

CHHOEUN CLASS MEMBER GUIDE

A GUIDE FOR **CAMBODIAN** COMMUNITY MEMBERS
FACING DEPORTATION



If you are a Cambodian community member with a deportation order, you may be a class member in a case called Chhoeun and this guide can help you navigate your options.

April 2026

This guide was created by the Immigrants' Rights Clinic at Stanford Law School, the Asian Law Caucus (ALC), the Center for Empowering Refugees & Immigrants, and New Light Wellness. Updates made by ALC. We do not work for and are not funded by any divisions of the Department of Homeland Security, including ICE, USCIS, or CBP.

What Is This Guide?

If you or a loved one is a Cambodian community member *who has a deportation order*, this guide is intended to:

- Help you learn about a case called *Chhoeun* that may benefit you (or your loved one);
- Help you understand how you (or your loved one) may fight deportation and stay in the United States; and
- Help you (or your loved one) prepare and make informed decisions for a future that may feel uncertain.

This guide is divided into three major sections, with additional checklists at the end. The guide will discuss:

Part I: About Chhoeun and the Chhoeun Settlement

Part I discusses the *Chhoeun* case and settlement. This section explains what the *Chhoeun* case is and how it may affect you or your loved ones.

Part II: Motion to Reopen

Part II contains information about how you may pursue a motion to reopen (a way to continue fighting your immigration case), whether this is the right step for you, and what you can do to prepare.

Part III: Preparing for ICE Contact

Part III contains information about what happens if you are asked to attend Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) check-ins and how you might prepare for the possibility of detention and deportation.

Part IV: Checklist and Tools

Part IV contains various checklists that can help you prepare documents and information.

Part I. *Chhoeun* and the Settlement

Chhoeun is a lawsuit about whether Cambodian refugees who received deportation orders and were released from immigration detention should receive some kind of notice from ICE, before ICE re-detains them for deportation.

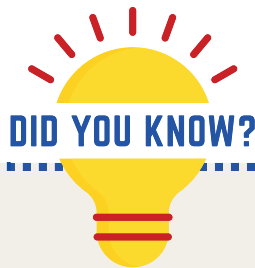
THIS SECTION INCLUDES....

- 1 History of the *Chhoeun* Lawsuit
- 2 Why ICE May Try to Deport Someone
- 3 What the *Chhoeun* Settlement Means for You

In **October 2017**, the first year that Donald Trump took office, ICE carried out raids all around the country against Cambodian refugees who had fled the Khmer Rouge many decades ago. *You or your impacted loved one may have been detained in the raids.*

ICE targeted these particular individuals because an immigration judge had previously decided that they should be deported because they were convicted of crimes, even though they had already served their sentences in prison or jail for those convictions. However, for these individuals, the U.S.

government never physically deported them. This is because the government of Cambodia often did not accept people for deportation, even though the U.S. and Cambodia signed an agreement in 2002 that allowed some deportations.



DID YOU KNOW?

The *Chhoeun* case may benefit you if you are a **Cambodian community member** who received a **deportation order** and **were released from immigration detention**. Because of a settlement agreement in the *Chhoeun* case, ICE **must give you a written notice that they can try to deport you in the future.**

The notice does not mean that ICE has immediate plans to deport you. The notice is a reminder that you have a **deportation order**. See page 5 of this guide for more information about the settlement.

YOU SHOULD EXPLORE LEGAL OPTIONS NOW TO CHALLENGE YOUR DEPORTATION ORDER.

Chhoeun Case Timeline

2017

Rickie Chhoeun and Mony Neth were two of the Cambodian refugees who were detained by ICE in raids in 2017. They had been convicted of crimes decades ago but had been living as peaceful, contributing community members for many years. ICE detained them without providing any warning.

Working with lawyers at the Asian Law Caucus and other organizations, Rickie Chhoeun and Mony Neth filed a lawsuit against ICE arguing that ICE should provide people with some notice before detaining people and trying to deport them.

The lawsuit asked for notice for all Cambodian refugees with deportation orders, not just Chhoeun and Mony Neth. This type of lawsuit, which covers not just the individuals who filed the lawsuit but also a big group of people who are in a similar situation, is called a **class action**.

PRESENT

The parties reached a settlement agreement, which the court approved on April 27, 2026. Under this settlement agreement, which ends the case, ICE must provide one-time written notice to all class members (regardless of whether or not they have complied with their order of supervision since initial release).



