STATE OF RHODE ISLAND
Department of Children, Youth & Families

Office of the Director
101 Friendship Street
Providence, RI 02903
Ashley Deckert, Director

To: All DCYF Providers

From: Ashley Deckert, Director

Date: February 16, 2026

Subject: 2026 Guidance for DCYF Providers

Dear Providers:

The Rhode Island Department of Children, Youth & Families (DCYF) considers the safety and well-being of children and families to be its top priority. We will continue to work to ensure the safety and well-being of the children and families we serve, while maintaining compliance with all applicable federal and state laws and court orders, including those governing immigration.

We acknowledge that each Provider operates as an independent entity and private business with its own legal representation, and we encourage you to consider adopting guidance and procedures specific to your staff and facilities in collaboration with your legal teams.

If a DCYF-Involved Child or Youth is the Subject of Local, State, or Federal Law Enforcement Action:
The Provider shall act in accordance with its own internal guidance or procedures. **The Provider shall contact the DCYF Child Abuse Hotline at 1-800-RI-CHILD (1-800-742-4453) immediately upon the enforcement action occurring.**

Guidance Provided to DCYF Staff

The Department has provided the guidance documented in the attached appendix, in alignment with state, legal, and departmental policies, to all DCYF staff in the event of an interaction with local, state, and federal law enforcement officers, including Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents.

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND
Department of Children, Youth & Families

Office of the Director
101 Friendship Street
Providence, RI 02903
Ashley Deckert, Director

APPENDIX

Dear Staff:

The Rhode Island Department of Children, Youth & Families (DCYF) considers the safety and well-being of children and families to be its top priority. This guidance document is intended to ensure that DCYF complies with all applicable federal and state laws and court orders, including those governing immigration, and to help staff ensure the safety and well-being of the children and families we serve. We may provide additional or updated guidance to DCYF staff, as needed.

If local, state, and federal law enforcement officers, including Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents enter a DCYF building to seek access to case records or individuals in the care, custody or control of DCYF, you should do the following:

1. **Verify the agent's identity and legal authority:** Ask for credentials and request a copy of the warrant, court order, subpoena or other legal document that the agent is relying on.
2. **Immediately notify legal counsel of the request:** Call the DCYF Executive Legal Counsel and transmit information relevant to the request, including the legal documentation, for their review.
    a. All records of DCYF are confidential and may be disclosed only when authorized by law (R.I. Gen. Laws § 42-72-8). DCYF staff must protect the confidentiality of client information until they can determine whether they are required, or even permitted, to turn over the records.
    b. DCYF staff are not required to allow agents access to nonpublic areas, such as areas within a DCYF office building, without a judicial warrant, absent a public safety exigency. A judicial warrant means a search warrant or arrest warrant issued by a federal district court judge or magistrate, or a Rhode Island judge.
    c. Administrative warrants, notices to appear, and administrative subpoenas are not judicial warrants and therefore do not, by themselves, authorize access to nonpublic areas of a DCYF office. Sample ICE administrative warrants and notices to appear (U.S. DHS forms I-200, I-205, and I-862) and federal search and seizure and arrest warrants (Forms AO 93 and AO 422) can be found in the Appendix.

3. While staff should not provide access to records or nonpublic areas without confirming that the local, state, or federal law enforcement agent has appropriate authority, **staff are otherwise not to interfere with enforcement actions while they are occurring and are to immediately contact their administrator and the Executive Legal Counsel.**

If staff are in the community and local, state, or federal enforcement action occurs against or involving a youth in the care, custody, or control of DCYF, or against or involving an adult member of a youth's family in the youth's presence, staff should attempt to obtain the name and contact information of the supervisory agent, obtain information about where the youth or adult are being taken, advise agents of any known medical condition and immediately call the Executive Legal Counsel. **Again, staff are not to obstruct any law enforcement officer engaged in enforcement action.**

4. **After law enforcement officers have left the premises:** DCYF staff must call the appropriate administrator according to their division to notify them that an enforcement action just took place, and confirm whether a caretaker is needed for the child(ren):
    a. For staff in the Division of Family Services, call your regional director.
    b. For staff in Child Protective Services, call your administrator.
    c. For staff in the Division of Youth Development, call the Executive Director.
    d. For staff in Licensing and Resource Families, call your administrator.
    e. For staff in the Legal division, call the Executive Legal Counsel.
    f. For all other staff, call the Deputy Director.

