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U.S. Immigration  
and Customs  
Enforcement

# Enforcement and Removal Operations ICE Air Operations Handbook

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## Foreword

This Handbook establishes and outlines the standard operating procedures of the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), Enforcement and Removal Operations (ERO), Assistant Director for Removal, ICE Air Operations (IAO) for the pre-boarding, embarking and disembarking of detainees/deportees on all charter and commercial aircraft, and the protocol for all required documentation. These procedures include the proper T-8 IAO Charter Application seat request and allocation process, formatting and submission of the Record of Person and Property Transferred (I-216) and associated required documentation, such as, but not limited to: medical transfer summary, Warrant of Removal (I-205), Warning to Alien Ordered Removed or Deported (I-294), Notice to Alien Ordered Removed/Departure Verification (I-296), Record of Deportable Alien (I-213), travel document, and photo for transfers and/or removal. Also provided are the proper procedures to request and schedule a commercial removal mission which include: reviewing country removal guidelines prior to scheduling air travel and adhering to them; submission of the correct type of removal in the OMEGA Portal; providing required information (i.e., Escort Threat Assessment (ETA), Travel Document) and any other documents required by the removal or transiting countries.

This Handbook will assist in ensuring uniformity of all 25 ERO Field Offices and any other authorized parties utilizing ICE Air's resources in the preparation of property and detainees/deportees when being transported via ICE Air charter aircraft and/or during commercial travel. This Handbook establishes guidance for both internal transfer (IT) domestic missions and/or repatriation flights.

ICE Air's Charter Operations operates charter aircraft to countries throughout the world and domestically throughout the United States. ICE Air must ensure compliance with all Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) laws, rules, regulations, policies, and guidelines for the safe operation of all charter aircraft. Additionally, IAO must ensure fiscal responsibility and compliance with the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) laws, rules, regulations, policies, and guidelines in the expenditure(s) of appropriations allocated for ICE Air Operations services.

Also, within ICE Air, Commercial Air Operations coordinates and supports escorted and unescorted commercial removals via commercial air.

I am confident this Handbook will assist ERO personnel in the preparation for ICE Air charter and commercial missions and will guide uniform application of the established operating procedures/protocols.

**EVAN C KATZ** Digitally signed by EVAN C KATZ  
Date: 2024.02.20 07:49:54 -05'00'

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Assistant Director, Removal  
U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement  
Enforcement and Removal Operations

## INTRODUCTION

### **Background**

ERO's mission is to identify, arrest, and remove detainees who present a danger to national security or are a risk to public safety, as well as those who enter the United States illegally or otherwise undermine the integrity of our immigration laws and our border control efforts. ERO upholds America's immigration laws at, within and beyond our borders through efficient enforcement and removal operations.

The primary goal of ICE Air, which falls within ERO's Removal Division, is to provide domestic and international air transportation support to the 25 ERO field offices located throughout the United States. IAO is comprised of Air Charter Operations (ACO) and Commercial Air Operations (CAO). ACO's objective is to transport detainees who have been ordered removed from the United States to their countries of origin and/or to transfer detainees domestically throughout the United States to various ICE-managed detention facilities via charter aircraft. CAO coordinates and supports escorted and unescorted removals via commercial air.

### **AIR CHARTER OPERATIONS**

ICE-leased aircraft are managed by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) ICE ERO IAO in Mesa, Arizona. The Arizona Removal Operations Coordination Center (AROCC) is located at the Phoenix-Mesa Gateway Airport and accommodates the temporary staging of up to 157 detainees. IAO/ACO manages various aircraft-related activities that include, but are not limited to, providing for the safe and secure transport of persons and property. ICE detainees transferred or removed on IAO charter aircraft remain in ERO custody and adhere to ICE transfer and transportation policies. IAO is responsible for transporting ERO detainees, while the sending ERO field offices retain responsibility for case management, processing for removal and/or transfer, transportation to the embarkation point, and detainee property. Air transportation movements via IAO are routinely coordinated with HQ Field Operations to ensure the efficient management of ERO's detention resources. IAO also has the flexibility to address field office requests for large-scale, domestic transfer air movements; and, when deemed necessary, coordinates such transfers with HQ Field Operations. IAO also provides support for a multitude of other initiatives that arise. There are five IAO/ACO operational locations located throughout the United States: San Antonio, Texas; Harlingen, Texas; Alexandria, Louisiana; Miami, Florida and Mesa, AZ.

All operational locations conduct missions to Central American countries such as Guatemala, El Salvador, and Honduras. Southern cities, such as San Diego, California, El Paso, Texas, and Harlingen, Texas, are used for removal operations to Mexico. In addition, all operational locations conduct flights domestically to internally transfer recently apprehended detainees or to transfer detainees to ICE-managed detention centers throughout the United States.

IAO/ACO using aircraft assigned to its various operational locations also conducts missions to Cuba, Haiti, Jamaica, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, Nicaragua, and the Dominican Republic on a periodic basis with the number of flights dependent upon negotiations with each respective country's government.

In addition to the daily charter flights, IAO/ACO conducts Special High Risk Charter flights (SHRC) to remove Failure to Comply (FTC) and significant High-Profile Removals (HPRs) from the United States. These missions are coordinated via Removal and International Operations (RIO), and authorized by the Assistant Director for Removal, to return detainees to countries throughout the world. In the past, IAO has conducted SHRCs to Nigeria, Cambodia, Pakistan, the Philippines, Ghana, Liberia, Jordan, Palestine, Egypt, Albania, Palestine, Senegal, Togo, Nepal, Indonesia, Central Asia, the Pacific Rim, Africa, and other European/Middle Eastern countries.

## **POSITION ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES RELATED TO ICE AIR MISSIONS**

### **Detention and Deportation Officer**

The IAO ACO Detention and Deportation Officer (DDO) is responsible for managing and coordinating all ICE ERO IAO charter aircraft and long-range charter missions both outside and within the borders of the United States. IAO missions are guided by various internal and external policies and procedures, such as removal guidelines, medical requirements for detainee travel, and contractual regulations. In addition, IAO is accountable for the coordination and resolution of any operational or logistical issues related to air charter movements. At times, this requires close coordination with ICE HQ, field management personnel, and/or contract representatives.

### **Supervisory Detention and Deportation Officer**

The Supervisory Detention and Deportation Officer (SDDO) is responsible for the coordination and resolution of issues related to ICE ERO daily operations and air transportation movements using ICE charter aircraft. The SDDO monitors and evaluates the delivery of IAO services to field offices, as well as the methods and techniques utilized to provide those services. The SDDO serves as part of a Flight Following Team (FFT), monitoring flight activities and addressing issues and/or concerns with/to IAO management staff. In addition, the SDDO serves as a liaison officer between ICE ERO charter companies and IAO. The SDDO at the originating operational location should be contacted immediately for any operational issues concerning any of the flights. The ICE Air Headquarters in Mesa, AZ 24-hour-duty number is (480) 638-8655 and is also listed under Contact Information.

### **ICE Air Removal Coordinator/Seat Reservationist – Approver**

The ICE Air Removal Coordinators (IARC)/Seat Reservationist – Approver are ICE ERO scheduling coordinators and Country Clearance Request Administrators for IAO-managed charter aircraft. IAO staff coordinate all domestic movements, as well as removals to Mexico, international flights, and the staging and transfer of detainees. The IARC supports all 25 field offices, providing them with scheduling dates for routine Central/South American, Caribbean, and any other missions. In addition, they serve as the Seat Reservationist and Seat Reservationist Approver in the T-8 Charter Application responsible for reviewing and allocating seat requests, preparing flight manifests, scheduling flight(s), lodging, and requesting and obtaining country clearance(s).

### **Flight Officer in Charge/Deportation Officer**

The Flight Officer in Charge (FOIC) is responsible for overseeing the rear cabin crew and detainees;

communicating with the IAO FFT about the progress of the mission at each leg of the flight; communicating with IAO regarding any changes to the manifest and itinerary; ensuring that all required documents are complete and accurate before dissemination to appropriate parties; coordinating aircraft security matters; and advising the flight crew when exchange operations are complete for continuation of the flight mission. The FOIC is responsible for reviewing all required documentation to ensure compliance with established ICE ERO current Country Removal Guidelines. The FOIC identifies and verifies required travel documentation and property for detainees on all continental United States (CONUS) and Outside the Continental United States (OCONUS) flights. The FOIC assigned to each mission is also responsible for contacting IAO prior to departure and upon landing at each location, reporting any discrepancies on the manifest/I-216, advising of delayed departures, and any other operational/logistical concerns or issues pertaining to the flight.

FOICs conducting ICE Air flight operations will wear the official ICE Officer polo shirt and neat, presentable pants. Exceptions to the uniform for personnel meeting with foreign officials to conduct negotiations or liaison activities, or when conducting SHRCs, will be made by the IAO Deputy Assistant Director and/or their designee.

### **Ground Officer in Charge**

The ERO Field Office at each detainee exchange location will assign a Ground Officer in Charge (GOIC) to coordinate with the FOIC. The GOIC is responsible for identifying and assigning ground personnel, as well as for establishing communication with airport security and the FOIC. The GOIC is also responsible for briefing the FOIC on the detainees being presented (i.e., total pax number, medical/mental cases, special interest cases, and combative individuals), and ensuring that all requisite and proper travel documentation has been submitted, to include but not limited to: Record of Person or Property Transferred (I-216), a medical transfer summary, Warrant of Removal (I-205), Warning to Alien Ordered Removed or Deported (I-294), Notice to Alien Ordered Removed/Departure Verification (I-296), Record of Deportable Alien (I-213), Property Tag (I-77), travel document, and photo for transfers and/or removals, etc. The GOIC will remain available in case any issues arise during the embarking/disembarking of the aircraft.

