

Instructions for Visiting the Immigrant Detention Center in Elizabeth NJ

Sebastien at Xavier is setting up more visits to the immigrant detention center in Elizabeth, NJ. Here is a list of the things to consider prior to signing up:

- (1) Below are the dates for our upcoming visits to the Elizabeth Detention Center in Elizabeth, NJ. Please sign up for no more than 2 dates. They will send out an email confirmation of your reserved spot subsequently. A reminder follow-up email will be sent out about one week prior to the actual visit to those confirmed accordingly. Available dates are: April 6, May 4, June 1, and June 29, 2019. Since we are limited to the number of volunteers for each visit, please be sure to RSVP by replying via email to: Xavier group (sanxnyc@gmail.com) and letting us know you wish to volunteer on the specific date/s so that we can save you a spot. Spots are on a "first-come-first-served" basis. On the respective dates of visits, we will be meeting at 8:30 am at the office of The Church of St. Francis Xavier (55 W 15th St) for a brief touch base/orientation, at which time we will go over some of the details and collect forms. We will head out at 9:00 am and plan to be back in Manhattan at approximately 1:30 pm. Transportation is provided to/from the detention center. Essentially, as volunteers, we seek to provide a compassionate face and an affirmation of humanity in the midst of an unjust and dehumanizing scenario. We do NOT visit as lawyers or social workers, but SIMPLY as friends and provide a friendly smile. Please recognize your role as listener, allowing the detainee to guide the conversation.
- (2) IMPORTANT INFORMATION TO CONSIDER
 - a) On the day of the visit, it is essential that you bring with you a government issued photo ID. If you do not bring this with you, you will NOT be able to enter the visitation area (**municipal IDs such as IDNYC are not considered valid forms of ID at the detention center**).
 - b) Please make every effort not to bring anything of great value on day of visit, such as purses/wallets/keys/cellphones/Apple Watch, as they will not be permitted inside the visitation areas (these items will need to be placed in lockers, which are available in waiting area).
 - c) Dress Code: The detention center has a VERY STRICT dress code. If you do not abide by it, you will NOT be granted entrance into the visitation area. Please do NOT wear: Tights or leggings; Short skirts (even if tights or leggings are worn under; Shorts (length must reach fingertips of outstretched arm by your side); Flip flops; Tank tops; Sleeveless shirts; Shear tops; Shirts that reveal bare shoulders or bosoms; Any exposed undergarments (bra-including straps-cannot be visible, either at shoulders or underarms); Overly baggy clothing; Hoodies; Overly distressed jeans (or any visible holes). In addition, the detention center does not allow you to wear jackets or sweatshirts with zippers inside the visitation area. Coats/jackets, scarves, hats, and gloves are not allowed inside visitation area either. The visitation area is a little cold so dress in layers if you are prone to being cold. Shirts or sweaters with buttons are allowed.
 - d) A subsequent email will be sent out forms from First Friends which must be fully filled out prior to visits, including FIRST FRIENDS VOLUNTEER AGREEMENT, and VOLUNTEER CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact us at: sanxnyc@gmail.com. Respond directly to him if you are interested in participating in this extremely meaningful work.