Democrats called it a crisis - not because of the inhumanity of displacement, but because they had to deal with it.

The Democratic establishment supports a “humane” immigration system in rhetoric, but in practice, they have funded ICE's expansion, voted for border walls, and framed immigration as a problem to be managed rather than a human right to be defended.

The machine of deportation runs on fuel from both parties.

- **Make demands.** Be clear: divest from GEO Group and CoreCivic, cut contracts with ICE, stop funding detention.
- **Apply pressure.** Use petitions, protests, media campaigns, shareholder activism, and public shaming. Attend board meetings. Organize walkouts.
- **Celebrate wins and keep going.** Divestment campaigns have won major victories. Use those wins to push for more.

Some universities, cities, and banks have already divested from private prisons. Yours can too. Money is power and taking it away from ICE weakens the entire system.

Rapid Response Networks

Rapid response networks are organized groups that mobilize quickly when ICE is active in the community. These networks can prevent deportations, provide immediate support, and create a culture of resistance.

How rapid response works:

1. **ICE sighting.** Someone spots ICE in the neighborhood—maybe they see the vehicles, maybe they hear about a raid.
2. **Alert goes out.** Using secure channels (usually Signal or WhatsApp), the sighting is reported to the network with details: location, time, number of agents, vehicle descriptions.

Divest campaigns

Divestment campaigns target the financial infrastructure that makes ICE possible. Private companies profit enormously from detention and deportation, and they're vulnerable to public pressure.

Key targets:

- **Private prison companies.** GEO Group and CoreCivic (formerly Corrections Corporation of America) run many ICE detention centers. They are publicly traded companies vulnerable to shareholder pressure.
- **Banks funding detention.** Major banks like JPMorgan Chase, Bank of America, and Wells Fargo provide loans and credit to private prison companies. Demand that your bank divest or change your bank if possible.
- **Tech companies.** Amazon, Microsoft, and Palantir provide cloud services, surveillance technology, and data analytics to ICE. Pressure these companies to end their contract or find alternatives.
- **Airlines.** ICE charts deportation flights through commercial airlines like Avelo. Demand that airlines refuse these contracts, or refuse to fly on these airlines.

How to organize a divest campaign:

1. **Research.** *Identify which companies or institutions in your community have ties to ICE or private prisons. This might be your university endowment, your city's pension fund, or a local bank.*
2. **Build a coalition.** *Partner with student groups, labor unions, faith communities, and other organizations.*

The reality is that ICE and the mass human rights abuses they administer, are not a product of right-wing nationalism. It is a product of American politics. The far-right has taken anti-immigrant rhetoric to the furthest extreme, but it is not unusual for the history of the United States. We are a country that oppresses and abuses the marginalized, and we have done so since our founding. The only true answer is abolition.

Part Two: Why Abolition

Abolition is the Only Answer

Some will say: “Reform ICE. Make it more humane.”

You cannot reform an agency whose founding purpose is cruelty. ICE was designed to separate families, to cage people, to deport. It was designed to reinforce racial hierarchies and the tools of empire. Reforming ICE is like reforming a hammer by asking it to stop hitting nails. The tool is working exactly as intended.

Abolition means dismantling ICE entirely and ensuring no agency rises to take its place. It means ending immigration detention, stopping deportations, and defunding the entire infrastructure of enforcement. Abolition is not a radical fringe idea, it is the only moral response to state-sponsored violence.

What Does Abolishing ICE Actually Mean?

Abolition is not just about tearing down it's about building up. It's a vision for a fundamentally different relationship to migration, safety, and community. Here's what it looks like in practice:

- **Sanctuary provision.** Provide physical sanctuary in churches, schools, or homes—a practice with deep historical roots. This can protect people from deportation for weeks, months, or longer. Know that the legal protections around sanctuaries are largely being ignored now, so be aware that this will need to be done in secret.
- **Eviction defense for immigrant families.** Organize neighbors to physically prevent evictions, which can lead to ICE involvement.