2020

In March 2020, the judge decided that the way ICE was carrying out raids without giving any warning violated class members' rights. The judge said that ICE was required to provide notices to certain class members if ICE was planning to detain and deport them.

Specifically, the judge ordered ICE to send a written notice at least 2 weeks before ICE detains a class member if the class member has followed their order of supervision since their initial release from ICE. Some community members call these notices two-week notices. Before the lawsuit, people were detained and deported without getting a notice.

After the judge ordered ICE to provide two week notices, ICE appealed that decision to a higher court called the Ninth Circuit of Court Appeals. That means ICE challenged the judge's decision and asked a higher court to get rid of the two-week notice.



"In the beginning, I felt like there's nothing I can do to overturn my deportation case. It was just a matter of time. Working with ALC, was the turning point of how everything changed. That's when I started to realize there are avenues, there's a community for you."

**Rickie Chhoeun,
Long Beach, CA**

Why Would ICE Try to Deport Me?

It may feel deeply unjust that ICE would try and deport you after so many years. Unfortunately, the immigration system treats individuals with prior criminal convictions very harshly. This is true even if the conviction happened many years ago and the person has turned their life around. You are at risk for deportation if you received a deportation order in the past, for example because of a criminal conviction.

ICE May Still Try To Deport You....



Even if you already served your time in prison or jail, immigration law says that the U.S. government can deport you because of the conviction.



Even if you received the deportation order many years ago and have been checking in with ICE for years, and the U.S. government has never actually tried to deport you, you still have a deportation order on your immigration record.



You may be able to take steps to challenge your deportation and stay in this country. We recommend you take action now because the sooner you act, the better chances you have to challenge your deportation. This guide explains some of the actions you can take.

How Does the Chhoeun Case Affect Me?



Are YOU Covered By the Settlement?

ALL Cambodian community members who (1) received a deportation order AND (2) were released from immigration detention are **class members in Chhoeun**, which means they are a part of the class action and covered by the settlement.



If you are a Cambodian national, received a deportation order, and were released from ICE, you will receive an Informational Notice from ICE. The notice will remind you that you could be deported someday and should get legal advice on challenging your deportation order as soon as possible.

The settlement agreement replaces the two-week notice with a one-time notice to the whole class. Under the settlement agreement, ICE must mail all notices to current class members by sometime in October 2026. This notice will have the title “Informational Notice.” The Informational Notice will come with copies of certain documents from the class member’s immigration file.



INFORMATIONAL NOTICE: **ALL CAMBODIANS WITH DEPORTATION ORDERS**

This notice is to provide information to all Cambodians with deportation orders. This information may be useful to you as you consider your legal options.

*You are **not required** to report to Immigration and Customs Enforcement (“ICE”) as a result of this notice. You are **not required** to take any action as a result of this notice.*

For Your Awareness

This informational notice is to remind you that you are subject to a final order of removal (deportation order). This means that ICE may take action to detain you or deport you at a future time.

*Receiving this informational notice does not mean that ICE will deport you. All Cambodians with final orders of removal (deportation orders) are receiving this informational notice as part of a settlement in a class action lawsuit of the *Chhoeun* settlement agreement and more information is available at [www.ice.dhs.gov/legal-notices](#).*

For More Information, Contact Your Legal Counsel

If you receive an Informational Notice, it is NOT a sign that ICE is targeting you for immediate deportation. It is a reminder that ICE could try to deport you at some point. Because you do not know if or when ICE will take steps to deport you, it is a good idea to get prepared now. The rest of this guide has more information on steps you can take right away.

Part II. Motions to Reopen: A Path to Stay

THIS SECTION INCLUDES....

- 1 What Is a Motion to Reopen?
- 2 Reasons You May Be Able to Submit a Motion to Reopen
- 3 Limits on Motions to Reopen
- 4 Steps You Can Take to Prepare for a Motion to Reopen

There May Be a Way for You to Fight Potential Deportation and Stay in the United States.

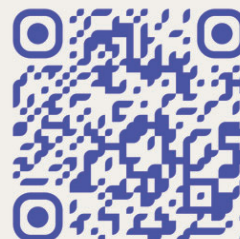
This can be done by filing a legal request called a **motion to reopen (MTR)**. An MTR is a request for the immigration court to erase your deportation order because of new information. It could give you another chance to fight your case in immigration court and stay legally in the United States.

