

CIVIC

A Guide to Touring U.S. Immigration Detention Facilities
& Building Alliances



A Guide to Touring U.S. Detention Facilities & Building Alliances
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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 our website at www.endisolation.org

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WHAT IS A COMMUNITY VISITATION PROGRAM?

A Community Visitation Program (CVP) ends the isolation of men and women in U.S. immigration detention by providing them with a volunteer visitor. CVPs connect volunteer visitors to immigrants in detention for sustained one-to-one relationships. Each volunteer visitor meets with a person in immigration detention on a regular basis, usually once a week for a period of months or years. As CVPs are often the only regular outside presence at a detention facility, visitor volunteers are in a unique position to protect against human rights abuses in detention and ensure that each person is treated with dignity. Moreover, visitation programs have the power to transform communities. Immigration detention is no longer an invisible practice because visitors are sharing stories from within detention with their friends, family, churches, and schools.

Currently, there are over 20 CVPs across the United States. In past years, establishing a CVP typically took one to three years because of challenges faced by communities with local detention facilities and U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) Field Offices.

However, Community Initiatives for Visiting Immigrants in Confinement (CIVIC) believes this reality will soon change. This manual is designed by CIVIC for communities across the country hoping to start a visitation program using ICE's new Visitation Directive. We are grateful for the guidance of the [Women's Refugee Commission](#) and the [Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service](#) who have outlined the general procedure for using the visitation directive. CIVIC encourages readers of this manual to review WRC's and LIRS's guidelines by following the links above.

The benefit of this resource is that the general guidelines are tailored to the unique request of using the Visitation Directive as a tool to establish contact and set up a permanent CVP. In addition, this manual provides an overview of some of the successes and roadblocks CVPs have encountered in the last year while using the Visitation Directive.

WHAT IS ICE'S VISITATION DIRECTIVE?

In September 2011, ICE announced the creation of a new policy the *Stakeholder Procedures for Requesting a Detention Facility Tour and/or Visitation*, also commonly referred to as the *Visitation Directive*. The Visitation Directive provides access to detention facilities for any organization or group of individuals that wishes to tour a facility and interview individuals in immigration detention. The longstanding advocacy of the Women's Refugee Commission (WRC), the Detention Watch Network (DWN), and Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service (LIRS) was critical in bringing about this new policy.

The Visitation Directive was designed for organizations that monitor conditions in detention facilities. Its original intent was to streamline the process for gaining access to a detention facility on a specific day for a specific purpose. It was not designed for community groups, such as CVPs, looking to establish a more permanent presence at an individual detention facility. Nevertheless, through conversation with CVPs across the country and meetings with ICE, CIVIC believes the Visitation Directive can be used as a first step to starting a consistent Community Visitation Program.

The United States has the largest immigration detention infrastructure in the world where people are isolated for months and sometimes years in county jails and for-profit prisons. CIVIC and its affiliated visitation programs work to end the isolation and human rights abuses of people in U.S. immigration detention.

WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE VISITATION DIRECTIVE AND A COMMUNITY VISITATION PROGRAM?

Since September 2011, ICE Field Offices, local detention facility staff, and community groups have expressed confusion over the difference between the Visitation Directive and CVPs. The confusion is largely due to the policy's name, the ***Visitation Directive***, which is not meant to apply to, or hinder, ***Community Visitation***

Programs (CVPs). Detention center/jail staff often do not understand the difference between organizations and community groups that use the Visitation Directive for monitoring purposes on an infrequent basis and CVPs that operate inside of detention facilities on a weekly basis.

There are over 20 CVPs across the United States in various stages of development. Generally, there are two types of CVPs: those that operate with the formal approval of ICE and detention center/jail staff and those that operate informally without this approval. Below are three common approaches to starting **formal** and **informal** CVPs:



1) Due to visitation policies at specific detention facilities, communities build **formal** relationships with ICE and detention center/jail staff to allow for consistent visitor access. (Example: Detention Dialogues, West County Detention Facility in California)

2) Communities coordinate with ICE and detention center/jail staff to start a **formal** visitation program, not out of necessity, but because these relationships provide extra incentives, such as contact visits and other privileges. (Example: Interfaith Committee for Detained Immigrants, McHenry County Jail in Illinois)

3) Communities operate **informal** visitation programs, meaning that the community group does not have a formal relationship with ICE and detention center/jail staff. Instead, the group works with family members and attorneys to identify immigrants in detention who are in need of support. These CVPs need only the full name, nationality, and Alien Registration Number of those detained in order to set up visits. (Example: Grassroots Leadership's Visitation Program, T. Don Hutto Detention Center in Texas)

For a more comprehensive look at the difference between formal and informal visitation programs, see *Strategies and Stories on How to Start an ICE-approved Visitation Program* (available at <http://www.endisolation.org/resources/>).

