

# ***Checklist for NNIRR Conference Participants***

## ***Plans To Make Before the Trip***

### **Inform Yourself About Risks You or Others May Face En Route**

- Read and make sure you understand the memo you should have received entitled "Safety Considerations for Non-citizens Planning to Attend NNIRR's Immigrant and Refugee Rights Conference". Take the time to discuss these materials with fellow participants and friends or family.
- If you have any concerns about your immigration status or any potential consequences of traveling, talk to an immigration attorney or competent and trustworthy immigration advisor BEFORE leaving home. Give this attorney information about your immigration status and copies of immigration documents, and ask him/her if s/he is willing to serve as an emergency contact in case of problems along the route. You may have to pay at least a consulting fee. If you need help finding an immigration attorney, please ask your organization for guidance.

### **Prepare Emergency Contacts**

- If you have talked with an attorney, give his/her name and contact information to the organizers you are closest with.
- Regardless of whether or not you have talked to an attorney, ask someone at home to be on call in case of emergency. This emergency contact person should have the phone number of an attorney or legal advisor where they can be reached 24 hours a day in case of an emergency.
- Give written authorization to your emergency contact person so they can pick up your paycheck and take care of any other details in case of an emergency or unexpected delay. This written authorization can be as simple as "I, (your name), authorize (name of person you are authorizing) to pick up my paycheck and anything else that may be needed in my absence. If any further information is needed, I can be reached at (your lead organizer's phone number)", then sign and date it, and leave it with your authorized person.
- Write down the name and cellular phone number of your lead organizer in case you are separated from him/her during an emergency.
- Plan and Communicate Phone Availability In Case of Emergency or Need
  - Take a cellular phone with sufficient battery power or an auto power adapter. If you do not have a cellular phone, make sure to buddy up with someone who does.
  - Make a back-up plan in case of emergency when your cellular phone is out of service range: either bring a calling card, enough change for a long distance pay phone call, or the number of someone you can call collect.

### **Determine Which ID Documents To Carry**

- Do not bring any false documents or anyone else's documents with you for any part of your trip
- If you are a non-citizen and are 18 years or older, you are required by federal law to carry your alien registration receipt card with you at all times (e.g., green card, I-94, work authorization, unexpired passport with a valid visa, etc.) that establishes your legal immigration status. Please make sure you make photocopies of all your important ID and other documents in case of loss and put in a safe place.
- US citizens do not have the same requirement to carry their identity documents. IT IS NOT A BAD IDEA TO HAVE ADEQUATE IDENTIFICATION.
- Conference participants, including US citizens, who do not have valid immigration documents have various options:
  - You can bring NO identification documents. In this case, if you are detained or arrested for immigration or other law enforcement reasons, you may be held by the authorities until they can positively identify you.

- You can bring a valid, unexpired driver's license or other U.S. federal, state, or local government issued identity document.
- If you do not have a valid driver's license or other US government identity document, you can bring a consular ID (matrícula), passport, or other foreign government issued identity document. Such documents are accepted by some state and local governments but many others do not.

**NOTE:** If you are arrested or have some other kind of emergency, documents like these can help authorities to more quickly identify you, let others know about your situation, and avoid unnecessary detention or delay. On the other hand, if you are arrested for immigration reasons, use of a consular ID or other foreign government identity document could be used against you to prove that you are a foreign national, thereby making it easier for the government to make its case that you should be deported.

## **Traveling by Car, Van or Private Bus**

If traveling to the NNIRR conference by car, van or private bus, review this checklist before you travel:

- Check the car you will be using for visible safety violations such as broken headlights, burnt out lights, smashed mirrors, expired registration, etc (if they cannot be fixed on time, do not drive that car).
- Do not travel significantly above the speed limit or otherwise call attention to your vehicle. In some areas, tinted glass that prevents police from seeing clearly into a vehicle is also illegal.
- Talk to an attorney at home who you know and trust so that he or she can be on call in case of unexpected problems, and make sure to provide that attorney's contact information to your family or close friend in case you should need any legal assistance. If you have contacted such an attorney, give the contact information to your lead organizer.

Immigrants traveling by land should be aware that some local police departments aggressively enforce traffic laws against those they suspect of being undocumented immigrants as a pretense for investigating immigration status.

## **Make Return Trip Plans**

- Make safe return trip plans before you leave.
- Give a detailed itinerary and return trip plans to your emergency contact and the lead organizer from your delegation.
- If you are returning by yourself or with a small group of people by land (e.g., car, bus, train), make sure you have a way to call someone for legal assistance in case of an emergency during your return trip.

*This document is intended to provide you with general and accurate information about some of the risks and consequences of certain options, as well as practical suggestions for participants of the National Conference for Immigrant and Refugee Rights. This document is not intended to provide legal advice, and should not be taken as legal advice. The organizers and sponsors of this event are not responsible for any use to which this document is put. Do not rely solely on the information contained in this document without consulting an attorney or the appropriate agency about your legal rights in your particular situation.*