



The Immigrant Defense Project (IDP) was founded 20 years ago to combat an emerging human rights crisis: the targeting of immigrants for mass imprisonment and deportation. As this crisis has continued to escalate, IDP has remained steadfast in fighting for fairness and justice for all immigrants caught at the intersection of the racially biased U.S. criminal and immigration systems. IDP fights to end the current era of unprecedented mass criminalization, detention and deportation through a multipronged strategy including advocacy, litigation, legal advice and training, community defense, grassroots alliances, and strategic communications.

HOW DID WE GET HERE?

In 1996, Congress passed a set of harsh immigration laws, rooted in the racist and punitive tenets of the War on Crime: expanded policing, unforgiving sentences, and mass imprisonment, with deportation as an additional punishment for a wide range of offenses. These laws laid the foundation on which the U.S. has built the world's largest detention and deportation system, one that exploded after the creation of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) in 2003. The growth of the surveillance state and the federal government's active entanglement of local law enforcement with immigration policing has created a new threat: a primary pipeline into the immigration prison and deportation system via contact with the police.

NOW, MORE THAN EVER

Again, we face a new moment of crisis: the current administration has escalated the war on immigrants to new heights, through its campaigns driven by fear, hatred, racism, and lies. IDP continues to develop strategies to fight back against this new wave of mass criminalization, detention, and deportation, and continues to push for change where it's needed most.

Rooted in the principle that no one is disposable, IDP continues to fight each step of the way.

“Every night that she goes to bed, there is a chance that she could wake up and I could be gone again. Can you imagine what trauma that brings to a child? You wake up in the morning and everything changes...”

Khalil, a social worker and advocate, was taken from his family by ICE during an early morning home raid. IDP worked with allies to win Khalil's release from ICE and a pardon from Governor Cuomo.



Fighting a Cruel, Hyperpunitive Immigration System

The U.S. operates the world's largest immigration detention system.

The U.S. budget for “homeland security” has grown more than 450% in the past 20 years.

Immigrants waiting for proceedings can be locked up for years without seeing a judge.

Even those with legal status may face mandatory detention and deportation for minor offenses, such as public use of marijuana, shoplifting, or using fake papers to work.

An immigrant can be deported for having a “criminal record,” even if the state doesn't consider the offense to be a conviction (e.g., a marijuana possession violation in NY).

Unlike criminal and civil law, there is no statute of limitations under immigration law. That means the government can put someone in deportation proceedings, regardless of how old the conviction is.

IDP EXECUTES A MULTIPRONGED STRATEGY AGAINST THE SYSTEMICALLY UNJUST CRIMINAL AND IMMIGRATION SYSTEMS TOWARDS A VISION OF HUMAN RIGHTS FOR ALL

LEGAL ADVICE & TRAINING

Via our hotline and trainings, we educate immigrants, advocates, & lawyers on the complex intersection of immigration and criminal law to prevent thousands of deportations each year.

IMPACT LITIGATION

We orchestrate the strategy behind litigation in the Supreme Court and Circuit Courts (including 5 recent victories) and challenge unfair laws to expand our reach exponentially.

POLICY & ADVOCACY

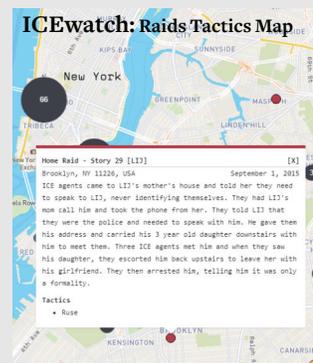
We advocate for laws and policies that protect human rights and fight criminalization, including some of the first successful policies against honoring ICE detainers, and our current pardon and ICE Out of the Courts campaigns.

COMMUNITY DEFENSE

We support communities and grassroots groups by providing valuable resources to defend their rights against ICE and during immigration proceedings, and by executing campaigns to keep loved ones home and families together.

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS

We highlight the systemic injustices underlying the deportation system, counter the demonization of immigrants and people with criminal convictions, and work to change the conversation by exposing the human toll of unjust policies.



Your support is more critical than ever as we scale up to fight back against hate and racism. Rooted in the principle that no one is disposable, IDP is uniquely positioned to fortify the frontline struggle to challenge the vilification of immigrants with criminal convictions.

Please visit immdefense.org/donate to learn how to support IDP, help protect our victories, fight back against the demonization of immigrants, and secure a vision of human rights for all.

IDP is fiscally sponsored by the Fund for the City of New York, a 501(c)(3). Your gift is tax deductible.