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News Releases

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ICE announces new arrangements for detainees relocated from New York facility

NEW YORK-U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), in coordination with Congressional leaders and community groups, today announced modified arrangements for detainees who have been relocated from the Varick Federal Detention Facility to the Hudson Federal Detention Facility-steps taken in line with ICE's commitment to prioritizing health, safety and uniformity among facilities while ensuring security, efficiency and fiscal responsibility.

The transfer of detainees from Varick brings significant benefits-including outdoor recreation space, contact visits with families and more space for legal orientation programs-in addition to the significant cost-savings gained by housing detainees at Hudson rather than Varick.

To facilitate detainee transfers in accordance with ICE's detention reform priorities, ICE will:

- Establish procedures for detainees housed at Hudson to be transported to Varick for face-to-face meetings with their attorneys. This will involve setting up twice-weekly pro bono sessions, at which ICE will transport a number of detainees from Hudson to Varick.
- Make arrangements for detainees scheduled for court at Varick to meet with their attorneys for extended periods before and after their hearings.
- Establish procedures for family members to visit with detainees who are scheduled for hearings at Varick before and after the hearings. ICE will remain open to other options for expanding family visitation in the future.
- Provide live and video orientations to detainees before transporting them to Hudson, and expand legal orientation programs by keeping detainees at Varick after initial processing, so that Legal Aid has access to the detainees daily.

Today's announcement comes in close coordination with Sen. Charles Schumer (D-N.Y.) and other Congressional leaders as well as representatives from the advocate community (10/2/10)

"ICE always welcomes input from Congress and advocacy groups and is open to reasonable suggestions that can make the removal process more effective and less taxing on detainees, their attorneys, and their families," said David Venturella, acting director for ICE's Office of Detention and Removal Operations.

In November 2009, ICE announced a major overhaul of its detention standards. ICE expects the Hudson facility to be in full compliance with the new guidelines by summer 2010. ICE pledged to offer advocacy groups the opportunity to tour Hudson once the facility is in full compliance.

ICE expects to suspend the housing of detainees at the Varick Street facility by the end of February, and will house all detainees housed at Varick at Hudson, unless medical needs or safety concerns necessitate transfer. The current administrative offices and workspace located at the Varick facility and the processing center in the detention facility will remain open.

-- ICE --

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) is the largest investigative arm of the Department of Homeland Security.

ICE comprises four integrated divisions that form a 21st century law enforcement agency with broad responsibilities for a number of key homeland security priorities. For more information, visit www.ICE.gov. To report suspicious activity, call 1-866-347-2423.

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