



BWLA STATEMENT

BWLA Statement on Keith Porter, Renee Good, and Alex Pretti

The Black Women Lawyers' Association of Greater Chicago, Inc. (“**BWLA**”) mourns the killings of Keith Porter, Renee Good, and Alex Pretti by federal ICE agents. These tragic deaths raise grave concerns regarding constitutional violations, the use of excessive force, adherence to the rule of law, and respect for human dignity.

We affirm: everyone has the right to peacefully protest and assemble without fear. The First and Fourth Amendments enshrine these fundamental freedoms and shield individuals from excessive force. Federal officers who use excessive and unwarranted deadly force erode public trust and undermine equal justice under the law.

BWLA recognizes that our membership and the communities we serve reflect the full diversity of Black womanhood, including African American, Afro-Caribbean, Afro-Latina, African immigrant, and multiracial identities. The experiences of Black women, particularly those in immigrant and international contexts, deepen our understanding of how systemic injustice and disproportionate force threaten our collective safety and dignity and those of other communities.

We are deeply troubled by the ongoing pattern of disproportionate and deadly force by federal law enforcement agencies. The Fourth Amendment’s protections against unreasonable force apply to all persons within U.S. borders and extend beyond First Amendment assembly contexts. No one should fear for their safety or life while exercising constitutionally protected rights or during any interaction with federal law enforcement. The escalation of these encounters resulting in deadly force reflect systemic failures that require urgent accountability, transparency, and reform.

The law must govern all, including those who enforce it. Our democracy only functions if people may freely participate without fear of violence. Officers who violate individuals' civil and constitutional rights must face a full, independent investigation and appropriate consequences.

BWLA urges Congress, the Department of Homeland Security, and ICE leadership to take swift, decisive action to end these injustices and prevent further harm, including:

- Conduct prompt, thorough investigations into these killings and enact reforms that prioritize public safety and justice.
- Ensure accountability for officers who violate individual’s civil rights through transparent investigations and appropriate disciplinary or legal action.

- Require all federal law enforcement agencies to implement comprehensive training in de-escalation, bias recognition, and constitutional rights for all personnel.

We stand with families and communities demanding justice for Keith Porter, Renee Good, and Alex Pretti. BWLA urges prompt action to safeguard civil rights and prevent further tragedy.

Protecting peaceful assembly and expression is essential. BWLA remains committed to policies that guarantee these basic rights so that everyone can participate in our democracy without fear.

We encourage community members to learn about their constitutional and civil rights when interacting with law enforcement and immigration authorities. Local bar associations and legal organizations in Chicago offer **Know Your Rights** programs and materials to support safer engagement, especially for Black communities that include immigrants, first-generation Americans, and undocumented individuals. For more information, visit: <https://immigrantjustice.org/for-immigrants/know-your-rights/>

BWLA will continue to work in coalition with local bar associations, community partners, and legal advocacy groups to expand access to Know Your Rights education and legal support for our communities across Chicago and the greater Midwest.

STATE-SPECIFIC CONSIDERATIONS

Note: Rights may vary by state and local jurisdiction. Some states have stronger protections than federal minimums. Research your local laws and contact local civil rights organizations for state-specific guidance.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES[A2]

- ACLU: www.aclu.org/know-your-rights
- Electronic Frontier Foundation: www.eff.org (digital rights)
- National Immigration Forum: immigrationforum.org
- United We Dream: unitedwedream.org
- Know Your Rights Programs: <https://www.first-defense.org/know-your-rights>
- ACS Chicago: <https://www.acslaw.org/issues/>
- IL Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights (ICIRR): [https://www.icirr.org/\[A1\]](https://www.icirr.org/[A1])

DISCLAIMER: This information is for educational purposes only and does not constitute legal advice. Laws vary by jurisdiction and change over time. For specific legal situations, consult with a qualified attorney in your area.

REMEMBER: Asserting your rights is not obstruction of justice. You can be respectful while still protecting your constitutional rights. When in doubt, remain silent and ask for an attorney.

KNOW YOUR RIGHTS REFERENCE GUIDE

KNOW YOUR RIGHTS

INTERACTIONS WITH ICE AND FEDERAL LAW ENFORCEMENT

A Quick Reference Guide from BWLA

YOUR CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHTS

You have rights regardless of immigration status, race, or background.¹

FOURTH AMENDMENT PROTECTIONS

- Right to be free from unreasonable searches and seizures²
- Right to be free from excessive force³
- Right to refuse consent to search your home, car, or belongings⁴

FIFTH AMENDMENT PROTECTIONS

- Right to remain silent - You do not have to answer questions about your immigration status, country of origin, or how you entered the U.S.⁵
- Right to refuse to sign documents you don't understand⁶

FIRST AMENDMENT PROTECTIONS

- Right to peaceful protest and assembly⁷
- Right to record police in public spaces (check local laws)⁸

