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Human Rights Defender Project
Immigration Court Observation

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VOLUNTEER MANUAL

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Human Rights Defender Project
Immigration Court Observation

VOLUNTEER MANUAL



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ROLE OVERVIEW AND GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

What is the Goal of the Human Rights Defender Project Court Observations?

The purpose of court observation is to bring transparency to immigration court and to hold government agencies accountable for any human rights violations that are happening. In particular, observers pay attention to:

- Access to hearings: Are observers being denied entry into courtrooms, if not, are explanations being given
- Access to counsel: How many people are represented? Does representation seem adequate? What barriers to finding counsel are being expressed?
- Access to language: Is an interpreter available in their native language? Does the interpretation seem adequate and comprehensive? Do noncitizens understand their proceedings? What challenges do people face with translation of documents.
- Demeanor and conduct of the Immigration Judge and Government Attorneys. Are they being thorough, fair, respectful? Do they seem to be culturally competent? Are they being attentive?
- Ability to raise defense: Can respondents adequately defend themselves? Do they understand the interplay of federal agencies involved? Are they giving up because of barriers?
- Bond: What factors are discussed pertaining to eligibility. Do people understand the burden of proof? Are bonds affordable?
- Policy changes: Are proceedings different over time, do judges announce new policies or case law? What impact does this have on proceedings? What is the human impact? Family and community- Do people have support, are they separated from family, what is the impact of the deportation proceedings on the person and their family.
- Root causes of migration, what are we learning about countries of origin and why people come to the US.

In addition, observers can make referrals for legal representation, and provide critical feedback to attorneys on new trends or concerns in court. The ultimate goal of this project is to improve human rights protections in our immigration court and to advocate for a more just immigration system.

What Court Observers Do

Observers attend master calendar and merits hearings at the Fort Snelling Immigration Court in the Bishop Henry Whipple Federal Building. Master calendar hearings are short procedural hearings where noncitizens learn why the government has initiated deportation proceedings, what rights and responsibilities the noncitizen has in the process, and whether they have a possible legal pathway to remain in the United States. The individual merit hearing is akin to the trial, where evidence is reviewed and testimony is heard. Following the merit hearing the judge will issue a decision. We observe hearings for people who are detained by ICE (“Detained Docket”), in prison serving a sentence post-conviction (“IHP Detained Docket”), and people who are not in a detention facility (“Non-Detained Docket”). Observers fill out specific observation forms based on the type of hearings they’ve attended. The

purpose is to summarize what was observed, note court room dynamics, new policies or issues of concern, and to share personal reflections. Observers are expected to bring an attitude of respect and compassion for the people whose cases we hear.

Expectations for Court Observers

All court observers must complete the three-part training before signing up for court shifts. Observers will be paired with an experienced observer for mentoring at their first shift.

- If you have not done so already, before your first shift, please watch the introductory video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p-jGRgUCG6E> and fill out the registration form at: [https://www.theadvocatesforhumanrights.org/Volunteer/Immigration Court](https://www.theadvocatesforhumanrights.org/Volunteer/Immigration_Court).
- Review shift reminder emails for important updates, announcements, and form revisions.
- **Notify the Project Coordinator at courtobserver@umn.edu 48 hours (about 2 days) in advance if you can't attend your shift, emergencies excepted.**
- Complete and return observation forms as soon as possible; no later than two weeks of your shift.
- Regardless of professional background, participate as a lay person and refrain from giving legal or professional advice to people in the courtroom or waiting area.
- Respect the privacy of people appearing in court. Don't share any personal information you learn during observation.
- Agree to the code of conduct: **cell phones must be powered off**, no food or drink, enter and leave courtroom quietly, refrain from speaking with the respondent at any time, refrain from speaking with the judge, guards, attorneys, interpreters in or out of the courtroom unless they initiate conversation. Refrain from speaking (even whispering) with other observers during proceedings. Leave the courtroom with all belongings as directed for closed hearing or if the courtroom is overcrowded. Identify yourself as a court observer if asked.
- Show respect to the Judge, **please rise from your seat when the judge enters or exits the courtroom**. You will usually be prompted to rise by the courtroom clerk.
- Adhere to the principle of non-intervention in the judicial process. Do not engage with the court regarding the merits of an individual case and do not attempt to influence outcomes through informal channels.
- Adhere to principle of objectivity. Endeavor to report on proceedings accurately.
- Dress respectfully: no T-shirts with slogans, no bare midriffs, no torn jeans. You do not need to wear business attire.
- Wear your Human Rights Court Observer lanyard to identify yourself to the court.

Before Your Shift

- **Please read the shift-reminder emails carefully**, they contain updates and special instructions.
- Please review instructions and forms, so you are familiar with the role and expectations as well as the format, content, and meaning of the observation form.

- Print copies of the observation form for the type of hearing you signed up for, as well as supplemental forms. The forms are all downloadable from the sign-up portal and the emailed shift reminder you will receive. You should always bring extra copies of forms as well as note-paper and something to write on (clipboard or notebook). You will fill out one form per respondent in detained hearings, and one form per shift for non-detained hearings. If you do not have access to a printer, you may use the observation form as a point of reference and answer the questions on another piece of paper and type your forms afterwards.
- If you have any question as to whether court will be cancelled due to inclement weather, you may check the EOIR (immigration Court) [Twitter](https://twitter.com/doj_eoir) page: https://twitter.com/doj_eoir. EOIR will refer to the Whipple Building site as the "Fort Snelling Immigration Court." You may also call the Fort Snelling Court weather hotline which operates during winter months: 612-713-7622. If court is closed due to weather a message will be posted by 5:30 AM.

What to Do When You Get There

General

This is an unsupervised volunteer project, there are typically one or two volunteer observers for each shift-type. There may be several observers present at the court on any given day observing different hearings/activities. There may also be additional observers being mentored for a first shift.

When you arrive to the court area

- Look for the dockets- the list of cases being heard for each courtroom. The dockets are posted on the wall in the courtroom lobby. They list individuals who have hearings that day and the type of hearings. It is important to know how to read the dockets so that you can identify which courtroom to go into based on the shift you are signed up for. The back of the Lobby Shift Docket Report has a guide for reading dockets. It's helpful to have blank dockets for copying the docket you will observe; this is most helpful for detained master calendar hearings. This will make it easier for you to identify each particular case you hear in court, as the information is often said quietly and quickly.
- **Typically, all morning cases for non-detained master calendar dockets, will be listed at 8:30 (unless court is scheduled to start late), and all afternoon cases are typically listed at 1:30. For detained master calendar dockets, they will usually have different start times for each detention facility scheduled with cases for the day.** Master calendar dockets will have multiple unrelated people scheduled at the same time. **The order of the hearings does not follow the order of the docket.** Typically, cases with legal representation are heard first.
- For non-detained master calendar hearings they may start with cases being heard remotely via webex. Those are not substantively different than in-person hearings, and observers should be allowed entrance for these hearings.
- If you are observing the master calendar non-detained docket, note that every individual is listed, but family cases will be heard together. The dockets are long. You do not need to copy the docket.