### **Deputy Attaché for Removal and Assistant Attaché for Removal**

The ERO Deputy Attachés for Removal (DAR) and Assistant Attachés for Removal (AAR) work diligently with foreign partners to abide by international laws and negotiate acceptance of their nationals upon their return. The DARs/AARs coordinate to ensure overseas safety in ground management and provide operational support, as well as assist in the return of detainees on routine and SHRC missions. These officers are deployed in Europe, Central and South America, the Caribbean, Asia, and Africa.

### **Contracting Officer Representative**

Contracting Officer Representatives (COR) are qualified individuals appointed by the Contracting Officer (CO) to assist in the technical monitoring or administration of a contract. The IAO CORs are assigned oversight roles for specific air charter contracts at specific locations to ensure compliance of all contractual requirements.

Although CORs can be employed on all types of contracts, they are extremely useful in the more complex



services, supply, and/or construction contracts. CORs perform, or cause to be performed, all necessary inspections; including documenting the inspection and submitting to the CO, as required, a report concerning performance of services rendered under the contract.

### **Pilot in Command**

The Pilot in Command (PIC) is responsible for all matters related to flight safety and service of the aircraft. The PIC is also responsible for notifying the FOIC of any unscheduled stops due to inclement weather conditions; mechanical difficulties or unforeseen matters; and for commanding orders during any evacuation. In the event the PIC or Second in Command (SIC) are not available or are unable to issue any commands during an emergency, the FOIC will be responsible for issuing orders, evacuating detainees, and ensuring the safety and security of the crew members.

### **Rear Cabin Security Crew**

Rear Cabin Crew are members of an air crew employed by the contractor primarily to ensure the safety and security of the detainees aboard an IAO aircraft. They provide security throughout the mission and often assist in duties such as providing meal and beverage service as a secondary responsibility.

### **Flight Nurse/Medical Aircrew Member (MAM)**

The Flight Nurse/MAM serves as the primary individual to determine suitability of a detainee's health status to board an ICE Air aircraft, monitor health status during the flight and report any medical issue(s) and/or discrepancies to the assigned FOIC.

## **SEAT RESERVATIONS, DOCUMENTATION REQUIREMENTS AND MANIFEST PROCEDURES**

The T-8 ICE Air Operations Charter application is a streamlined and centralized location for creating and approving transfer and removal flight missions and allocating passengers onto those missions. The application was created to manage requests and approvals efficiently and effectively. Further information regarding the T-8 IAO Charter Application including Charter Application Quick Reference guides and the Manual that provide step-by-step instructions can be found at [T-8 IAO – Charter Application Quick Reference Guides](#) on the [ERO System Information Center](#). Any questions regarding the T-8 IAO Charter Application should be directed to the [ICE Help Desk](#).

### **Scheduling**

The Seat Requester and Seat Request Approver are responsible for generating and approving seat requests, respectively. The seat requests with flight itineraries will then move to the Seat Reservationists and Seat Reservationist Approvers for their review and approval.

### **OCONUS**

The Seat Requester and Seat Request Approver must generate and approve the seat requests in the T-8 ICE Air Operations Charter application as soon as practicable but prior to the Seat Request Deadline. Country

specific Seat Request Deadlines can be found in T-8 Homepage of the Seat Requester and Seat Requester Approver under the Flight Rules widget. The information can also be accessed via the Lists tab, International Missions, [Countries](#) section of the T-8 ICE Air Operations Charter application. The IAO Seat Reservationist and Seat Reservationist Approver will review and allocate the seat request itineraries for final flight manifesting. Seat requests missing required documentation and or itineraries requested incorrectly will be returned to the Seat Requester for correction.

## CONUS

The Seat Requester and Seat Request Approver must generate and approve the seat requests in the T-8 ICE Air Operations Charter application 24 hours in advance of the intended CONUS travel date. The IAO Seat Reservationist and Seat Reservationist Approver will review and allocate the seat request for final flight manifesting. Seat requests missing required documentation and/or itineraries requested incorrectly will be returned to the Seat Requester for correction.

Please note that *revisions* for OCONUS missions may be accepted no less than 72 hours prior to the mission date. Revisions for domestic missions, with the concurrence of the sending and receiving office, may be accepted prior to initial departure date/time. However, last minute additions from the sending office are subject to approval from the receiving office, the FFT and the FOIC, and should be avoided to the greatest extent possible to prevent ground delays and possible rejection of the detainee(s) on the flight line at the receiving location(s).

The ICE Air Mailboxes' addresses are:

[IAO-BRAZIL](#)

[IAO-COLOMBIA](#)

[IAO-CUBA](#)

[IAO-DOMESTIC MISSIONS](#)

[IAO-DOMINICANREPUBLIC](#)

[IAO-ECUADOR](#)

[IAO-ELSALVADOR](#)

[IAO-GUATEMALA](#)

[IAO-HAITI](#)

[IAO-HONDURAS](#)

[IAO-IRIMEXICO](#)

[IAO-JAMAICA](#)

[IAO-NICARAGUA](#)

[IAO-PERU](#)

[IAO-SHRC](#)

## Documentation Requirements for all ICE Movements

After the seats have been requested, approved, allocated and manifested for a flight as outlined at [T-8 IAO – Charter Application Quick Reference Guides](#) on the [ERO System Information Center](#), the sending office must continue to coordinate with the receiving and or staging location(s).

Ten copies of Form I-216 must be presented prior to commencing the boarding process on all ICE Air flights. Detainees manifested as primary and or alternates in the T-8 ICE Air Operations Charter application must be on a separate I-216. Form I-216 must clearly indicate pick up and drop off locations and should not have multiple detainees going to different destinations on the same form.

All detainee transfers shall be executed in accordance with Section 7.4 of the Performance Based National

Detention Standards (PBNDS), “[Detainee Transfers](#)”. To expedite the transfer process, all medical, travel and removal documents must be attached to an I-216 in the same order as the names of the detainees appear on the I-216(s). In all movements, all detainees must be entered into (b) (7)(E) prior to boarding an ICE Air flight.

For removal flights departing a staging location to international destinations, the I-205 or I-296 will be completed by the sending ICE ERO officers verifying departure of the aircraft from a staging location for removal missions. Upon completion of the executed/verified departure documents and to secure their return, field offices are to provide an envelope with the Docket Control Office’s current address.

Regarding the movement of Unaccompanied Children (UC), prior approval must be obtained from the receiving location(s) by the sending location(s), as per guidance outlined in the [\(LES\) Unaccompanied Alien Children Joint Concept of Operations](#), and the [Juvenile and Family Residential Management Unit, Field Office Juvenile Coordinator Handbook](#) with approval annotated on the I-216. The approval must also be uploaded into the T-8 ICE Air Operations Charter application prior to making the seat request. A completed Form I-770, Notice of Rights and Request for Disposition, shall accompany all juveniles; this notification is required to be provided to all persons who are taken into custody and who either appear, are known, or claim to be less than eighteen years of age.

For UC removal flights departing a staging location for an international destination, a copy of the I-216 signed by the receiving government official must be placed into the UAC’s A-file for verification of safe return, per the [Juvenile and Family Residential Management Unit, Field Office Juvenile Coordinator Handbook](#) issued on November 2021.

### ***Medical Documentation Requirements***

For detainees classified as “new apprehensions,” for which medical information is unavailable, a blank medical transfer summary form with the detainee’s name, date of birth, and alien number will be required. In the event of a flight diversion to an alternate location or in an onboard medical emergency, the FN/MAM may then use this form during symptom screening.

The IAO FN/MAM will conduct a visual screening consistent with current ICE policy and procedures on those detainees lacking medical summary information (new apprehensions) who are delivered to the aircraft. Any detainee who fails to pass screening by a **flight medical provider** and/or is suspected of having a health-risk condition potentially contagious to other detainees, staff and/or third parties, will be denied boarding and referred to an ICE approved facility for screening. For those detainees who have completed a tuberculosis (TB) test, a Medical Transfer Summary of Alien in Transfer or its equivalent, will be required from the facility. This medical document must be signed by a **qualified health care provider**.

Prior to acceptance for flight, the facility medical staff must clear the transfer of detainees with special medical needs or mental health conditions, and prior approval must be obtained from the sending and receiving field office location(s). The sending facility’s medical staff shall prepare a Medical/Mental Health Transfer Summary and provide medical instructions/medication in accordance with PBNDS, [Detainee Transfers](#). The sending location shall upload the receiving facility or AAR approval, Medical Transfer Summary and IAO Medical Questionnaire into the T-8 ICE Air Operations Charter application when submitting a seat request. The Safe Release Plan must accompany the detainee patient being removed

from the country.

### ***Property Documentation Requirements***

In all movements, detainees possessing property are limited to one durable, tear-resistant container (Box, Backpack, Suitcase or ERO-approved bag only), weighing **no more than 40 pounds**, per PBNDS, [Funds and Personal Property](#). There must be a completed I-77 for the item, and the I-77 number must be indicated on the I-216.