USING THE VISITATION DIRECTIVE TO START A VISITATION PROGRAM: CASE STUDIES

Although implementation of the Visitation Directive was not intended to apply to or hinder Community Visitation Programs, CIVIC believes community groups can strategically use it to facilitate contact with detention center/jail staff and ICE's Field Representatives in the hopes of starting a formalized CVP.

While prospective visitation programs have run into a series of issues with starting a visitation program after using the Visitation Directive, the ICE Office of the Public Advocate and dedicated Field Public Advocate Liaisons have been working with CIVIC to resolve issues as they arise.

I. Case Studies – Problems With Visitation Directive Implementation

A. Detention Facilities Are Confused About Purpose of ICE Visitation Directive

After the Visitation Directive was announced, Detention Dialogues, a formal established visitation program at the West County Detention Facility in Northern California, was notified by jail staff that ICE had come out with a new directive that was going to make visitation very difficult. Local jail staff was under the impression that the paperwork required under ICE's Visitation Directive would need to be filled out every time a Detention Dialogues' visitor met with an individual in detention.

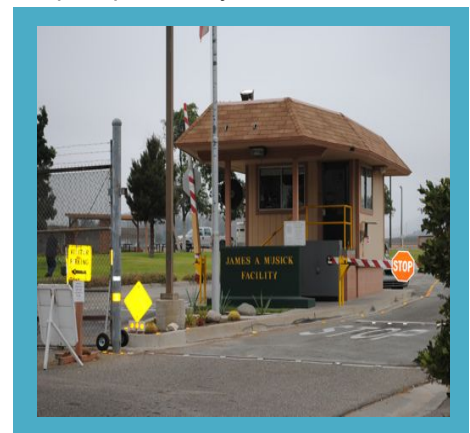
Detention Dialogues worked with WRC and ICE to clarify with jail staff that ICE did not intend the new policy to apply to or hinder established visitation programs. Local jail staff and Detention Dialogues were relieved by this clarification, and visitation resumed.

B. Some Detention Facilities View the Visitation Directive as Purely a Monitoring Tool and Not a Means for Initiating CVP's

After using the Visitation Directive as a means to tour ICE-contracted facilities and meet with representatives from ICE Field Offices, communities have overcome challenges faced by ICE-contracted facilities as the Directive does not specifically include guidance or authority on initiating CVP's. For example, in one county, a prospective visitation group reports that while ICE's Field Office is amenable to a visitation program, the Captain of the local facility has refused to meet with the group to discuss the possibility of more regular visitation. This ICE Field Office has recommended using the Visitation Directive on a monthly basis to initiate contact with men and women in immigration detention at the local county jail. While each ICE Field Office may require participants in the tour/visit to resubmit their forms via post each time they desire a visit/tour, CIVIC suggests trying to submit the forms via email. ICE Field Offices seem to be amenable to this option, which will allow you to easily reactivate the Visitation Directive the following month using the scanned copies previously submitted.

C. Local Counties Apply their Own Policies for Obtaining a Tour

ICE's Visitation Directive streamlines the process of requesting a tour/visit of a detention facility, but visitors must still comply with applicable ICE detention standards and *local facility requirements*. For example, Orange County, California, requires community groups to submit documentation to fulfill ICE's requirements as well as Orange County's Release of Liability and Clearance form to tour its two detention facilities: James Musick Facility and Theo Lacy Facility.



II. Case Studies – Some Success Stories

A. The Visitation Directive Gives You Almost Immediate Access to ICE and the Detention Facility

Part of the reason why visitation programs have taken years to get established is that ICE and local detention facilities have been unwilling to meet with community groups interested in starting visitation programs. The Visitation Directive changes this because an ICE Field Office Representative along with detention facility staff accompany community visitors during their tour/visit of the facility. This provides community groups with an

opportunity to inquire about how to start a visitation program.