Important considerations:

- Direct action carries risk. Assess your own risk tolerance and capacity. If you can't afford to be arrested, there are roles you can play that don't involve front-line confrontation.
- Never pressure others into taking risks they're not comfortable with, especially undocumented people who face far greater consequences.
- Direct action works best when it's part of a broader strategy with legal support, media strategy, and community backing.
- Train beforehand. Take workshops on de-escalation, know-your-rights, jail support, and action planning.
- Have a legal support team and bail fund in place before taking action.

Direct action is not for everyone, but for those who can take on the risk, it can stop deportations, protect community members, and disrupt ICE's ability to function. It sends a clear message: we will not cooperate with our own oppression.

Direct Action

Direct action means taking action yourself rather than appealing to those in power to act on your behalf. It's intervention. It's a disruption. It's a refusal. Direct action can take many forms, from the quiet to the confrontational, and it's some of the most powerful work you can do.

Examples of direct action for immigration justice:

- **Physical blockades.** Block ICE vehicles, prevent them from leaving detention centers, or block access to ICE offices. This requires planning, coordination, and willingness to risk arrest, but it can successfully prevent deportations.
- **ICE vehicle disabling.** Some activists have deflated ICE vehicle tires or otherwise temporarily disabled vehicles to prevent raids or deportations. This is higher-risk but has been effective.
- **Workplace shutdowns.** If ICE raids a workplace, workers and allies can refuse to work, shut down operations, or block ICE from accessing the building.
- **Jail/detention center support.** Show up outside detention centers to let people inside know they're not forgotten. Make noise, hold signs, provide commissary funds, and pressure facilities to improve conditions.
- **Accompaniment as intervention.** Physically accompany people to ICE check-ins or hearings, making it harder for ICE to detain them without witnesses.

1. Dismantle the infrastructure of deportation

- Shut down all ICE detention centers immediately and release everyone detained
- End all deportations. Period.
- Terminate partnerships between ICE and local law enforcement
- Defund ICE entirely and redirect those billions toward resources that actually support communities
- Abolish ICE as an agency with no replacement enforcement body created to take its place

2. End immigration enforcement at borders

- Demilitarize the border, remove walls, surveillance towers, armed patrols
- Close border patrol stations and end workplace raids
- Eliminate policies like Title 42, "Remain in Mexico," and asylum caps
- Stop prosecuting people for crossing borders (end "illegal entry" and "illegal reentry" charges)
- Process asylum claims quickly and humanely, with a presumption of approval rather than denial

3. Provide status and dignity for all

- Grant permanent residency and a pathway to citizenship for all undocumented people currently in the U.S.
- End all visa restrictions and caps
- Ensure access to driver's licenses, banking, healthcare, and education regardless of immigration status
- End discrimination based on immigration status in employment, housing, and public benefits

4. Invest in communities, not cages

- Take the \$25+ billion currently spent on immigration enforcement and deportation and invest it in:
 - Affordable housing
 - Universal healthcare
 - Public education
 - Job training and living-wage jobs
 - Mental health services
 - Community-based conflict resolution
 - Programs that address root causes of displacement (climate change, economic inequality, violence)

5. Transform our relationship to migration

- Recognize freedom of movement as a human right
- Create systems that welcome and integrate newcomers rather than criminalize them
- Provide language classes, job placement assistance, and cultural orientation programs - voluntary resources, not mandatory assimilation
- Build solidarity between immigrant and native-born working-class communities
- Challenge the nationalism and xenophobia that divides us

6. Address the root causes of displacement

- End U.S. military interventions, coups, and support for authoritarian regimes
- Cancel debt and pay reparations to countries the U.S. has destabilized
- Stop funding “border security” in other countries (like Mexico's southern border)

Option 3: Contact paper method

1. Print your designs on regular paper
2. Cut out the designs
3. Cut clear contact paper slightly larger than your design
4. Peel the backing off the contact paper and carefully place your paper design on the sticky side
5. Cut a second piece of contact paper and place it sticky-side down on the back of your design
6. Trim to size - you now have a laminated, two-sided adhesive sticker

Option 4: Vinyl stickers (most durable, requires investment)

1. Purchase printable vinyl sticker sheets or use a Cricut/similar cutting machine
2. Print or cut your designs
3. These are waterproof and very durable for outdoor use

Stickering is accessible, low-risk, and surprisingly effective at shifting culture and spreading information. It's also fun, and that matters. Joy is resistance too.

