



# ICE PRESENCE AT U.S. AIRPORTS

## OVERVIEW

News outlets have confirmed that on March 23, 2026, ICE agents began deploying to some U.S. Airports. While the administration has indicated that the agents are there to assist with the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) officer shortage, we know their presence at airports will undoubtedly cause fear and increase risks of immigration enforcement for noncitizens who may be traveling. We want to make sure that anyone who plans to travel to and from U.S. airports is aware of this news and understands their rights.

### Understand Your Risks Before Traveling or Entering an Airport

- People with prior immigration contact (especially removal/deportation orders) or criminal history (including Lawful Permanent Residents), or who are undocumented or out of immigration status are at higher risk of being detained and removed from the U.S.
- If stopped, answer truthfully and never lie about your status because making a false statement to a federal officer is a crime.
- Under the 4th and 5th Amendment, you have a right to:
  - Remain silent
  - Refuse to sign documents

### How to Prepare for Travel

- Create a defense plan in the event you are detained.
  - Memorize phone numbers of lawyers and loved ones
  - Ensure your loved ones can access your immigration documents
- Carry updated documents, especially if you are in lawful status, and keep copies of them in a secure location as part of your defense plan.
- Secure your devices, i.e. phone, laptop, tablet, including deactivating fingerprint or face ID.
- Protect your communications, including using secure messaging apps.
- Print your airplane ticket, so you do not have to rely on your device to board.

### If you are a University of California Student, Staff or Faculty member

- The UC Immigrant Legal Services Center is available for consultation, including in the event that you are arrested or detained. For urgent matters, you can contact us at [ucimmhelp@law.ucdavis.edu](mailto:ucimmhelp@law.ucdavis.edu).

### Additional Resource

- [ACLU-Enforcement at the Airport](#)
- [NILC & ILRC-Community Alert: Immigration Arrests at Airport \(multilingual\)](#)

*This document is for informational purposes only and is not intended as legal advice.*