For example, at the James Musick Facility in California, CIVIC accompanied a community group on a tour/visit. Facility staff was interested in beginning a conversation on starting a visitation program, and ICE asked for a written proposal. The written proposal resulted in approval from ICE and the Orange County Sheriff's Department, and it took only three months from the time the community group requested a tour to when ICE approved the CVP.



“Although we had already begun visiting men and women in immigration detention during normal visiting hours at the James Musick Facility, the tour helped in many ways. It allowed us to see the inside of the facility, to better understand the living quarters and situation for immigrants at Musick. A couple of us even saw the

women we had already visited and exchanged a few words. It also helped further our developing relationships with ICE, the Orange County Sheriff's Department, and other James Musick staff. The tour also resulted in official approval of our visitation program, and we are now able to post a regular sign-up sheet in the detention facility for immigrants who want a visit.

Most of our visitors had never been in a ‘jail,’ so the tour eased lots of discomforts. A tour also is beneficial for someone who may be undecided about starting to visit or even for someone who knows they will not be visiting but wants to be supportive in some other way.” – Jan Meslin, Coordinator of Friends of Orange County Detainees

B. The Visitation Directive Can Be Activated on a Regular Basis

If a group looking to start a visitation program faces resistance from individual detention facilities, the group can use the visitation directive on a monthly basis to visit with immigrants in that detention facility. Instead of requesting a tour and interviews with the men and women in immigration detention each month, groups can use the visitation directive to request only interviews with immigrants in detention.

While establishing a working relationship with the jail and the local ICE Field Office is preferable to activating the Visitation Directive monthly, this is an option for groups facing unwavering resistance from the local detention facility. In fact, one ICE Field Office has been working with one of CIVIC's prospective visitation programs to initiate monthly contact with immigrants in detention by using the Visitation Directive. However, as there remains no legally protected right to visitation, visitations will be accommodated based on resources available.

HOW DO I USE THE VISITATION DIRECTIVE TO START A VISITATION PROGRAM?

CIVIC is committed to ending the isolation and abuse of immigrants in detention by building and strengthening community visitation programs. If you choose to use the Visitation Directive for the purpose of establishing a CVP, we suggest using the following documents and procedures to help you prepare for your tour as well as explain the purpose of your visit.

Step One: Schedule Your Visit/Tour

At least 14 days prior to your planned visit, submit **Background Information for Each Visitor**, a **Cover Letter**, and a **One-Pager** explaining the benefits of a visitation program to the Field Public Advocate Liaison.

- See pages 9 and 10 of this manual for a sample Cover Letter and a completed One-Pager
- Include background information for each visitor as required by the facility (e.g. Full Name, Date of Birth, Social Security Number, Driver's License Number, etc.)
- For the contact information of the Field Public Advocate Liaisons, visit the following web-page:
<http://www.ice.gov/about/offices/enforcement-removal-operations/publicadvocate/contact.htm>

Submit the following additional completed forms:

1. Tour/Visit Notification Flyer & Sign-Up Sheet
 - <http://www.ice.gov/doclib/publicadvocate/pdf/71-031.pdf>
2. Signed ICE Visitor Code of Conduct form for each stakeholder participant
 - <http://www.ice.gov/doclib/publicadvocate/pdf/71-032.pdf>
3. Copy of Sample Consent Form
 - See page 11 for a sample English/Spanish Consent Form, prepared by CIVIC

ICE's forms also may be found under the Quick Links Section on the left side of the following web-page:
<http://www.ice.gov/about/offices/enforcement-removal-operations/publicadvocate/>

SAMPLE COVER LETTER

<Organization Name>

<Organization Address>

[You may use Community Initiatives for Visiting Immigrants in Confinement and your own home address if you do not yet have a visitation program name or PO Box]

<Date>

<Field Office Director or Contact Name>

<Field Office Address>

Dear *[Field Office Director]*:

Community Initiatives for Visiting Immigrants in Confinement (CIVIC) and *[Name of your program]* would like to conduct a visit to the *[name of facility]* on *[insert three potential dates]*. During this visit, we would like to tour the facility and interview immigrants in detention.