This is a long and complicated process and is not possible for everyone. It is important to find a lawyer if you want to file a motion to reopen. Because a motion to reopen is time-sensitive, it is crucial to begin this process as soon as you can. Luckily, there are steps you can take NOW to help prepare for a possible motion to reopen, even before meeting with a lawyer.

.....

The purpose of this section is not to prepare you to file your own motion to reopen without a lawyer, although it is possible to do that. Instead, the purpose is to give some guidance on how to decide if a motion to reopen is a good option for you, and how to go about collecting documents and finding the right lawyer.

If you are unsure whether or not you have a deportation order, you can call 1-800-898-7180, visit <https://acis.eoir.justice.gov/en/>, or use the qr code to find out.



Is a Motion to Reopen Right for Me?

Below are some reasons why you might consider filing a motion to reopen.

It can be complicated to figure out whether you are able to reopen your immigration case, and it is best to consult with a trusted lawyer.

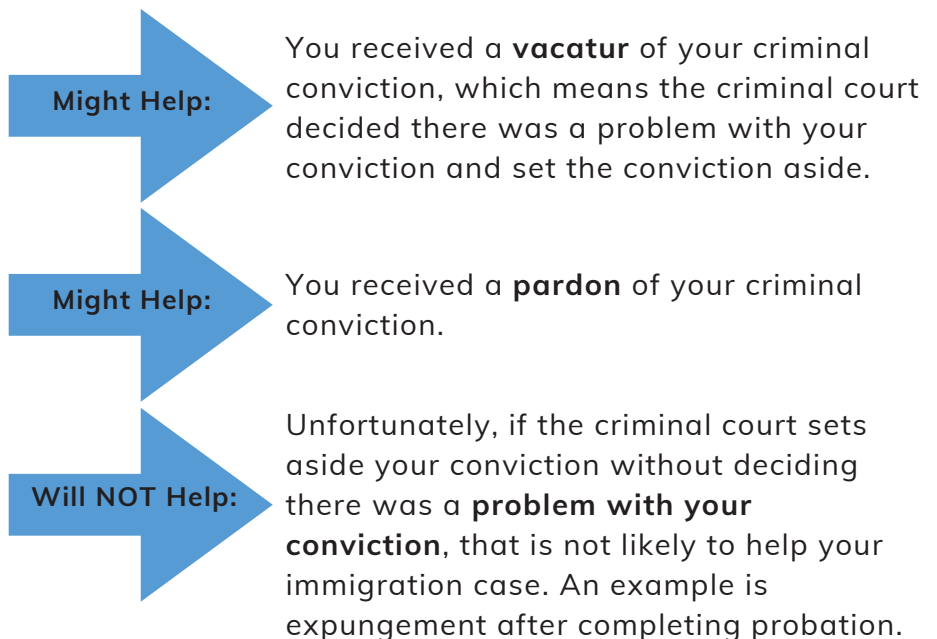
(1) The law **changed** and your conviction is no longer considered a crime that comes with immigration penalties.

(2) In the past you did not qualify for an immigration **waiver** or immigration **relief**, but now you do.

You may be able to stay legally in the U.S. even with certain convictions by asking for a **waiver** or applying for **relief**. Not everyone qualifies and it often depends on: (1) if you have U.S. citizen or green card holder **relatives** and (2) if you can show **hardship** to your family and that you have rebuilt your life after your conviction. You may also obtain relief by applying for **asylum**.

(3) Your **rights were violated** when you were in immigration court. For example, your lawyer did a very poor job of representing you—such as missing an important deadline or failing to apply for immigration relief that you qualified for. This is called **ineffective assistance of counsel**.

(4) Your criminal conviction was **erased**. It is important to note that there are different ways that a criminal conviction can be erased. Some of those ways might help your immigration case and some won't.



A Pardon: One Possible Path to a Motion to Reopen



A pardon is one possible way to qualify for a motion to reopen. Mony had his conviction pardoned and filed an MTR which was granted. The pardon process is different in every state and for every person.



Mony Neth
Modesto, CA

Q: What Was the Pardon Process Like?

"The pardon process started several months before I got detained. I was trying to do something else with my life. I was trying to become an insurance agent. I was told that because of my background I couldn't do it.

