



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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ICE COVERTLY TRANSFERS 60 IMMIGRANTS FROM ORANGE COUNTY JAIL, ADVOCATES CALL FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASES

NEW YORK — On Sunday, July 24, 2022, advocates received a devastating call from immigrants inside Orange County Correctional Facility, a county jail in Goshen, NY that contracts with Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE). The callers alerted advocates that the jail was conducting COVID-19 tests and ICE officials were preparing to transfer them to other detention facilities. ICE made this decision surreptitiously, seemingly overnight and have already transferred over 60 people Monday morning. ICE has not notified family members, friends, or attorneys that their loved ones and clients have been moved or where they will go. These transfers will further remove immigrant New Yorkers from their communities, isolate them from resources and legal aid and further cloud oversight of detention conditions. New York must take immediate and urgent action to stop these transfers and release those detained inside Orange County, a jail that is notorious for medical neglect, [poor conditions](#), racism, retaliation and [abuse](#).

An immigrant held at Orange County Jail, who chose to remain anonymous, stated on a call Monday morning, “I’m calling on behalf of those who are still at OCJ in Housing D1 to let the public know that they are transferring us without telling us where we are going. We are all scared and angry that they keep us in the dark like our lives don’t matter. They are giving us 20 minutes to call our loved ones and attorneys but no one knows anything.”

“We are appalled at ICE’s total lack of transparency and consistent determination to separate immigrants from their loved ones,” said **Tania Mattos, director of advocacy and policy at Envision Freedom Fund.** “Rather than facing the public outcry to release those inside Orange County, ICE cowardly chose to work in the shadows of their unchecked power and transfer immigrant New Yorkers away from their support systems. But the fight is not over and we will not let ICE transfer people without exposing behind-closed-doors actions. We demand that ICE immediately stop all transfers, and instead, release folks back into their communities.”

“ICE maintains its discretion to release all those in its custody, and we demand the immediate release of everyone at Orange County Jail,” said **Cynthia Galaz, Senior Policy Associate with Freedom for Immigrants**. “ICE has a history of weaponizing mass transfers in an attempt to squash organizing inside detention and sow fear in our communities, but we will not be silenced. People have a right to stay close to their loved ones, legal representation, and support networks. While we continue to call for the closure of the facility, we demand a just closure of the Orange County Jail so that people can safely reunite with their loved ones and communities.”

The Dignity Not Detention working group demands ICE release the immigrants currently detained at Orange County Correctional Facility and the passage of the Dignity Not Detention Act (S7373/A7099), which would end all existing ICE detention contracts with New York state. The working group is an extension of the Abolish ICE NY NJ Coalition and includes representatives from Envision Freedom Fund, Freedom for Immigrants, Showing Up for Racial Justice - NYC Chapter, Queer Detainee Empowerment Project, New York State Youth Leadership Council, New York Lawyers For The Public Interest, Rochester Rapid Response Network, Center for Constitutional Rights, Democratic Socialists of America - NYC Chapter, Catholic Charities, Survived and Punished New York, Freedom For Immigrants and The Bronx Defenders.

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