- Morning cases may finish before noon, and it is not uncommon for afternoon cases to finish before 4:00. We have no way of knowing when court will end early, so we apologize in advance if you arrive for a shift and the cases are already finished.
- IHP hearings are scheduled every 30 minutes, the schedule may start at 8:00, 8:30 or 9:00. there may be time between each hearing. Except for the IHP docket (people in prison), hearings are not time specific.
- **Unfortunately judges are increasingly restricting public access to courtrooms.** If your shift is set to begin and the courtroom door is locked, please inquire with the guard. If you get an unsatisfactory answer, you may inquire at the filing window. Please be respectful; demanding access is counter-productive and can compromise this project. Document any access restrictions or delays on your observation form(s).
- **Please note that electronic device usage (e.g. cell phone, computer) is not allowed in the courtroom area, including the waiting room, except for attorneys. You are not allowed to photograph the posted dockets. Power all devices completely off.**

During observation

- Please wear your Human Rights Court Observer lanyard. If you don't receive one in the mail you can ask another observer during your first shift; they may be able to get one from our file box or please email the Project Manager at courtobserver@umn.edu to have another one mailed to you.
- Fill out as much of the observation form as possible when listening in on hearings. **Do your best to answer ALL the questions, even when the response is "not discussed" or "unknown". This is the only way we know what did and did not happen.**
- For detained master calendar hearings you will document each hearing during your shift, no matter how short, even hearings that can't move forward because an interpreter can't be found, or cases that are quickly rescheduled to allow the respondent to find an attorney. These are important due process issues that we can only track if observers document them.
- Please print legibly if you don't plan to type out your forms later. Do your best not to write to the edges of your paper, this makes scanning for data entry very difficult. You may attach an additional sheet of paper with additional notes when submitting your forms. This should be brief. Our data entry portal cannot accept voluminous notes. Please aim to be both comprehensive and concise. Discern what you think is most important.
- The observation form(s) should **not** include Respondent names unless you receive specific instructions otherwise. **For the detained docket, please document the full 9 digit A# if you are able, at minimum document the last three digits of the A# which are listed on the posted docket.** If you only have the docket number, we can use that to look up the last three of the A#. Do your best to get both the A# and country code for each respondent. Referring to the docket at the end of your shift will help you fill in missing information. **Make sure the A# is on the front and back of every page for detained hearings.**
- **It is helpful to get full A#s for the non-detained master calendar hearings** in case details are needed based on handling of the case. These details are part of observer trainings.

- If you are observing a merits hearing (akin to the trial), the judge may ask the respondent to grant consent to have observers present. This is true even if an attorney has already consented. If the respondent is concerned about their sensitive information being discussed, you may be asked to leave, we respect the respondents' autonomy to make this decision.
- You will not be interacting with respondents, attorneys, or judges during the hearings. Please remain quiet during the hearings, as they are recorded.
- You may sit anywhere in the observation section where there is an open seat. Because courtroom seating is very limited, at times court staff may ask observers to give up their seat in order to accommodate respondents or family members. You can wait in the waiting area and go back in when a seat opens up. Unfortunately court staff may not come and get you when space has opened up; watch for people to exit. You may also be asked to leave the courtroom for a closed hearing. Wait in the waiting room until the guard or clerk indicates you can return to the courtroom. Also, when space is limited, EOIR's policy is for media representatives to have priority over the general public, including observers.
- If court runs late and you are the last shift, you are encouraged to stay until all cases are completed, but you may leave at the end of your scheduled time if you are unable to stay. For non-detained master calendar hearing, please try to stay through the adjudication of "no-shows".
- If you have any concerns about the hearings that you observed, please include that in the notes section of the form, this is often the most informative part of the form.
- Quietly step out of the courtroom when your shift is complete. **Unless you have an emergency, please wait until a hearing is completed rather than leaving mid-hearing.**

What Should I Say if Someone from the Court Asks Who I Am?

- You can let them know that you are a court observer with the Immigration Court Observation Project.

After the Observation

- It is very helpful to review the annotated observation form, and sample completed form contained in the *Observation Forms and Annotated Guides* packet before you submit your forms. Make sure you review the annotated form that matches the docket you observed (detained, non-detained, and merits). The annotated forms will help clarify what you observed and understand definitions and the information we are seeking on the observation form.
- **Complete your observation forms, and review to make sure you have answered every question. Submit them promptly – no later than 2 weeks after your shift. Make sure each form has your full name and the complete date- day, month, year. Email a scan or photograph to the Project Manager at: courtobserver@umn.edu or mail them to: Amy Lange, The Advocates for Human Rights, 330 2nd Ave S, Suite 800, Minneapolis, MN 55401.**
- If your forms are not double sided, **do not use staples when you submit your forms.**
- Experienced observers are welcome to enter their own observations in the online database. Contact the Project Manager for training and instructions: courtobserver@umn.edu.

- **Review the “Notifications” document and submit all the pertinent notifications from your shift within 24 hours.** If you observe a uniquely troubling case that you feel warrants a referral to an attorney, or a formal complaint against a judge, you may also submit that. Please include: hearing date, shift time, shift type, Judge, A#, country of origin, detention location (if detained), and relevant notes to courtobserver@umn.edu as soon as possible with an explanation of your concern.
- Observing can be very emotional or upsetting; please feel free to contact the project coordinator if you wish to discuss your experience. You may do this any time: courtobserver@umn.edu.
- If you have questions about the project, suggestions for improvement, or requests for training please contact courtobserver@umn.edu.

Additional Resources

Court observation forms, resource materials, and more can be found on The Advocates for Human Rights website, under the Immigration Court Observation Tab:

https://www.theadvocatesforhumanrights.org/Volunteer_Portal/Immigration_Court.

DIRECTIONS TO IMMIGRATION COURT AT FORT SNELLING

Immigration Court is held in the

**Bishop Whipple Federal Building
1 Federal Drive
Fort Snelling, Minnesota 55111.**

To get there:

Light rail

1. The Blue Line Fort Snelling Station stops directly across from the Bishop Whipple Federal Building. Walk across the parking lot to the building's main entrance.

Car

1. Take highway 62/55 and exit at Bloomington Road.
2. Follow the signs for the Federal Building. Google Maps is also accurate for directions.
3. Parking
 - a. Free visitor parking is available adjacent to the federal building. With 5 courtrooms now in operation, the lot fills early, though it empties out as the morning or afternoon wears on. If the lot is full you can park in the Metro Transit Park & Ride
 - i. A valid driver's license may be required to be shown for all vehicles entering the federal building parking lot.



- ii. Guards ask all entrants why they are there. You can tell them that you are there for immigration court.
 - iii. At this time do not need identification in order to enter the building.
- b. The Park & Ride South Lot is south of the federal building on Minnehaha Ave.
 - i. It is marked as Blue Line metro transit Park & Ride.

Entering the Building

1. No prohibited items
 - a. Ex: lighters, firearms, pepper spray, pocketknives, box cutters, matches, razor blades, chains in excess of 12", etc.
 - b. Possession of a firearm in a federal building is a federal offense.
2. Security
 - a. You must go through a security checkpoint, one person at a time.
 - b. Checkpoint includes magnetometer and x-ray machine.
 - c. Remove belts, watches and items from pockets. Electronics need to go in bin.
 - d. You may need to take off your shoes.
 - e. Beverages are allowed through security but not in the courtroom.