First, I went to the local county courthouse to do an expunge[ment] on my case. The clerk at the courthouse told me that since I have a felony, it couldn't be expunged. They told me to go see a public defender, [and get a] certification of rehabilitation for felonies.

I went to talk to the public defender and they helped me. They scheduled a court date. [I also met with an investigator] before the court hearing. We met at a Starbucks, he asked me some questions. I told him 'My life is different now. I went to church and decided to serve my community.'

After that he wrote a report to the court. The judge granted me the motion for a certificate of rehabilitation. That's when it's on its way to the governor's office and when we started collect[ing] petition letters. [So we] can send it to the to the governor to grant my pardon."

Time and Number Limitations on Motions to Reopen

1

Motion to Reopen

Generally, you may file only one motion to reopen, and you must file it within 90 days of the deportation order. However, there are exceptions.

90

Day Deadline

Ways Around the 90 Day Deadline:

The 90-day deadline to file an MTR is likely to have passed for most class members because they received deportation orders years ago.

- You may be able to get around the 90-day deadline if you have some extraordinary circumstance that prevented you from meeting it and you can show that you were working hard to meet the deadline. The legal term for this is **equitable tolling** of the deadline. Not every individual can make this showing, so it is important to talk to an attorney.
- Even if you miss the 90-day deadline, you can ask the immigration court to still reopen your case, but the immigration court will only do so if you can provide a very good reason. The legal term for this is **sua sponte** reopening.

Will I Be Protected From Deportation if I File a Motion to Reopen?

Unfortunately, no (at least not automatically). ICE can still deport you while your motion to reopen is pending. There are a few limited exceptions where people are protected from deportation while their MTR is pending, for example if you missed your immigration court hearing because you never received notice of your hearing.

If you do not fall into one of the exceptions, you must also file a **motion for a stay of removal** with your **motion to reopen**. If you win the motion for a stay, that pauses your deportation while you are waiting for a decision on your MTR. You should seek legal representation for your MTR and motion for a stay of removal.

What Steps Can I Take Now to Prepare?

A first step you can take is to request your immigration and criminal records. You and a lawyer will need these records to understand what you were convicted of, why you received a deportation order, and whether you might qualify for a motion to reopen. You can make the process of getting legal advice more efficient by having your records ready when you meet with a lawyer. It can take months to get your records, so it is best to start early.

Requesting Your Immigration Records Through the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA)

Under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), you can **request** your **own** immigration records or **someone else's** immigration records if you have their written permission. You should make a FOIA request to two immigration agencies: the **Executive Office for Immigration Review (EOIR)**, for the documents from your immigration court case, and **U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS)**, for the rest of your immigration related documents.

This is **free** and you can do it **online** or by **mail**.



Visit [EOIR's website](#) to submit a FOIA request to EOIR online.



Visit [USCIS's website](#) to submit a FOIA request to USCIS online.



For help with submitting FOIA requests online, refer to this [guide](#) from the Asian American Legal Defense and Education Fund.



For help with submitting FOIA requests by mail, refer to the guide on ALC's [Resource Page](#).

Requesting Your Criminal Records

To get a list of your arrests, you can request your FBI record (sometimes called your “rap sheet”). Visit their [website](#) and follow the instructions there.

You should also get the criminal court records from each county where you had a conviction. Each court has a different process. Check the county court's website or try reaching out to the court or local public defender's office.



Other Documents to Gather

You can gather documents relating to your life in the U.S. in preparation for a possible motion to reopen. These are available as a checklist at the end of this guide.

Finding A Lawyer: Best Practices

Although it is possible to file a motion to reopen without a lawyer, this is a complicated legal process and it is best to find legal representation if you can.



Reach out to a **nonprofit organization** that may be able to provide a free consultation and possibly free legal representation on a motion to reopen.

You can visit the Asian Law Caucus (ALC's) [Resource Page](#) for more information on legal and community-based resources.

Beware of Scams and Protect Yourself

Only two types of individuals can give immigration legal advice: **attorneys** and **DOJ-accredited representatives**, who are non-attorneys approved by the U.S. government to provide immigration legal services.



Make sure the person you are reaching out to has these qualifications.

Be **cautious** if the person agrees to file an MTR **before** they have **reviewed** your documents, or if they promise that they can win your case. A good lawyer will **carefully review** your case and give you their honest opinion **before** you move forward.

