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Defenders

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THE
LEGAL AID
SOCIETY

Justice in Every Borough.

July 25, 2022

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**NYIFUP PROVIDERS CONDEMN ICE'S RECKLESS AND DANGEROUS TRANSFERS
FROM ORANGE COUNTY CORRECTIONAL FACILITY, DEMAND IMMEDIATE RELEASE
OF ALL PEOPLE FROM THE FACILITY**

(NEW YORK, NY) - The Bronx Defenders, The Legal Aid Society, and Brooklyn 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 following statement in response to ICE's unilateral decision to transfer detained immigrant New Yorkers from the Orange County Correctional Facility (OCCF) in Goshen, New York to unknown locations:

"ICE's decision to transfer detained immigrant New Yorkers from the Orange County Correctional Facility to unknown locations outside of the NYC area, without any prior notice to detained people's families or legal counsel, is reckless and unsafe.

Throughout the week of July 18th, NYIFUP had contacted ICE multiple times to confirm rumors of imminent transfers out of the NYC area of immigrant New Yorkers detained at OCCF. ICE denied specific transfer plans, but clarified that OCCF requested ICE 'assist them by drawing down the overall population in their facility' and that they were in the planning stages of that population reduction. Over this past weekend, ICE not only initiated transfers, but did so without providing a process to file release requests, in contradiction to prior communications and practice.

Despite well-documented evidence that ICE's practice of transferring detained people worsened COVID-19 outbreaks within the receiving detention facilities and their surrounding communities, ICE has chosen to risk countless lives to maintain a cruel and unfair detention system that should not exist. This decision to transfer detained immigrant New Yorkers to unknown locations is even more shocking as New York State leads in Monkeypox cases in the United States and the World Health Organization recently declared the Monkeypox outbreak a global health emergency.

We have been here before. In March 2020, NYIFUP called on ICE to prevent the COVID-19 crisis from spiraling and urged the safe and orderly release of people in their jails when the tri-state area was the pandemic's epicenter. Instead, ICE facilitated mass transfers and deportations out of New York and New Jersey. Two and a half years later, COVID-19 has taken the lives of 1,023,341 million people in the United States. ICE's reckless behavior to transfer detained immigrant New Yorkers to unknown locations in the midst of two global health crises shows that

they not only have failed to learn from their past mistakes, but remain shamelessly committed to separating families and endangering the American public. We demand ICE stop the transfers, and release detained immigrant New Yorkers to their families where they can access the care and community support that ICE is incapable of providing to those they detain.”

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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.