    In an emergency you may contact the hotline 1-800-RI-CHILD to obtain contact information for any of the individuals listed above.
5. If there is a caretaker available, the DCYF staff member will provide the child(ren) or caretaker of the child(ren) with information regarding community resources that are involved in immigration-related matters and explain that they may contact the resources should they choose to.
6. If there is no caretaker available, DCYF staff will follow normal department operating procedures for the emergency placement of a child. (DOP 700.0035 Kinship Care, DOP 700.0230 Family Search and Engagement, DOP 700.0170 Placement Determinations, Referrals, and Transitions)
7. Within 24 hours of the enforcement action occurring, the DCYF staff member will update the case record with a case activity note (CAN) and mark it as critical. The critical CAN must include as much information as possible, such as the date, time, and names of the individuals involved.

Protect Client Confidentiality

Information about clients is confidential. DCYF shall keep confidential all information received from and/or about children and families who are currently and/or were previously involved with the Department. Access to this information is governed by agency policies, and state and federal laws, and is limited to authorized individuals, agencies, and institutions on a need and a right to know basis. (DOP 100.0000, Confidentiality, R.I. Gen. Laws § 42-72-8) Familiarize yourself with our policies on information sharing and adhere strictly to confidentiality protocols.

Maintain Professional Boundaries

As child welfare professionals, it is essential to approach interactions with local, state, and federal law enforcement officers with clarity and professionalism, while remaining focused on our mission to serve children and families. This requires setting clear boundaries and ensuring all actions align with the law and agency policies.

By remaining calm, maintaining professional boundaries, and focusing on the safety and well-being of children, you can effectively navigate complex situations while upholding the integrity and mission of DCYF.

Role Clarity

Your role is as a child welfare professional for the State of Rhode Island. Your responsibilities include providing support and resources to families facing challenging circumstances, but they do not include enforcing immigration laws or facilitating immigration-related actions.

Office of the Director
101 Friendship Street
Providence, RI 02903
Ashley Deckert, Director

Support Children and Families

When engaging with families affected by immigration enforcement, prioritize trauma-informed care. Recognize that these families may be experiencing heightened fear or anxiety, and ensure interactions are compassionate and supportive without compromising your professional boundaries.

Update Important Records

Work with clients on a regular basis to ensure that all contact information is current. DCYF staff can work with clients to develop a family preparedness plan and identify emergency contacts for their children in the event a parent or caregiver is detained and unable to care for the child(ren).

Promote Client's Needs

DCYF has established strong partnerships with community-based providers who are well-equipped to deliver trauma-informed care and offer a comprehensive range of support services, including counseling, housing assistance, and financial aid. Together, we aim to help families maintain stability during difficult times.

Seek Supervisory Support

Bring any concerns to your supervisor. Regularly discuss potential scenarios and appropriate responses to ensure alignment with agency policies and to receive guidance on complex situations.

By adhering to this guidance, DCYF staff can anticipate and respond to needs, ensuring the protection and support of the children and families under their care.

