

March 19, 2019

Michael W. Meade  
Acting Field Officer Director  
Miami Field Office, Enforcement and Removal Operations (ERO)  
Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE)  
U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS)  
865 SW 78th Avenue Suite 101  
Plantation, FL, 33324  
Phone: (954) 236-4900  
Miami.outreach@ice.dhs.gov

Sent via email

Re: COVID-19 and OSUP/ROR Reporting at Miramar ICE Facility

Dear Director Meade:

It has come to our attention that your office is continuing to require persons released on Orders of Supervision (OSUP) or on Orders of Release on Recognizance (ROR) to report in-person to your facility in Miramar,<sup>1</sup> despite Florida Governor Ron DeSantis' announcement days ago that there was community spread of the coronavirus in Broward County.<sup>2</sup> There were troubling reports of long lines at the facility on March 18.

We, the undersigned organizations, urge you to direct the immediate suspension of all in-person OSUP and ROR reporting currently scheduled in Miramar, consistent with similar measures taken by ICE-ERO in Orlando and in other jurisdictions,<sup>3</sup> and with calls by the American Immigration Lawyers Association (AILA) in letters to DHS-ICE Deputy Director

---

<sup>1</sup> Manuel Madrid, *Miramar ICE Facility Still Open Despite Coronavirus Concerns*, Broward Palm Beach New Times (March 16, 2020), <https://www.browardpalmbeach.com/news/coronavirus-orlando-ice-facility-closes-miramar-still-open-10612318>.

<sup>2</sup> Franklin White and Evan Siegel, *DeSantis Confirms Evidence of COVID-19 Community Spread in Broward; 4th Florida Death Announced*, WSVN (March 14, 2020), <https://wsvn.com/news/local/desantis-confirms-evidence-of-covid-19-community-spread-in-broward-4th-florida-death-announced>.

<sup>3</sup> Steph Solis, *Coronavirus Response: ICE Boston to Start Conducting Scheduled Immigration Check-ins by Phone*, Mass Live (March 16, 2020), <https://www.masslive.com/coronavirus/2020/03/coronavirus-response-ice-boston-to-start-conducting-scheduled-immigration-check-ins-by-phone.html>.

Matthew Albence on March 12<sup>4</sup> and March 16.<sup>5</sup> We are deeply concerned that cancelling check-ins on a case-by-case basis under the circumstances would cause uncertainty among persons subject to reporting, and pose unnecessary risks to public health. It would also be administratively inefficient.

The White House now recommends the closure of schools, restaurants, bars, and other indoor venues “where groups of people congregate” in “states with evidence of community transmission.”<sup>6</sup> This recommendation echoes the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)’s guidelines for mitigating the risk posed by the new virus in places where a “substantial” level of community transmission may be occurring.<sup>7</sup> The CDC warns that COVID-19 (the disease caused by the new coronavirus) may cause severe illness, possibly resulting in death, and that “[p]eople in places where ongoing community spread of the virus [...] has been reported are at elevated risk of exposure.”<sup>8</sup>

Following confirmed reports of community spread in Florida, Governor DeSantis ordered on March 17 the immediate closure of all public-school campuses, as well as bars and pubs, in the state.<sup>9</sup> Prior to that, he directed state agencies to temporarily suspend driver’s license and professional license renewal requirements.<sup>10</sup>

All immigration courts in the country—including places where little to no community transmission has yet been reported—have now either closed their doors or suspended all hearings

---

<sup>4</sup> American Immigration Lawyers Association, *AILA Sends Letter to ICE Regarding ICE Facilities and COVID-19* (March 12, 2020), <https://www.aila.org/advo-media/aila-correspondence/2020/aila-sends-letter-to-ice-regarding-ice-facilities>.

<sup>5</sup> American Immigration Lawyers Association, *AILA Letter to ICE and EOIR Regarding Urgent COVID-19 Measures* (March 16, 2020), <https://www.aila.org/advo-media/aila-correspondence/2020/letter-to-ice-and-eoir-regarding-urgent-covid-19>.

<sup>6</sup> The White House, *Coronavirus Guidelines for America* (March 16, 2020), <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefings-statements/coronavirus-guidelines-america>.

<sup>7</sup> Center for Disease Control and Prevention, *Implementation of Mitigation Strategies for Communities with Local COVID-19 Transmission* (March 12, 2020), <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/community-mitigation-strategy.pdf>.

<sup>8</sup> Center for Disease Control and Prevention, *Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-2019): Situation Summary* (March 17, 2020), <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/cases-updates/summary.html>.

<sup>9</sup> Mario Ariza and Brooke Baitinger, *Florida Coronavirus Updates: More than 200 Cases Statewide; Broward to Get Field Hospital*, South Florida Sun Sentinel (March 17, 2020), <https://www.sun-sentinel.com/coronavirus/fl-ne-fl-ne-coronavirus-florida-live-updates-20200317-zvub7kv4ezgs3d6jg4gysuhleq-story.html>.

<sup>10</sup> Florida Department of Public Health, *The State of Florida Issues Updates on COVID-19* (March 15, 2020), <http://www.floridahealth.gov/newsroom/2020/03/031520-2110-covid19.pr.html>.

of non-detained individuals.<sup>11</sup> Likewise, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) has announced the temporary suspension of non-emergency in-person services at all its offices.<sup>12</sup>

Meanwhile, the number of known cases of COVID-19 in Broward County—which already accounts for the largest share of known cases in Florida<sup>13</sup>—continues to rise exponentially.

Your prompt action may be critical to preventing further spread of this highly contagious disease through a population made more vulnerable by common lack of access to healthcare and reliance on public transportation—and whose lack of access to legal representation, as well as child care and other social resources, will likely be exacerbated by the closure of schools and the dramatic economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

To weather this major crisis, Florida communities need governments at all levels to prioritize public health. Therefore, we urge the immediate suspension of all in-person OSUP and ROR reporting scheduled in Miramar, until such time as the state of emergency in Florida is lifted, or U.S. immigration courts are re-opened, whichever is later. Please advise us as to your decision at the earliest opportunity. If you wish to discuss, we are available for a teleconference at your convenience. Please contact Amien Kacou, Staff Attorney - ACLU of Florida ([akacou@aclufl.org](mailto:akacou@aclufl.org)) or Kirk Bailey, Political Director - ACLU of Florida ([kbailey@aclufl.org](mailto:kbailey@aclufl.org)) with any questions or to discuss further. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

AMERICAN CIVIL LIBERTIES UNION OF FLORIDA  
FLORIDA IMMIGRANT COALITION  
COMMUNITY JUSTICE PROJECT  
AMERICANS FOR IMMIGRANT JUSTICE  
WECOUNT!  
QLATINX  
IMMIGRATION CLINIC, UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI SCHOOL OF LAW  
IMMIGRATION AND HUMAN RIGHTS CLINIC, FIU COLLEGE OF LAW

---

<sup>11</sup> U.S. Department of Justice, *EOIR Operational Status During Coronavirus Pandemic* (March 18, 2020), <https://www.justice.gov/eoir/eoir-operational-status-during-coronavirus-pandemic>.

<sup>12</sup> U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, *USCIS Office Closings* (March 17, 2020), <https://www.uscis.gov/about-us/uscis-office-closings>.

<sup>13</sup> Zachary T. Sampson, *Coronavirus in Florida: Two new deaths in Manatee and Broward, almost half of cases involve people 60 or older*, Tampa Bay Times (March 17, 2020), <https://www.tampabay.com/news/health/2020/03/17/coronavirus-in-florida-half-of-cases-involve-people-60-or-older-according-to-state-data>.