Ask a trusted legal or community organization about the person's **reputation**. Nonprofit organizations, even if they are not able to take your case, may be able to refer you to lawyers they know who do good work.

If you need financial support, **avoid predatory loans**. You might consider asking for a **payment plan** or starting a **GoFundMe** instead.



If you feel **comfortable** that the lawyer is **trustworthy** and you want to **hire** them, sign a contract. The **contract** should say what services the lawyer will provide and how much you will pay. Once you have hired a lawyer to prepare a motion to reopen, the lawyer will work to draft the papers and collect supporting documents. This will likely include working with you to prepare your declaration, which is a document where you tell parts of your life story. When your motion to reopen is ready, your lawyer will **file** it, which means *officially give it to the court*.

ALWAYS ask your lawyer for copies of all documents and save your documents and correspondence with the lawyer. Feel confident advocating for yourself. **DO NOT** hesitate to contact your lawyer for questions or updates. That is part of their job.

Part III. Preparing for ICE Contact

You or a loved one may face contact with ICE in the forms of: ICE check-ins, detention, or even deportation. Remember that you are not alone in this process—featured below are stories of community members who have been through these experiences and their reflections. There are also steps you, your loved ones, and your community can take now to prepare for future contact with ICE.

THIS SECTION INCLUDES....

- 1 What Happens at ICE Check-Ins
- 2 What Immigration Detention Is and When It Can Happen
- 3 How to Prepare for Potential Deportation
- 4 Resources if You Are Sent to Cambodia

ICE Check-Ins

What Is an ICE Check-In?



ICE requires most people with deportation orders to attend check-in appointments. Typically, an ICE officer will ask you to verify your address and then give you a new check-in date. But ICE may detain you at a check-in, or ask you to seek travel documents.

Mony Neth Q&A

Q: What Does a Typical ICE Check-In Look Like In Your Experience?

“There is an officer in the front, but we don't really talk. You slide your [order of supervision] paper in and then [you] wait. Sometimes it takes 10-15 minutes, sometimes it was less than that. They would just sign that paper, call your name, and tell you to come back on whatever date that they put on the paper. There's no interaction, there's no talk about any deportation or anything related with immigration. You just go in and they tell you to come back at a later date.”



Preparing for an ICE check-in

1. Ask someone to accompany you to the check-in: This can be an attorney, a family member or friend with secure immigration status, or a volunteer
2. Consult with an immigration attorney before your check-in: An attorney can help you prepare in case you are detained, and help you better understand your immigration options.
3. Prepare for possible detention (see following section): if ICE has instructed you to seek travel documents/told you that they are seeking travel documents from you, or if ICE has asked you to come to a check-in much sooner than usual.

Detention: What Is It and Where Can It Happen?

Detention is when ICE holds you in custody while your immigration case is pending or while ICE is trying to deport you. This could happen to you if you have a deportation order. Even if you were detained a long time ago and released, you still have a deportation order on your immigration record and ICE can arrest and detain you again.

If you are in prison or jail, ICE may show up on your release date and transfer you to an immigration detention facility.

Where Could I Be Detained?

ICE can detain you anywhere, but the most common places are:



At an ICE Check-In



At Home



At Prison or Jail

DO NOT OPEN THE DOOR!

ICE officers may not enter your home unless they have a warrant signed by a judge with your name and address on it. ICE officers almost never have a warrant signed by a judge.

Q: What Advice Do You Have For Class Members?

“Be prepared. When I say that I mean not your family, but yourself. You have to be prepared first. You have to put yourself first before you can actually pass your problems or the issue of what's going on to your family. The most important thing is that class members have to do their due diligence. Because these things, when it comes, it comes to you fast. You have to be prepared. You have to listen. You have to be aware of what's going on.”

Rickie Chhoeun



Detention: Preparing for Detention

(1) Make a Plan.

- Ensure that you and your loved ones have a plan in place for matters like familial commitments, childcare, financial commitments, and records safekeeping.
- Create a preparedness plan and file with your loved ones containing all important documents and information. See the sample checklists at the end of this document and the Immigrant Legal Resource Center's [Family Preparedness Plan](#) toolkit for more information.

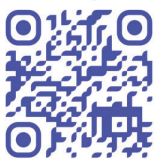


(2) Know Your Rights.