### **Waiver of Documentation Requirements**

Waiver of documentary or informational requirements may only be obtained from the IAO Deputy Assistant Director and/or designee. The requesting office must articulate the reason(s) for which such a waiver may be warranted. Examples warranting a waiver may include urgent operational requirements to transport large numbers of newly apprehended detainees, natural disasters requiring emergent movements, or the inoperability of computer processing systems such as (b) (7)(E). Prior to submitting a request to IAO, the requesting field office must first obtain concurrence from the receiving field office, and then annotate the name/contact information of the person who granted approval/authorization for the specific movement.

The concurrences from all parties involved must be uploaded into the T-8 ICE Air Operations Charter application prior to making the seat request. Information must include the name of the officer(s) at the receiving office who approved the request.

### **Additional Documentation Requirements According to Type of Movement**

**Documentation Requirements for all Flights:** All detainees must have the original travel document with photo, as required. Travel documents may not be required for special removal cases pre-arranged by HQ ERO (i.e., Electric Nationality Verification (ENV) Program).

**Documentation Requirements for SHRC Flights:** In addition to the documents required above, SHRC flights also require completed I-205s/I-296s for each detainee, with a clear and current photo and a clear right index fingerprint. To expedite the return of the executed document for SHRC removals, it is required that the sending office(s') address be stamped/written on the I-205/I-296. Upon completion of the executed/verified departure documents and to secure their return, field offices are to provide a prepaid envelope with the Docket Control Office's current address.

These documents must be included in the travel packet that is presented to IAO at the flight line or provided to the removal staging location.

All detainees must be transported with cash in United States currency (unless there is foreign currency in the detainee's property). It is the responsibility of the sending offices to ensure that checks and/or debit cards issued by an institution are cashed prior to the transfer/removal. Detainees must retain possession of money, valuables, and jewelry provided none of those items pose a safety or security risk. Mexican VRs must also have an I-94, "Arrival/Departure Record."

## Transferring Detainees from one ICE Office to Another

This section ensures that the transfer of detainees from one facility to another will be accomplished professionally and responsibly with respect to notifications, detainee records and the protection of detainee funds and property. This includes new Notice to Appear (NTA) cases, ER cases pending court, Final Order cases pending travel documents, Change of Venue cases, and Room and Board (R&B) cases.

The sending field office will comply with the ICE [Use of Restraints](#) Policy, ERO 11155.1, effective November 19, 2012, and PBNDS regarding [Detainee Transfers](#).

The detainee's A-file must accompany the detainee. For R&B cases, only a work folder with the applicable case's specific documentation is required. Valuable items that pose a security risk are to be placed into a separate and sealed transparent plastic bag) with a completed G-589, Property Receipt, for each detainee. Per the PBNDS, [Funds and Personal Property](#), all detainees possessing property are limited to one durable, tear-resistant container (Box, Backpack, Suitcase or ERO-approved bag only), weighing no more than 40 pounds. There must be a completed I-77, and the I-77 number must be indicated on the I-216.

## BOARDING OPERATIONS

### Arrival at Aircraft

Missions originating from IAO operational locations require sending field offices to arrive at the airport **two hours prior to departure time**, to ensure sufficient time for boarding. Sending and/or receiving field offices utilizing IAO scheduled mission stops throughout the day (domestic transfer flights) must report to the airport one hour prior to the arrival of the IAO charter aircraft, to ensure preparedness for immediate embarking/disembarking upon landing, so as not to disrupt or delay scheduled departure times.

*Note: Ground Security will only be required upon request from IAO or the sending and receiving Area of Responsibility for Special Interest/High Profile Removal cases. All ICE Officers must maintain security awareness during detainee exchange operations, both within and outside the perimeter.*

### Detainee Exchange Vehicles

When the aircraft comes to a complete stop and the engines have shut down, the GOIC and the FOIC will coordinate the positioning of all detainee exchange vehicles. Consideration is to be given to visibility and perimeter control. At a minimum, a 50-foot distance must be maintained from the loading stairs of the aircraft and the exchange vehicles.

For safety reasons, vehicles must be parked bumper to bumper or side by side with wheels facing away from the aircraft. The preferred method of parking is bumper to bumper to ensure a secure perimeter around the aircraft. To avoid potentially dangerous situations, vehicles should be turned off whenever possible.

### Security Procedures

(b) (7)(E)

(b) (7) (E)

### **Emergency Exit Row Seating**

The FOIC has the authority to direct the seating of the contract security officers on IAO contract aircraft and should distribute the officers evenly throughout the cabin to maintain safety and security, as well as to aid in the event of an emergency evacuation. In the event there is a full passenger load, and the FOIC determines – based on the cabin configuration – that the emergency exit row seating must be occupied by detainees, the following will be required prior to seating detainees at the emergency exit row.

It must be determined that the detainee is either a non-criminal or a low-level criminal.

The detainee must be able to speak and understand English.

The detainee must agree to assist in the event of an emergency evacuation.

The detainee must be **unrestrained**.

The detainee must be 18 years of age or older.

The detainee must have sufficient mobility, strength, or dexterity in both arms and hands, as well as both legs, to follow instructions on the passenger information cards provided by the carrier and located at emergency exit rows.

The detainee must have sufficient visual capability to follow instructions on the passenger information cards without the assistance of visual aids beyond contact lenses or eyeglasses.

The detainee must have sufficient auditory capacity to hear and understand instructions shouted by a crewmember without assistance beyond a hearing aid.

The seat(s) immediately next to the emergency exit doors may **not** be occupied by a detainee at any time and must be occupied by a contract security officer if there are unrestrained detainees seated in any seats of the emergency exit row.

When there are unrestrained detainees seated in the exit row, these officers must remain in place (on the ground or in the air) as long as there are unrestrained detainees at, or near, the emergency exit door.

### **Carry-on Items**

Unless otherwise specified in this document, items such as books, valuables, religious items, legal materials, and other miscellaneous items will generally be placed with the detainees' stowed property on the aircraft. Detainees with coats, jackets or sweaters will wear them or store them in their property; no carry-on personal items are allowed, and items will be returned to the delivering agency, office, or ICE facility for disposition. The FN/MAM will review and inspect all Keep on Person (KOP) medications (e.g., inhalers) and medical supplies (e.g., catheter) needed for self-care, prior to allowing detainee to carry on the flight. During inclement weather, each sending field office will be responsible for providing an adequate supply of coats and/or blankets for use during detainee exchange. Cash will be maintained in the detainees' possession unless it poses a safety or security risk to the mission.

**Clothing:** Detainees are limited to one set of adequate and clean clothing on their body. No jail overalls or institutional clothing will be permitted.

**Footwear:** All detainees boarding the aircraft are required to wear proper footwear. For safety reasons, shoelaces, high-heeled shoes/boots, steel-toed shoes/boots, and showers shoes/flip-flops are not acceptable on the aircraft.

**Jewelry:** For internal CONUS transfer flights, detainees will be permitted to wear a plain wedding band. All other jewelry, including religious medallions, must be packaged with the detainee's property. All ICE detainees on IAO flights, who are being removed from the country the same day, are permitted to keep all monies and jewelry on their person provided the jewelry is not a security risk. Any jewelry considered to be a security or safety risk will be stored in the detainees' property.

**Removal of Pierced Items from Detainees:** Neither ICE, security personnel, or the FN/MAM will remove any foreign body jewelry, studs, metal pieces, etc., implanted in the skin or body of a detainee. All foreign materials implanted in the skin or body of a detainee scheduled for travel via ICE Air aircraft must be removed at a medical facility and/or by trained medical personnel prior to travel. The removal of such items can potentially cause infection and/or injury to the detainee and must never be attempted outside an appropriate medical setting. The sending office is responsible for ensuring that any detainee transported via ICE Air aircraft has had any unnecessary foreign objects implanted in his/her skin or body removed. The FOIC will make the final decision for rejection/acceptance of detainees with foreign objects in/on their body and will determine if the object may be used as a potential weapon, escape device, or a potential security risk.

**Eyeglasses:** Two pairs of prescription eyeglasses and one soft eyeglass case (without metal inserts) or hard paper cases will be permitted, if carried on the detainee's person.

**Contact Lenses:** All contact lens cases in the possession of the detainees will be turned over to the FN/MAM or the FOIC and placed in personal property.

**Hair:** No detainee will be permitted to board with his/her hair bound with any object (rubber bands, ponytail holders, string, bobby pins, beads, etc.). No hair decorations are permitted. Wigs will be permitted for valid medical reasons (hair loss due to chemotherapy, etc.).

**Accessories:** Belts, suspenders, bootstraps, chains, neckties, scarves, hats, caps, turbans, and/or gloves are not permitted on ICE Air flights.

## Property

If applicable, property not permitted on the body of a detainee for boarding purposes may be sealed with their other property. All detainee property must be placed in suitable, durable containers (no plastic trash bags) tagged with an I-77. Property information must also be listed on the I-216. All detainees possessing property are limited to one durable, tear-resistant container (Box, Backpack, Suitcase or ERO-approved bag only), weighing no more than 40 pounds. All excess detainee property must be shipped by the sending ICE ERO office. When presenting detainees at the flightline all property bags should be laid out on the tarmac in order of the I-216.

### **Approved Property Bags:**



**Confiscated and Refused Property:** Property refused by the FOIC will be returned to the delivering agency at the airlift detainee exchange location for disposition/ forwarding. Any item that the FOIC determines could be used as a possible weapon will be taken from the detainee and returned to the delivering ICE official for disposition.

