



HAND IN HAND

THE DOMESTIC EMPLOYERS NETWORK

Emergency Planning Guide for Homecare Employers: Preparing for ICE Detention or Deportation Scenarios

Why This Matters

As homecare employers, we have an important role to play in ensuring our homes are safe and fair workplaces. As the current administration escalates its tactics—including targeting people regardless of immigration status— **it is essential that homecare employers have an emergency plan in place in the event that a worker we employ is targeted by ICE.** This plan should center the safety, dignity, and humanity of the homecare worker, while also protecting your safety and well-being.

This guide will help you:

- Prepare responsibly and compassionately. Help think through scenarios and ways to keep both your homecare worker and you safe.
- Support your homecare worker's legal rights and security.
- Show up in solidarity with immigrant communities.
- Join a national network of employers committed to creating homes and workplaces grounded in fairness and care.

Step 1: Build Trust and Start the Conversation

- **Establish a Supportive Dialogue:** Many immigrant homecare workers are deeply fearful at this moment, so be sure to approach the conversation from a place of support. A conversation starter might look like:
 - “I’ve been thinking about you a lot lately, and I’m grateful for the support you give me. Your safety is deeply important to me, and I know that many people are feeling scared after the ICE raids across the country. If you’re comfortable, I’d like to open a discussion about this so we can take precautions to keep you safe, as well as be clear about a plan in case of emergencies.

- **Don't Inquire About Immigration Status:** If you do not know the homecare worker's immigration status, **don't ask**.
 - You might say, "We haven't had a discussion about immigration status and I'm not asking you to share that information. My goal is to be supportive to keep you safe at this moment. If you feel comfortable, I would like to create a plan together that centers on safety and support."
 - An emergency plan is important regardless of immigration status because of ICE's rampant racial profiling, including confirmed reports of U.S. citizens who have been detained.
- **Show Your Support Through Action:** Being a fair employer is the first step in building trust. You can make sure your home is a fair and dignified workplace by:
 - Paying a fair wage.
 - Holding regular check-ins.
 - Creating a written work agreement that outlines responsibilities, pay and benefits.
 - Providing paid time off including sick leave.
 - Providing meal and rest breaks.

We know that many homecare employers might want to do significantly more than their financial situation allows. If this is your situation, there are additional ways you can be an ally in this critical time. We encourage you to be creative and adapt these suggestions as you are able.

Step 2: Make Sure the Homecare Worker Knows Their Rights

Knowing our rights is one of the most powerful tools we have. It is critical that everyone in your home, including the homecare worker you employ, understands their rights under the law.

Key Rights to Know:

- **You have the right to remain silent.** The homecare worker is not required to answer any questions about who they are, where they were born, or their immigration status.
- **You do not have to open the door unless ICE presents a judicial warrant signed by a judge.**
- **You can ask to see the warrant.** The warrant must be signed by a judge and say "U.S. District Court" or "State Court" at the top. Request that the warrant be slipped under the door or shown through a window.
- **You have the right to contact a lawyer.** Do not sign anything or provide information without legal advice.
- **Remain calm.** Do not run. Politely but firmly state your rights and ask to speak to a lawyer.

Action Steps:

- **Watch a Know Your Rights training together.** Check out the Immigration Legal Resource Center (ILRC) [Know your Rights video training](https://www.ilrc.org/know-your-rights) in English or Spanish.

- Additional resources can be found through the [National Domestic Workers Alliance](#) and [National Immigration Law Center](#).
- Download and share the [ILRC Know Your Rights When Confronted by ICE](#) flyer and red cards, which you and the homecare worker can carry in your pocket.
- **Practice emergency scenarios.** Role-play what to do if ICE arrives at your home.

Step 3: Know Your Legal Rights and Responsibilities as a Homecare Employer

As a homecare employer, you have important legal rights and responsibilities to protect both yourself and the worker:

- You are not obligated and should never share any information about the homecare worker or any other workers in your home with ICE.
- **You are not required to let ICE into your home or onto your private property** without a warrant signed by a judge.
- **You have the right to ask to see a warrant, if it's not provided.** An administrative ICE warrant (Form I-200 or I-205) does not require you to let ICE into your home. **Only a warrant that has been signed by a judge must be honored.** You should keep the door locked and ask to have the warrant slipped under the door.
- In many states, including New York and California, there are laws **prohibiting employers from retaliating against their employees by calling ICE** or threatening to report them to immigration.