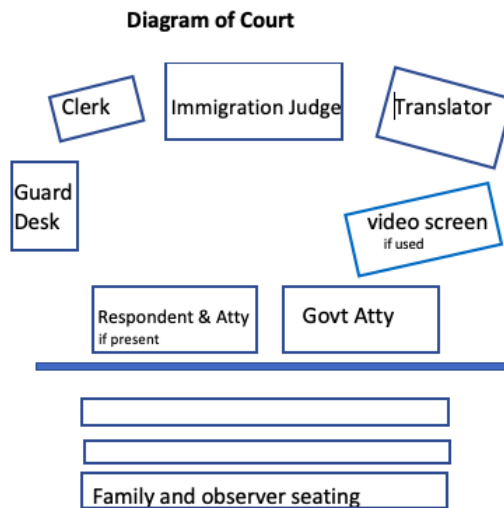


Locating Immigration Court

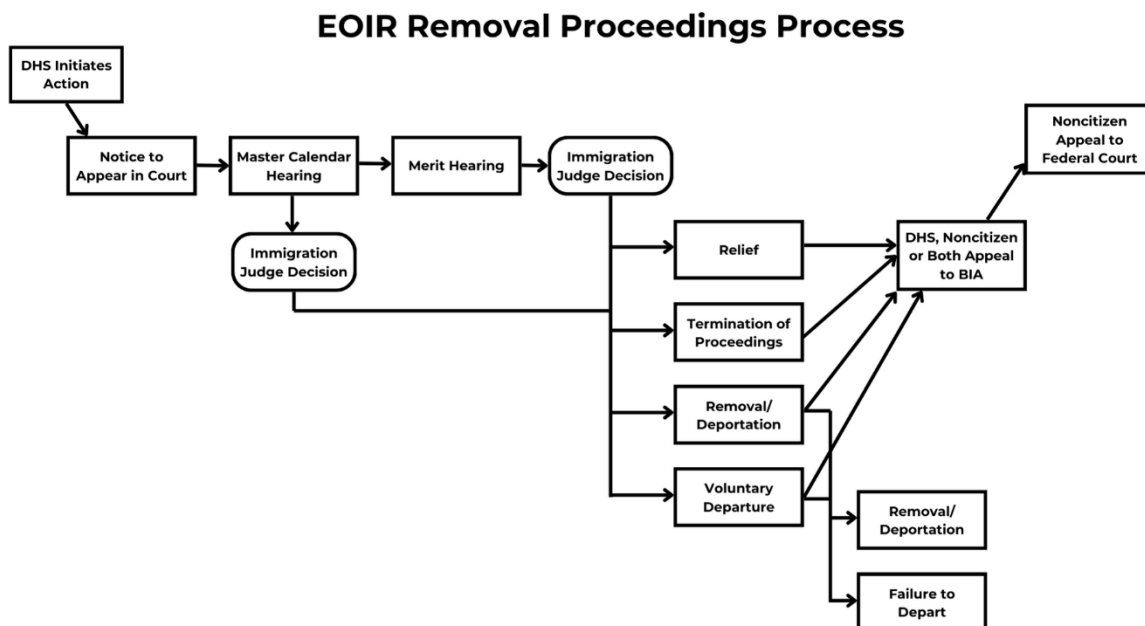
1. The courtrooms are on the 1st floor, in Room 1850. After going through security, take a left before the elevator bank. Walk down the hall; the court waiting room is the last door on the left.
2. The dockets will be posted on the wall, behind plexiglass, on the left wall when you walk in. They are labeled by courtroom and judge. Your reminder email will note which docket to look for and which courtroom you will be observing in.
3. Walk in quietly to start the observations. No one is allowed to stand. If the courtroom seating is full, you'll need to return to the waiting room until people leave. You will hear best if you sit in the front row.

General Tips

1. Arrive early to get through security
2. Do not bring anything more into the building than necessary.
3. Dress respectfully, casual is fine. Business attire is not necessary. The courtroom tends to be cold, so dress accordingly.
4. **Power off all electronic devices** in the courtroom.
5. There are bathrooms in the outer hallway and a cafeteria on the lower level if you need a break.



FLOWCHART – IMMIGRATION CASE IN COURT- START TO FINISH



Note that immigration enforcement falls entirely under the Executive Branch of government.

BASIC OVERVIEW OF COURT PROCEEDINGS

Immigration law is quite complex and the landscape is rapidly changing, observers are not expected to understand all the nuances, but familiarity with the overall structure is important.

Volunteers observe hearings for noncitizens in removal proceedings at the Fort Snelling Immigration Court. This is the court for MN, ND, and SD. We observe removal proceedings for noncitizens being held in ICE detention, those serving prison sentences while also in immigration proceedings (IHP hearings- Institutional Hearing Program), and for those who are not detained. We observe 3 types of hearings: master calendar hearings (preliminary procedural hearings), bond (custody) hearings, and merits hearings (also known as individual or final hearings). For people held in detention, bond and removal hearings may take place back-to-back.

Anyone whom the government believes is in the U.S. in violation of immigration law may be put into removal proceedings in immigration court. (Not everyone, however has a right to a hearing in front of a judge.) The court process starts when ICE issues a Notice To Appear (NTA) to a noncitizen.

The Notice to Appear (NTA) contains allegations against the noncitizen:

- They are not a citizen of the U.S.
- They are a citizen of another (named) country
- It will specify where and when they entered the U.S., if known, or state that it is unknown and
- They entered illegally, or they entered legally but violated the terms (like overstaying a visa) or
- They have authorization to be here but have committed crimes which make them deportable

The NTA then lists the relevant statute and charges the immigrant with being deportable i.e. for being in the United States in violation of immigration law.

Noncitizens in these court proceedings are referred to as respondents (not defendants). People end up in removal proceedings in a variety of ways: shortly after entering the US, after arrests or sentences for criminal activity, in raids, sweeps, and off the streets. Immigration and Customs Enforcement is increasingly aggressive and we are seeing many more people arrested, including those who have lived in the US for a long time. Many people are now being held in detention who have active cases before the court but were not previously detained.

At the first removal (deportation) hearing the judge will explain the purpose of removal proceedings, explain their role, and provide advisals enumerating the respondent's rights and responsibilities in the process.

If the respondent doesn't have an attorney, they are offered a continuance to find an attorney. A person in deportation proceedings must hire their own attorney. There is no public defender type system in immigration court. They should be provided with a list of free attorneys. A respondent may hire any attorney they wish, however, there are not enough attorneys to meet demand and private attorneys can be expensive.

At a subsequent hearing the immigration judge will take pleadings. In pleadings the individual is asked to respond to each of the allegations and the charge of removability under the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA), as noted in the Notice to Appear (NTA). Admitting the allegations and conceding the charge makes someone deportable/removable.

Pleadings are conducted differently if someone has an attorney vs. if they are representing themselves (pro se). If someone is pro se, each allegation is read and responded to individually. If there is an attorney, they will speak on behalf of the respondent, and the judge typically asks the attorney to waive the reading of all the allegations and charge in the NTA. During pleadings, some people may refute the charge of removability, claiming, for instance, that their criminal history doesn't make them removable, or even that proceedings should be terminated because they are a citizen.

Once someone concedes that they are removable, the judge, or the respondent's attorney if they have one, determines whether the immigrant has any avenue to apply for relief, as in relief from deportation. Different modes of relief from deportation, granting some sort of legal status, have different eligibility criteria. Judges screen pro se (unrepresented) individuals by asking a series of questions about family ties, length of time in U.S., fears of return to home country, and whether they've been a crime victim. If the respondent has an attorney, the attorney will screen for eligibility and submit the relevant applications.