**Discrepancies:** Any discrepancies regarding the contents of the transported, sealed detainee property container/box will be resolved between the sending and receiving ICE offices.

**Detainee Money:** Although cash is the accepted vehicle for money transfer to foreign soil, checks may also be allowed in very limited, special circumstances. The sending office must coordinate such cases in advance with IAO Headquarters in Mesa, and the detainee's detainee number must be recorded on any check. All



property should be laid out on the tarmac in order of the I-216.

### **Restraint Requirements**

In accordance with the [Use of Restraints](#) policy, policy number 11155.1, Section 5.10, effective November 19, 2012, detainees transported by ICE Air aircraft will be fully restrained by the use of [Authorized Restraint Devices](#); i.e., handcuffs, waist chains, and leg irons during CONUS and OCONUS flights. Detainees will not be delivered to the airlift in any type of restraint that necessitates removal prior to the detainee boarding the aircraft. Flight security personnel will restrain any individual aboard an ICE Air flight who poses a threat to the safety of the mission. ICE-approved handcuffs and leg irons (Hiatt, S&W, Peerless, etc.) will be applied in accordance with ICE policy and procedures. **Series 400 Peerless are not to be used.** All cuffs should have the correct right and left side in their construction. Many inexpensive cuffs have two right sides cuffs attached with a chain, but there should be a mirror image relationship. All restraints will be applied with double bars, locking pins up, and keyholes forward. The FOIC will have final decision as to the use of restraints. (The Use of Restraints on minors is described in the Juvenile Section.)

**Exchanging Restraints:** Delivering field offices will exchange restraints on a one-for-one basis during the detainee exchange process. Crew members are not authorized to exchange working restraints for damaged or defective restraints.

**Removal of Restraints:** Restraints will not be removed for any reason – unless approved by the FOIC or the Assistant FOIC.

**Special Restraints:** The FOIC has the authority to authorize the type of restraint used on detainees in special circumstances, i.e., spit masks, mittens, leg braces, cargo straps, the WRAP, etc.

Per PBNDS 2011 (rev. 2016), a pregnant woman or woman in post-delivery recuperation shall not be restrained absent truly extraordinary circumstances that render restraints absolutely necessary as documented by a supervisor and directed by the on-site medical authority. This general prohibition on restraints applies to all pregnant women in the custody of ICE, whether during transport, in a detention facility, or at an outside medical facility. Restraints are never permitted on women who are in active labor or delivery.

**Foreign Agreements:** All existing Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) and other agreements with foreign governments regarding repatriation procedures and operations will continue to be observed. *While restraints are required during air transport, all restraints will be removed prior to the opening of the aircraft door at the OCONUS destination location(s).*

### **Detainee Meals and Incidentals**

The designated ICE office meeting the aircraft is responsible for providing detainee meals, as indicated on the official flight manifest, in addition to other necessary items such as: diapers, formula for infants/toddlers, and sanitary supplies for females.

One meal per detainee must be provided by the sending ICE office. This meal will include one sandwich and one granola bar (or an acceptable substitute). Due to allergy precautions, no peanut butter or peanut-based products are allowed. Extra water will be provided by IAO, if needed. Fruit, chips, and condiments

(mustard, ketchup, mayonnaise, etc.) are not allowed. Note: Additional meals will be provided for detainees on a medical-needs basis and as recorded on the Medical Transfer Form, as well as on any flight(s) scheduled for longer than 10 hours.

## **FUGITIVES AND /OR HIGH-PROFILE REMOVALS**

If a detainee is a special interest case or considered to be a High-Profile Removal (HPR), the originating office shall receive advance approvals from the receiving facility and/or AAR for removal. Additionally, the originating office shall identify the subject as a special interest case or HPR in the T-8 ICE Air Operations Charter application when submitting a seat request, upload the receiving office or AAR approval into the system and make an appropriate annotation in the comments column of the I-216. Notifications of all HPR movements aboard IAO aircraft will be completed by Field Operations as soon as the approved operational plan is completed.

## **VIOLENT AND ESCAPE RISK DETAINEES/FAILURE TO COMPLY**

Advance notification must be provided to IAO and notated in the T-8 ICE Air Operations Charter application comments section when submitting a seat request for those detainees being transported by ICE who have exhibited or threatened violence, for whom special custody conditions are required, and for those detainees who have any known gang affiliation. Additionally, an appropriate annotation must be made in comments column of the I-216.

Field offices are to ensure that a summary of cases is forwarded in a timely manner to appropriate HQ ERO components, including IAO, prior to scheduling.

## **ICE HEALTH SERVICE CORPS**

The ICE Health Service Corps (IHSC) oversees medical/behavioral health care and public health services for ICE detainees. IHSC also serves as the medical authority for ICE on a wide range of medical issues, including the agency's comprehensive detainee health care program. The IHSC Special Operations Unit (ISOU) serves as health program advisors and medical service providers to IAO. ISOU provides medical aircrew members for the detained noncitizens during domestic flight transfers and international removals in support of IAO objectives.

The clearance for air travel by a medical provider must be annotated on the medical transfer summary.

## **Medical and Behavioral Health Considerations**

**Medical and Mental Health Issues:** The clearance for air travel by a medical provider must be annotated on the medical transfer summary or medical clearance form prior to flight. Those cases requiring mental health care should be identified as a medical case in T-8 ICE Air Operations Charter application system and on the I-216. The sending location shall upload the receiving facility or AAR approval, Medical Transfer Summary and IAO Medical Questionnaire into the T-8 ICE Air Operations Charter application when submitting a seat request. Detainees who are taking prescribed psychotropic medications must be transferred with their medication and sufficient documentation to allow proper monitoring and treatment of their condition. The Safe Release Plan must accompany detainees being removed from the country. Detainees on active suicide watch will be refused boarding unless prior approval and medical clearance has

been obtained by IAO, FN/MAM or FOIC.

**Pregnant Detainees:** Prior approval must be obtained from the receiving location(s) by the sending location(s). Travel for removal or transfers for all pregnant patients requires medical case review and medical approval.

Pregnant detainees who are in the first or second trimester of pregnancy may travel via ICE Air aircraft if there have been no medical complications during pregnancy. Air travel for all pregnant patients up to and including the 26th week (26 weeks and 6 days) requires medical case review and approval for domestic and international flights. Air travel for all pregnant patients in the 27th week up to and including the 35th week (35 weeks and 6 days) requires medical case review and approval by an OB/GYN for domestic and international flights. Air travel for any pregnant patient at 36 weeks (36 weeks through term) is not recommended.

The clearance for air travel by a medical provider must be annotated on the medical transfer summary. Those detainees in their third trimester, 27-36 weeks, may travel only if the detainee has a written statement from an ICE-contracted physician or an IHSC official authorizing travel by aircraft, and if the detainee is not experiencing any medical problems at the time of boarding. The statement must be dated within 72 hours of the scheduled movement.

### **Tuberculosis Clearance for Air Transport**

ERO detainees who do not have signs, symptoms, or diagnostic tests indicating confirmed or suspected active TB disease are eligible for air transportation.

Detainees who have been identified during chest radiograph screening and subsequent evaluation with confirmed or suspected TB disease are eligible for air transport after the following criteria are met:

- The detainee is on multidrug anti-tuberculosis treatment, and the treating provider has determined the detainee patient to be non-contagious as outlined in **Guidance for FN/MAM on TB Clearance Requirements for Transportation**, or the treating provider gives an alternate explanation for the abnormal findings and excludes a diagnosis of TB disease.
- Detainees who have completed TB screening will have results documented on a medical transfer summary.
- Detainees who do not present with symptoms consistent with TB and have not been tested for TB are eligible for air transport, subsequent to a TB symptom screening by the FN/MAM (TB testing should be accomplished as soon as feasible at the receiving facility.).
- Detainees who do not present with symptoms consistent with TB and have documentation of a positive finding for a TB Skin Test (TST) or Interferon Gamma Release Assay (IGRA), and have not yet had a CXR, are eligible for air transport (A CXR should be scheduled as soon as feasible at the receiving facility.).
- Detainees who do not present with symptoms consistent with TB and have had a TST placed, but

not yet interpreted, are eligible for air transport (The date and time the TST was placed should be documented on the medical transfer summary so it may be interpreted at the appropriate time by the receiving facility.).

- Detainees who do not present with symptoms consistent with TB and have had blood drawn for an IGRA, with results pending, are eligible for air transport (Date of the specimen collection and pending status should be documented on the medical transfer summary for follow-up by the receiving facility.).

### **Guidance for FN/MAM on TB Clearance Requirements for Transportation**

Detainees identified via a symptom screening at the flight line by a FN/MAM as having symptoms consistent with TB will be denied boarding and will be referred to an appropriate facility for further medical evaluation.

Detainees are eligible for air transportation without environmental controls if they meet the criteria for housing in general population or the following criteria:

- No symptoms suggestive of TB assessed and documented within one year prior to transport.