Step 4: Create an Emergency Action Plan for Your Home Together

Co-create a plan that works for both you and the homecare worker to ensure safety in case of an emergency:

Discuss and agree on steps to stay safe:

- **Transportation Safety:** Create a transportation plan so your homecare worker can get to and from work safely. This could include offering rides, paying for a rideshare service, or finding a mutual aid group in your area.
- **Adjust Work Routines:** Think creatively to adjust routines to reduce the time when the homecare worker is in public.
 - If you employ multiple attendants, consider offering to rearrange the task list with your care team so that they can do tasks within the home.
 - When possible, use delivery services for groceries and goods.
- **Emergency Contacts:** Make sure that you have contact information for emergency support for both you and the homecare worker. Ideally these numbers should be memorized.
- **Find Back-up Caregivers:** Identify friends, family, or other homecare workers who can offer back-up homecare if needed in the event the worker is targeted by ICE.

- **Encrypted Communication:** Consider using and downloading an encrypted messaging app like Signal to communicate with your homecare worker. These apps are safer to use than text messages because they prioritize user privacy and collect minimal data.
- **Paid Leave for Shelter-in-Place:** If you live in a city like Los Angeles that is being targeted for ICE raids, offer additional paid leave so that the domestic workers you employ don't lose income when they don't feel safe leaving their home to go to work. Make it clear that this does not mean their job is at risk.
 - We know this may be a big ask for you, but try to consider creative ways of giving your attendant paid time off when it's an emergency and for you to secure the attendant care you need. For example, you could consider joining or starting a [mutual aid group](#).

If a homecare worker is detained while they are working with you:

- Law enforcement, ICE, and government officials are required by law to provide people with disabilities reasonable accommodations.
 - If you use [Augmentative and Alternative Communication \(AAC\)](#), consider entering pre-programmed messages that you would say to ICE.
 - "Please show me your warrant."
 - "Please show me your badge."
 - "You do not have permission to enter my home."
 - "I will not answer any questions until a lawyer is present."
 - "I use an AAC device to communicate. Please allow time for me to respond."
 - "Please give me space and do not touch my mobility device."
 - Give a [disability accommodations card to ICE](#), which is designed to communicate that you have a disability and need an accommodation for the purpose of interacting, following instructions, or in the event of being stopped, questioned, or detained by an officer or agent.
- If there are bystanders present and you need additional support, directly ask one or two bystanders to help you by giving them direct, clear instructions. You might need assistance with:
 - [Calling your local rapid response hotline](#).
 - Calling an emergency contact.
 - Filming ICE's encounter.
 - For tips on filming ICE, watch this [video](#).

Step 5: Offer Concrete Resources to the Homecare Worker You Employ

Offer your worker additional resources to support them:

- If the homecare worker has children of their own, [offer to help them create their own family plan](#).
- Provide contact information for [local immigration attorneys](#).
- Connect them with the [National Domestic Workers Alliance](#) that provides resources for domestic workers and know your rights training.

- Share resources from [The Immigrant Legal Resources Center](#) and [National Immigration Law Center](#) which have extensive materials in multiple languages.
- Have [red cards](#) available for the homecare worker to have at all times. You can print out a stack and leave them by the door.

Sample Emergency Contact Sheet

| Name | Relationship | Phone | Notes |
|------------|----------------------|---------|--|
| [Person 1] | Emergency Contact | [Phone] | Speaks Spanish |
| [Person 2] | Immigration Attorney | [Phone] | Available for emergencies |
| [Person 3] | Backup Caregiver | [Phone] | Available after school and for emergency pickups |

Final Note from Hand in Hand

At Hand in Hand, we believe that preparing for these challenges is an act of solidarity and love. It is a way to show care for the people who help care for you. Being a fair employer shows a commitment to building homes and communities where no family lives in fear.

By taking these steps, you are showing up for your homecare worker, supporting immigrant families, and joining a movement for dignity and justice for all care workers.

Need Support? Contact Hand in Hand:

 info@domesticemployers.org

 <https://domesticemployers.org>

See Hand in Hand's "[How Employers can Support Immigrant Domestic Workers Guide](#)" for more. **We're here for you every step of the way.**