

Helping Your Child After Arrest: A Guide for Immigrant Families

If your child gets arrested, you may be scared and unsure of what is happening to your child and how you can help. This pamphlet is intended to give family members of youth under 18 who have been arrested some basic information about what to expect, how to locate your loved one, how best to support them, and how immigrant families can stay safe through the juvenile justice process.



If your child is stopped by police, and your child is between the ages of 12-17 (people 18 + are in the adult criminal system), the officer can:

1. **RELEASE:** the police may simply let your child go and in some situations refer your child to a community organization;
2. **RELEASE WITH A TICKET:** other the times the police will give your child a ticket with the date of when your child has to go to court; or
3. **DETAIN:** sometimes the police will take your child to juvenile hall. If taken to juvenile hall, your child is likely to be in one of two **L.A. County Juvenile Hall Locations:**

Barry J. Nidorf Juvenile Hall
16350 Filbert Street
Sylmar, CA 91342
(818) 364-2011

Central Juvenile Hall
1605 Eastlake Avenue
Los Angeles, CA 90033
(323) 226-8611

Can I visit my child in juvenile hall or camp if I am undocumented?

YES—Your name must appear on the visiting list and you must have some form of government-issued ID

- A passport (non-U.S. is ok)
- A state-issued ID (non-driver's license is ok)

If you do NOT have an ID, you can still visit, but you must ask your child's lawyer to have the judge place you on the visiting list.

 **Here in Los Angeles, it is unlikely that ICE will be at the juvenile halls or camps looking for visitors.**



Visiting Information

Juvenile halls accept family visits on weekends only from 1-4 pm. Saturdays are when you can visit your child if their last name begins with A-M and Sundays are when you can visit your child if their last name begins with N-Z. Only two people, parents or guardians are allowed, and for only 45 minutes maximum due to COVID restrictions. The juvenile hall will provide a county-approved mask upon visitation even if you are wearing one. For family visits to juvenile camps, call the camp where your child is located to learn about specific visiting hours and guidelines.

IF YOUR CHILD IS NOT ABLE TO CALL YOU, PLEASE TELL THEIR LAWYER

Steps in a juvenile case

1. First court appearance: arraignment/detention hearing

If your child is held in juvenile hall, they must have this first court appearance within 48 hours (this could be longer if the arrest occurred on a Thursday or Friday, on a court holiday or right before a court holiday). This is when your child will talk to their lawyer for the first time. If your child cannot afford to pay a lawyer, they will get a free lawyer paid for by the government. These lawyers come from offices called the public defender, alternate defender, or independent juvenile defender.

💡 Public Defenders, alternate defenders and independent juvenile defenders are **all lawyers**, most often very good lawyers. Sometimes, it might not seem like it because they are very busy and have a lot of cases. But they are ethically required to provide your child with the BEST representation. While you might see the lawyer talking to the judge or the prosecutor, they cannot make decisions about the outcome of your child's case without talking to your child.



You and your child should always ask their lawyer questions!

At the first hearing, if your child is in juvenile hall, your child's lawyer can argue for their release home.

Note: Even after they are released, your child will have to keep coming back to court until their case is over. If they miss a court date, a warrant will likely be issued for their arrest and they could end up in juvenile hall.

2. Pre-Plea Report Date

After the first court hearing, your child will be put in contact with a probation officer so that the officer can make a recommendation to the court about your child's case. Ask your child's lawyer if you have any questions about what to tell the probation officer.

3. Adjudication

At this hearing, the judge decides if the charge is true or untrue, and whether your child is guilty or not guilty. This is a time for your child's lawyer to tell your child's side of the story and to present any witnesses or evidence in your child's favor.

4. Disposition

If the charge is found true (if your child is found guilty) or if your child accepts a plea offer, there will then be a disposition, meaning the punishment.

One disposition could be that your child is put on probation. While on probation, your child might have to follow certain rules or complete certain requirements like:

- A curfew
- Victim awareness classes
- Drug and alcohol testing
- Check-ins with their probation officer
- Counseling, tutoring or mentoring

Most, if not all, of these requirements should be free of charge. If money or any issue comes up that will make it hard for your child to meet these requirements, contact your child's attorney immediately.