Historically, subsequent master calendar hearings involve receiving and submitting applications for relief and providing supporting evidence. Respondents then get scheduled for a final hearing (aka individual hearing or merits hearing). This is where the case is presented-- testimony is given, witnesses, if any, are called, evidence is reviewed and the judge makes a final determination whether or not to grant relief.

Both the immigrant and the government attorney have a right to appeal the judge's decision (granting relief, denying relief, dismiss or pretermittting a case) to the Bureau of Immigration Appeals. A respondent must pay a substantial filing fee for an appeal.

In the current landscape many people do not receive a full hearing on an application for relief/ legal status- they never get a merit hearing. Many cases are being dismissed with respondents then subject to expedited removal, or applications are pretermitted, meaning rejected as legally deficient without the benefit of testimony or supplemental evidence. This is a troubling change which raises significant due process concerns.

It is not uncommon for respondents to seek or receive a removal (deportation) order at a master calendar hearing. In addition to those due to pretermission, many people simply give up, especially if they are detained. Detention is so unpleasant and the process of applying for relief so difficult from detention (communication with the outside is challenging and expensive), many people ask to be deported. Some people have no possible legal avenue to stay in the US and the judge orders deportation, and many people think their chances are slim in the current climate and simply request a deportation.

Sometimes if a person doesn't have any avenue for relief that enables them to stay in the U.S., they can receive a form of relief called Voluntary Departure. This is a discretionary grant by an immigration judge that is an alternative way to leave the country without a deportation. To receive Voluntary Departure, one must not have committed or been charged with a serious criminal offense; and must be deemed a person of good moral character. The benefit of Voluntary Departure is that the person doesn't have a

deportation on their record. Returning unauthorized to the U.S. after deportation can be charged a felony. In contrast, crossing the border illegally is a misdemeanor and being present in the U.S. without authorization is a civil offense. To get Voluntary Departure one must have the funds to pay the cost of airfare (typically around \$750), and one must already have appropriate travel documents, typically a passport.

As noted above, detained noncitizens may request a bond hearing. This is typically referred to as a custody redetermination i.e. the ability to pay a monetary bond to be released from ICE custody. Bond hearings are scheduled along with master calendar hearings on the detained dockets. Recent changes in case law have drastically narrowed eligibility for bond.

If someone requests a bond hearing they must first argue that they are eligible for bond. In most cases now, immigration judges do not have jurisdiction to grant a bond, and will deny bond on that basis. If a judge determines they do have jurisdiction to consider bond, a hearing first determines the person is not subject to mandatory detention on the basis of an arrest, a conviction, or status as an “arriving alien”. The respondent bears the burden of proof. They then must prove that they are not a danger to society and that they are not a flight risk. This usually requires showing at least some of the following: no criminal record, stable housing, stable employment, family in the US, and / or community ties. If the judge grants a bond, the amount is supposed to mitigate flight risk. If a bond is granted and the person is able to pay the bond, they are released from ICE custody and their case moved to the non-detained docket. Both the detainee and the prosecuting attorney (government attorney aka DHS counsel) have a right to appeal the judge’s bond decision to the Bureau of Immigration Appeals.

Immigration cases are being adjudicated more quickly than historically. Judges have had timelines imposed, and quotas have been established for case completion. All of this impacts what observers witness and document.

SAMPLE NOTICE TO APPEAR (NTA)

Immigration and Naturalization Service

Notice to Appear

In removal proceedings under section 240 of the Immigration and Nationality Act:

File No: _____

In the Matter of: _____

Respondent: _____

currently residing at: _____

(Number, street, city, state and ZIP code)

(Area code and phone number)

- ☐ 1. You are an arriving alien.
- ☐ 2. You are an alien present in the United States who has not been admitted or paroled.
- ☒ 3. You have been admitted to the United States, but are deportable for the reasons stated below.

The Service alleges that:

- 1) You are not a citizen or national of the United States.
- 2) You are a native of _____ and a citizen of _____.
- 3) You were admitted to the United States at _____ on or about _____ as a nonimmigrant _____ with authorization to remain in the United States for a temporary period not to exceed _____.
- 4) You remained in the United States beyond _____ without authorization.

On the basis of the foregoing, it is charged that you are subject to removal from the United States pursuant to the following provision(s) of law:

Section 237 (a) (1) (B) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (Act), as amended, in that after admission as a nonimmigrant under Section 101(a) (15) of the Act, you have remained in the United States for a time longer than permitted.

- ☐ This notice is being issued after an asylum officer has found that the respondent has demonstrated a credible fear of persecution or torture.
- ☐ Section 235(b)(1) order was vacated pursuant to: ☐ 8 CFR 208.30(f)(2) ☐ 8 CFR 235.3(b)(5)(iv)

YOU ARE ORDERED to appear before an immigration judge of the United States Department of Justice at:

(Complete Address of Immigration Court, including Room Number, if any)

on _____ at _____ to show why you should not be removed from the United States based on
(Date) (Time)
the charge(s) set forth above.

(Signature and Title of Issuing Officer)

Date: _____

(City and State)

See reverse for important information

Form I-862 (Rev. 3/22/99) [N]

REFERENCES AND GLOSSARY

Most Common Country Codes

When possible write 2 digit code, and country name on your form

AF – Afghanistan	ES - El Salvador	MX - Mexico
BI - Bosnia	ER - Eritrea	NI - Nigeria
BM - Burma	ET - Ethiopia	NU - Nicaragua
BO – Burkina Faso	FM – Federated States of Micronesia	PK - Pakistan
BR - Brazil	GH - Ghana	RO - Romania
CC - Cambodia	GT - Guatemala	RU - Russia
CH - China	HA – Haiti	SO - Somalia
CM - Cameroon	HO - Honduras	SU - Sudan
CO - Colombia	IN - India	TU – Turkey
CU - Cuba	KE - Kenya	UZ - Uzbekistan
DC – Democatic Republic of Congo	KZ - Kazakhstan	VE - Venezuela
DR - Dominican Republic	LA – Laos	VM - Vietnam
EC - Ecuador	LI – Liberia	XS - South Sudan
		ZA - Zambia

Location Codes on Docket

BLM, (EFM) Non- Detained	BLD- Kandiyohi, MN	BL8- Douglas, MN
BLJ- Juvenile, Non- detained	BLF- Freeborn, MN	MIN, WAF, and SOD- Prisons
BLC- Crookston, MN (Polk county)	BLG- Grand Forks, ND	
	BSB- Sherburne, MN	
	BL5- Lawrence, SD	
	BL7- Burleigh, ND	

List of Government Attorneys- always changing

Cassondra Bly	Jennifer Duffy	Julie Lei
Sarah Boggie	David Hackworthy	Anne Myers
Molly Bowan	Sommer Honeycutt	Nakeesha Nath
Courtney Campbell	Madeline Jack	Luke Nelson
Joseph Dietz	Lisa Kumiega	Courtney Nussbaumer
Lori Ann Drayson	Justin Lee	Tom Prochazka

List of Immigration Judges

IJ Audrey Carr

IJ Kalin Ivany

IJ Monte Miller

IJ Brian Sardelli

Glossary, forms, and abbreviations

The glossary is written for lay people; it should not be construed as legal advice. This is for reference only. You do not need to know these terms in order to be an effective observer.

