



Texas Catholic Conference of Bishops

KNOW YOUR RIGHTS

Regardless of your immigration status, you have certain rights. Know your rights when you are encountering any law enforcement official or government official.

- 1) You have the right to remain silent. It is your right to refuse to speak to any law enforcement official: federal, state or local.
- 2) If you are not a U.S. citizen and an immigration agent requests your immigration papers, you must show them if you have them with you. Carry all immigration documentation with you at all times.
- 3) You have the right to ask for and review a warrant before law enforcement enters your home. An immigration-related warrant of removal does not give law enforcement the right to enter your home.
- 4) You have the right to speak with an attorney. The government is not required to provide you with an attorney, but you have the right to retain one.
- 5) You have the right not to sign anything until an attorney has reviewed the document and can explain the consequences of signing the document. If you sign the document before you understand it fully you may voluntarily give up legal rights.
- 6) If you are approached by a law enforcement officer, do not run. You have the right not to answer questions. Running may give the officer probable cause to detain or arrest you.
- 7) You have the right to contact your local consulate and request assistance when detained at an immigration detention facility.
- 8) In Texas, a passenger in a vehicle has the right not to provide identity documents unless there is probable cause to detain them, such as visible criminal activity.

PREPARE A FAMILY EMERGENCY PLAN

Prepare for emergencies by creating a family disaster plan that includes the following:

- 1) Contact information of a licensed immigration attorney, preferably a member of the American Immigration Lawyers Association (AILA).
- 2) If you have children who are U.S. citizens, complete an Authorization Agreement for Voluntary Adult Caregiver that allows a Texas resident to designate a family member or friend to take custody of his or her children while he or she is unavailable. Forms and instructions are available in English, Spanish and Vietnamese at texaslawhelp.org/article/authorization-for-nonparent-care-of-a-child and on the Texas State Department of Family and Protective Services website at www.dfps.texas.gov/site_map/forms.asp.
- 3) File a Power of Attorney to designate an agent that can handle any business, property or other personal affairs in your absence. It is necessary for an attorney to file the Power of Attorney with the court.
- 4) Keep all identity and immigration documents together with the information listed above.