

## FREE FAMILY GUIDE

# If Someone You Love Is Detained

 7 Parts, 33 Steps  Printable PDF  MVP Law Group, APC

If you are reading this, something has probably already happened. Your heart may be racing, and you may feel angry, frightened, and numb all at once. Every one of those feelings makes sense.

Take one breath. You do not have to solve everything today. This guide gives you the steps that help most, in the order that helps most. It is written for the spouse, the adult son or daughter, the sister, the friend, the person named as agent, and the person now caring for the children.

### ♥ THE FIRST 72 HOURS

What matters most right now

**The children first:** a safe adult tonight, a normal routine tomorrow, and honest, calm words.

**Find out where your loved one is,** and bring in an immigration attorney early.

**Keep the household running:** rent, utilities, the car, the phone.

**Do not pay anyone who promises a quick release,** and do not sign anything you do not understand.

1

## Take care of the children first

☐ **Make sure every child is with a safe, trusted adult tonight.**

If pickup from school or daycare has changed, call them today and tell them who is coming.

☐ **Tell them the truth, gently.**

In words that fit their age: their parent cannot be here right now, it is not their fault, and the adults are taking care of things. Avoid promises you cannot keep.

☐ **Keep their routine as normal as you can.**

School, meals, and bedtime at the usual times. Routine is how children feel safe.

☐ **Give the school and the doctor the caregiver documents.**

The Caregiver's Authorization Affidavit and any medical authorization the parent signed.

☐ **Watch for signs a child needs more support.**

Changes in sleep, eating, or school. The school counselor and the pediatrician can help.

2

## Find out where your loved one is

☐ **Search the ICE Online Detainee Locator at [locator.ice.gov](https://locator.ice.dhs.gov).**

Search by A-number and country of birth, or by full name and country of birth. A person who was just detained can take a day or two to appear.

☐ **Write everything down.**

The date, time, and place it happened, any names or badge numbers, any papers left behind, and the facility name once you know it.

☐ **Contact their consulate.**

Consulates often help their citizens who are detained and can sometimes help locate them.

☐ **Answer calls from unknown numbers.**

Calls from detention centers often come from numbers you do not recognize. Ask the facility how family can receive calls and add money for basic needs.

## Keep these close

### THE OFFICIAL PLACES TO START

| Who                                             | What it is for                                                                                   | Where                                                   |
|-------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>ICE Online Detainee Locator</b>              | Find where a detained person is being held.                                                      | <a href="https://locator.ice.gov">locator.ice.gov</a>   |
| <b>Free and low-cost immigration legal help</b> | The Department of Justice list of legal service providers.                                       | <a href="https://justice.gov/eoir">justice.gov/eoir</a> |
| <b>State Bar of California</b>                  | Check that an attorney is licensed before you pay anyone.                                        | <a href="https://calbar.ca.gov">calbar.ca.gov</a>       |
| <b>Their consulate</b>                          | Help for their citizens, including those who are detained.                                       | The consulate of their country in Los Angeles           |
| <b>MVP Law Group</b>                            | Power of attorney, caregiver documents, and guardianship: the home, the money, and the children. | <b>(818) 788-7881</b>                                   |

### 3 Get legal help for the immigration case

This is the one part we do not handle. It is also the part that cannot wait.



#### **Contact an immigration attorney or an accredited representative now.**

Free and low-cost providers are listed at [justice.gov/eoir](https://justice.gov/eoir). Check any California attorney's license at [calbar.ca.gov](https://calbar.ca.gov).

- ☐ **Encourage your loved one to talk with an attorney before signing anything.**

Whenever possible, no document should be signed without understanding exactly what it means.

- ☐ **Gather what the attorney will ask for.**

ID, A-number, immigration papers, proof of time in the United States, birth certificates of U.S. citizen children, tax records, and letters from people who know your loved one.

- ☐ **Never pay a notario.**

A notario or notary public is not a lawyer in the United States and cannot help with an immigration case.

#### 4 If you are the agent: use the power of attorney

- ☐ **Find the signed power of attorney and read it.**

Look at which powers it gives and when it takes effect.

- ☐ **Go to the bank with the document and your ID.**

Banks may ask for their own form or a signed statement from you as agent. Ask exactly what they need.

- ☐ **Pay the essentials first.**

Rent or mortgage, utilities, phone, and car insurance.

☐ **Keep their money separate from yours, and keep every receipt.**

A simple notebook with date, amount, and what it paid for protects you and them.

☐ **Use their money for their needs.**

That includes the immigration attorney's fees and the household bills.

☐ **Remember the limits.**

An agent cannot sign immigration forms for them. USCIS generally requires their own signature.

☐ **If no power of attorney was signed, call us.**

We will explain what can still be done for the home, the money, and the children.

5 Protect the home and belongings

☐ **Talk to the landlord or lender early.**

If a payment will be late, it is easier to arrange before it is missed.

☐ **Look after the car.**

Keep it insured, and move it if it is parked where it could be towed.

☐ **Collect the mail.**

Watch for bills and official notices. Give anything about the immigration case to the attorney right away.

☐ **Contact their employer.**

Ask about the final paycheck and any personal belongings at work.

☐ **Arrange care for pets.**

A neighbor, a relative, or a friend can help for now.

**6** Watch for scams that target families

Families in this moment are targeted on purpose.

☐ **Nobody can guarantee a release for a fee.**

Be wary of anyone who calls asking for money to fix the case.

☐ **Officials do not ask families to pay with gift cards, payment apps, or cryptocurrency.**

If someone does, it is a scam.

☐ **Pay any immigration bond only through official channels.**

Ask the immigration attorney how and where to pay it.

☐ **Protect their information.**

Do not share their A-number or documents with anyone you have not verified.

You are carrying a great deal right now.

☐ **Accept help.**

Let relatives, friends, and your faith community take turns with meals, rides, and childcare.

☐ **Make a simple plan for the week.**

Who picks up the children, who calls the attorney, who handles the bills.

☐ **Rest and eat.**

You cannot hold everyone else up if you collapse.

☐ **Call us when you are ready.**

For the home, the money, and the children: (818) 788-7881, or Jaslen directly at (213) 855-4466. We speak Spanish.



**FOR THE HOME, THE MONEY, AND THE CHILDREN**

You do not have to hold this together alone

If you are the agent or the caregiver, we can help you use the documents that exist. If nothing was signed, we will explain what can still be done. Call us, in English, Spanish, or Russian.

---

*This guide is general information as of October 2026, not legal advice, and it does not create an attorney-client relationship. MVP Law Group is an estate planning firm and does not handle immigration cases. For the immigration case, speak with an immigration attorney or an accredited representative. Website addresses and procedures can change. Attorney Advertising.*