Abbreviation or Form	Full Name	Description
42A	Cancellation of Removal- Legal permanent resident	Application for relief for legal permanent residents in deportation proceedings before an Immigration Judge. Convictions for certain crimes is a common way that LPRs can become deportable. To get cancellation, person must 1. be LPR for at least 5 years 2. been in US Continually for 7 years. 3. No aggravated felony. 4. Never gotten cancellation before. 5. Convince judge that your positive attributes outweigh the negative. If granted, immigrant keeps their green card.
42B	Cancellation of removal- non legal permanent resident	Application for relief for non-legal permanent residents in deportation proceedings before an Immigration Judge. Very hard to get. Requirements: 1. lived continuously in United States for at least 10 years. 2. You have been a person of good moral character 3. You haven't been convicted of crimes that would render you inadmissible or deportable. 4. Your possible deportation would cause " <u>exceptional and extremely unusual hardship</u> " to your lawful permanent resident or U.S. citizen spouse, child or parent. Persons who are victims of abuse in US by US citizen or legal permanent resident spouse or parent can be also eligible to apply for cancellation of removal. If granted, the immigrant is eligible for a green card from USCIS.

ACA	Asylum Cooperative Agreement/ safe 3 rd Country	Agreements between the US and other countries that allow the US to send asylum seekers to those countries to seek protection instead of allowing them to apply for asylum in the US. The US signed ACAs with El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras. None of these 3 countries can be considered “safe” or capable of fair or robust adjudication of asylum claims. A 2025 BIA decision (Matter of C-I-G-M- & L-V-S-G-, 29 I&N Dec. 291) ruled the judge must remove the respondent to a 4 rd country unless the respondent can prove they would be persecuted in that third country. This must happen before the judge can consider the original asylum application.
Ad. Close/ Admin close	Administrative closure	This is a docket-management tool. It takes a case off the active court docket, usually for the purpose of adjudicating a pending application before USICS. A respondent will not have court hearings while the case is administratively closed. Either party can file a motion to re-calendar the case.
Adjustment of Status	Adjustment of status to Legal Permanent Resident	Application to get a green card. This is filed on an I-485 application. These can be adjudicated by USCIS or EOIR (by Immigration Judges, for detainees in removal proceedings). See I-485 in glossary
Asylum	Application for asylum	May only apply for asylum if one is already physically present in the United States. Must apply for asylum within one year of arrival in the United States, unless there are changed circumstances that materially affect eligibility for asylum or extraordinary circumstances directly related to one's failure to file within one year. Must prove persecution based on race, religion, nationality, political opinion or membership in a “social group”, that home government can’t or won’t protect you, and that safe relocation within home country is not possible. . Asylum does offer path to citizenship.
B-2	Tourist Visa application	
BIA	Board of Immigration Appeals	The Board of Immigration Appeals (BIA) is the highest administrative body for interpreting and applying immigration laws. Generally, the BIA does not conduct courtroom proceedings - it decides appeals by conducting a "paper review" of cases. The majority of appeals reaching the BIA involve orders of removal and applications for relief from removal.

Biometrics	Biometrics	The collection of biometrics is required for those gaining lawful immigration status. It includes the taking of photographs, fingerprints and signatures. The US is beginning to collect more biometric information on migrants- such as iris scans and using facial recognition software, raising privacy and surveillance concerns.
Cancellation	Cancellation of removal	See 42A and 42B, forms of cancellation of removal for legal permanent residents and people without legal status (non-LPR) respectively.
CAT	Relief under the Convention Against Torture	CAT, is an extremely rare grant of protection from deportation for individuals who fear torture in their home country. To qualify, an applicant must demonstrate a clear probability (more than a 50% chance) that they will be tortured either directly by or with the acquiescence of the government of their country of origin. Certain individuals are legally ineligible for both asylum with withholding of removal, so relief under the Convention against Torture (“CAT”) is the only chance they have of remaining in U.S. Usually this occurs when person has been convicted of a “particularly serious crime.” Almost all people who qualify only for CAT are subject to mandatory detention during the course of their removal proceedings. Those who gain protection under CAT can be deported to third countries.
CFR	Credible Fear Review	If someone is in expedited removal proceedings and expressed fear persecution or torture, he/she will be given a credible fear interview with an asylum officer. If the asylum officer finds the person has a credible fear, person will be referred to an IJ for a full hearing. If the asylum officer does not found him/her to have a credible fear, he/she can request a credible fear review with the IJ.
Charging Document	Charging document	A charging document is a pleading that initiates criminal charges against a defendant. It—not arrest—signifies the commencement of a criminal case. Complaints, information, and indictments are charging documents.
CIS	U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services	USCIS is a component of the United States Department of Homeland Security (DHS).
CAA	Cuban Adjustment Act	The Cuban Adjustment Act of 1966 (CAA) allows Cuban natives or citizens living in the United States who meet certain eligibility requirements to apply to become lawful permanent residents (get a Green Card). Must have been in the US at least one year, among other requirements. Application filed with USCIS

Custody Hearing	Bond Hearing	A hearing to determine whether someone can be released on bond or is ineligible, either because criminal or arrival history, or previous deportation order makes someone subject to mandatory detention, or because a judge determines the person is a danger to society.
DACA	Deferred Action on Childhood Arrivals	DACA is Deferred Action on Childhood Arrivals, an executive action by the Obama administration in 2012. The protection lasts for two years and is renewable. It allowed recipients to get work permits, driver's licenses, and have access to in-state tuition and employer-based health care from their employers. It doesn't offer a path to citizenship.
de novo	anew, from the beginning	When a court hears a case de novo, it is deciding the issues without reference to any legal conclusion or assumption made by the previous court to hear the case.
DHS	Department of Homeland Security	Numerous agencies are directed by the department of homeland security including USCIS (US Citizenship and Immigration services), CBP (US customs and boarder Protection), ICE (US Immigration and Customs Enforcement)
Dismissal	Also referred to as termination	A case can be dismissed or terminated for several reasons, a finding that a Legal permanent resident's criminal conviction is not a deportable defense, a finding that someone in removal proceedings is a US citizen, or as a result of prosecutorial discretion, meaning ICE drops a case. With the exception of finding someone is a US citizen, dismissal doesn't guarantee they won't be placed back in removal proceedings in the future.
EAD	Employment Authorization Document	Commonly known as a work permit. These are issued by USCIS. Asylum seekers can apply for EAD 6 months after filing their I-589.
ECAS	EOIR Courts and Appeals System	Electronic filing system for cases with EOIR (immigration court) and the Bureau of Immigration Appeals. Electronic filing of all records into ECAS is required as of February 2022.
EOIR	Executive Office for Immigration Review	An agency within Department of Justice. EOIR's immigration judges conduct administrative court proceedings in immigration courts (such as in the Whipple building). They determine whether foreign-born individuals — who are charged by DHS with violating immigration law — should be ordered removed from U.S. or be granted relief from removal and be permitted to remain in the country.