At the QR code below are some downloadable images that you can use for free to make stickers at home.



How to DIY Make Stickers at Home:

Option 1: Full-sheet sticker paper (easiest)

1. Purchase full-sheet sticker paper (available at office supply stores or online—brands like Avery make them)
2. Print your designs directly onto the sticker paper using a regular inkjet or laser printer
3. Cut out your stickers with scissors or an X-Acto knife
4. Optional: Cover with clear packing tape or a layer of contact paper for weather resistance

Option 2: Regular paper + packing tape

1. Print your designs on regular printer paper
2. Cover the printed side completely with clear packing tape, overlapping slightly to avoid gaps
3. Cut out your stickers
4. The tape creates a waterproof, adhesive backing when you peel and stick

- Support international movements for climate justice and economic sovereignty
- Oppose trade deals like NAFTA that destroy local economies

7. Create true sanctuary

- Make cities, schools, hospitals, and workplaces genuine sanctuaries where immigration status is never questioned
- Prohibit cooperation with immigration enforcement by any public institution
- Protect immigrants from employer exploitation by strengthening labor rights for all workers
- Ensure that reporting crimes, accessing healthcare, or attending school never puts anyone at risk of deportation

This is not an impossible dream. Every one of these demands is achievable. Other countries have far more humane immigration systems. Many cities and states are already implementing sanctuary policies. Community defense networks are already protecting people from ICE. The infrastructure of abolition is already being built, what we need is the political will to make it universal.

Abolition means choosing care over cages. It means choosing solidarity over borders. It means choosing a world where everyone belongs.

The Case for Open Borders

Here is the truth: borders are imaginary lines enforced by violence. They do not keep us safe. They do not protect jobs. They do not preserve culture. What they do is divide the world into people who matter and people who don't.

Open borders do not mean chaos. It means treating migration as a human right, as it was for most of human history. Before the 20th century, people moved freely across the earth. Borders as we know them are a modern invention, designed to control labor and to preserve the wealth of imperial powers.

Open borders would benefit everyone. Economically, immigrants contribute far more than they take. They start businesses, pay taxes, and fill essential jobs. Major studies show that open borders would double global GDP.¹⁰ The idea that immigrants “steal jobs” is a myth designed to divide working people. The real thieves are the billionaires who hoard wealth while paying starvation wages.

Culturally, migration enriches societies. Food, music, language, ideas—these cross borders and make us all more human. The fear of “losing our culture” is rooted in white supremacy, in the false belief that some cultures are pure and must be protected from contamination.

And ethically? No one is illegal. People fleeing violence, poverty, and persecution deserve safety. Period. Borders kill - tens of thousands have died crossing deserts, drowning in rivers, freezing in detention. Every one of those deaths is a policy choice.

- Transportation. Drive people to check-ins, court dates, or appointments. Provide gas money or bus passes.
- Childcare. Offer to watch children while parents attend legal meetings, work, or organize. This is often one of the most needed and hardest-to-find forms of support.
- Language support. Provide interpretation or translation services, help fill out forms, or accompany people to appointments where language barriers might be a problem.

The key to mutual aid is that it's reciprocal and non-hierarchical. You're not a savior swooping in to help, you're part of a community caring for each other. Build relationships. Ask what people need rather than assuming. And remember: mutual aid goes both ways. Undocumented people have skills, knowledge, and resources to share too.

To get involved, look for local mutual aid networks. Many cities have them. If you can't find one, start one, even if it's just a few neighbors looking out for each other. If you are in Harrisonburg you can connect to Shenandoah Mutual Aid.

Stickering Campaign

An easy way to engage in small acts of civil disobedience is to take part in a stickering campaign. In this act of quiet protest, stickers are placed in public places where they are easy to see and identify—bathroom stalls, light poles, bus stops, bulletin boards, laptop backs, water bottles. Stickers spread information, normalize abolitionist ideas, and remind people they're not alone in their resistance.