- Do **NOT** open the door for ICE unless they have a **warrant** signed by a judge, which they *almost never* do.
 - Make sure those who live in your home know not to open the door.
- You have the **RIGHT** to remain silent.
- You have the **RIGHT** to refuse to sign anything before you talk to a lawyer.
- You have the **RIGHT** to make a phone call.
 - Memorize a loved one's phone number in case ICE takes your phone.

(3) Practice Exercising Your Rights.

With a trusted individual, practice situations where you have to exercise your rights. See Video Examples [here](#).



(4) Having A Conversation With Your Loved Ones.

If you are detained, your loved ones will want to step in to help. They will be in a better position to help if you have communicated with them about the possibility of detention and deportation. This can be a difficult conversation to have, and you can decide if it's right for you.

Seeking Release from Detention: Habeas Corpus Petitions

What is a **habeas corpus petition**? A habeas petition is a legal tool that allows you to file a case in federal district court—not immigration court—challenging your detention in immigration custody and challenging your removal to a third country (a country not listed on your removal order).

What can a habeas corpus petition do for me?

In certain circumstances, a habeas petition can protect you from being detained in immigration custody unless you get a bond hearing. If you are already detained, you can file a habeas petition to seek release from immigration custody or a bond hearing.

A habeas petition can also protect you from removal to a third country without certain procedures. But it cannot protect you from deportation to the country on your removal order or ensure that you will not be re-detained by immigration officials (if they follow certain procedures).

Sample excerpt of an annotated habeas corpus petition - more guidance available at below link

AD 242 (Rev. 09/17) Petition for a Writ of Habeas Corpus Under 28 U.S.C. § 2241

DO NOT FILE THIS IN COURT - USE THIS TO FILL IN A CLEAN COPY!

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
for the
Put the correct court for where you are detained here

Your name
Petitioner

v.
The warden, ICE AFOD, ICE Director, and Attorney General go here
(name of warden or authorized person having custody of petitioner)

Case No. _____
(Supplied by Clerk of Court)

PETITION FOR A WRIT OF HABEAS CORPUS UNDER 28 U.S.C. § 2241
Personal Information

1. (a) Your full name: _____
(b) Other names you have used: _____

2. (a) Name of institution: _____
(b) Address: _____

(c) Your identification number: **Your A number**

How can I file for a habeas corpus petition?

You can either file a habeas petition through a lawyer or on your own (pro se). The National Immigration Project has created resources for filing a pro se habeas petition:

<https://nipnlq.org/work/resources/habeas-explainer-pro-se-filing-instructions>

Deportation From the United States: Preparing for Deportation

(1) Prepare Funds

- If you have a U.S. bank account, take out the money and give it to a trusted person to wire money to you in Cambodia.
- If you are being deported, consider bringing no more than \$100-200 so you do not draw too much attention to yourself.
- In Cambodia, be sure to save money while you adjust to the Cambodian economy, wages, and cost of living.

(3) Don't Pack

IDs, social security cards, green cards, important documents

(2) Pack

- Your loved ones should have an opportunity to drop off a bag that will go to Cambodia with you. The weight limit is 40 pounds.
- You can pack this bag in advance. You may want to pack clothes, shoes, medications, toiletries and personal belongings, and a phone and phone charger.
- Loved ones or trusted organizers can also help pack a bag for you if you have already been detained.

WHY? ICE may take them. Important original documents are best kept safe with a trusted person. Make copies of them or have them available to you online.

(3) Develop Skills

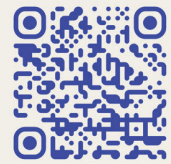
- **Certifications:** Getting certified as a barber, mechanic, electrician, plumber or computer repair person would make you more marketable.
- **Degrees:** Getting your high school diploma, GED, associate's, bachelor's, or higher degrees if possible would help you in the job market.
- **Language:** Brushing up on your Khmer language skills (both oral and written) is highly recommended.
 - There are always jobs available for people with bilingual qualifications.
 - Consider getting a TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages) certification.

Reentry Resources in Cambodia

KVAO (Khmer Vulnerability Aid Organization) has supported individuals with temporary housing and other basic needs, but has been impacted by cuts to USAID funding as of early 2025. Visit their [website](#) and contact them for the latest information about the services they provide.



New Light Wellness is an organization that serves Southeast Asian families and communities impacted by deportation across borders through peer support groups, leadership development programs, and one-on-one support. Visit their [website](#) for more information.



There are many folks who have been deported that you can connect with to have a support group. **You will not be alone!**

Can I Ever Come Back to the United States?