The purpose of this visit is to learn more about *[name of facility]* and the needs of immigrants detained there as well as begin a dialogue with you and your staff on how to start a community visitation program at *[name of facility]*. Currently, there are over 20 community visitation programs operating at ICE-contracted facilities across the country. *[Name of your program]* is a member of CIVIC, a national organization committed to ending the isolation of immigrants in detention by building and strengthening visitation programs. CIVIC and *[name of your program]* are excited about bringing this cost-effective service to your facility. Enclosed, you will find a one-pager explaining the purpose of visitation programs and how this visitation program can benefit *[name of facility]*.

During the tour, we would like to visit the housing units (both male and female), special housing units, medical unit, library, dining areas, recreation spaces, and the visitation rooms. We also would like the opportunity to speak with any immigrants in detention interested and willing to meet with us.

We are available from *[insert number of hours, for example: all day; from 9 am to 2 pm; etc.]* on the following dates: *[list proposed dates]*

The visit will be conducted by *[insert number of individuals conducting visit]* community members whose information is as follows:

Individual 1 Full Name

Individual 1 Affiliation [e.g. your organization]

Individual 1 Date of Birth

Individual 1 Driver's License State and Number

Individual 1 Social Security Number

Individual 2 Full Name

Individual 2 Affiliation

Individual 2 Date of Birth

Individual 2 Driver's License State and Number

Individual 2 Social Security Number

Enclosed, please find completed copies of the ICE Stakeholder Tour/Visit Notification Flyer and Sign Up Sheet; a signed copy of the ICE Stakeholder Code of Conduct for each participant; and our consent form for your review.

Please let me know at your earliest convenience which dates would work best for you and your staff. If you need any additional information or have questions about this request, please contact *[name]* at *[phone]* or *[email]*. You may also contact CIVIC's national office at 385-212-4842 or by emailing info@endisolation.org.

Best regards,

[Name, Position, Affiliation]

Community Initiatives for Visiting Immigrants in Confinement (CIVIC)

Mission Statement

CIVIC ends the isolation of persons in immigration detention by building and strengthening community visitation services at ICE-contracted detention facilities across the United States.

What is a community visitation service?

An immigration detention visitation service connects immigrants in detention to community volunteers for conversation. Volunteers will not visit as social workers or lawyers, but simply as friends. Volunteers will be encouraged to recognize their role as listeners, allowing the detained immigrant to guide the conversation. It is important to note that volunteers will not solicit immigrants in detention to become clients in violation of applicable Rules of Professional Conduct.

What are the benefits of this visitation service?

A visitation service for ICE detainees will support your facility. Surveys typically show that boredom is one of the most common and damaging problems in detention. Unable to alleviate tension, trauma, and anxiety through visiting with friends from the outside, the detained immigrant's isolation may reinforce these feelings. Many immigrants in detention do not have family or friends who can visit them either because their family members are undocumented or because they have been transferred to this detention facility from another part of the country. Visits from community members give detainees a "break," serve to boost their morale, and help individuals refocus their emotions on positive relationships while in detention.

Does ICE encourage visitation?

Yes, the ICE Performance-Based National Detention Standards (PBNDS) encourage visitation. Standard 5.7 of the 2011 PBNDS, Standard 32 of the 2008 PBNDS, and the Standard on Visitation of the 2000 PBNDS all encourage community visitation.

Will this visitation service cost your facility anything?

No. In fact, this visitation service will provide ICE detainees with an additional activity without the need to increase your facility's capacity because there is no overhead cost for such a service. As organizers of this service, we would make sure each volunteer undergoes the appropriate background check and completes an appropriate, documented orientation program so that he or she is aware of your facility's applicable rules and procedures and agree to comply with them.

Are there any other similar visitation services offered in the United States?

Yes. There are over 20 visitation programs across the country.

What are the different models of visitation services?

There are a number of different models of immigration detention visitation services, and CIVIC and our local community members are willing to work with your facility to develop and implement a visitation service that works best for your facility. Here are two common models:

(1) Visitors meet *once a week* in a classroom with a group of men or women in immigration detention. (Examples: McHenry County Jail in Illinois; Ramsey County Jail in Minnesota)

(2) Visitors meet with immigrants in detention during regular visiting hours. These visits do not count against the immigrant's generally allotted number of visits per week. Visitors know whom to visit in detention because ICE provides the visitation group with an ICE Pro Bono Telephone System extension and visitors make announcements once a month in the pods/modules. This model works best in facilities with liberal visiting hours. (Examples: Otay Detention Facility in California; Elizabeth Detention Center in New Jersey)

For more information, visit: www.ENDISOLATION.org
To contact CIVIC, email info@endisolation.org or call 385-21-CIVIC.

