



# Know Your Rights: If ICE Stops You in Public

All people living in the United States, including undocumented immigrants, have certain U.S. constitutional rights. If you are undocumented and Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) officers stop you on the street or in a public place, remember your options and rights:

## 1. You Have the Right to Ask if You are Under Arrest or Free to Leave

- Do not panic or run away.
- Ask if you are being arrested or detained. If the ICE officer says no, you can ask if you are free to leave.
  - If they say yes, walk away calmly.
  - If they say no, stay where you are and do not attempt to leave.

## 2. You Have the Right to Remain Silent

- You do not have to speak to the immigration officer, answer any questions, or show any documents.
- If you are asked where you were born or how you entered the United States, you may refuse to answer or remain silent.
- If you choose to remain silent, say “I choose to remain silent.”
- You may show a **know-your-rights card** ([English](#)) ([Spanish](#)) to the officer that explains that you will remain silent and wish to speak to a lawyer.
- If you do not understand English, state the language you speak.

## 3. You are Not Required to Show Immigration Documents

- You may refuse to show identity documents that reveal your country of nationality or citizenship.
- Never show false documents or provide false information.
- Do not say you were born in the United States if you were not, and do not claim to be a U.S. citizen if you are not one.

## 4. You May Refuse a Search

- You have the right to refuse a search of yourself or your personal belongings unless officers have probable cause or a warrant.
- ICE officers cannot search you without your consent unless they have probable cause. However, they can pat down the outside of your clothing if they suspect you have a weapon.

- If ICE officers try to search you, you can say, “I do not consent to a search.”
  - If they search you anyway, do not resist physically.
  - Document what happened – this may help in a future legal case.

## 5. You Have the Right to Speak to a Lawyer

- If you are detained or taken into custody, you have the right to contact an attorney.
- Even if you do not have a lawyer, you may tell the officers that you want to speak to one by saying, “I want to speak to a lawyer.”
- If you have a lawyer, you have the right to talk to that lawyer. If you have proof of that relationship (such as a signed **Form G-28**), give it to an officer.
- If you do not have a lawyer, ask for a list of pro bono (free) or low bono (low cost) lawyers.
- If detained by ICE, you have the right to contact your country’s consulate or have an officer inform the consulate of your detention. Your consulate may be able to assist you in connecting with a lawyer.

## 6. You Do Not Have to Sign Anything

- Do not sign any paperwork without speaking with a lawyer first.
- If you choose to sign something, make sure you fully understand what it means. Signing documents may waive your rights or lead to deportation.

## 7. If you Believe Your Rights Have Been Violated

- Write down what happened or ask a witness to do so.
- Include specific details like names, badge numbers, and exactly what was said and done.
- Report the violation to a lawyer or an immigrant rights organization.

For more information about your rights or to see if you qualify for immigration relief, consult an immigration lawyer. Visit [www.ailalawyer.org](http://www.ailalawyer.org) to find legal help.