AND one or more of the following:

- In ICE custody for less than 72 hours, and TB Symptom Screening conducted by FN/MAM.
- Prior positive TST or Interferon Gamma Release Assay (IGRA) and subsequent normal CXR not suggestive of TB disease.
- Negative TST or IGRA within one year of scheduled transport.
- CXR within one year of scheduled transport not suggestive of TB disease.
- Three consecutive respiratory specimen++ microscopy results smear negative for AFB and no clinical suspicion of TB disease.
- Suspected or confirmed drug-susceptible TB disease; and three consecutive respiratory specimen++ microscopy results smear negative for acid fast bacilli (AFB); and taking and tolerating multidrug at least five doses, anti-tuberculosis therapy; and evidence of clinical improvement.
- Suspected or confirmed multidrug-resistant (MDR) or extensively drug resistant (XDR) TB disease and three consecutive respiratory specimen++ microscopy results smear negative for AFB; and taking and tolerating an effective, multidrug, anti-tuberculosis regimen; and evidence of clinical improvement; and produced a series of at least two early morning sputum specimens of good quality, collected on separate days, that are all negative for Mycobacterium tuberculosis (MTB) on culture.
- Reliable documentation of recent, successful completion of effective TB therapy and a 15-day supply of medication, if applicable.

## Prescription Medication

Detainees prescribed medications must travel with a minimum of 7-days' worth of all medications; prescription, OTC and as needed (PRN). Detainees with prescribed medications must travel with, at a minimum,

TB medications: 15-day supply.

HIV Medications: 30-day supply.

The sending facility must provide the medication with documented diagnosis. The date and time of the last dose of medication delivered by direct supervision must accompany the patient during transit.

Any Detainees requiring prescription medication will be medicated **by the delivering office prior to acceptance by the FN/MAM or the FOIC**. Prescribed medications must be delivered to the Flight Nurse. Approval for additional quantities of prescribed medications may be requested and/or provided on a case-by-case basis. Prescribed medications will be administered by the FN/MAM as scheduled based on departure time zone on CONUS/OCONUS flights regardless of flight times, when safe to administer. Whenever possible, prescription medications should be stapled with the ICE Medical Transfer Summary (or equivalent medical form) and the I-216.

Detainees are permitted two respiratory inhalers and one bottle of nitroglycerin tablets on their person.

## Narcotics and Controlled Substances

The FN/MAM will account for and secure all Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) Schedule II, III and IV drugs in his/her custody. Change of custody of narcotics and controlled substances requires a written transfer, as detailed below.

The FN/MAM and the officer delivering the detainees to the aircraft will also:

Note the amount of the transferred dosage on *the* ICE Medical Transfer Summary form or its equivalent, (Section II- Medication Required for Care En Route). Information included will be the name of the detainee patient, alien number, name and dosage of the drug, and the quantity of the drug transferred to the custody of the FN/MAM.

Document any drugs administered during flight on the medical form. The FN/MAM and the receiving officer will count the number or quantity of each controlled substance being transferred and will document the amount on the ICE Medical Transfer Summary or equivalent form.

If the final destination is overseas on a repatriation flight, the FN/MAM and FOIC will print and sign their names on the controlled substance chain of custody form, ICE Medical Transfer Summary, or its equivalent.

## Special Medical Treatment

Detainees requiring special medical treatment (i.e., self-catheter, colostomy care, etc.) will not be boarded unless the detainee can perform the necessary care or treatment on himself/herself, and the necessary equipment is intact and accompanies the detainee patient.

In accordance with PBNDS, detainees transferred from one detention facility to another diagnosed with HIV/AIDS must be provided a minimum of a 30-day supply of medication, as ordered by the prescribing authority.

## Decreased Mobility

For safety reasons, detainees who are unable to board the aircraft on their own will not be boarded on the aircraft without authorization in advance from the ICE FOIC and/or the IAO SDDO. Transport chairs are available for detainee patients with decreased mobility or paralysis. Under these circumstances, detainee patients will need to be transported to final destinations with wheelchairs, crutches, and/or any other available medical assistance equipment, as required. Officers will not carry detainees aboard the aircraft.

## Medical/Mental Health Conditions Requiring Evaluation

Detainees with conditions such as the following will be refused boarding unless cleared by an **qualified medical provider (Physician and/or Advance Practice Provider)** in addition to receiving approval from the FOIC: infectious (contagious) disease; respiratory condition; gastrointestinal problem (bleeding); uncontrolled seizure disorder; uncontrollable psychiatric behavior; sickle cell disease; kidney failure requiring dialysis; head injury; cardiac condition (history of angina or heart attack); thrombophlebitis of the lower extremities; and dental appliance or wire restricting opening of the mouth that cannot be clipped by **IHSC/or authorized medical personnel**.

## Arrival of the Detainee at the Final Destination

Both the FN/MAM and the receiving officer will print and sign their names on the ICE Medical Transfer Summary or equivalent form. The FN/MAM will retain the original copy of the finalized form(s), providing one copy to the delivering officer and one copy to the receiving officer.

## Exceptions to Medical Provisions

Unless otherwise noted, the only individuals authorized to grant exceptions to any provision in this section are IAO Management, the FN/MAM or the FOIC.

## FEMALE DETAINEES, JUVENILES AND FAMILY UNITS

### Female Detainees

Unless instructed otherwise by IAO, male and female detainees may be transported together on ICE Air flights. Whenever possible, female detainees will be under the visible surveillance of a female officer and separated from male detainees.

## Juveniles

IAO flights will operate in accordance with the Use of Restraints Policy (ERO11155.1), dated November 19, 2012, and the June 6, 2014, memorandum Interim Guidance Regarding the Use of Restraints While Transferring Juveniles on ICE Air Flights in addition to any and all internal IAO policies.

Unaccompanied Children (UC) will be separated from unrelated adults at all times during transport and seated in a designated area near officers under close supervision.

Any detainee below the age of 18 is considered a juvenile. The Flores Settlement Agreement requires all UCs to be handled in the least restrictive setting; therefore, restraints are not warranted except in exigent circumstances. Juveniles being transported on IAO flights shall not be handcuffed or restrained unless an individual juvenile has demonstrated or threatened violent behavior, has a history of criminal activity, or demonstrates a likelihood of escape. In these instances, the use of restraints should be on a strict case-by-case basis and not as a general practice. Juveniles under the age of 12 years old should never be in full restraints. If it is necessary to restrain a juvenile, always consider size, age, gender, and comprehension level when considering the type of approved restraints to apply. Continue to treat all juveniles with courtesy and respect, but do not sacrifice or compromise security to do so.

If a Flight Officer in Charge (FOIC) determines it is necessary to restrain an entire group of juveniles on an IAO flight, then that decision must be approved at/or above the Unit Chief level and an After-Action Report must be completed. The same process must be followed when any juvenile under the age of 12 is restrained in any manner.

Minors five years of age and younger are considered “tender age” and require an additional escort to be supplied by the sending field office, as they cannot be cared for by the contract security guards assigned to the mission.

If a tender-age child is accompanied by another family member who is also a juvenile, the juvenile relative cannot be considered responsible for the tender-age child. If they are traveling together, an additional escort will be required for each of them. Offices should refer to the flight rules in T8 regarding juvenile and family unit rules.

## Family Units

Family units will be transported together as much as possible to avoid stress separation. Minors who are part of a family unit will travel with at least one parent.

*Note: If a parent or guardian is responsible for the juvenile(s) in flight, they should be exempted from restraints. If they pose a threat or safety concern, they would not be the responsible caretaker of the family group.*

If an exception arises that requires separation, the officers will document the incident by recording the facts and the reasoning behind such a decision. Supplies for infants (i.e., diapers, formula, etc.) will be made available during transport whenever applicable. All field office personnel should refer to the flight rules in T-8 ICE Air Operations Charter application system regarding juvenile and family unit removals.

## **EMERGENCY AIR MOVEMENTS**

Emergency air movements are based on unforeseen circumstances such as disturbances and/or riots in ICE ERO facilities, urgent evacuations due to natural phenomena, or in response to other urgent operational reasons. Emergency air movements may also occur due to exigent enforcement operational requirements. All emergency air movements must be authorized by IAO management in Mesa.

## **ACCESS TO ICE AIR CHARTER FLIGHTS**

Only persons assigned to IAO will be transported via ICE aircraft, unless otherwise approved by the Assistant Director for Removal. The approval for requests to access ICE aircraft or flight operations will be coordinated through OPLA and the ERO Headquarters Removal Division.

## **REQUEST FOR MEDIA ACCESS TO ICE FLIGHTS**

Media requests must be made in writing and submitted to the ICE Public Affairs Office at least 14 business days in advance of the requested date of access. Requests to board ICE flights (by accredited media, congressional staff or consular officials) or requests to access IAO (without boarding the aircraft) must be submitted for consideration and concurrence to the appropriate ERO DAD.

If approved, the request will be forwarded to the appropriate HQ ICE component(s), as well as to the IAO DAD, for coordination with ICE Air Operations and the respective field office's staff involved at the flight line to ensure visibility.

Exceptions to the above procedures, due to special circumstances, may be authorized only by the Assistant Director for Removal.

All requests for access to ICE Air charter flights must include:

- Source and purpose of request;
- Date, location and duration of the media event;
- List of equipment to bring on board the aircraft;
- The name, date, place of birth, and social security number for each individual requesting access;
- Passport/visa information for all participating media personnel traveling to a foreign destination, non-U.S. citizen media personnel traveling abroad and returning on the same aircraft are responsible for having in their possession appropriate documents required for re-entry into the United States;
- A signed ICE Hold Harmless Agreement; and, any other information required by HQ ERO. Media representatives are responsible for securing all required visas; and

Only the ERO Assistant Director for Removal may authorize exceptions to the above procedures. If media representatives fail to follow these procedures and/or fail to secure requisite approvals, the FOIC may deny media representatives access to the special charter flight.



