

## **Trans Army Field Guide: Risks Posed by ICE to Trans People and Mitigation Strategies**

*Version 1.0 — Surveillance, Raids, Deportation, and Resistance Tactics for Trans Liberation across Borders*

### **LEGAL DISCLAIMER**

This document is intended solely for educational and analytical purposes. It is not a call to action, nor does it condone, promote, or instruct on the use of sabotage, violence, or illegal activity. All information contained herein is derived from publicly available sources and intended for use in defense-only planning, civil contingency analysis, community resilience mapping, and academic discourse. The authors are not responsible for how readers use or interpret this document. Engage responsibly and lawfully.

### **INTRODUCTION**

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) is one of the most violent threats to trans people—especially Black and Brown migrants, asylum seekers, undocumented trans women, and gender-nonconforming individuals. From raids to detention to family separation, ICE operates like a paramilitary force with nearly unchecked power. This guide maps the specific risks ICE poses to trans lives and how to mitigate them through community, legal tactics, digital hygiene, and resistance.

This guide is written for trans migrants, trans-led organizers, and allies who refuse to let borders define who belongs.

### **WHO'S MOST AT RISK?**

- Trans women of color, especially from Latin America, the Caribbean, and Southeast Asia
- Undocumented trans people living in mixed-status households
- Trans folks with prior contact with the criminal legal system
- Trans youth in shelters or foster systems
- LGBTQ+ asylum seekers with active cases
- Trans sex workers, especially near high-surveillance corridors

## PRIMARY THREATS FROM ICE TO TRANS PEOPLE

### 1. Surveillance and Database Tracking

- ICE uses biometric data (fingerprints, facial recognition, DNA) from DMV records, jails, and medical systems
- DHS Fusion Centers collaborate with local law enforcement to cross-reference gender marker updates, aliases, or name changes

### 2. Detention Conditions

- Trans women are often placed in men's facilities
- Solitary confinement used as "protection," causing extreme mental harm
- No access to HRT or gender-affirming care in most centers
- High rates of sexual assault, denial of medical treatment, and transphobic abuse

### 3. Raids and Targeted Arrests

- Doorstep raids disguised as package deliveries
- Arrests at hospitals, workplaces, or shelters
- Reliance on community snitches and digital tracking

### 4. Deportation Without Appeal

- Expedited removal processes often ignore asylum claims, especially when gender persecution is under-documented
- Detransitioning during deportation due to lack of meds, documents, or safety in home country

## MITIGATION STRATEGIES FOR TRANS PEOPLE UNDER THREAT

### 1. KNOW YOUR RIGHTS (AND TRAIN OTHERS)

- You are not required to open the door for ICE unless they show a signed judicial warrant (Form I-200 or I-205 does *not* count)
- You have the right to remain silent and not sign anything
- You do not have to disclose gender history or medical status
- Prepare a "Know Your Rights" zine in multiple languages
- Host community defense trainings with trans-led legal groups

### 2. BUILD A SAFE DOCUMENT TRAIL

- Keep copies of ID, prescriptions, asylum paperwork, affidavits, and medical letters in encrypted cloud storage
- Make a “grab-and-go” bag with these materials, plus HRT, water, phone numbers
- If possible, update gender markers and name changes in a sanctuary state

### **3. DIGITAL SECURITY**

- Use Signal, ProtonMail, and 2FA for all organizing and personal comms
- Never store legal status or identity info in unsecured cloud notes or chats
- Use Tor or VPNs when accessing sensitive info, especially from shelters
- Disable location tracking on all devices; use Faraday bags during raids

### **4. MUTUAL AID DEFENSE INFRASTRUCTURE**

- Create ICE response teams that include:
  - Legal observer
  - Medic
  - Transport
  - Spiritual support
  - Language interpreter
- Develop housing networks for rapid relocation
- Build anonymous reporting channels to alert the community to raids or checkpoints

### **5. COMMUNITY RAPID RESPONSE TO RAIDS**

- Text trees, group chats, airhorns, or flashlight codes
- Neighborhood patrols that observe and film from a distance
- Safe house routes with neutral drop points
- Do NOT confront ICE directly unless legally protected and strategically trained

### **6. DETENTION SUPPORT + ADVOCACY**

- Document every incident and prepare media kits for each arrested person
- Connect with legal clinics like Transgender Law Center’s Black LGBTQIA+ Migrant Project (BLMP)
- Crowdsource bail funds and commissary support
- Publish op-eds, run press campaigns, and elevate voices from inside

## **CITIES WITH ACTIVE TRANS-LED ANTI-ICE WORK**

- **New York, NY** – Make the Road, BLMP, Sylvia Rivera Law Project
- **Los Angeles, CA** – Familia TQLM, Gender Justice LA
- **Phoenix, AZ** – Trans Queer Pueblo
- **Chicago, IL** – Organized Communities Against Deportation (OCAD)
- **Oakland/SF, CA** – TGI Justice Project, Black LGBTQ+ Migrant Project

## **LONG-TERM STRATEGY: FROM SURVIVAL TO SANCTUARY**

- Push local governments to pass sanctuary laws that include gender identity protections
- Pressure medical systems to provide uninterrupted HRT access in shelters and detention centers
- Train up trans-led legal brigades and border defense teams
- Archive abuse to build international human rights cases

## **CONCLUSION**

ICE is not just an immigration agency, it is a gender-based, racialized enforcement tool. We will not be erased by borders, cages, or bureaucrats.