- It is possible but very challenging to return the United States after deportation.
 - Winning a motion to reopen should allow you to return to the U.S., although ICE can make the process difficult.
 - It may also be possible to get a new green card through a U.S. citizen family member, but you would need to apply for waivers for your conviction and for your prior deportation.
- **Talk to an attorney to discuss any options for returning.**

Words of Wisdom

The following testimonials are words of wisdom shared by Cambodian community members who have been through the process of detention and deportation.

Jerry

44, Long Beach, CA

“Keep your head up. You can have a good life [here in Cambodia]. If your head is in the right place, you can have a fulfilling life. If you could just [enter Cambodia] with a new outlook on life, then you can be all right.”



Bo

50, Holland, MI

“Just keep your faith. Keep on being strong and be that fighter. Never, ever, ever give up. You know the struggle is hard out here. But it's not as hard as it is [when you are detained]. You are in a cage. So mentally you got to prepare yourself.

Know that you're not alone, that you will have somebody here if you ask for help. Most of us, as men, we don't like to ask for help. When you ask for help, it's [seen] as a sign of weakness, especially coming from the prison mentality. Know that there is help and help is available.”



Tony

49, San Diego, CA

“Seek advice and plan for the worst. Now you got New Light Wellness and the Asian Law Caucus and a handful of organizations where you can speak [and ask for] support and guidance. Seek them right away.

If you get incarcerated or they are planning to deport you then [ask for help] and also plan for the worst for the family.”



Bunreas

42, Stockton, CA

“For the people that's in the states, the families that's in the states, don't give up, on us. Our family is what sustains us. Our family here in Cambodia, our family back in the states.”

For Family and Community: How to Help Our Loved Ones?

1 Know How to Find Your Loved Ones.



Detention centers are all across the country and ICE may detain your loved ones in any of its detention centers. To find a person currently being held by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), use the [Online Detainee Locator System](#).



If you cannot find them through the online system, contact an [ICE Enforcement and Removal Operations \(ERO\) field office](#).



If you know the facility where the person is being held, contact the [immigration detention](#) facility directly.

2 Locate and Implement Your Family Preparedness File.

3 Practice Self-Care and Ask for Help.

Deportation (and the threat of deportation) is a horrific experience and can be severely traumatizing for everyone in the targeted family. Accept and request others' help, such as cooking healthy meals for you or watching children. Sometimes just sharing your story with a sympathetic listener can be therapeutic.

4 Reach Out to Local Community Organizations.



These [organizations](#) may be able to offer mental health services, support groups, advocacy and connections to legal assistance, wrap-around care, case management, emergency funds, classes, connections to employment opportunities, and support with basic needs such as food and shelter.

5 Discuss Building a Public Campaign.



Community members can also organize a public campaign against threats of detention and deportation. One great resource for planning a public campaign is the [MN8 Southeast Asian American Solidarity toolkit](#).

Words of Wisdom, Continued

The following testimonials are words of wisdom shared by family members impacted by their loved one's detention or deportation.

Moragaut S.

"I was cold, tired, and confused all in one that morning. There were so many thoughts running through my head. Why is everyone here? Why is my mom so stressed but also acting so nonchalant? Why can't I figure out the whole story? Then, that very morning, it hit me. We were in for a long journey that would require the greatest sacrifices we had ever encountered. Adjusting to a family with one less person took the greatest toll on us. But, nonetheless, we had support. For the community that supported us, I am forever grateful."



Photo Credit: Joyce Xi Photography

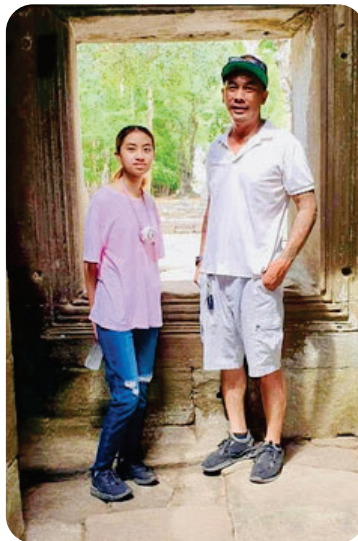


Kanley S.P.

