

Detention Standards Implementation Initiative Additional Information for Volunteers

Volunteer attorneys have made the ABA Detention Standards Implementation Initiative a success since 2001. Since then, over 80 volunteer delegations have visited nearly 60 different detention facilities across the United States. The ABA provides a detailed, two-hour training to delegation members via video or telephone conference, and ongoing support as they prepare for their facility visit. The ABA also provides a step-by-step training manual, which includes a summary of select Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) Detention Standards, guideline questionnaires based on the Standards for meetings with facility staff and detainees, and a sample report. Delegations focus in particular on the ICE Detention Standards relating to legal access: Access to Legal Material, Group Presentations on Legal Rights, Visitation, and Telephone Access. Volunteer delegation members typically spend between fifteen and twenty hours to participate in the Initiative, including training and preparation, the detention facility visit, and report drafting; delegation leaders should anticipate spending additional time to coordinate the delegation.

The delegation includes four to six members (attorneys, legal assistants, summer associates, and a translator if needed). The facility visit is arranged with ICE at least two weeks in advance, on a date that is mutually convenient to the delegation members and facility and ICE staff. The visit includes meetings with ICE officials and facility staff and interviews of up to twelve detainees. The information gathered from these conversations and the delegation's observations of the facility makes up the report on facility implementation of the ICE Detention Standards. Volunteers can expect to spend approximately half a day at the facility, depending upon facility staff availability and the number of detainees to be interviewed. Including travel time, the visit may extend to a full day.

Volunteers send their draft report to ABA staff, who review it and submit it to ICE's Detention Standards Compliance Unit. The ABA meets with ICE quarterly to discuss the reports. Reports are not publicly available.

The ICE Detention Standards are available at:
<http://www.ice.gov/partners/dro/opsmanual/index.htm>.