Community Initiatives for Visiting Immigrants in Confinement (CIVIC)

**& _____
Authorization and Release**

Would you like to be connected to community members for a visit?

CIVIC community members are NOT government employees. They are NOT lawyers.

They are NOT social workers. They are NOT religious ministers.

CIVIC community members would be offering friendship and the opportunity to connect with a community member who cares deeply about the lives of men and women in immigration detention. If you are interested, please fill out the information below.

Print name: _____ A# _____

I understand that, by signing this release, I grant CIVIC and _____ the permission to speak with me. I also understand that my personal identifying information will not be shared with anyone beyond the authorized visitor(s) and will be kept confidential.

X _____
Signature

Date

.....
Community Initiatives for Visiting Immigrants in Confinement (CIVIC)

**& _____
Autorización y Permiso**

¿Te gustaría un visitante? Si desea recibir la visita de un miembro de la comunidad, escriba su nombre aquí. Este miembro de CIVIC NO ES un empleado del gobierno. Este miembro NO ES un abogado. Este miembro NO ES un trabajador social. Este miembro NO ES un ministro religioso. Este miembro de CIVIC ofrece amistad y la oportunidad de hablar con alguien de la comunidad que se preocupa por las vidas de los que están dentro de la cárcel.

Nombre: _____ A# _____

Yo entiendo, al firmar esta autorización, Yo le doy permiso a CIVIC y _____ para hablar conmigo. Además, yo entiendo que mi información personal de identificación no será compartida con nadie más, a parte de las personas que están autorizadas para visitarme, y que será mantenida confidencial.

X _____
Firma

Fecha

**Sample Consent Form prepared by Community Initiatives for Visiting Immigrants in Confinement*

Step Two: Email CIVIC

Email CIVIC and let us know you have submitted the paperwork for the tour.

1. Email us at info@endisolation.org so that we can help you ensure that the Captain/Warden of the detention facility as well as an ICE Representative attends the tour.
2. If you encounter any problems with obtaining a visit/tour, please let us know.

Step Three: Prepare For Your Visit/Tour

There are many important issues to keep in mind as you prepare for your visit/tour, especially if you hope to use the Visitation Directive to start or strengthen a CVP.

A. Organize a Group of Community Volunteers:

Organizing a group of community volunteers is a crucial step both in the process of using the Visitation Directive and in starting a CVP.

For groups that are in the initial stages of starting a visitation program—and that may not yet have a committed volunteer pool—using the Visitation Directive may be a great first step in recruiting and engaging prospective volunteers. CIVIC recommends tapping into already organized groups, such as faith communities and student organizations. In preparation for a visit/tour, many groups organize an informational session that explains to volunteers the exact purpose of the visit, what is expected of them, and the many ethical concerns outlined below.

CIVIC recommends organizing an in-person informational session so that participants in the tour can openly discuss their concerns in advance. Visiting immigrants in detention can be a difficult and traumatic experience. Many visitor volunteers struggle with feeling safe in such a punitive institutional environment. For others, visiting immigrants in detention may trigger negative emotional or psychological feelings that are damaging to health and well-being. In using the Visitation Directive, some volunteers who are committed to helping immigrants in detention may decide that visitation is not the best means for them to do so. It is important that volunteers are well prepared in advance, so that they may exude as much comfort in their role as is possible in an institutional prison setting. If volunteers appear to be comfortable, this may make it easier for those detained to open up and share their concerns and experiences.



CIVIC can help you prepare for hosting an informational session or training, and CIVIC staff is available to help conduct in-person trainings or conference calls. Preparing for a visit in advance is the most responsible approach, as volunteers will be informed and empowered to do what is best for them and for the individuals in detention they want to support.