"As a mother of 5 dealing with my husband's deportation, I felt alone. I didn't know how to fight deportation. Fortunately, I met with CERI, ALC and APSC who showed me that by sharing our stories it could help bring my husband back from detention. I was shy, it was my daughters who spoke in front of the Capitol and at City Hall. The organizers taught us to share our stories to our Khmer elders who we thought would judge our family. On the bus ride to Sacramento, I saw the elders and Buddhist leaders chanting and standing by me and it made me proud of our Khmer community."

Melody O.

"I am a 15-year-old girl living in Cambodia with my parents dealing with the unfortunate effects of deportation. It happened in 2019, and I felt like the last years of my childhood were ripped away from me. I will be forever grateful that I still have my parents on my side to push me through this difficult time and I am doing my very best. I excel in school and I'm trying to find a hobby I enjoy."



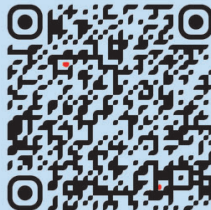
Tiffany K.

"I'm the wife of a deportee and a mother of two beautiful daughters [putting all my] strength on my back to hold my family together. It was the most intense grief I've ever experienced and worse pain for my kids. Our memories are pictures painted by our heart, and nothing can erase them. I can only keep the light of hope burning in my heart regardless of our circumstances. Hope is powerful."

Part IV. Checklists and Tools

The following guides are meant to provide examples of documents and information to collect and include in your family preparedness plan and file. These checklists are just for personal preparation and do not need to be sent anywhere. They were inspired by the Immigrant Legal Resource Center's Family Preparedness Plan toolkit (QR code below), which also has more examples/variations. It is important to keep the following documents and information in one place so that you and your family can access them easily in case of potential detention or deportation.

For each of these documents, we recommend that you take a photo, copy, or scan the document and save it or have a family member save it. If you are detained or deported, do not bring original documents because ICE may confiscate them.



IMPORTANT DOCUMENTS	
Driver's Licenses or ID Cards	
Work Permits	
Old Permanent Residence Card (Green Card)	
Passports	
Birth Certificates	
Marriage License	
Caregiver's Authorization Affidavit	
A-Number (This number appears on immigration documents and is important to know.)	
Immigration Documents (See Part II for instructions on how to request these.)	
Criminal Conviction Documents (See Part II for instructions on how to request these.)	
Social Security Card or ITIN Number	
Registry of Birth (for U.S.-Born Children Registered in Parent's Home Country)	
List of Entries and Exits to the US with information on dates (Purpose of Trip, Etc.)	

EMERGENCY INFORMATION	
Important Contacts and Emergency Contacts - See form attached for template to fill out.	
Health insurance cards, medication lists and doctor's contact information for you and family members.	
Latest bills for rent, utilities, loans and car payments (in case family must take over payments).	
Latest banking statement.	

** These are documents that are also useful to have ready in case something happens or you or a loved one is detained or deported.*

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS THAT COULD HELP A MOTION TO REOPEN

Work history (including paystubs, W-2 forms, tax forms, business certificates). **Ask your employers for copies if you do not have these.**

Letters of support (from family, co-workers, friends, customers, religious/community leaders, prison officials, etc., describing your positive qualities and why you should stay in the US).

Educational Documents (including Certificates, Grades, Diplomas, GEDs).

Proof of family ties to the US (birth certificates, IDs, green cards, passports, naturalization certificates, etc. for spouse, children, parents, siblings)

Medical records for you and all family members (including hospital records, medical transcripts, doctor's notes, prescription records and bills). **Ask your medical providers for copies if you do not have these.**

Other: prison records showing good behavior, church records, community service documents, information about volunteering, photos of you and your family and friends together.

**For some people, the immigration court has "discretion" to let you stay or not in the US based on whether they think you are a good person and your deportation would lead to hardship to you, your family, and your community. This category of documents can help convince the immigration court to use their discretion to grant your motion to reopen and let you stay.*

CONTACT INFORMATION

Name

Date of Birth

Phone Number

Email

Address

Work Number

Work Email

Work Address

EMERGENCY CONTACT

Name

Date of Birth

Phone Number

Email

Address

Work Number

Work Email

Work Address

CHILDREN'S INFORMATION

Name

Date of Birth

Phone Number

Email

School Address

School Number

Afterschool Program

Afterschool Program Address

Doctor

Health Insurance

Doctor's Number

Doctor's Email

Doctor's Address

Medical Conditions

Medications

Allergies