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND
Department of Children, Youth & Families

Office of the Director
101 Friendship Street
Providence, RI 02903
Ashley Deckert, Director

U.S. Department of Homeland Security Administrative Warrant (Form I-200)

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY **Warrant for Arrest of Alien**

File No. _____

Date: _____

To: Any immigration officer authorized pursuant to sections 236 and 287 of the Immigration and Nationality Act and part 287 of title 8, Code of Federal Regulations, to serve warrants of arrest for immigration violations

I have determined that there is probable cause to believe that _____ is removable from the United States. This determination is based upon:

☐ the execution of a charging document to initiate removal proceedings against the subject;

☐ the pendency of ongoing removal proceedings against the subject;

☐ the failure to establish admissibility subsequent to deferred inspection;

☐ biometric confirmation of the subject's identity and a records check of federal databases that affirmatively indicate, by themselves or in addition to other reliable information, that the subject either lacks immigration status or notwithstanding such status is removable under U.S. immigration law; and/or

☐ statements made voluntarily by the subject to an immigration officer and/or other reliable evidence that affirmatively indicate the subject either lacks immigration status or notwithstanding such status is removable under U.S. immigration law.

YOU ARE COMMANDED to arrest and take into custody for removal proceedings under the Immigration and Nationality Act, the above-named alien.

SAMPLE

_____
(Signature of Authorized Immigration Officer)

_____
(Printed Name and Title of Authorized Immigration Officer)

Certificate of Service

I hereby certify that the Warrant for Arrest of Alien was served by me at _____ (Location)

on _____ (Name of Alien) on _____ (Date of Service), and the contents of this notice were read to him or her in the _____ (Language) language.

_____ Name and Signature of Officer

_____ Name or Number of Interpreter (if applicable)

Form I-200 (Rev. 09/16)

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND
Department of Children, Youth & Families

Office of the Director
101 Friendship Street
Providence, RI 02903
Ashley Deckert, Director

U.S. Department of Homeland Security Administrative Warrant (Form I-205) (p.1)

DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY
U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement

WARRANT OF REMOVAL/DEPORTATION

File No: _____

Date: _____

To any immigration officer of the United States Department of Homeland Security:

_____
(Full name of alien)

who entered the United States at _____ (Place of entry) on _____ (Date of entry)

is subject to removal/deportation from the United States, based upon a final order by:

- ☐ an immigration judge in exclusion, deportation, or removal proceedings
- ☐ a designated official
- ☐ the Board of Immigration Appeals
- ☐ a United States District or Magistrate Court Judge

and pursuant to the following provisions of the Immigration and Nationality Act:

I, the undersigned officer of the United States, by virtue of the power and authority vested in the Secretary of Homel Security under the laws of the United States and by his or her direction, command you to take into custody and remo from the United States the above-named alien, pursuant to law, at the expense of:

SAMPLE

_____
(Signature of immigration officer)

_____
(Title of immigration officer)

_____
(Date and office location)

Office of the Director
101 Friendship Street
Providence, RI 02903
Ashley Deckert, Director

U.S. Department of Homeland Security Administrative Warrant (Form I-205) (p.2)

To be completed by immigration officer executing the warrant: Name of alien being removed:

_____

Port, date, and manner of removal: _____

Photograph of alien removed	Right index fingerprint of alien removed

_____
(Signature of alien being fingerprinted)

_____
(Signature and title of immigration officer taking print)

Departure witnessed by: _____
(Signature and title of immigration officer)

If actual departure is not witnessed, fully identify source or means of verification of departure:

_____

_____

_____

_____

If self-removal (self-deportation), pursuant to 8 CFR 241.7, check here. ☐

Departure Verified by: _____
(Signature and title of immigration officer)

SAMPLE

ICE Form I-205 (8/07) Page 2 of 2

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND
Department of Children, Youth & Families

Office of the Director
101 Friendship Street
Providence, RI 02903
Ashley Deckert, Director

U.S. Department of Homeland Security Notice to Appear (Form I-862)

U.S. Department of Homeland Security **Notice to Appear**

In removal proceedings under section 240 of the Immigration and Nationality Act:

Subject ID: FINS: File No:
DOB: Event No:

In the Matter of:

Respondent: _____ currently residing at:

_____
(Number, street, city and ZIP code) (Area code and phone number)

☐ 1. You are an arriving alien.
☐ 2. You are an alien present in the United States who has not been admitted or paroled.
☐ 3. You have been admitted to the United States, but are removable for the reasons stated below.