FOICs that are contacted by media personnel at the aircraft without having the proper authorization are to be denied access, until proper clearance and or approval is acquired.

## **CONTACT INFORMATION FOR AIR CHARTER OPERATIONS**

Staff contact information can be found on the [IAO website](#) within the ICE Intranet.

## **COMMERCIAL AIR OPERATIONS**

### **Overview**

Headquarters ERO ICE Air's Commercial Air Operations is located in Mesa, Arizona and serves as the commercial air transportation coordinating entity within ERO Removal Division's ICE Air Operations. CAO is charged with the mission of transferring and removing deportees via commercial aircraft, thus executing the final phase of the removal process. CAO strives to improve commercial removals by maximizing the use of direct routes to foreign countries, and minimizing transit situations that require extensive resource coordination, allowing field offices to better utilize officer resources.

## **POSITION ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES RELATED TO CAO MISSIONS**

### **Detention and Deportation Officer**

The Headquarters ICE Air CAO DDO/Staff Officer is responsible for managing and coordinating all ICE ERO escorted commercial air removals, in addition to providing guidance and support to all 25 Field Offices. The CAO DDO coordinates escorted missions not only with Field Offices, but also with the Travel Service Provider (TSP) which is currently OMEGA World Travel (OWT), the International Operations Division (IOD), and other U.S. Government agencies.

### **ICE Air Removal Coordinator (IARC)**

The CAO IARC is responsible for managing and coordinating all ICE ERO unescorted commercial air removals for all 25 Field Offices. Working with the TSP and IOD to ensure that every unescorted removal mission is scheduled in accordance with the current Removal Guidelines (RG). IARCs submit the official country notification cables to the appropriate country points of contact.

## **OPERATIONAL PROCESS**

### **ERO Country Removal Guidelines and Restrictions**

The commercial air removal process begins with the Field Office's responsibility to review the Removal Guidelines (RG). The RGs provide pertinent information that must be used when determining and selecting a date of departure. Once the RG factors have been considered and a removal date established, a travel request is submitted by the Field Office via the OMEGA Portal.

The determination of a departure date must consider all U.S. holidays, holiday(s) in the country of destination, as well as any transit countries. Other factors to consider are itinerary processing times and

country clearance timeframes from each specific country and/or countries, if itinerary has multiple transit stops. Only business days may be counted, no weekends or holidays. When counting business days, DO NOT count the date of submission or the date of departure.

The RG can be found at: [ICE Air Operations \(sharepoint.com\)](https://sharepoint.com).

### **Escort Threat Assessment (ETA)**

Escorted and Unescorted removal classifications are determined by the field offices utilizing the Escort Determination Chart found in [DROPPM Chapter 16, Appendix 16-4: Enforcement Standard Pertaining to the Escorting of Aliens](#).

An ETA is required for all removal travel conducted via commercial aircraft. Field Offices are required to complete the electronic ETA in the ServiceNow application as well as submit the completed and signed ETA to their designated CAO POC **at the time of the initial travel request**. The field office classification officer is required to make a threat assessment of each detainee, or group of detainees, using the ETA worksheet, and then recommend a Class Descriptor. The first and second-line supervisors will review this recommendation, assign a "final" Class Descriptor, and complete the worksheet. A supervisor who does not concur with the recommended Class Descriptor must justify his/her alternative assessment in the comments section.

Threat factors include criminal background, propensity for violence or disruptive behavior, potential threat to national security, potential risk to the public, length of flight, layover durations, if the subject has been a victim of a sex crime by a member of the opposite gender, medical or mental health conditions, age, previous failures to comply, and ability to resist an officer's control. If the evidence listed on the form is not sufficient, CAO may return the assessment and request additional documentation resulting in a possible delay in removal.

If the removal is a High-Profile Removal (HPR), annotate this information on the travel request, as well as the ETA.

### **Travel Requests**

- After reviewing the RG, the Field Office Travel Coordinator (FOTC) initiates the ticketing process by submitting a travel request online, through the current TSP at the following:
  - (b) (7)(E)
- The request is transmitted to the TSP with a copy to either the [CAO.UNESCORTED](#) or [CAO.ESCORTED](#) mailbox.
- Within 24 hours of receipt, the TSP creates and sends an itinerary, based on the request to the FOTC, with a copy to the appropriate CAO mailbox.
- The FOTC reviews the proposed itinerary within 24 hours of receipt and either accepts, revises, or declines the itinerary or the TSP *will* consider the itinerary to be accepted and final. If routing is different than expected, refer to the RGs for information on requirements for transit countries.
- FOTC itinerary validation is necessary to ensure travel plans are established before notification cable and Electronic Country Clearance (eCC) are submitted.
- If requested, the TSP will return a revised itinerary to the FOTC within 24 hours of submission. If no revisions are requested, the TSP will purchase tickets and the itineraries will be considered final.

- The TSP *will* impose a fee for any change(s) requested after the 24-hour period expires.
- The FOTC must forward approved itineraries to their designated CAO points of contact.
- FOTCs must also submit the required documentation to the carrier for approval and/or airline notification. Please refer to the Country and Airline RGs for guidance.
- CAO Staff Officers will submit eCC requests and notifications according to the country RG requirements. After an escorted removal notification cable is submitted, CAO Staff Officers will submit an eCC to the State Department.

**Prior to submitting a travel request, the Field Office should ensure the following:**

- There is an enforceable Final Order of Removal, and the removal is ready to be scheduled.
- Field Office is in possession of a Passport or Travel Document OR there is a definitive date on which the travel document will be issued. Ensure that the true and correct name and DOB match the information on the travel document and in EARM.
- The RGs have been thoroughly reviewed for requirements relating to the country of destination as well as any transit countries to include processing/country clearance times, visa requirements, vaccination requirements, holidays, etc.
- Escorting officers have completed required Escort Removal Training in the ICE Training System (ITS), including Counter Threat Awareness Training (CTAT) (or the former HTSOS training), received all requisite visas, obtained any necessary vaccinations, etc.
- Escorting officers' passports are valid for more than six (6) months beyond the date of the scheduled escort.
- Ensure that deportee's name on the itinerary matches name on his/her passport or travel document.
- If travel document is pending, this needs to be annotated in the travel request.
- Do not list section of law in grounds for removal. Examples are as follows: IJ Final Order of Removal, Voluntary Departure (list Juvenile if it is a Juvenile), etc.
- Certain countries have transit restrictions and/or airline deportee limits per flight that require CAO pre-approval before Omega can process a travel request. Please see the RGs for countries with transit restrictions and/or airlines with deportee limits per flight. Once the FOTC has received "Transit/Airline Approval" from CAO, they must add a comment stating as such in the "Additional Information/Comments" section of the mission travel request.
- When a request is submitted, send the completed ETA to the escorted or unescorted mailbox and CC your designated CAO POC.

**Annual Leave in Conjunction with Commercial Escort Missions**

All official activities while in travel status in a foreign country fall under the direction of the Department of State, Chief of Mission. ICE officers engaged in official business (including approved annual leave) shall not travel to other countries, change hotels, or otherwise modify their travel plans without obtaining prior authorization from their supervisor as well as obtaining approval from CAO, in conjunction with the responsible ERO DAR or AAR. This is primarily for officer safety and to ensure compliance with Chief of Mission requirements. In the event of an emergency, the Chief of Mission will be required to account for the whereabouts, safety and security of all U.S. personnel in country.

- NOTE: At a minimum, any officer that fails to comply with the above will not be allowed to take any leave in conjunction with an overseas escort. Egregious violations may result in the U.S.

Government passport being revoked. Any officer that requests down time/leave in conjunction with an escorted removal acknowledges these penalties and may not appeal the decision as down time/leave in conjunction with an escorted removal is a privilege, not a right. All EEO rights and avenues, of course, remain in place.

While in country, in conjunction with escorted removal travel (including while on approved annual leave), ICE officers shall immediately comply with all requests to make contact with in-country officials. Because the Chief of Mission granted the presence of ICE officers in country, officers must comply with instructions to contact Embassy/ ERO Attaché/ HSI Attaché and/or RSO Officials, when directed to do so. Compliance is not optional while on official travel.

Prior to requesting annual leave, officers and supervisors must confirm via the RG, posted to ICE Insight's Removal [ICE Air Operations](#) page that no current prohibition exists against leave in conjunction with travel to your projected destination country. Even if the RG contain no overt statement barring taking leave, rapidly evolving global events/circumstances and/or case-specific factors may also influence your ability to do so. Leave will not be approved for any country that is currently at a Department of State Travel Advisory level 3 (reconsider travel) or 4 (do not travel).

Requesting Annual Leave in conjunction with an escorted removal mission is only allowable if:

- The Officer requesting annual leave has sufficient leave available for use;
- No current prohibition exists against leave in conjunction with travel to the projected destination country or the witness departure country;
- The request for annual leave incurs ***no additional expense*** to the U.S. Government at any stage during the removal mission;
  - o If the return airfare with annual leave is higher than the cost of return airfare without annual leave, the leave will be denied due to the added expense to the U.S. Government. At no time will the TSP, "fare shop" to find a lower return fare. Completion of the removal mission is the priority, not the accommodation of officers' leave requests.
  - o The TSP will use the same itinerary for the leave return as they would for the non-leave return. If identical flights are not available, they will utilize the best return itinerary to complete the mission. This alternate itinerary must travel the same route as the return route without leave, as requesting country clearance in additional location(s) would incur an additional expense to the U.S. Government.
- The request for annual leave is made at the time of the ***initial mission request***;
- The initial mission request contains all required information, to include:
  - o The name of the supervisor authorizing leave.
  - o Number of days annual leave is approved (max 4 calendar days).
    - Escorting officers may remain no more than 4 calendar days beyond the projected return date (had officer not taken leave); noting that regular days off including weekends count against the 4-calendar day total.
  - o The officer's lodging information covering the entire approved annual leave period to include: lodging name, address and phone number.
    - Officers may only take annual leave within the escort destination country, the known last international port if conducting a witness departure, or any authorized overnight location if leave is allowed at that location. .