ER	Expedited Removal	“Expedited removal” refers to the legal authority given to even low-level immigration officers to order the deportation of immigrants who arrive at the border or are found within 14 days of arrival within 100 miles of the Mexican or Canadian border—without any of the due-process protections granted to most other people—such as the right to an attorney and to a hearing before a judge.
ERO	Enforcement and Removal Operations	Enforcement arm of ICE. Identify, arrest and remove immigrants who are in US illegally or found removable. They have the heinous hotline so people can call and report people suspected of being undocumented.
eROP	Electronic record of proceedings	EOIR has moved to electronic records for all cases initiated beginning in 2022. Case filings and records of proceedings (hearings) are now electronic, the system is called eROP.
EWI	Entered without inspection	Enter the US without a visa / aren’t paroled in at border crossing. These people would be considered “undocumented”, but there are other ways to be in the U.S. without status, including those whose permission has expired or who have otherwise fallen out of legal status.
ER- Expedited Removal	Expedited Removal	A process where immigrants can be quickly deported without a hearing in front of a judge. Under longstanding practice ER was applied to people who were encountered at or near the border who had been in the US 2 weeks or less. It is now broadly applied to anyone in the US who can’t prove they’ve been continuously present in the US for at least two years.
F-1	Student Visa	
Habeas Petition	Habeas Corpus petition, or Petition for a Writ of habeas Corpus	In the context we hear in immigration court most often refers to an immigrant having the right to file a habeas petition in federal district court if they are still detained six months after their deportation order. This can occur, for instance, when a person has been ordered deported but their country of origin will not issue travel papers, or when there isn’t proof a detainee is a citizen of the country they are to be deported to. In hearing the petition a federal judge can order continued detention, a bond hearing or release from ICE detention. (see also “writ” in glossary)

H-1B visa	Workers in specialty occupations- temporary visas	Allows companies in the United States to temporarily employ foreign workers in occupations that require the theoretical and practical application of a body of highly specialized knowledge and education. There is a cap on number of H1-B visa's granted.
H-2A visa	Temporary visa for seasonal agricultural workers	temporary visa category
H-2B visa	Temporary visa for non-agricultural workers	temporary visa category
I-130	Petition for Alien Relative	This is the application filed to establish that a valid family relationship exists between a U.S. citizen or legal permanent resident and a person seeking a green card. Example a U.S. citizen married to a non-citizen files this so their spouse can get a green card. This is filed before USCIS- not the EOIR (Executive office of immigration review). The immigration judges we observe have no authority to grant or deny I-130s. The filing fee for I-130 is \$535. The approval process takes 5-12 months for immediate relatives and can take several years for other family preference categories.
I-213	Record of Deportable/ Inadmissible Alien	A form that arresting officer completes regarding a person's personal information and immigration record (including past apprehensions and removals) prior to being placed in removal proceedings before an Immigration Judge. Includes photo, fingerprints
I-261	DHS form I-2611 amends an NTA	This is a form used by ICE to add or substitute charges or factual allegations on the NTA
I-360	Petition for Amerasian, Widow(er) or Special immigrant (Juvenile)	A petition to USCIS for status under a range of unique classifications including physician, religious worker and a juvenile who is declared dependent on a juvenile court (SIJS).
I-485	Adjustment of status	Adjustment of status is the process to apply for lawful permanent resident status (also known as applying for a Green Card) when already present in the United States. Usually requires an eligible person filing a petition on immigrant's behalf. A person can adjust based on different grounds such as being a victim of abuse or trafficking or having a qualifying citizen relative. Fee is \$1140 for filing and \$85 for biometrics.

I-589	Application for Asylum, Withholding of Removal and CAT (Convention against Torture)	Same application is used for asylum, withholding of removal and Conventions against Torture. See individual listings for more information.
I-751	Petition to remove conditions on residence	This application is submitted to USCIS (not EOIR), by a conditional permanent resident who obtained status through marriage and wants to remove the conditions on his or her residence. The conditional resident status is valid for two years. If a petition to remove conditions is not filed, the person can lose lawful status.
I-862	Notice to Appear	Dept of Homeland Security submits this to court and respondent, stating why a person is deportable: came without permission, overstayed a visa or committed certain crimes.
ICE	Immigration and Customs Enforcement	U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) enforces federal laws governing border control, customs, trade and immigration to promote homeland security and public safety. ICE is one of the Departments of the Department of Homeland Security.
IHP	Institutional Hearing Program- also known as Institutional Removal Program	IHP is a program where immigration judges conduct removal proceedings for noncitizens serving criminal sentences in state and federal prisons. The project greatly expanded during the Trump administration, and commenced in MN in 2020
I J	Immigration Judge	Immigration Judges are not actual judges in the judicial branch of government. They are civil servants in the Department of Justice, part of the executive branch. They do not receive lifetime appointments, but do receive tenure. They must be attorneys with several years of experience.
ISAP	Intensive Supervision Appearance Program	Release program requiring a home monitoring ankle bracelet
Joseph Hearing	Joseph Hearing	This is a a bond hearing where a legal permanent resident in immigration detention puts forth and defends evidence and argument that he/she should not be subject to mandatory detention based on criminal convictions, (crimes of moral turpitude and/or aggravated felonies).

LPR	Lawful (legal) permanent resident	This is what is commonly referred to as a green card holder.
N-400	Application for certificate of Citizenship	
NCIC	National Crime Information Center	An electronic clearinghouse of crime data that can be tapped into by virtually every criminal justice agency nationwide, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.
NTA	Notice to Appear	Dept of Homeland Security submits this to court and respondent, stating why a person is deportable: came without permission, overstayed a visa or committed certain crimes. This initiates the removal hearing process. Responding to the allegations and charge in a notice to appear is the process called pleadings.
Padilla case or Padilla precedent	Supreme Court Case Padilla Vs Kentucky	Supreme Court Case <i>Padilla v. Commonwealth of Kentucky</i> , (2010), United States Supreme Court decided that criminal defense attorneys must advise noncitizen clients about the deportation risks of a guilty plea. Attorneys must give their clients some advice about deportation: counsel cannot remain silent about immigration.
PLEADINGS	Pleadings	During a master calendar removal hearing, respondent (or attorney on behalf of respondent) will be asked to admit or deny the factual allegations in the Notice to Appear and concede or deny the charge of removability, acknowledging that the person is in the US in violation of immigration law. This is called pleadings. If pro se, the judge typically does not state that this process is "pleadings". The respondent gets sworn in and will be asked to respond to each allegation individually (is not a US citizen, is a citizen of another country, entered at such and such a time and place, is here without permission etc. OR is here with permission but violated the conditions of their status and concede the government's charge of being deportable. If respondent has an attorney, the judge will ask if attorney is ready for pleadings. The individual allegations will not be read, rather the attorney will state that they admit the factual allegations 1 thru x and concede or deny the charge of removability. Pleadings must take place before someone can seek relief from deportation, this is to assure that the government doesn't deport a US citizen.

