

Entry by Immigration Officials

Alki UCC Standard Operating Procedures

Summary & Purpose The purpose of this Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) is to provide clear and actionable guidelines for church staff in the unlikely event that immigration officials or agents (such as U.S. Customs & Border Protection (CBP) or Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE)) request access to the building.

This SOP aims to ensure that the legal rights of the church, its members, and staff are protected while maintaining a respectful and compliant interaction with officials.

By following these procedures, staff can manage such situations, safeguard community rights, and seek appropriate legal and leadership support.

Immigration officials may visit a workplace for many reasons, including:

- Issuing a Notice of Inspection to audit Forms I-9.
- Looking for or investigating a particular employee or group of employees.
- Conducting a worksite enforcement action, commonly known as a raid.

Adopted: December 2025

I. Preparation

To ensure Alki UCC maintains compliance with I-9 reporting requirements, the Office Manager along with the Personnel Team will regularly conduct internal I-9 inventory audits to determine if there are missing I-9s or missing work authorization updates (only where necessary).

All I-9 documentation must be stored securely and separately from other personnel records so they can be accessed quickly if a Notice of Inspection is issued.

II. Immediate Steps

1. **Contact Leadership:** If immigration officials arrive and request access to the campus, immediately call the Council Moderator, Vice Moderator, and the Pastor. Do not allow entry into the building until they arrive.
2. **Stay Calm and Respectful:** Interact with officials calmly and respectfully. Do not obstruct or interfere with their actions.
3. **Verify the Agent's Identity and Purpose:**
 - Ask for identification from the lead special agent and confirm the agency they represent.
 - Write down their contact details or take photos on your phone.
 - Ask them to clarify the reason for the visit.
4. **Do Not Answer Questions:** If staff members or volunteers are asked questions by immigration agents, they should **politely state** that they are not authorized to answer questions and will refer the agent to a supervisor and/or legal counsel.

III. Responding to a Notice of Inspection (NOI)

If an official presents a Notice of Inspection, you will be asked to sign a Certificate of Service. **Only** the Council Moderator (or the Vice Moderator if the Moderator is unavailable) is authorized to sign this document.

1. Do not provide any documents. We have three (3) days to respond.
2. The Council Moderator (or Vice Moderator) must contact legal counsel immediately for assistance in responding to the NOI.

IV. Handling Warrants

If ICE presents a warrant seeking an individual or conducting an enforcement action, follow these steps to verify its validity:

1. **Check for Judicial Signature:** A valid search or arrest warrant must be signed by a judge. ICE administrative warrants (Forms I-200/I-205) are not signed by judges and **do not authorize entry into non-public areas without consent.**
2. **Review Details:** Ensure the warrant specifies the correct address and the scope of the search. It should clearly state the areas ICE is authorized to search.

- Note: Google the Judge's name to verify authenticity

- Note: The address must be exact

Judicial Warrant

- Issued By: A judge or magistrate
- Signature: Signed by a judge or magistrate
- Authority: Grants permission to enter private property
- Details: Specifies the exact address, areas to be searched, and items or individuals to be seized

Example:

- Header: "United States District Court of Western Washington"
- Signature Line: "Judge/Magistrate"

ICE Administrative Warrant

- Issued By: An ICE agent or immigration officer
- Signature: Signed by an ICE agent or immigration officer
- Authority: Does **not** grant permission to enter private property without consent
- Details: May include the name of the individual and reason for arrest but lacks judicial authorization

Example:

- Header: "Department of Homeland Security"
- Signature Line: "Authorized Immigration Officer"

V. Additional Guidelines

- **Do Not Consent to Entry:** Without a valid judicial warrant, do not consent to ICE entering the premises. If a valid search warrant is presented, the Moderator will contact legal counsel **for real-time guidance before taking any further action** and before escorting agents to the area(s) specified in the warrant.
- **Document the Interaction:** Record the names and badge numbers of the ICE agents and document the details of the interaction for future reference.

- **Do Not Attempt to Conceal, Lie, or Mislead:** Avoid providing any misleading information or attempting to hide information or people that ICE is entitled to review or meet with.
- **Seek Legal Advice:** If there are any uncertainties, the Moderator will contact legal counsel immediately for guidance.

VI. If Someone is Detained

If someone is detained by ICE agents or police at or near Alki UCC:

- Call the Moderator, Vice Moderator, and/or Pastor immediately.
- You have a right to observe the arrest from a reasonable distance, so as not to interfere, and to **record the incident**.
- Do not physically interfere with the detention or attempt to prevent the individual from leaving with officials.
- Announce that you are **recording the incident**. You may capture the license plate of a vehicle, if applicable, and the badge number of the officer.
- If possible to do so safely, collect witness statements for future reference.
- **Do not sign any documents without having them reviewed by an attorney first.**

Notifications

After any incident, the Moderator will:

- Immediately report the incident to the Washington Immigrant Solidarity Network (WAISN) hotline at 1-844-724-3737.
- Complete and file an internal incident report within 24 hours.

References

[1] *The Basics on ICE Warrants and ICE Detainers* – ILRC (accessed 2025)

[2] *Warrant Verification Employer Information* – ILRC (accessed 2025)

By following these guidelines, you contribute to the protection of the rights of the synagogue, its members, and staff while complying with legal requirements. If you have any questions or need further clarification, please reach out to the Moderator or Pastor.

For more information on the recent rescission of federal Protected Areas Policies, review the Fact Sheet from the National Immigration Law Center. To familiarize yourself with immigrant rights, review the “Know Your Rights” resources from the ACLU as well as the supplemental document *Know Your Rights with ICE*.

[Factsheet: Trump’s Rescission of Protected Areas Policies Undermines Safety for All - NILC](#)