

## Visiting Immigrants in U.S. Detention: A CIVIC Visitor Volunteer Training Agenda

*The purpose of this 3-hour training is to provide information and guidelines to assist the visitors who work as volunteers in detention facilities as part of a CIVIC-affiliated immigration detention visitation program.*

*CIVIC is dedicated to ending the isolation and abuse of persons in immigration detention by building and strengthening community visitation programs across the United States. Visitation programs connect persons in civil immigration detention with community members. These volunteer visitors provide immigrants in detention with a link to the outside world, while also preventing human rights abuses by creating a community presence in otherwise invisible detention facilities.*

*CIVIC is a national organization with affiliated community visitation programs across the United States. CIVIC provides capacity-building support to current visitation groups, resources and training to new groups, and a communication platform for all visitation groups. CIVIC combines this practical approach to social change with a vision of social justice, setting in motion a national movement to combat the isolating experience of immigration detention. For more information, please visit CIVIC's website at [www.endisolation.org](http://www.endisolation.org).*

### AGENDA

(30 minutes) Introductions. At the heart of the visitation movement is COMMUNITY not only because the best way for programs to start and flourish is when communities take initiative, but also because visitation is difficult. It is emotionally draining and the only way you will be able to sustain yourself is if you have the support of your community—this community.

Each person says his/her name and what REALLY brought him or her here today. Also what are you unsure about, afraid about? Encourage people to really feel like this is safe space to be open/vulnerable.

(1 hour) Overview of Immigration Detention and the Visitation Movement.

- Background on first immigration detention case
- Pre 1996 & Post 1996 immigration detention
- Landscape, conditions, standards
- Specifics on the detention facility you will be visiting
- History of the visitation movement
- Stories highlighting importance of visitation and reality of immigration detention (4 stories)
- Questions (but questions are encouraged throughout)

(10 minute break)

(1 hour) What Does It Take to be a Visitor Volunteer? (questions are encouraged throughout)

- Security rules and regulations
- The role of the visitor volunteer (visitation is NOT for everyone and that's OK)
  - What will the visitation program be providing you?
  - Recommendations for being a stellar visitor volunteer
  - Steps for a good visit
  - Issues that should be referred to Visitation Program Coordinator(s)/CIVIC
  - Confidentiality
  - Recording information, reporting information, and support systems

(20 minutes) Hypotheticals, Role Playing, and Questions

*To receive a free copy of CIVIC's training video on how to be a visitor volunteer, please contact CIVIC at [info@endisolation.org](mailto:info@endisolation.org).*

*CIVIC staff also is available to conduct in-person trainings.*

