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MIGRANT POWER ALLIANCE CALLS ON NYC TO END COOPERATION WITH ICE: NYC COMPLIES WITH MOST FEDERAL REQUESTS TO DETAIN NEW YORKERS, TURNS OVER THOUSANDS TO ICE

Contact: mpamedianyc@gmail.com
Cris Hilo (English): 347-342-2706
Maria Marroquin (Spanish): 267-563-0629

New York, NY- Recent figures released by New York City's Department of Correction (DOC) [show](#) that NYC complies with most voluntary requests issued by the federal government known as "detainers" or "immigration holds." Detainers are requests that ask local police to hold a person beyond the time they otherwise would have been released. This helps to transfer individuals into Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) custody for detention and subsequent deportation proceedings. The federal Department of Homeland Security (DHS) has [clarified](#) that a detainer is only a request and that local administrations are not required by law to comply. The [Migrant Power Alliance](#), a coalition of immigrants and human rights organizations, calls on the city administration to stop willfully complying with ICE detainer requests. By not handing New Yorkers over to ICE, the city will at least allow immigrants to secure legal counsel and be with their families as they fight their deportation case.

[Data](#) shows that 60 percent of New Yorkers apprehended by ICE from October 2005 through December 2010 had detainers placed on them. Although the City Council passed legislation in [2011](#) and [2013](#) to limit the city's cooperation with ICE, the DOC statistics demonstrate that legislation allows for the city administration to systematically turn thousands of New Yorkers over to ICE custody. By complying, the DOC helps place immigrant New Yorkers into the grip of the country's inhumane detention and deportation system that already deports approximately 400,000 people every year. Between October 2012 and September 2013, the DOC cooperated with an overwhelming 73% of all requests submitted by ICE and held 3,080 individuals beyond the time the individual would have otherwise been released. The DOC turned over 3,074 of those individuals into ICE custody. A recent *New York Times* [article](#) shows that from July to September 2013 the DOC honored a lower percentage of detainers, due to the activation of the most recent law – however, that time span is too short to be conclusive. It is unacceptable for hundreds of New Yorkers to be separated from their families especially as we approach the holidays.

New York City has been called a "City of Immigrants" by many, including Mayor Bloomberg and Mayor-elect de Blasio, but under the custody of ICE, New Yorkers are held in a network of detention centers out of state, with no bond, no meaningful access to legal counsel, separated from family, and with little [chance](#) of successfully fighting their deportation cases.

NYC allows ICE to operate in the city precincts and jails through the detainer. Consequently, New York residents hesitate to contact local law enforcement for fear of eventually being turned

over to ICE. Essentially, the NYC detainer policy has produced a hostile and fearful environment for New York communities.

Studies show that every stage of the criminal justice system (from Stop and Frisk, to legal representation, to sentencing) is racially biased against poor people of color. This is the population that makes up the majority of the 13,000 inmates imprisoned at NYC's Rikers Island on any given day. Allowing ICE to operate in the city jails extends the reach of mass incarceration by keeping non-citizens detained for longer periods. Ending detainers is one step towards making a safer city for all New Yorkers.

Cities such as [Washington D.C.](#), [Chicago](#), [New Orleans](#), and [Santa Clara, CA](#) already refuse almost all ICE detainer requests. It's time for New York City to be a leader amongst US cities to stop ALL collaboration with ICE by refusing to comply with ALL detainer requests. NYC's city council and Mayor-elect de Blasio have an opportunity to help build a city based on public trust, public safety and human rights for all New Yorkers.

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