Prepermit	Prepermit or Pretermission	Rejecting an application for relief as “legally insufficient” without the benefit of a full hearing with evidence and testimony. Seen almost exclusively with asylum applications. A respondent can appeal a judge’s pretermission decision. Pretermission rulings often take place during master calendar hearings
Pro Se	Pro se - for oneself	Representing self in court- speaking on one's own behalf without legal representation.
Reinstatement	Reinstatement of removal	A removal order/ procedure that applies to noncitizens who return to the US without authorization after having been removed under a prior deportation order. Reinstatement order can be issued against non-citizens who have been living in the US for many years. A person does not automatically get judicial review of reinstatement orders (can be removed without a court hearing)
Relief	Relief from deportation	Various avenues exist for relief: asylum, withholding of removal, cancellation of removal, adjustment of status, voluntary departure.
Remand	Remand	A case is returned to the immigration judge, after an appeal, for reconsideration or to apply a ruling or legal determination by the Board of Immigration Appeals or appellate court.
Removal order	Removal order Removal=Deportation	Order for deportation. Someone may be ordered deported after losing their case, after appealing and losing the appeal, or anytime during the process if they give up and ask to be deported. A deportation/ removal order, even when requested by the detainee, is not voluntary departure. Returning to US without authorization, within a stated number of years (usually 10) after a deportation order is a felony.
Reopen	Reopen or Reconsideration	A motion to have a new hearing after a final removal order (reopen a completed case). The motion to reopen could be based on a change of facts, new evidence, or errors in law as originally applied, which would have had significant impact on original decision if they had been available at the time.
Respondent	Respondent	Legal term for Immigrant appearing in court. We use the word detainee in our documentation, as we observe detained hearings

RFR	Reasonable Fear Review	Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) may not remove individuals to a country where they are “more likely than not” going to be persecuted or tortured. If a person was removed before and expresses a fear of persecution or torture, ICE must refer their case to an asylum officer for a reasonable fear interview. If determined there is a reasonable fear, a person may seek withholding of removal or deferral of removal before an IJ. If determined there is not a reasonable fear, the person can request the IJ to conduct a reasonable fear review.
ROA	Register of Action	Registers of Actions will show the charges, what were dismissed, what was pled to, and what the sentence ultimately was for the defendant.
SIJS	Special Immigrant Juvenile Status	A form of protection granted by USCIS to immigrant children under age 21 who have been abused, abandoned or neglected by a parent. Applicable only to those who have sought remedy through state court or are in custody of a state agency. Those given SIJ classification may qualify for legal permanent residency (green card)
Status Docket	Placing a case on the status docket	This is another docket management tool which takes a case off the active master calendar docket There are status updates provided to the court about issues pending before USICS. Final adjudication is delayed. A Director’s Memo March 2025, significantly restricts the use of the status docket.
T-Visa	T-Visa	T nonimmigrant status is a temporary immigration benefit that enables certain victims of a severe form of human trafficking to remain in the United States for up to 4 years if they have assisted law enforcement. T nonimmigrant status is also available for certain qualifying family members of trafficking victims.
Termination	Termination of Removal	This terminates a removal case and allows person to stay.
TPS	Temporary Protected Status	Temporary protected status is a temporary status given to eligible people of designated countries that are affected by armed conflict or natural disaster. The status allows people to live and work in the US for a limited amount of time. Trump has been terminating these programs despite the fact that some people have been in the US over 20 years.

U visa	U-Visa	The U nonimmigrant status (U visa) is set aside for victims of certain crimes who have suffered mental or physical abuse and are helpful to law enforcement or government officials in the investigation or prosecution of criminal activity. There is a cap of 10,000 u-visas granted per year. When cap is reached, people are placed on waiting list and are granted deferred action or parole.
Under safeguards		Term used when granted voluntary departure, but rather than being released on bond or intensive home monitoring, in order to wrap up your affairs, you are kept in detention and transported to the airport by ICE, to make sure that you leave the country.
USCIS	U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services	USCIS is a component of the United States Department of Homeland Security (DHS). Sometimes referred to as CIS
Voluntary departure	Voluntary Departure	Voluntary departure is a discretionary form of relief from deportation, granted by a judge. It permits a noncitizen to depart the United States without an order of removal (deportation) on his or her record. This has a number of benefits over deportation. Most importantly, it means that unauthorized return to US is not subject to felony prosecution as it is after a deportation. Voluntary departure carries with it a deadline of either 60 days or 120 days which allows person time to close bank accounts, terminate leases, sell real estate and personal property, say goodbye, and make future arrangements. (if they are not detained). Detained people who are granted voluntary departure are usually held in detention until their departure from the US. A person granted voluntary departure must pay for their plane ticket back to country of origin, and must have valid travel documents, usually a passport.
Waiver	Waiver of inadmissibility	This is the most common waiver referred to in Immigration court. A waiver is like a pardon. If granted, a waiver can allow you to apply for immigration status despite an infraction that would otherwise make you ineligible. Some waivers are automatic, and some are discretionary.
WOR	Withholding of Removal	Withholding of removal is a form of relief issued by an immigration judge to a person who demonstrates more than a 50% chance that they will be persecuted in their home country on account of their race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or political opinion. Unlike with asylum, a person granted withholding of removal has no pathway to a green card or to U.S. citizenship. A person granted withholding of removal cannot travel outside of the United States (it's considered self-deportation).

Writ	Being out on a writ	In context of immigration court, it is an order from the state court judge to the jail that is holding the person, to produce them for a hearing in criminal court; as a result, the person is moved from ICE custody to the county jail where the criminal case is pending, until the criminal court judge allows their release back to ICE. Technically a writ of habeas corpus ad prosequendum.
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All of these resources, and more can be found on the Immigration Court Observation Project page of The Advocates For Human Rights:

https://www.theadvocatesforhumanrights.org/Volunteer_Portal/Immigration_Court

SAMPLE DOCKET: EXPLAINED

[Sample Detained Docket](#)
[Master Calendar Morning](#)
[Afternoon Merits Hearing](#)

[U Hearing Calendar-Redacted- Detainee](#)

[Judge First Last](#)

[From Date to Date](#)

Hearing Date
Date

Start Time	End Time	#	H	Loc	Noncitizen Name	A#	H/C Type	Prev Adj	Nat	Opt-In	Noncitizen Rep	Lan
8:30	9:30	1	BLD		Last, first	xxx-xxx-078	ARMV	01	SO			ENG
8:30	12:30	2	BLD		Last, first	xxx-xxx-155	ARMV	01	MX			SP
8:30	9:30	3	BLD		Last, first	xxx-xxx-296	ARMV	01	HO			SP
8:30	9:30	4	BLD		Last, first	xxx-xxx-331	IRMV	NA	ES			SP
8:30	11:30	5	BLD		Last, first	xxx-xxx-334	IRMV	NA	MX			SP
8:30	9:30	5A	BLD		Last, first	xxx-xxx-334	BRMV	NA	MX	Y	Jones, Kim (CY)	SP
8:30	9:30	6	BLD		Last, first	xxx-xxx-442	ARMV	02	GT		Gleekel, Ben (OP)	SP
10:30	12:30	7	BLG		Last, first	xxx-xxx-480	IRMV	NA	NI		Anderson, Gabriela (OP)	ENG
10:30	12:30	8	BLG			@xxx-xxx-499	ARMV	01	MX			SP
10:30	12:30	8A	BLG			@xxx-xxx-499	BRMV	01	LI		Miller, Maria (CY)	ENG
10:30	12:30	9	BLG		Last, first	xxx-xxx-600	ARMV	02	GT	Y	Harrison, Caleb (OP)	SP
10:30	12:30	10	BLD		Last, first	xxx-xxx-770	ARMV	8B	MX			SP
1:30	4:30	11	BLD		Last, first	xxx-xxx-929	ARMV	TQ	SO			SO

