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*****FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE*****

New York Immigrant Family Unity Project Statement on Massive ICE Data Leak of Detained Asylum Seekers' Information

Immigration Legal Providers Call for Release of Affected Individuals; Reaffirm Call for End of ICE Detention

(New York, NY) – **The Legal Aid Society, Brooklyn Defender Services, and The Bronx Defenders** – New York City’s defender organizations providing free legal representation to detained immigrants through the New York Immigrant Family Unity Project (NYIFUP) – today released the below statement in response to ICE’s release of [the names of more than 6,000 detained immigrants](#) on its public website in violation of law and policy and which puts the impacted people in danger.

“ICE has caused a serious security breach that resulted in an appalling breach of privacy and potential for grievous harm to people who are in its custody. People fleeing torture and persecution have experienced horrific violence and come to the United States seeking safety. Instead, the government has detained them in jail and has now released their personal information to the public, creating a risk of retaliation from the very individuals and governments they fled.

“ICE’s disregard for the safety and privacy of those in its custody increases the likelihood of violence and death for those impacted, and creates ongoing fear and anxiety for anyone who is forced to entrust the agency with their personal information.

“There is no excuse for this horrendous action. ICE not only released confidential information in violation of federal regulation and policy, but also allowed these private details to be accessed by members of the general public.

“The dangerous and inhumane nature of immigration detention is well-documented. People in ICE custody endure horrific conditions including outbreaks of [COVID-19](#), [sexual abuse](#), [denial of health care](#), [harassment by guards](#), and [unsanitary conditions](#). The additional harm of releasing information and the subsequent lack of accountability for that inexcusable breach of protocol marks another measure of the harm caused by the government’s policy of unnecessarily incarcerating people who are trying to establish their rights to stay in the United States—a practice that must be eliminated.

“We demand that the government notify all affected people immediately, either directly, or through their attorneys, that their information was included in the security breach and then proceed to release those impacted people from jail to ensure their safety and so they can begin to remediate the harm that was caused to them.

In addition, New York State should take critical steps to cease its complicity with ICE, an agency proven to have no regard for the people in its custody and who have now further contributed to putting them in harm’s way. New York should pass the [New York for All Act](#) and the [Dignity Not Detention Act](#). One ends New York’s participation in ensnaring people into ICE custody, while the latter prevents ICE from using New York facilities as ICE detention centers.”

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The New York Family Immigrant Unity Project (NYIFUP) is the nation’s first public defender system for immigrants facing deportation—defined as those in removal proceedings before an immigration judge. Funded by the New York City Council since July 2014, the program provides a free attorney to almost all detained indigent immigrants facing deportation at the Varick Street Immigration Court.