

CENTER FOR NEW AMERICANS

FORT SNELLING IMMIGRATION BUILDING PRACTICE ADVISORY

The Bloomington Immigration Court (“the Court”) and Immigration and Customs Enforcement (“ICE”) recently moved to a new location at 1 Federal Drive, Fort Snelling, Minnesota 55111. The following practice advisory from the Center for New Americans at the University of Minnesota Law School aims to give practical tips and advice for those coming to the Federal Building for business with immigration for the first time.

I. Building Access

a. Getting to the Federal Building

i. Lightrail

1. Blue line – Fort Snelling Station. Then walk across the parking lot to the main entrance

ii. Car

1. Take highway 62/55 and exit at Bloomington Road. Follow the signs for the Federal Building

b. Parking

i. Visitor parking – adjacent to the Federal Building

1. A valid driver’s license is required to be shown for all vehicles entering the Federal Building parking lot
2. Guards also ask all entrants what they are there for
3. If you do not have a driver’s license, insurance, or registration on the vehicle, play it safe and do not park in the visitor lot

ii. Park & Ride South Lot – South of the Federal Building on Minnehaha Ave.

1. Marked as Blue Line metro transit Park & Ride
2. No need to show a driver’s license



c. Entering the Building

i. Proper identification

1. If you have a hearing/check-in: hearing notice or appointment sheet alone are okay if you do not have a government ID
2. Family members: need a photo identification

- a. U.S./state government ID preferred, but other photo IDs such as foreign passports, consular IDs will also be accepted
 - 3. Law students have successfully entered with foreign passport and student ID but it took a call to a supervising security agent
- ii. No prohibited items
 - 1. Ex: lighter, firearms, pepper spray, pocket knife, boxcutter, matches, razor blade, chains in excess of 12", etc.
 - 2. Possession of a firearm in a federal building is a federal offense under 18 U.S.C. § 930
- iii. Enter the building with your attorney (if you have one) to be safe
- iv. You must go through a security checkpoint, one person at a time
 - 1. Checkpoint includes magnetometer and x-ray machine
 - 2. Remove belts, watches and items from pockets
 - 3. You do not need to take off your shoes

II. Business with the Court

- a. New Mailing Address
Bloomington Immigration Court
1 Federal Dr., Suite 1850
Fort Snelling, MN 55111
- b. Signing in
 - i. After going through security, take a left before the elevator bank
 - 1. Walk down the hall; the court waiting room is the last door on the left
 - ii. After entering the waiting room, the sign-in sheet for attorneys and family is on a table to the left
 - 1. Each judge has a separate sign in sheet
 - 2. Judge Nickerson (pink sheet): all family and attorneys on same sheet; if multiple attorneys (or students), only put lead attny name
 - 3. Judge Castro: separate sign-in sheets for attorneys and family
 - 4. Judge Olmanson: separate sign-in sheets for attorneys and family
 - iii. Dockets are posted above the sign-in sheets for all 3 Immigration Judges
- c. Filings accepted at the window from 8:30am to **4:00pm**
 - i. Note that the Bloomington Court website is incorrect
- d. Courtroom access
 - i. Master calendar hearings – you must wait in the waiting area to be called by the clerk
 - ii. Individual hearings – you may enter the courtroom before the hearing
- e. Client meeting room
 - i. There is a small client meeting room; see a guard to access the room
- f. A special note on detained proceedings
 - i. Detained proceedings no longer limit the number of family members
 - ii. The order in which cases proceed depends on the clerk
 - 1. Jim: in order down the docket, including pro se
 - 2. Marie: down the docket with attorneys first, then pro se
 - iii. Initial master calendars are Tuesdays and Thursdays
 - iv. Master resets are all set for 9AM; initial masters are 1PM
 - v. Interpreters use headset device from the bench next to the judge

III. Business with ICE

- a. New mailing addresses – update templates (EOIR-28, certificate of service)
 - i. Office of Chief Counsel
1 Federal Dr., Suite 1800
Fort Snelling, MN 55111

- ii. Enforcement and Removal Operations
1 Federal Dr., Suite 1601
Fort Snelling, MN 55111
- b. New telephone numbers
 - i. OCC: 612-843-8935
 - ii. ERO: 612-843-8600
 - 1. Fax: 612-843-8771 (for fax located near Eric O'Denius/Angela Minner)
- c. Filings with OCC
 - i. There is a drop-box inside suite 1800
- d. ERO Check-ins
 - i. Go down the hall past the elevators, turn right and it's the first door on the left in an area that looks like a waiting room
 - ii. Requests to speak with Deportation Officers are made at the window here
- e. Visiting detained persons – 4 interview rooms
 - i. ERO area for attorney interviews and family visits is one level down
 - 1. Turn left past the snack shop; walk past the bank down the hall
 - ii. Fill out visitor information sheet as before
 - 1. Each attorney and family member needs a separate sheet
 - iii. ERO has stated that pro bono attorneys have priority over other attorneys and family; attorneys take preference over family
 - iv. before a hearing: attorney only until around 8:30am
 - 1. At 8:30, detainees are brought to the holding cell area closer to Judge Nickerson's courtroom
 - v. after hearing: attorney, family, other contacts

IV. General Tips

- a. Arrive early to get through security
- b. Do not bring anything more into the building than necessary
- c. Bring a driver's license or identity document
- d. Building hours are 7:00am to 5:00pm – closed on federal holidays