- Document carefully. If you're filming ICE activity or protests, be mindful of who appears in your footage. Blur faces if you're posting publicly, especially of people who may be undocumented or at risk.

Security culture isn't about paranoia, it's about care. It's about making sure that your work doesn't inadvertently put vulnerable people in danger.

Practice Mutual Aid

Mutual aid is the practice of communities taking care of each other outside of, and often in opposition to, state systems. It's not charity; it's solidarity. It's the recognition that we all have something to give and something we need, and that we survive by taking care of each other.

To counter the state-sponsored violence of ICE, mutual aid can take many forms:

- Direct financial support. Give money directly to undocumented people and families affected by ICE. Many mutual aid networks use apps like Venmo or Cash App to send funds quickly when someone needs help with rent, legal fees, or expenses after a family member is deported.
- Housing support. Offer temporary shelter to people fleeing ICE, recently released from detention, or in need of a safe place to stay. Even a couch for a few nights can be lifesaving.
- Food and supplies. Organize community fridges, food distributions, or supply drives. Provide groceries, diapers, hygiene products, or whatever is needed without requiring paperwork or proof of anything.

"But What About Criminals?"

The most common objection to open borders is: "What about criminals? What about dangerous people?"

First, the vast majority of undocumented people are not criminals. They are workers, parents, students, and neighbors. The criminalization of immigration itself is the problem. Crossing a border without papers is a civil offense, not a crime, yet it is treated as one to justify cruelty.

Second, let's be honest: the "criminal immigrant" narrative is racist propaganda. It portrays immigrants (particularly Black and Brown immigrants) as inherently dangerous, while ignoring the fact that immigrants commit crimes at lower rates than native-born citizens. The real question is: why are we more afraid of an undocumented worker than a billionaire CEO who commits wage theft, environmental destruction, and tax evasion?

Fear of the "other" has always been used to justify oppression. Don't let it work on you.

Abolition Is Not a Dream. It's a Demand.

Abolishing ICE and opening borders is not naive. What is naive is believing that the current system, one built on violence, extraction, and white supremacy, can ever be made just.

Abolition is practical. It means redirecting the billions spent on cages and deportations toward housing, healthcare, education, and restorative justice. It means building a world where no one has to flee their home, and where those who do are welcomed.

Abolition is urgent. Every day ICE exists, families are torn apart. Every day borders are enforced, people die.

So what will you do?

Will you accept the logic of borders, the myth that some people deserve safety and others don't? Or will you join the fight for a world without walls, without cages, without the violence of "us" and "them"?

Abolition begins with refusal. Refuse to cooperate with ICE. Refuse to accept deportation as inevitable. Refuse the lie that borders keep us safe.

Abolition continues with action. Organize in your community. Support undocumented neighbors. Disrupt ICE operations. Demand that your city, your school, your workplace become a sanctuary, not in name, but in practice.

Abolition succeeds when we build the world we want to see. Mutual aid networks. Community defense. Solidarity that crosses every border.

Abolish ICE. Open the borders. Build a world where everyone belongs.

Practice Security Culture

Security culture refers to the practices and habits that protect you, your community, and the people you're organizing with from surveillance, infiltration, and legal consequences. When engaging anti-ICE organizing, especially anything that involves civil disobedience or supporting people evading ICE, security culture is essential. Here are some basic practices:

- Use encrypted communication. Signal is a free, encrypted messaging app that protects your conversations. Use it for organizing, especially when discussing sensitive information like ICE sightings, rapid response, or direct action plans.
- Limit what you share online. Assume that anything posted on social media can and will be seen by law enforcement. Don't post photos of people at protests without their consent, don't share specific details about actions before they happen, and avoid tagging locations in real-time.
- Know what to do if arrested. The general advice is to give your name and nothing else. Do not answer questions without a lawyer present. Write the number for a legal support hotline on your arm in permanent marker before protests.
- Protect others' information. Don't share names, addresses, immigration status, or identifying details about people in your network without their explicit consent. If someone shares sensitive information with you, keep it to yourself.
- Be aware of infiltration. Law enforcement and ICE have been known to infiltrate organizing spaces. Be cautious with new people asking detailed questions about plans, pushing for illegal activity, or trying to gather information about others.