EXPLANATION

- # is the order of cases on the docket. This is just the order in which they are listed for a particular day.
- Detained and non-detained master calendar dockets are long, multiple unrelated people scheduled at the same start time.
- For detained master calendar (and bond), hearings, cases are not time-specific, different start times usually indicate different detention locations.**
- Hearings do not go in order of the docket numbers. Usually cases with attorney representation will be heard before pro se cases, and for non-detained, webex cases before in person. Individual merit hearings are time specific, for non-detained cases the top of the docket will say Individual, detained still say Detainee, but there will only be one person per block of time.
- A# Only the last three digits of the 9 digit A# is printed on the docket.** The entire A number is usually stated in the court room, try to document the whole A#.
- H/C type** is the hearing type. IRMV is initial removal hearing, ARMV is a subsequent removal hearing (A stand for adjourned), BRMV is for bond hearings, though bond hearings may also be listed as ARMV or IRMV. IWHO is Initial Withholding Only, ICFR is Initial Credible Fear Review, IRFR is Initial Reasonable Fear Review
- Prev adj** notes the adjournment code from the last hearing, why the case was continued. NA indicates a first hearing in court.
- Nat is nationality, it will list the two digit country code.** The most common country codes are listed in your instructions
- Opt-In** refers to e-filing. This is not relevant to our observations and can be ignored.
- Noncitizen Rep** is the attorney for the respondent, if there is one., you'll note that most people appear pro se, without an attorney. There may also be a substitute attorney than the one listed. Attorneys don't always appear on the docket. CY= rep on bond case only; OP= representation for removal/other
- LAN** is language, this indicates the language the respondent has requested, or that the court thinks they speak. Interpreters, in person, or via phone are provided if English isn't the preferred language.

ONGOING SUPPORT AND TRAINING FOR VOLUNTEER COURT OBSERVERS

- Mentors are available for new and experienced volunteers, contact courtobserver@umn.edu
- The Docket- a monthly newsletter is emailed to all volunteers
- Monthly Volunteer Debrief: date, time, and location rotate. Details are noted in The Docket. Meet other volunteers, share experiences and perspectives. Occasionally a guest speaker will be scheduled
- Periodic trainings, presentations, and facilitated discussions, announced in The Docket
- Binger Center Annual Immigration Law Conference, held every November, all volunteers welcome to register
- The American Immigration Council has many resources on their website: <https://www.americanimmigrationcouncil.org/>. Volunteers are also encouraged to subscribe to their e-news: <https://immigrationimpact.com/>

COMMUNICATION AND SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDELINES

If approached by members of the press/media we ask that observers refrain from comment. Observers should not publicly identify themselves as part of the Immigration Court Observation Project or as volunteers of The Advocates for Human Rights, even off the record. Comments made to the media can jeopardize the project, the organization and our legal services clients. Please refer all media inquiries to press@advright.org.

Social media is a powerful tool for sharing your experiences and impressions of immigration court. It is an immediate way to express how broken and inhumane our immigration system is. But social media posts can also be weaponized, and hard to contain. We want to avoid any risk to our project's continuation by refraining from sensationalized or inflammatory posts. It is also critical that we protect people who are extremely vulnerable in our immigration system.

When considering what or whether to post, or publicly present, please consider these guidelines.

- Be careful to not exploit or sensationalize any immigrant's story.
- Do not post any details which could identify an individual
- Please don't identify any judge or attorney by name
- Focus on system issues rather than individual cases
- Focus on the impact the observations had on you
- Speak for yourself and not on behalf of the Immigration court observation project or The Advocates for Human Rights.

If in doubt, feel free to send your post to courtobserver@umn.edu for review prior to posting. If you write a longer post that might be suitable for The Advocates for Human Rights' blog, please feel free to submit it to courtobserver@umn.edu. These guidelines are the same for public speaking to civic, faith or community groups.

COPY OF EOIR LIST OF FREE LEGAL SERVICES, PROVIDED TO PRO SE RESPONDENTS: FORT SNELLING COURT

* Non-Profit Organization
 ** Referral Service
 *** Private Attorney

List of Pro Bono Legal Service Providers <http://www.justice.gov/eoir/list-pro-bono-legal-service-providers>

Updated October 2024

Fort Snelling Immigration Court

Fort Snelling, Minnesota (page 1 of 2)	
The Advocates for Human Rights* 330 Second Avenue South, Suite 800 Minneapolis, MN 55401 Tel: (612) 341-9845 www.theadvocatesforhumanrights.org <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No walk-ins • Intake hours: Tuesday 10AM-12PM and Thursday 12PM-2PM by phone (612) 341-9845 or online at www.theadvocatesforhumanrights.org • Asylum, Survivors of Trafficking, Unaccompanied Minors, Detention • Limited to residents of MN, ND, and SD 	South Dakota Voices for Peace* P.O. Box 600 Sioux Falls, SD 57101 Tel: (605) 782-9560 Fax: (612) 341-2971 info@southdakotavoicesforpeace.org www.sdvfpeace.org <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will assist UAC and victims of crimes • Will not represent individuals in detention • No criminal cases • Intake hours Monday-Friday, 9AM-5PM • Primary residence must be located in South Dakota • Languages: Spanish, interpreters for other languages available upon request
Immigrant Law Center of Minnesota* 450 North Syndicate, Suite 200 St. Paul, MN 55104 Tel: (651) 641-1011 Fax: (651) 641-1131 oficinalegal@ilcm.org www.ilcm.org <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Represent low-income immigrants of any nationality detained or residing in MN • ICE detainees can check website or call (651) 641-1011 for detention line schedule • Limited capacity • Languages: Spanish and Karen 	

Individuals must contact the providers on this list directly to request legal services. Although the providers on this list offer pro bono (free) legal representation, they may not have the capacity at this time to accept new cases.

Disclaimer: As required by 8 C.F.R. § 1003.61, the Executive Office for Immigration Review (EOIR), Office of the Director, maintains a list of organizations and attorneys qualified under the regulations who provide pro bono or free legal services. The information posted on the list is provided to EOIR by the Providers. EOIR does not endorse any of these organizations or attorneys. Additionally, EOIR does not participate in, nor is it responsible for, the representation decisions or performance of the organizations or attorneys.

* Non-Profit Organization
 ** Referral Service
 *** Private Attorney

List of Pro Bono Legal Service Providers

<http://www.justice.gov/eoir/list-pro-bono-legal-service-providers>

Updated October 2024

Fort Snelling Immigration Court

Fort Snelling, Minnesota (page 2 of 2)	
American Bar Association Detention and LOP Information Line** immcenter@americanbar.org www.americanbar.org/groups/public_interest/immigration/ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pro se case assistance for detained respondents only • Dial 2150# from the detention center • To contact on behalf of a detained individual, email immcenter@americanbar.org. • The American Bar Association Commission on Immigration Detention and LOP Information Line is not available to provide free legal services for noncitizens scheduled for Credible Fear Interviews and/or Asylum Merits Interviews 	Mid-Minnesota Legal Aid* 111 North 5 th Street, Suite 100 Minneapolis, MN 55403 Tel: (612) 332-1441 Fax: (612) 446-5800 mpsimmigrationintake@mylegalaid.org www.mylegalaid.org <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Represent immigrants with low incomes detained or living in Minnesota • Limited capacity • Intake hours: Mondays from 10:30AM - 12:30PM and Thursdays from 1:30PM - 3:30PM • Languages: Spanish

Individuals must contact the providers on this list directly to request legal services. Although the providers on this list offer pro bono (free) legal representation, they may not have the capacity at this time to accept new cases.

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