- If officer(s) will remain at the original U.S. Government provided hotel, that should be indicated on the initial request.
  - TSP hotel selection is based on current information from the RG (RSO required hotels), proximity to the airport and foreign per diem rates. If the RSO has a required list of hotels, only those hotels may be used, even when on leave.
- If officers are staying with family or friends, they must provide: family/friend's name, address, and phone number.
- Any other information required as outlined in the RG.

If the initial travel request does not contain **ALL** required information for annual leave outlined above, the request for annual leave will be denied.

- Once a request for annual leave has been submitted to CAO and the TSP, the officer(s) are committed to taking the requested leave and will be unable to cancel their leave request as cancellation would incur the TSP change fee (i.e., additional expense to the U.S. Government). If exigent circumstances exist, cancellation will require, at a minimum, DFOD concurrence as it will incur additional cost to the U.S. Government.
- Once a request for annual leave has been submitted to CAO, last minute changes to lodging or travel itinerary are not authorized. Any change(s) to lodging that impact country clearance may result in disciplinary action.
- In instances where a field office makes a request to expedite a travel request due to exceptional circumstances, requests for annual leave may not be included as this will prolong the processing of itineraries.

Field Offices should not cancel a mission request solely to resubmit a new mission for the purposes of meeting the requirements for submission of an annual leave request. Requests to modify missions to add leave requests or leave information after initial travel request submissions will not be approved by CAO. Pending travel requests that have already been submitted via the Omega portal cannot be modified to add leave.

While annual leave may be requested, there is no guarantee that the additional days in country will be approved by the U.S. Embassy. The Chief of Mission maintains full authorization to restrict any USG employee's (conducting official business) entry, leave, and in-country movement, particularly in relation to health issues (COVID-19, communicable disease outbreak, etc); terrorist risk; armed conflict; current local country conditions; and driving privileges. The responsible overseas ERO DAR/AAR may also determine that your specific removal case poses heightened concerns regarding your remaining in-country for any timeframe exceeding that which is necessary to conduct official business.

If a request for annual leave is denied, CAO will inform the Field Office Travel Coordinator of the reason for the denial. The Field Office Travel Coordinator will inform the escorting officer and the supervisor of the denial. The escorting officer will refrain from contacting CAO directly. Field Offices should not delay the scheduling of removal missions, solely to accommodate an annual leave request.

The scheduling of any form of annual leave is subject to the needs of the Agency and advance approval by the supervisor. Requests for annual leave should be submitted through webTA to obtain approval from your supervisor. Specific questions relating to annual leave should be referred to your direct supervisor.

For additional information, reference the Frequently Asked Questions document located on the IAO InSight page [here](#).

## COMMERCIAL REMOVAL PROCESS TIMELINE

### Change/Cancellation Notification Process

- After the 24-hour itinerary validation period has expired, change (modification) and cancellation requests must be authorized by a Staff Officer within CAO.
- A designated FOTC or higher-ranking officer must approve a change or cancellation request being submitted to the TSP. The FOTC must ensure that the proper form is used when making all requests via the TSP website. (i.e., change form for changes and cancellation form for cancellation requests).
- Notification action starts by submitting a change or cancellation request to CAO and to the TSP.
- Staff Officers will forward authorized or declined requests to the TSP, the CAO TC responsible for the requesting AOR, and to the requesting FOTC.
- If requests are incomplete and/or are submitted incorrectly, CAO staff will communicate directly with the requesting FOTC. (The TSP is not routinely included in internal/routine correspondence.)
- When a change or cancellation occurs within 48 hours of a scheduled removal (or enroute) **the field office** is responsible for making notifications to the applicable ICE Attaché Office(s).
- For removals transiting more than one country, the sending field office must make notification of the change/cancellation to the ICE ERO Attaché office for both the transit and destination countries.
- Contact should be made by telephone via X-SECTOR (800-973-<sup>(b) (7)(E)</sup>) to one of the following until notification is achieved (in this order):
  - a. The ICE ERO Deputy or Assistant Attaché for Removal (or ICE Rep)
  - b. The ICE Attaché
  - c. The Department of State Regional Security Officer (RSO)
  - d. The ICE Air Operations CAO Duty Officer at (202) 423-<sup>(b) (7)(E)</sup> for further guidance on notifications.
- Field offices should be persistent in their attempts to make the required notification(s) until contact is achieved through one of the methods listed above. As a last resort, send an email to the ICE ERO Attaché Office and CAO and explain the reason(s) why notification is being made electronically.
- FOTCs are to reach out to ICE ERO Attaché Offices for last minute changes and cancellations matters ONLY. FOTCs must contact IAO CAO for any other routine matters regarding removal questions/issues. Any last-minute changes must be operationally necessary.
- Additional notes regarding changes and cancellations, per the August 25, 2010, ICE Memorandum issued by former Assistant Director Robert P. Helwig, *Guidance Regarding Travel Itineraries, Country Clearances Notifications and Expedited Country Clearance*, include:
  - **Officers are prohibited from changing or cancelling any part of their itinerary (i.e., flight/hotel arrangements) without prior approval from ICE Air CAO.**

- **All authorized changes and cancellations must be made through the TSP, and not directly with the airline.**

### **Expedited Travel Requests**

- Processing of an expedited request **does not guarantee** approval by host country.
- Field offices must check the “Expedited Itinerary Request” box in the travel request form in the OMEGA Portal and provide a justification as to why the case needs to be expedited.
- CAO will review the request and either approve or deny it based on reason and justification.
- CAO will coordinate with IOD for exceptional cases only if the expedited request does not allow sufficient time for eCC processing per the RGs. Approval of Expedited Request does not guarantee approval of eCC if travel request does not have the allotted time per the RGs.

### **Special Cases – Visa Waiver and Airline Expense Cases**

The officer/agent should attempt to affect a VWP removal at carrier expense to the country of embarkation by preparing and serving upon the carrier Form I-259, Notice to Detain, Remove or Present Alien. If the liable carrier denies responsibility or liability and refuses to accept the subject for removal, then it may be necessary to remove the individual at U.S. Government expense while pursuing reimbursement from the carrier through ERO’s Removal Division.

Visa Waiver and Airline Expense Cases are requested using the Special Request button found on the OMEGA website at (b) (7)(E). Field offices must submit documentation to the TSP for the carrier via fax at (910) 938-(b) (7)(E) or by email/scan. Required documentation includes passport, I-94W, I-259, E-ticket, and the reservation and/or reservation number. The carrier will return an itinerary to the TSP within 24-48 hours. More complicated cases may take longer. Once the carrier accepts responsibility and issues an itinerary, it is forwarded to the TSP, who in turn issues a ticket.

### **Medical Escort Requests**

Field offices may request the evaluation for medical escort from ISOU if medically necessary. The field office or facility supporting the commercial escort will plan and coordinate timely with the assigned Field Medical Coordinator (FMC) or the provider overseeing the care of the patient will fill out the IHSC Form 950 ISOU Preflight Patient Worksheet form in its entirety, ensuring that all special needs (e.g., wheelchair, crutches, oxygen) requests and other relevant patient medical information are documented on the form.

The FMC or provider overseeing the care of the patient will then submit the form to the ISOU Medical Consultant, ISOU Chief, ISOU Mission Support Specialist, and the ISOU Medical Air Operations Program Manager for review and determination.

If approved sufficient time to plan the commercial medical escort must be allotted to coordinate ISOU escorting medical officer staging for detainee assessment, medical records and medications review prior to travel; as well as medical clearance and equipment approval for travel in aircraft with airline/s and countries traveling through and to final destination.

**Medical Escort Travel Coordination:** The requesting field office will make all travel preparations for the ISOU officer. If travel visa(s) are required, instructions will be provided, and arrangements made for the ISOU officer to obtain the visa(s).

- a. **Pre-Mission Travel:** Local/requesting ICE Office should have real time knowledge of the geography, roads, traffic, vehicle allotment/availability, hotels, airport time and distances to patient holding area for proper, safe, efficient planning and coordination.
  - i. Travel arrangements (air, hotel, and car rental) will be made for the ISOU officer to depart from home station 2 days prior to the flight so that they are able to review medical records and medications the day before the flight. For example: If the mission's departure date is Monday, the officer will arrive at departure location on Saturday, go to the facility on Sunday (see patient, review meds and medical records), and depart on Monday with the patient and ICE escorting team.
  - ii. Once the airline is identified and tickets purchased, the coordinating clinic or FMC will contact the airline, with the patient's travel information, to assure medical clearance by the airline is obtained and approved for flight. (Some airline requires medical pre-clearance).
  - iii. For medical equipment: Medical prescription and Statement of Needs by physician will be required to be submitted to the airline upon their request (If connecting flight with multiple airlines, all airlines will need documentation/notification to assure a smooth transfer). The same applies to any other equipment including wheelchairs.
    - o To verify if a medical equipment is approved to be carried on board/checked in, please check out the TSA website. <https://www.tsa.gov/travel/security-screening/whatcanibring/medical?page=0>
    - o Portable oxygen concentrators approved by the FAA are listed here: [https://www.faa.gov/about/initiatives/cabin\\_safety/portable\\_oxygen](https://www.faa.gov/about/initiatives/cabin_safety/portable_oxygen)
- b. **Mission Travel:** The requesting field office will make all travel arrangements to include ISOU officer, ICE escorting officers, and patient on the same travel itinerary. Per ICE Escort Policy, the ISOU MAM will not be seated directly next to the patient. Seating may be in front of or behind the patient.