ICE Watch

Another way to get involved is to join a local ICE watch. These groups organize (typically over Signal or similar secure channels) to monitor the locations of ICE vehicles and inform people when ICE is in their neighborhood. They may have a list of license plates to watch out for, or specific individuals who are known ICE agents. These groups also tend to serve as avenues for mutual aid and safe community building.

To get connected to your local ICE watch either see if you can find them online, or if not, go to radical spaces and protests in your community. You may find zines or other information leading you to the local ICE watch. If you are in the Harrisonburg/Staunton/Charlottesville area, there is an ICE watch locally. Keep an eye out for their zines in local radical spaces to get in touch.

Spread Information

Spreading information about ICE and abolition is an easy way to get involved. There are a number of resources online you can share around, many of which are listed at the end of this zine. Sharing zines is also a great way to connect people with information. This zine is available for a free printable PDF download. Email baedger@proton.me for a link to the PDF.

What Can I Do?

It can be overwhelming to encounter the massive structural inequities and injustices that take place in our immigration system. It is easy to feel hopeless. Abolition can feel like an impossible goal. The system is so large, it is easy to begin to lose faith in the possibility of abolition.

The good news is that abolition does not happen overnight, and it never relies on one person alone. Abolition is a network of people doing what they can. It is necessarily a patchwork.

It is important as you enter this world of organizing to remember that you are not the only person doing this, and **you are not a savior**. There have been undocumented people working on immigrant justice for decades, and doing so with deep information from their lived experience and their organizing experience. Don't assume because you have read this zine, or even because you are an organizer, that you know best.

Educate Yourself

One of the most powerful tools we have for abolition and liberation is education. Reading this zine is an incredible start, but I recommend reading or listening to some additional sources that are written by undocumented people to hear their stories and to learn how to stand in solidarity with them. Always let undocumented people lead the narrative.

At the end of this zine is a list of resources you can reference to learn more about abolition, immigrant justice, and the history of ICE. I have done my best to prioritize resources by undocumented authors in this list. Look through the list and pick a couple of resources that feel accessible to you. If reading an entire book feels prohibitive, listen to a podcast or watch a documentary. There are many ways to engage, regardless of your learning style.

It is also important to remember that while you are centering resources from undocumented people, it is not their responsibility to be your teacher. Do not add an additional mental load to the lives of undocumented people by asking them to educate you. The resources at the end of this zine have been offered voluntarily, and in many cases the people who created the resources were paid for their labor. Lean into resources that actually recognize the labor of education for marginalized people.

If you are undocumented reading this, know that educating others is not your responsibility. This zine is a call for solidarity, which means that you do not have to hold this on your own.

Court Watch

A great entry point into organizing in your local community is to get involved in a court watch. Court watches bring together community members to observe local court proceedings on a regular basis—often weekly or daily, depending on the program.

Protest

Protest is one of the most well-known forms of resistance in leftist and liberal spaces alike. It is a powerful way to stand in solidarity with undocumented folks, and especially to leverage privilege by putting yourself in a position that may be dangerous or lead to arrest for others.

There are many ways to get involved in local protests. Try to connect to an organizing or protest network locally to be updated regularly on what is coming up. Many of these groups have open signal channels you can join that post all of the upcoming protests.

Be aware: there are many different kinds of protest. Some involve civil disobedience, including taking up space in public spaces without the permission of law enforcement agencies, some partner with local law enforcement openly. Consider what you are most comfortable with ethically and legally. If you are not a person who is able to be arrested for any number of reasons (identity, family, poverty, etc.), consider how you can engage safely so that you do not run the risk of arrest. If you are a person who holds the privilege to be arrested without major ramifications, consider how you might want to show up differently.

And always consider: if protests are partnering with local law enforcement, that may also mean that they are tangentially partnering with ICE. Law enforcement is often in the pocket of ICE, and very willing to turn on protestors and activists if asked. Be aware of who is being partnered with, and exercise caution, particularly if undocumented or at-risk folks are at your protest.

