



SANTA MONICA - MALIBU UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

Responding to Immigration Enforcement: Scenarios, Do's, and Don'ts for School Staff

This guide helps all SMMUSD staff—administrators, office staff, teachers, and classified employees—know what to do if immigration enforcement officers (e.g., ICE or DHS agents) appear at or near a school site.

Under AB 49, immigration enforcement officers may not enter any nonpublic area of a school campus without a valid judicial warrant signed by a judge.

Schools are protected spaces, and staff must act calmly, lawfully, and consistently with district policy.

1. If Immigration Officers Walk into the Main Office

Do:

- Remain calm and professional.
- Politely ask for the officers' names, badge numbers, and agency affiliation.
- Request to **see a judicial warrant signed by a judge** (not just an administrative order).
- Politely state that district policy requires verification before granting access.
- Contact your principal or site administrator immediately, who will notify Student Services.

Do Not:

- Allow the officers beyond the main office or into any **nonpublic areas** (classrooms, offices, playgrounds).
- Attempt to physically impede the officer, even if the officer appears to be exceeding the authorization given under a warrant or other document.
- Provide or confirm any information about students, families, or staff.
- Attempt to handle the situation alone.

2. If Immigration Officers Are Seen Walking on Campus Without Checking In

Do:

- Stay calm and avoid confrontation.
- If safe, approach respectfully and say:

“Excuse me, our district policy requires all visitors to check in at the main office. May I escort you there?”

- Notify the principal or site administrator immediately.
- Keep students in class and maintain normal routines.

Do Not:

- Attempt to physically stop or block the officers.
 - Direct them toward a specific student, staff member, or classroom.
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3. If an Immigration Officer Enters a Classroom

Do:

- Stay calm and composed in front of students.
- Politely and firmly say:

“Sir/Ma’am/officer, I need to contact my administrator before allowing access to this classroom. Please wait outside while I do that.”

- Notify the front office using the intercom or phone.
- Contact your principal or designee immediately.
- Keep students seated and calm; do not discuss the reason for the visit.

Do Not:

- Allow the officer to question, photograph, or remove any student.
- Attempt to physically impede the officer, even if the officer appears to be exceeding the authorization given under a warrant or other document.
- Provide names, schedules, or any identifying information.
- Attempt to manage the situation on your own.

4. If Officers Claim They Have Legal Authority But No Judicial Warrant

Do:

- Respectfully state:

“District policy requires a judicial warrant signed by a judge before granting access to a student or nonpublic area. I need to contact my administrator.”

- Call the principal and district office immediately.

Do Not:

- Allow access based solely on verbal claims or administrative paperwork.
 - Attempt to physically impede the officer, even if the officer appears to be exceeding the authorization given under a warrant or other document.
 - Accept unsigned or photocopied documents as valid warrants.
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5. If a Parent or Student Reports Immigration Activity Near Home or School

Do:

- Reassure them that schools are safe havens and that immigration enforcement officers cannot enter without a judicial warrant.
- Refer them to your Bilingual Community Liaison for assistance.
- Share family preparedness resources, such as emergency contact plans and legal support information.

Do Not:

- Ask about the family’s immigration status.
 - Make promises or provide legal advice.
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6. If Immigration Officers Are Confirmed to Be Present on Campus

Do:

- The **district is required by SB 98 (SAFE Act) to immediately notify all families and staff** if immigration enforcement officers are confirmed on school grounds.

- Follow administrator directions for communication and safety.
- Maintain a calm and supportive tone with students and colleagues.

7. If the Media or Public Ask About an Immigration Incident

Do:

- Direct all media inquiries to the Superintendent's Office or Communications Department.
- Maintain confidentiality and follow FERPA and district guidelines.

Do Not:

- Make statements or share information about any student or family.