Northwest IMMIGRANT RIGHTS Project

NWIRP Community Advisory
Protecting Yourself and Your Loved Ones During Holiday Travel

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Over the past several months, immigration enforcement officers have ramped up arrests of community members at airports across the United States, including at SeaTac airport with the most recent arrests of two community members over the weekend. Now that the holiday travel season is upon us, community members should approach air travel with caution and safety planning in mind.

If you are not a lawful permanent resident (green card holder) or U.S. citizen and have an active immigration case or pending status, this could create concerns about traveling domestically with your work permit. Immigration enforcement officers are actively arresting travelers with expired permission to stay on a visitor visa, even if community members have pending immigration relief. Understand that there are certain travel risks for travelers in pending immigration status who use a work permit to travel, because TSA's domestic travel information is cross-referenced against ICE's immigration records.

Here are some additional recommendations to keep in mind:

- If you do not have any immigration status, avoid airport travel entirely.
- If you are traveling, make sure your immigration and travel documents are up to date (unexpired) and accessible.
- A work permit (Employment Authorization Card), although an acceptable photo ID at TSA, is not the same as having lawful immigration status.
- If you have a pending immigration case, temporary visa, a prior deportation order, criminal history, or other immigration concern, consult an immigration attorney before traveling.
- Keep an emergency contact informed about any travel plans.
- Know your constitutional rights and avoid relying on rumors or unverified social media posts.

This is a reminder to stay informed, verify information, and seek qualified legal advice when there may be immigration consequences. We have several resources on traveling available on our social media accounts which have all been reviewed by NWIRP legal staff and are trusted sources of information. The safety of our community is paramount to all of us at NWIRP. We hope that these recommendations are helpful to you and your loved ones this holiday season.