I do not wish to speak with you, answer your questions, or sign or hand you any documents based on my 5th Amendment rights under the United States Constitution.

I do not give you permission to enter my home based on my 4th Amendment rights under the United States Constitution unless you have a warrant to enter, signed by a judge or magistrate with my name on it that you slide under the door.

I do not give you permission to search any of my belongings based on my 4th Amendment rights.

I choose to exercise my constitutional rights.

These cards are available to citizens and noncitizens alike.

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Here's why court watches matter: ICE frequently stakes out courthouses, waiting to arrest people as they arrive for hearings, even for minor traffic violations. Having trained observers present serves multiple purposes. First, it creates accountability—ICE is less likely to act brazenly when they know they're being watched and documented. Second, observers can immediately alert lawyers and rapid response networks if someone is detained, enabling faster intervention. Third, the documentation court watchers provide—noting who was arrested, when, and under what circumstances—can become crucial testimony in legal cases fighting for someone's release.

Court watches also support people navigating the court system by providing a compassionate presence, connecting them with resources, and ensuring they don't face the system alone. Many court watch programs also track patterns in how judges treat immigrant defendants, gathering data that can be used to challenge unjust practices and push for sanctuary courthouse policies.

No special legal training is required—just commitment, attention to detail, and willingness to show up consistently. It's organizing that anyone can do, and it makes a real difference.

If you would like to get involved in a local court watch, see if there is one active in your community. If you are in Staunton, you can connect with Eyes on Staunton, the local court watch group, at eyesonstaunton@protonmail.com to learn more or get involved.

Know Your Rights

There is a wonderful resource known as a *red card* that is produced by the Immigrant Legal Resource Center. These cards can be accessed at <https://www.ilrc.org/red-cards-tarjetas-rojas>. It is recommended to order or print some and keep them with you, give them to people at events, and make them available at public places, particularly where folks who would benefit from them most might be. For convenience, the next page contains cards that you can cut out yourself to distribute. It is recommended to laminate these for durability. You can laminate them at home using clear contact paper, peel-off laminating sheets, or even a layer of tape cut to fit.

Bail/Legal Defense Funds

A tangible way to stand in solidarity with people being detained by ICE is to give to local bail/legal defense funds. These funds are incredibly important, as they allow people to get legal support and leave detention to be with their families. *Any amount you can give is helpful*, don't let yourself be deterred by an inability to give a lot.

There are bail funds all around the country. If you are based in the Charlottesville area you can give to:

- Cville Immigrant Freedom Fund (<https://reimaginecva.org/listing-item/cville-immigrant-freedom-fund/>)
- Central Virginia Community Support Fund (<https://secure.actblue.com/donate/ccfreedomfund>)
- Legal Aid Justice Center (<https://www.justice4all.org/>)
- ACLU (www.aclu.org/)

You have constitutional rights:

- **DO NOT OPEN THE DOOR** if an immigration agent is knocking on the door.
- **DO NOT ANSWER ANY QUESTIONS** from an immigration agent if they try to talk to you. You have the right to remain silent.
- **DO NOT SIGN ANYTHING** without first speaking to a lawyer. You have the right to speak with a lawyer.
- If you are outside of your home, ask the agent if you are free to leave and if they say yes, leave calmly.
- **GIVE THIS CARD TO THE AGENT.** If you are inside of your home, show the card through the window or slide it under the door.

Usted tiene derechos constitucionales:

- **NO ABRA LA PUERTA** si un agente de inmigración está tocando la puerta.
- **NO CONTESTE NINGUNA PREGUNTA** de un agente de inmigración si trata de hablar con usted. Usted tiene el derecho a guardar silencio.
- **NO FIRME NADA** sin antes hablar con un abogado. Usted tiene el derecho de hablar con un abogado.
- Si usted está fuera de su casa, pregúntele al agente si tiene la libertad de irse y si le dice que sí, váyase con tranquilidad.
- **ENTRÉGUELE ESTA TARJETA EL AGENTE.** Si usted está dentro de su casa, muestre la tarjeta por la ventana o pásela debajo de la puerta.