IF ICE APPROACHES YOU IN PUBLIC

WHAT TO DO:

- ✓ Stay calm and keep your hands visible⁹
- ✓ Ask: "Am I free to leave?" If yes, walk away calmly¹⁰
- ✓ Say: "I am exercising my right to remain silent"¹¹
- ✓ Ask for an attorney immediately¹²
- ✓ Remember or write down officer badge numbers and agency¹³

WHAT NOT TO DO:

- ✗ Don't run - This can escalate the situation¹⁴
- ✗ Don't lie - Silence is better than false information¹⁵
- ✗ Don't sign anything without an attorney¹⁶
- ✗ Don't consent to searches¹⁷

IF ICE APPROACHES YOU AT YOUR HOME

YOUR RIGHTS:

- ICE needs a judicial warrant signed by a judge to enter your home¹⁸
- Administrative warrants are NOT enough to force entry¹⁹
- You can refuse entry and ask to see the warrant through a window²⁰
- You have the right to remain silent and ask for an attorney²¹

WHAT TO SAY:

"I do not consent [A3] to your entry. I do not consent to a search. I am exercising my right to remain silent." ²²

IF DETAINED OR ARRESTED

IMMEDIATE STEPS:

1. Say clearly: "I want an attorney"²³
2. Do not answer questions until your attorney arrives²⁴
3. Do not sign documents without legal representation²⁵
4. Ask to make a phone call - This is your right²⁶

IMPORTANT:

- You have the right to an attorney even in immigration proceedings²⁷

- Contact your consulate if you are not a U.S. citizen²⁸

EMERGENCY CONTACTS

Keep these numbers accessible:

- **National Immigration Legal Services Directory:** immigrantjustice.org | 1-844-360-3591
- **ACLU Immigrants' Rights Project:** aclu.org/issues/immigrants-rights | 212-549-2500
- **Local Immigration Attorney Referrals:** chicagobar.org | 312-554-2000

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- **ACLU Know Your Rights:** aclu.org/know-your-rights²⁹
- **National Immigration Forum:** immigrationforum.org³⁰
- **United We Dream:** unitedwedream.org³¹
- **Illinois Immigration Info:** illinoisimmigrationinfo.org³²

DISCLAIMER: This information is for educational purposes only and does not constitute legal advice. Laws vary by jurisdiction. For specific legal situations, consult a qualified attorney.³³

REMEMBER: Asserting your rights is not obstruction of justice. You can be respectful while protecting your constitutional rights.

CITATIONS

- ¹ *Plyler v. Doe*, 457 U.S. 202 (1982)
- ² U.S. Const. amend. IV
- ³ *Tennessee v. Garner*, 471 U.S. 1 (1985)
- ⁴ *Schneckloth v. Bustamonte*, 412 U.S. 218 (1973)
- ⁵ U.S. Const. amend. V; *Miranda v. Arizona*, 384 U.S. 436 (1966)
- ⁶ 8 CFR § 287.3
- ⁷ U.S. Const. amend. I
- ⁸ *Glik v. Cunniffe*, 655 F.3d 78 (1st Cir. 2011)
- ⁹ ACLU Know Your Rights Guide (2024)
- ¹⁰ *Florida v. Royer*, 460 U.S. 491 (1983)
- ¹¹ *Miranda v. Arizona*, 384 U.S. 436 (1966)
- ¹² *Gideon v. Wainwright*, 372 U.S. 335 (1963)
- ¹³ ACLU Immigrants' Rights Project Guidelines
- ¹⁴ *Illinois v. Wardlow*, 528 U.S. 119 (2000)
- ¹⁵ 18 U.S.C. § 1001
- ¹⁶ 8 CFR § 287.3
- ¹⁷ *Schneckloth v. Bustamonte*, 412 U.S. 218 (1973)
- ¹⁸ *Payton v. New York*, 445 U.S. 573 (1980)
- ¹⁹ National Immigration Project Guidelines (2024)
- ²⁰ 8 CFR § 287.8
- ²¹ U.S. Const. amend. V
- ²² ACLU Model Language for ICE Encounters
- ²³ *Edwards v. Arizona*, 451 U.S. 477 (1981)
- ²⁴ *Miranda v. Arizona*, 384 U.S. 436 (1966)
- ²⁵ 8 CFR § 287.3
- ²⁶ 8 CFR § 236.1
- ²⁷ 8 U.S.C. § 1362
- ²⁸ Vienna Convention on Consular Relations, Art. 36
- ²⁹ American Civil Liberties Union (2024)
- ³⁰ National Immigration Forum (2024)

³¹ United We Dream (2024)

³² Illinois Coalition for Immigrant Rights (2024)

³³ Model Rules of Professional Conduct 1.1

Prepared by the BWLA Civil Rights Committee



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