For additional information regarding commercial medical escorted travel, please see the ISOU Commercial Medical Escort Request Instructions form located on the ICE Air [InSight page](#).

## Voluntary Departures

Travel requests for most in-custody Voluntary Departure (VD) cases are not required. Routing, airline and timeline restrictions contained in the RG no longer apply to these cases. The field is authorized to remove these individuals via the airlines/routes contained in the itinerary the individuals provide. While most in-custody VD grants will fall under these guidelines, RG restrictions and notifications will continue to be made in the following instances:

- VD cases in which the subject is a High-Profile Removal;
- VD cases which are removed via IAO charter flights; and
- In rare cases in which the field determines a VD case requires escort.



- Refer to the June 19, 2018, broadcast, *Change in Notification Instructions for Voluntary Departure Cases in ICE ERO Custody*.

## Canadian Removals

CAO coordination is required for Canadian Removals. CAO requires the following documentation to be sent to the (b) (7)(E) [@ice.dhs.gov](mailto:@ice.dhs.gov) mailbox in PDF format:

1. I-270\*\* (type legibly);
2. I-270A\*\* (type legibly);
3. Medical paperwork (if the subject has a medical condition);
4. I-217;
5. Final Order of Removal;
6. Notice to Appear (Form I-862);
7. Copy of documentary evidence of Canadian Landed Immigrant status or other Canadian Immigration status (TD/Passport/Letter of Facilitation);
8. NCIC Wants/Warrants in “additional comments” on I-270A (if applicable, state if active wants/warrants exist in U.S. or Canada, or both);
9. Intended address upon return to Canada; and
10. Itinerary (if applicable).

CAO will coordinate the removal with the Canadian Border Security Agency (CBSA) prior to submitting the Notification Cable.

Canadian Landed Residents should follow the same procedure as Canadian citizens.

- All Canadian deportees who are being removed by commercial air, regardless of citizenship and whether escorted or unescorted, are required to possess a valid passport or valid TD from the Canadian consulate.
- If a subject is being removed via land transportation, the subject can possess a birth certificate, an expired passport (not to exceed six months), or a valid TD from the Canadian consulate.

## Purchase of Business Class Airfare

For official business travel, ICE travelers must use coach-class accommodations, unless approved in writing by the proper official. First-class travel is prohibited unless otherwise approved by the DHS Under Secretary for Management (USM), and business-class travel is also prohibited unless authorized by the ICE Director, in accordance with ICE Policy Directive Section 7.13 – First-Class and Business-Class Travel Policy. All ERO requests for premium class travel for removal operations must be routed through the CAO Unit Chief for concurrence and routing through official channels prior to transmission to the Office of the Director for final approval.

## Cable Notification

CAO Staff Officers/TCs will generate and submit Notification Cables for all unescorted and escorted

removals.

- Unescorted removals require cable notifications, while escorted removals require cable notifications and an eCC.
- Notification cables convey no particular permission to conduct the removal mission; they simply provide notification to the Embassy/ICE Attaché/DARs/AARs/RSO in the receiving and transit countries of ICE's intent to conduct a removal to or through their respective area of responsibility.
- CAO generates and sends a notification cable, via email, to destination/transit country points of contact for distribution to Department of State personnel.

### Department of State eCC System

The eCC is the tracking tool owned by DOS, and used by both DOS and ICE. The eCC request has two separate processes:

- The Requestor (CAO Staff Officers) creates requests for clearance to visit or transit one or more countries, and;
  - The ICE ERO Attaché, DAR/AAR, or RSO review submitted requests and either approve, deny, or request additional information to render a final determination.
- The eCC system is used by ICE Attaché personnel in the host country to facilitate escorted removals and, when necessary, to provide lodging assistance, transportation, meet and greets, and/or prompt evacuation in case of an emergency.
  - The eCC is the official authorization for U.S. Government personnel to be in country (including transits) *on official business*.
  - Issuance of an eCC considers current travel warnings and safety issues in country. Once eCC clearance is provided, the travel is considered officially authorized by DOS. All official activities fall under the direction of the Chief of Mission. **ICE officers engaged in official business (including approved annual leave) shall not travel to other countries, change hotels, or otherwise modify their travel plans without obtaining prior authorization from IAO CAO, in conjunction with the in country approving official.** This is for officer safety. In the event of an emergency, the Chief of Mission will be required to account for the whereabouts, safety, and security of all U.S. personnel in country, and will utilize eCC information to do so. During an emergency, ICE also uses the eCC to locate and account for all personnel.
  - While in country, in conjunction with escorted removal travel (including while on approved annual leave), ICE officers shall immediately comply with all requests to contact in country officials. Because the Chief of Mission granted the presence of ICE Officers in country, officers must comply with instructions to contact Embassy/ICE Attaché/DARs/AARs/RSO officials, when directed to do so. Compliance is not optional while on official travel (including during any annual leave taken in conjunction with official government travel).

## My Services eCC Access

Since November 15, 2019, ERO officers traveling Out of the Continental United States (OCONUS) have respectively utilized MyServices eCC system to facilitate escorted removals. CAO creates MyServices eCC profiles for new OCONUS travelers, but ONLY profile creator(s) or the specific officers themselves can update existing profiles. ERO officers who have traveled on an escorted mission within the last three (3) years without updating their profile *must* update their current account profiles in the MyServices eCC system.

To update your profile:

- Log onto MyServices via web browser (Google Chrome) at:  
**(b) (7)(E)**
- If you do not have a login/password or for any issues logging in, contact the MyServices helpdesk at the ILMS Self-Service Portal at **(b) (7)(E)**, or at 1-888-313.<sup>(b) (7)(E)</sup>
- Only the person who created the officers' MyServices profile or the Officer themselves are able to update the information: passport numbers/expiration, HTSOS/CTAT dates, Emergency Contact (Supervisor) information, etc.

## Deviation Escort Policy Technical and Procedural Update

Due to political and social situations worldwide, certain deviations from the escort policy may be appropriate in specific cases. For example, deviation may be appropriate for a successful removal to a country for which ICE does not receive clearances for travel due to operational barriers. Requests for a deviation will be considered by HQERO on a case-by-case basis, and HQERO will make the final determination as to whether deviation from the policy is permitted in a particular case. Refer to the broadcast dated June 25, 2021, *Field Advisory – Deviation Escort Policy Technical and Procedural Update* for additional guidance.

**Acronym List**

AAR	Assistant Attaché for Removal
ACO	Air Charter Operations
AFB	Acid Fast Bacilli
AOR	Area of Responsibility
AROCC	Arizona Removal Operations Coordination Center
BDU	Battle Dress Uniform
CD	Clinical Director
CDF	Contract Detention Facilities
CAO	Commercial Air Operations
CONUS	Continental United States
CRG	Country Removal Guidelines
CTAT	Counter Threat Assessment Training
CXR	Chest X-Ray
DAD	Deputy Assistant Director
DAR	Deputy Attaché for Removal
DEA	Drug Enforcement Agency
DDO	Detention and Deportation Officer
DHS	Department of Homeland Security
DO	Deportation Officer
DOCC	Detention Operations Coordination Center
EADM	ENFORCE Alien Detention Module
ER	Expedited Removals
ERO	Enforcement and Removal Operations
FOD	Foreign Object Debris
FFT	Flight Following Team
FN	Flight Nurse
FOIC	Flight Officer in Charge
FOTC	Field Office Travel Coordinator
FOS	Flight Operations Supervisor
FTC	Failure to Comply
GOIC	Ground Officer in Charge
HPR	High Profile Removal
HQ	Headquarters
IAO	ICE Air Operations
ICE	U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement
IARC	ICE Air Removal Coordinator
IGRA	Interferon Gamma Release Assay
IGSA	Intergovernmental Service Agreement Facilities
IHSC	ICE Health Service Corps
IRI	Interior Repatriation Initiative
IT	Internal Transfer
MAM	Medical Aircrew Member
MDR	Multidrug-Resistant
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding

MSS	Mission Support Specialist
MTB	Mycobacterium Tuberculosis
NTA	Notice to Appear
OCONUS	Outside the Continental United States
PBNDS	Performance-Based National Detention Standards
PIC	Pilot in Command
RCD	Regional Clinical Director
RG	Removal Guidelines
SDDO	Supervisory Detention and Deportation Officer
SHRC	Special High-Risk Charter
SIC	Second in Charge
TB	Tuberculosis
TC	Travel Coordinator
TSP	Travel Service Provider
TST	Tuberculosis Skin Test
UAC	Unaccompanied Alien Child(ren)
VD	Voluntary Departure
VR	Voluntary Return
XDR	Extensively Drug Resistant