

Family Resource Guide Regarding Increase in Federal Law Enforcement Presence in Chicago

(February 2026)



With an increase in federal law enforcement in Chicago, CPS is providing families with guidance on staying safe, especially traveling to-and-from school, and moving within the community.

Tips for Traveling

- **Plan Ahead.** Before leaving home, know your walking path. If your school has a Safe Passage route, try to use it. There are trusted adults along these paths to help keep families safe. Visit cps.edu/safepassage for a map of Safe Passage routes in Chicago. On days when there are a lot of people protesting or lots of police or military presence, try to walk straight to and from school and avoid stopping at other places.
- **Travel With Friends and Family.** It's safer to travel with friends and family members than traveling alone. Families can walk with a large group, creating a "Walking School Bus." Families can also carpool or use a buddy system on public transportation to stay safe.
- **Stay Visible.** Walk on streets that are busy and have lots of lights. Don't take shortcuts through dark alleys or quiet, empty places.
- **Know Where to Find Help.** Find places you can go if you feel unsafe. You can go inside buildings like a library, a church, a firehouse, or a police station. Community centers and Chicago Park District fieldhouses are also good places to find trusted adults who can help. Figure out where these places are in your neighborhood in case you need to use them. If you do not feel safe walking to and from school, reach out to your school counselor or a trusted adult at the school you have a relationship with.
- **Stay In Touch.** Make sure your family members know your plans. Tell them where you're going and who you will be with. If you have a cell phone, keep it charged and on so your family can reach you. Families can also create a block or neighborhood phone or text tree to share information quickly.
- **Stay Alert.** Keep your eyes and ears open! Don't listen to music too loud in your headphones and try not to look down at your phone while you're walking. Stay focused on what's happening around you.

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Know Your Constitutional Rights

(NOTE: This information is provided for general awareness only and should not be considered legal advice. Those with specific questions about their rights should consult an attorney)

- **You have the right to remain silent and refuse to answer questions** if stopped by federal agents or law enforcement — even if there is a warrant.
- You do not have to share your birthplace, your immigration or citizenship status, or the birthplace or status of anyone else.
- You are not required to consent to a search (please be aware that local police do have the right to pat you down if they reasonably suspect a weapon).
- You do not need to let any agent into your home unless they have a warrant signed by a judge.
 - **IMPORTANT:** A warrant signed by a judge — also known as a judicial warrant — permits federal agents to enter your home. An administrative warrant **DOES NOT** permit federal agents to enter your home. [Page two of this resource shows examples of each kind of warrant.](#)
- If stopped on the street, you have the right to ask if you are free to leave.

CPS Protections and Protocols

CPS has [strong protections in place](#) to support our students and staff in the wake of federal policy changes. Visit [cps.NewAdminGuidance](#) for complete details.

As a reminder, CPS:

- **DOES NOT** ask for our families' immigration status
- **WILL NOT** coordinate with federal representatives, including Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE)
- **DOES NOT** share student records with ICE or any other federal representatives, except in the rare case where there is a court order or consent from the parent/guardian
- **WILL NOT** allow ICE agents or any other federal representatives access to CPS schools or facilities unless they produce a criminal judicial warrant signed by a federal judge

While these protocols are mainly related to immigration enforcement, these apply to interactions with all federal agents and representatives.

CPS school security guards, clerks, and school leaders all receive regular and updated training to ensure the safety of students and staff, and CPS maintains regular communication with our in-school staff on safety-related issues.

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Immigration-Related Resources for Families

Families can visit the City of Chicago's Office of Immigrant, Migrant, and Refugee Rights (IMRR) page at chicago.gov/imrr for resources and guidance.

CPS has created cps.edu/immigration with resources for families, including:

- Information and resources provided by community partner organizations, especially Know Your Rights materials.
- Links to illinoisimmigrationinfo.org, a centralized webpage put together by Illinois immigrations service organizations that is updated weekly with new information.
- A specialized list of immigration services by geographic area, including legal support
- Guidance for families applying for financial aid for college or other postsecondary programs
- A calendar of upcoming Know Your Rights trainings and Family Preparedness workshops. Here are the next upcoming sessions; all registration links and a full schedule can be found on cps.edu/immigration.

Emergency Family Planning

While it may be a difficult topic to discuss, we want to make sure our families are prepared in case of an unexpected emergency. Having a plan in place beforehand can make a difficult situation more manageable. Here are a few recommendations:

- **Update Emergency Contact Information:** Please ensure your student's emergency contact information is up-to-date so their school can reach an emergency contact if needed. Please reach out to their school if you need assistance.
- **Memorize Important Phone Numbers:** You should memorize the phone numbers of your family, a trusted friend, and a lawyer.
- **Create a Family Plan:** If you have children or family members who rely on you, you should have a plan for childcare, school pickup, and care for dependents.
- **Identify a Trusted Contact:** You should designate a reliable person (family member, friend, or community leader) who knows your family plan and can act on your behalf. You should provide this person with copies of important documents (see below).
- **Organize Important Documents:** You should give a trusted contact a copy of all your important documents. This includes your "A" number (Alien Registration Number) if you have one, which is crucial for locating a detained individual. You can also share a copy of your passport number and visa foil, if you hold a visa.

Upcoming Trainings and Workshops

CPS works with local government agencies and community-based organizations to provide trainings and workshops to families and staff. The most up-to-date schedule can be found on cps.edu/immigration.

- **Know Your Rights:**

- **Tuesdays at 2 p.m. and Thursdays at 6 p.m.:** The Resurrection Project will be hosting bi-weekly virtual Know Your Rights workshops. Tuesday sessions are in English; Thursday sessions are in Spanish. [Register here.](#)
- **Tuesdays at 6 p.m.:** The Illinois Coalition for Immigration & Refugee Rights will be hosting weekly virtual Know Your Rights workshops. Spanish interpretation provided. [Register here.](#)
- **Bi-weekly on Wednesdays at 11 a.m.:** The Mayor's Office of Immigrant, Migrant, and Refugee Rights (IMRR), in collaboration with the Resurrection Project and the Chicago Public Library, will be hosting bi-weekly virtual Family Preparedness Plan workshops. Morning sessions will be in English. [Register here.](#)
- **Bi-weekly on Wednesdays at 6 p.m.:** The Mayor's Office of Immigrant, Migrant, and Refugee Rights (IMRR), in collaboration with the Resurrection Project and the Chicago Public Library, will be hosting virtual Family Preparedness Plan workshops. Evening sessions will be in Spanish. [Register here.](#)