The Department of Homeland Security alleges that you:

SAMPLE

☐ This notice is being issued after an asylum officer has found that the respondent has demonstrated a credible fear of persecution or torture.
☐ Section 235(b)(1) order was vacated pursuant to: ☐ 8CFR 208.30(f)(2) ☐ 8CFR 235.3(b)(5)(iv)

YOU ARE ORDERED to appear before an immigration judge of the United States Department of Justice at:

_____
(Complete Address of Immigration Court, including Room Number, if any)

on _____ at _____ to show why you should not be removed from the United States based on the
(Date) *(Time)*

charge(s) set forth above.

_____
(Signature and Title of Issuing Officer)

Date: _____ _____
(City and State)

See reverse for important information

Form I-862 (Rev. 08/01/07)

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND
Department of Children, Youth & Families

Office of the Director
101 Friendship Street
Providence, RI 02903
Ashley Deckert, Director

Federal Search and Seizure Warrant (Form AO 93)

AO 93 (Rev. 11/13) Search and Seizure Warrant

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT

for the

In the Matter of the Search of
(Briefly describe the property to be searched or identify the person by name and address)

Case No.

SEARCH AND SEIZURE WARRANT

To: Any authorized law enforcement officer

An application by a federal law enforcement officer or an attorney for the government requests the search of the following person or property located in the _____ District of _____
(identify the person or describe the property to be searched and give its location):

I find that the affidavit(s), or any recorded testimony, establishes probable cause to search and seize the person or property described above, and that such search will reveal *(identify the person or describe the property to be seized):*

YOU ARE COMMANDED to execute this warrant on or before _____ *(not to exceed 14 days)*
' in the daytime 6:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. ' at any time in the day or night because good cause has been established.

Unless delayed notice is authorized below, you must give a copy of the warrant and a receipt for the property taken to the person from whom, or from whose premises, the property was taken, or leave the copy and receipt at the place where the property was taken.

The officer executing this warrant, or an officer present during the execution of the warrant, must prepare an inventory as required by law and promptly return this warrant and inventory to _____.
(United States Magistrate Judge)

' Pursuant to 18 U.S.C. § 3103a(b), I find that immediate notification may have an adverse result listed in 18 U.S.C. § 2705 (except for delay of trial), and authorize the officer executing this warrant to delay notice to the person who, or whose property, will be searched or seized *(check the appropriate box)*
* for ____ days *(not to exceed 30)* ' until, the facts justifying, the later specific date of _____.

Date and time issued: _____ _____
Judge's signature

City and state: _____ _____
Printed name and title

SAMPLE

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND
Department of Children, Youth & Families

Office of the Director
101 Friendship Street
Providence, RI 02903
Ashley Deckert, Director

Federal District Court Arrest Warrant (Form AO 422)

AO 442 (Rev. 11/11) Arrest Warrant

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT

for the

United States of America
v.
) Case No.
)
)
)
)
)

Defendant

ARREST WARRANT

To: Any authorized law enforcement officer

YOU ARE COMMANDED to arrest and bring before a United States magistrate judge without unnecessary delay
(name of person to be arrested) _____,
who is accused of an offense or violation based on the following document filed with the court:

* Indictment * Superseding Indictment * Information * Superseding Information * Complaint
* Probation Violation Petition * Supervised Release Violation Petition * Violation Notice * Order of the Court

This offense is briefly described as follows:

SAMPLE

Date: _____ _____
Issuing officer's signature

City and state: _____ _____
Printed name and title

Return

This warrant was received on *(date)* _____, and the person was arrested on *(date)* _____
at *(city and state)* _____.

Date: _____ _____
Arresting officer's signature

_____
Printed name and title