B. Ethical Concerns and Confidentiality:

Visitors should clearly explain the purpose of their visit to individuals who are detained. Visitors should speak with compassion, while relaying their desire to help those detained. However, it is also important to explain the limitations on the kind of support visitors can provide. For example, because over 80% of individuals in detention lack legal representation, this is a huge need, but visitors cannot meet it. However, if this is clearly communicated in the beginning of the interview session, those detained are more likely to understand the capacities of the group and share more about their non-legal needs. Remember, if you are able to start a visitation program, you eventually may be able to connect individuals in detention to pro-bono representation. However, it is best not to promise anything during this initial visit.

Additionally, be sure to convey that any information individuals in detention share with visitors will be held in the strictest confidentiality. CIVIC suggests using the following language:

English: "We are a group of community members who are concerned for your well being. We are here to talk with you today about your experience in detention and how we may be able to help you. Unfortunately, we are not lawyers or social workers. We cannot influence the outcome of your legal case or answer any legal questions. Also, we are not connected to ICE or the jail staff in any way and anything you tell us will not be disclosed to anyone. We are here today because we hope to start a visitation program at this facility that would connect community members like us to you, or others detained here, on a regular basis for conversation and support. We are here today to listen to you, to learn about your experience, so we can understand what kind of support you need."

Spanish: "Somos un grupo de miembros de comunidad que somos preocupado por su bienestar. Estamos aquí para hablar sobre su experiencia en detención y ver si podemos ayudarse en una manera. No somos abogados ni trabajadores sociales. No podemos influir en el resultado de su caso legal o contestar preguntas legales. Además, no somos conectados con ICE o el personal de la cárcel de ninguna manera y todo lo que nos dicen que no será compartida con ellos. Hoy estamos aquí porque tenemos la esperanza de iniciar un programa de visitas en este centro que se conectaría miembros de la comunidad al igual que nosotros a usted, o a otros detenidos, aquí, sobre una base regular para la conversación y soporte. Hoy estamos aquí para escucharte y aprender de su experiencia, para que podamos entender qué tipo de soporte que necesita."

CIVIC also encourages prospective CVPs to review, Visiting Immigrants in U.S. Detention Facilities (also available at <http://www.endisolation.org/resources/>).

C. Ensure Volunteers Are Prepared to Translate:

If you plan on interviewing individuals in detention, it is essential to recruit volunteers who are bilingual (Spanish and English). Spanish is the most common foreign language spoken in immigration detention, but if possible, try to recruit volunteers who are bilingual and fluent in other languages, too. It is very important that volunteers are able to understand the important concerns those detained may share. Although some individuals detained may be bilingual themselves and able to translate for the group of volunteers, it is best to plan for translation in advance to ensure the most effective and ethical forms of communication. However, do not let lack of language diversity prevent you from using the Visitation Directive or starting a visitation program!

D. Create a List of Questions for the Tour:

CIVIC suggests preparing a list of questions to ask the facility staff during the tour as well as a list of questions to ask the men and women in immigration detention. There should be some overlap between the two sets of questions because visitors have reported receiving contradictory information from facility staff and immigrants in detention. This will allow CIVIC to correct any misunderstandings and ensure people in immigration detention are receiving proper treatment and services in accordance with ICE policies and procedures as directed by the Performance-Based National Detention Standards.

This is a sample list of questions, which has been adapted from questions used by CIVIC during tours. Special thanks goes to Anne Chmielewski for preparing a first draft of these questions.

Questions to Ask During the Tour

1. What is the capacity of the facility? How many immigrants does it house? How many immigrants are there now?
2. What are the top five nationalities held in this facility?
3. What languages do they speak? What translation services are available for residents?
4. Can community groups provide for unmet needs such as additional clothing, toiletries, calling cards, books, money?
5. How much do phone calls cost? How do men and women in immigration detention make phone calls? Do they have to purchase a calling card? Are calling cards available for purchase at the commissary? Can they call collect?
6. Does ICE's Pro Bono Telephone System work at this facility?