If your child does not do what is required when they are on probation, or is arrested again, they will likely end up back in the court system.

California has strong laws that allow young people to have their juvenile records sealed. This means the record will not show up on any background checks and your child can truthfully state they have not been convicted of a crime (but they still may have to disclose the crime in immigration matters). Ask your child's lawyer about record sealing.

PROBATION OFFICER?	NO
LOCAL POLICE OFFICERS?	NO
LOCAL SHERIFF OFFICERS?	NO
IMMIGRATION AGENTS?	NO
JUDGE?	NO
THEIR LAWYER?	YES

Who should your child talk to about their immigration status?

Generally, police/sheriff officers and immigration agents should never need to know about your child's immigration status. The probation officer and judge might consider it, but your child should never disclose it without talking to their lawyer, first. Throughout the case your child has the **right to remain silent** and the **right to talk to a lawyer**.

Your child should definitely check with their lawyer before they bring up their immigration status with anyone.

It is important to note that juvenile cases may not affect your child's immigration status at all. This is why it is so important to ask your child's lawyer about whether there will be consequences.

What should my child tell their lawyer about their immigration status?

- Everything they know about their immigration history and current status.
- If they plan on applying for or adjusting their immigration status.
- Ask their lawyer about each option for their case and its potential effects on their current immigration status and future options.
- If your family or your child has an immigration lawyer, make sure your child's lawyer and the immigration lawyer have each other's contact information

How can I help my child's case?

Tell your child's lawyer that you can collect letters of support to help your child's case.

Letters of support can be from family members, including yourself, your child's teacher, coach, religious leader, neighbor, or anyone else who knows your child well.

Letters of support should include:

- Information about who is writing the letter and how they know your child
- How long the person has known your child
- The person's remarks about your child (kind person, creative artist, smart, etc.)
- If the person is offering to help your child, how specifically they are offering to help (tutor your child, find them a job, etc.)



These letters should be given only to your child's lawyer.

You can also help by making sure your child’s lawyer understands your child’s immigration status. If your child has an immigration attorney, you should make sure the juvenile lawyer and immigration lawyer have each other’s contact information.

How do I find my child’s court date?

Information about youth is kept private and you won’t be able to find your child’s case online. You can, however, call your child’s lawyer or the Public Defender’s office at: **(213) 893-1041**

At every court hearing your child should be given paperwork with the next court date if there is one.



Should I attend my child’s court dates?

If you have the time, it is helpful to attend your loved one’s court dates because it shows they have community and family support. During COVID-19, however, the courthouses may not allow family or other supporters inside. Check with your loved one’s lawyer before you attempt to go to court.

Should I be worried about ICE at courthouses?

A California law called SB 54 ensures that state and local resources are not used to help federal immigration enforcement and that courthouses are a safe space for everyone in the community.

If you are worried about going to court, you should contact a trusted source for legal advice to discuss in advance.



Advocating for a child in juvenile hall or camp

If your child's rights are being violated or you are worried about their treatment in juvenile hall or juvenile camp, you can make complaints. Complaints that will be kept **confidential** should go to:

- The Probation Reform & Implementation Team by email: prt@prt.lacounty.gov or phone: (213) 974-4787
- The Office of the Ombudsman by emailing ombudsman@probation.lacounty.gov, or calling (877) 822-3222. You can get a complaint to submit here: <https://probation.lacounty.gov/ombudsman/>.

If immediate attention is needed for your child, call Probation directly, but know that the information will **not be kept confidential**:

- Call the Probation Information Center at 866-931-2222 from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday-Friday or your child's probation officer to make a complaint

RFK Immigrant Family Legal Clinic Contact Information

This pamphlet is for informational purposes only and not for the purpose of providing legal advice. This information is specific to Los Angeles County. If you are a student or a parent at RFK Community Schools and have questions about your individual case, please contact the Immigrant Family Legal Clinic for a free and confidential consultation.

When campus is open, you can drop by our office, located across from the Welcome Center. You can also reach us in one of three ways:

- Fill out our online form available on our website: www.law.ucla.edu/iflc and [HERE](#)
- Email us at iflc@law.ucla.edu
- Call us at **(310) 794-6871** (leave a message with your name and number and we will call you back as soon as possible)

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