

Interactions with Federal Immigration Law Enforcement

1. Purpose

This guidance establishes our congregation's approach to federal immigration enforcement based on our religious convictions as a Unitarian Universalist sanctuary congregation. It clarifies how our theological principles translate into practical action when faced with immigration enforcement activities ¹. This guidance supports our mission of radical hospitality and justice-making while protecting both our community members and our religious freedom. It aligns with our conviction of the inherent worth and dignity and our congregational vote to become a Sanctuary Congregation (established August 27, 2017).

Foundational Religious Framework

Core Theological Foundation: Our response to federal immigration enforcement flows directly from our fundamental religious convictions:

- **Inherent Worth and Dignity of Every Person:** Our core religious belief is that every person possesses sacred, inviolable worth regardless of legal status, documentation, or national origin. This theological conviction makes sanctuary not optional charity but religious imperative.
- **The Sacred Sources Authority:** Our faith draws from religious Sources that universally command protection of the stranger, care for the vulnerable, and resistance to unjust authority, including:
 - Jewish and Christian teachings: "You shall love the stranger as yourself" (Leviticus 19:34)
 - Humanist ethics: Universal human rights transcend national boundaries
 - Earth-centered traditions: All beings deserve protection and care
 - Progressive revelation: Our understanding of justice continues to expand, grow and change.
- **Congregational Covenantal Practice:** Through democratic process on August 27, 2017, this congregation formally covenanted to become a Sanctuary Congregation, making sanctuary practice a binding religious commitment, not discretionary policy.

Religious Mission Implementation

Mission Clarity: Our congregation exists to serve our religious mission of sanctuary. Every space, every activity, every interaction serves this sacred purpose as theological reality, not political statement.

Sanctuary as Religious Practice: We practice sanctuary through:

- Worship - We welcome immigrants because our faith declares no human being illegal in the eyes of the divine.
- Spiritual formation - Sanctuary work is spiritual discipline that forms us into the people our covenant calls us to be.
- Community care - Protecting the vulnerable fulfills our sacred obligation to create beloved community.
- Prophetic witness - Our sanctuary practice proclaims that divine love transcends human borders.

2. Organizational Guidance

Non-Cooperation with Immigration Enforcement

Compliance with Lawful Orders: We make a clear distinction between two types of documents: judicial warrants (signed by federal judges, which we comply with under legal compulsion while maintaining religious objection) and administrative requests or warrants (issued by agencies like ICE, which we refuse based on religious conviction and Fourth Amendment protections).

Private Religious Space: Our building is designated as a private religious space, except for public religious areas that serve our mission of public worship, limited to Sunday mornings and other times the building is open for public worship. Public religious areas include the sanctuary and entrance hall.

Private Religious Areas: All other spaces and times, including but not limited to:

- Offices and meeting rooms
- Classrooms and library
- Sanctuary/worship hall outside of public worship times
- All outdoor areas and parking
- Any space during pastoral care, spiritual direction, religious education, or sanctuary activities

Information Protection

Data retention: We will not ask for or collect information regarding legal status, documentation, or immigration history from any community member or visitor.

Clergy-Penitent Privilege: We affirm and protect clergy-penitent privilege and will legally defend against any intrusion into confidential pastoral communications and relationships as protected by

Colorado state law (including but not limited to [C.R.S. § 13-90-107\(1\)\(c\)](#)), and the establishment clause of the First Amendment.

Community Protection

We maintain clear community protection measures including communication channels for rapid response, training programs for staff and community members, and coordination with local partners doing immigration work.

3. Related Content

Bylaws and Policies

This guidance interprets or implements the following:

- Congregational Vote - Sanctuary Congregation Commitment (August 27, 2017)
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1. By immigration enforcement activities, this is defined as any federal implementation of immigration law through any agency

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