7. What are the visiting hours? Are they contact visits or behind Plexiglas walls?
8. How can a family member visit with someone in immigration detention? Can they just show up or do they have to book in advance?
9. What identification documents are required by visitors?
10. After a person in immigration detention receives a visit, what is the protocol? Are they strip searched before going back to their cells?
11. What support, if any, is provided to those residents when they are released?
12. Are people currently in ICE custody mixed with people in county or state custody?
13. Do they include asylum seekers/vulnerable groups?
14. Breakdown of security level kept at (minimum, medium, maximum)
15. Access to legal service providers (KYR or LOP, do groups screen detained individuals, do groups provide legal representation)
16. Are credible/reasonable fear interviews conducted via phone/VTC or in person?
17. # medical staff, # mental health staff, # requests/week for mental health and medical care?
18. How does an immigrant in detention request medical care?
19. Is there a subcontractor for health services? Who do health staff report to?
20. Has the facility been accredited by the American Correctional Association or the National Commission on Correctional Health Care (NCCHC)? Why are people placed in solitary (punishment vs. medical vs. suicidal/mental health)?

Questions to Ask the Men and Women in Immigration Detention

Visitation

1. Have you ever received a visit from a family member or friend?
2. What is the visitation room like?
3. After your visit, are you strip searched or are you allowed to go back to your cell without being searched?

Phone Access

1. How often are you allowed to use the phone?
2. How expensive are your phone calls?
3. Were you given a list of ICE's Pro Bono Telephone extensions? For lawyers? For Consulates? Embassies? Immigration Court?

Access to Medical Care

1. Requesting medical appointments—process, wait times?
2. Translation services (phone or in person is okay)?
3. Counseling available for sadness/nightmares/coping with past difficult life events?

Conditions

1. Number of persons in a unit
2. Housed with only other immigration detainees?
3. Recreation—is it outdoors? How often?
4. Programs/education? Access to GED, computer, or health classes?
5. Cleanliness?
6. Relationship with officers?
7. Religious services?
8. Commissary prices, over the counter medication costs
9. DSM – Do you know who the Detention Service Manager is? What do they do?
10. Are you allowed to participate in work programs? Is it optional or mandatory? Are certain privileges linked to whether you participate in the work program?

Grievance Process

1. Have you ever tried to file a grievance? About what? How did you file it and with whom?
2. What happened? Did you ever get a response, how long did it take, etc.

Solitary Confinement

1. Have you been placed in solitary & why?
2. If yes, why were you placed in solitary?

Food

1. Meet nutritional needs?
2. Cleanliness, quality/spoilage
3. Meal times

Access to Legal Services

1. Aware of free service providers?
2. Barriers in meeting up with legal services
3. Is legal library up to date, accessible? Librarian/assistant?

Step Four: Ask ICE and Detention Facility Staff About Visitation During the Tour

CIVIC suggests using the following language:

“Across the United States, communities are providing visitation services to men and women in ICE custody. Currently, there are over 20 visitation programs. CIVIC, a national organization that helps build and support visitation programs, has met with ICE’s national office. Are you open to starting a dialogue on how we might be able to provide this service at *[name of facility]*?”

Step Five: Debriefing/Following-up After the Tour

1. Debriefing with ICE/Jail Staff: Some groups have asked to meet with the detention facility staff and ICE immediately after the tour and interviews to debrief. If permitted, this is a great time to voice some of the concerns group members have and to discuss the possibility of a follow-up meeting to determine how your visitation program can serve the jail and immigrants in detention.
2. Email to ICE/Jail Staff: Send an email to the captain of the detention facility and the ICE Representative, thanking them for the visit. Request a follow-up meeting with the ICE Representative to discuss how to implement a visitation program.
3. Debrief with Volunteers: These are some sample questions to help you lead a discussion and unwind after what may have been a traumatic visit.
 - a. What was something you heard or saw today that broke your heart?
 - b. How do you feel about being a visitor to immigrants in detention?
 - c. During difficult times, how do you keep going? From what sources/people do you draw hope and purpose for your life?
 - d. What would a family member or friend say are your greatest strengths or gifts? How do you hope to use these strengths or gifts to be a visitor to immigrants in detention?

You may also consider recommending the following books to your volunteers:

- a. Trauma Stewardship: An Everyday Guide to Caring for Self While Caring for Others
- b. Self-Nurture: Learning to Care for Yourself As Effectively As You Care for Everyone Else

CONCLUSION

The appropriate next steps depend on many different variables. CIVIC is committed to working one-on-one with programs to help determine next steps as well as provide general support in your endeavor to build or strengthen a community visitation program. Please reach out to us at any time at info@endisolation.org or call us at 385-21-CIVIC (385-212-4842).