



U.S. Immigration  
and Customs  
Enforcement

Christina Fialho  
Co-Founder/Executive Director  
Community Initiatives for Visiting Immigrants in Confinement (CIVIC)  
P.O. Box 40677  
San Francisco, California 94140

Dear Ms. Fialho:

Thank you for your August 1, 2013, letter regarding the Community Initiatives for Visiting Immigrants in Confinement (CIVIC) visitation programs in detention facilities within the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), Enforcement and Removal Operations (ERO) Los Angeles area of responsibility (AOR).

Through the agency's Detention Reform Initiative, which was initiated in 2009, ICE has demonstrated its commitment to an immigration detention system that prioritizes the health, safety, and welfare of detainees. This initiative has already improved many elements of detention, including reduced transfers, improved access to counsel, increased recreation, improved conditions of confinement, increased access to quality medical and mental health care, and increased protection for vulnerable populations.

In the spirit of our reform initiative, on September 28, 2011, ICE issued the *Stakeholder Detention Facility Tours and Visitation Directive*. The goal of this Directive is to facilitate access to our facilities and to invite outside perspectives on our detention practices. Also, to give due regard to transparency, ICE's detention standards ensure that members of the media are informed of the agency's detention practices through organized facility tours and detainee interviews. Stakeholder procedures corresponding to this directive may be found by visiting our website at [www.ice.gov](http://www.ice.gov).

To this end, ICE supports CIVIC's stated goal of providing non-relative therapeutic visitation to those in the agency's care and custody. Since the fall of 2012, ICE has demonstrated this support by establishing re-occurring visitation programs in numerous locations around the country.

While promoting transparency with regard to immigration detention, ICE is dedicated to ensuring that detainees' personal information is respected and safeguarded. This is critical in maintaining public trust. To accomplish this, ICE has established privacy protections in our detention standards and policies to ensure detainees' consent is received prior to any interview, recording, or photograph. This is done usually through a signed privacy waiver authorizing information disclosure to a third party, which may include a media representative, community group, or visitation volunteer.

All stakeholders who wish to enter ICE detention facilities must disclose the nature of their visit, particularly whether it is community service oriented or media focused. Individuals reporting for online media publications and other freelance journalists or bloggers are considered “media representatives” under the Performance Based National Detention Standards (PBNDS) 2011, Standard 7.2. Such individuals may access our facilities in compliance with these standards.

ICE welcomes the resumption of CIVIC’s non-relative therapeutic visitation to detention facilities in the Los Angeles AOR. However, like all stakeholders accessing ICE detention facilities, CIVIC and its Los Angeles-based affiliates must ensure that ICE receives sufficient advanced notice of the intended purpose of the visit (e.g. therapeutic visitation, media-related purpose, etc.), and that CIVIC volunteers provide consent forms to the detainees visited and inform the detainees about how any information provided may be used. As with all stated ICE standards and policies related to visitor access, the agency, including its contracted staff, reserves the right to monitor all detainee programming to ensure safety and security.

Adhering to these procedures will ensure detainee safety and privacy while facilitating open and transparent dialogue with all stakeholders. This is critical in order for CIVIC’s volunteers to have continued access to our detention facilities.

Should CIVIC or its affiliates seek to tour ICE detention facilities as media representatives, they must:

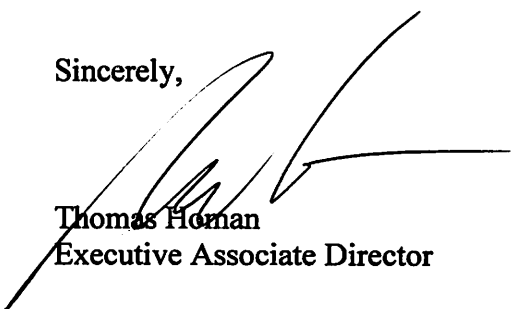
- 1) Request approval for tours and detainee interviews through the local ERO Field Office Director;
- 2) Disclose the purpose of the visit; and
- 3) Obtain a signed privacy (consent) release from any detainee who is interviewed, recorded, or photographed. The consent form can be found in Appendix 7.2.A. of PBNDS 2011.

All media tours require the scheduling and attendance of an ICE Public Affairs Officer.

To resume CIVIC’s visitation programs in the Los Angeles area, please contact Los Angeles Assistant Field Office Director Robert Naranjo at [Robert.Naranjo@ice.dhs.gov](mailto:Robert.Naranjo@ice.dhs.gov) or 213-633-4431. To conduct a tour and/or visitation for media purposes, please contact the ICE Public Affairs Western Office at 949-360-3096. If you have any remaining questions or concerns, you may contact ICE ERO Deputy Assistant Director for Custody Programs and Community Outreach Andrew Lorenzen-Strait at [Andrew.R.Lorenzen.Strait@ice.dhs.gov](mailto:Andrew.R.Lorenzen.Strait@ice.dhs.gov) or 202-732-4262.

ICE ERO appreciates the work of CIVIC and other community-based visitation programs operating around the country. It is our strong desire to continue to facilitate the work of CIVIC in the area of therapeutic visitation. A separate, identical response will be sent to the CIVIC affiliates who co-signed your letter.

Sincerely,



Thomas Foman  
Executive Associate Director