6.3 Law Libraries and Legal Material

I. Purpose and Scope

This detention standard protects detainees’ rights by ensuring their access to courts, counsel and comprehensive legal materials.

This detention standard applies to the following types of facilities housing ICE/ERO detainees:

- Service Processing Centers (SPCs);
- Contract Detention Facilities (CDFs); and
- State or local government facilities used by ERO through Intergovernmental Service Agreements (IGSAs) to hold detainees for more than 72 hours.

Procedures in italics are specifically required for SPCs, CDFs, and Dedicated IGSA facilities. Non-dedicated IGSA facilities must conform to these procedures or adopt, adapt or establish alternatives, provided they meet or exceed the intent represented by these procedures.

For all types of facilities, procedures that appear in italics with a marked (***) on the page indicate optimum levels of compliance for this standard.

Various terms used in this standard may be defined in standard “7.5 Definitions.”

II. Expected Outcomes

The expected outcomes of this detention standard are as follows (specific requirements are defined in “V. Expected Practices”).

1. Detainees shall have access to a properly equipped law library, legal materials and equipment (including photocopying resources) to facilitate the preparation of documents.

2. Detainees shall have meaningful access (no less than five hours per week) to law libraries, legal materials and equipment.

3. **When requested and where resources permit, facilities shall provide detainees meaningful access to law libraries, legal materials and related materials on a regular schedule and no less than 15 hours per week.

4. Special scheduling consideration shall be given to detainees facing deadlines or time constraints.

5. Detainees shall not be required to forgo recreation time to use the law library. Requests for additional time to use the law library shall be accommodated to the extent possible, including accommodating work schedules when practicable, consistent with the orderly and secure operation of the facility.

6. Detainees shall have access to courts and counsel.

7. Detainees shall be able to have confidential contact with attorneys and their authorized representatives in person, on the telephone and through correspondence.

8. Detainees shall receive assistance where needed (e.g., orientation to written or electronic media and materials; assistance in accessing related programs, forms and materials); in addition, detainees who are illiterate, limited-English proficient or have disabilities shall receive appropriate special assistance.

9. Detainees in the Special Management Unit (SMU) shall have access to legal resources and materials on the same basis as the general population.

10. Detainees shall be notified of the facility’s rules on law libraries and legal material through the detainee handbook.

11. The facility shall provide communication assistance to detainees with disabilities and detainees who are limited in their English proficiency (LEP). The facility will provide detainees with disabilities with effective
communication, which may include the provision of auxiliary aids, such as readers, materials in Braille, audio recordings, telephone handset amplifiers, telephones compatible with hearing aids, telecommunications devices for deaf persons (TTYs), interpreters, and notetakers, as needed. The facility will also provide detainees who are LEP with language assistance, including bilingual staff or professional interpretation and translation services, to provide them with meaningful access to its programs and activities.

All written materials provided to detainees shall generally be translated into Spanish. Where practicable, provisions for written translation shall be made for other significant segments of the population with limited English proficiency.

Oral interpretation or assistance shall be provided to any detainee who speaks another language in which written material has not been translated or who is illiterate.

III. Standards Affected

This detention standard replaces “Access to Legal Material” dated 12/2/2008.

IV. References


ICE/ERO Performance-based National Detention Standards 2011:

- “5.1 Correspondence and Other Mail,” in regard to correspondence with attorneys and other legal representatives, judges, courts, embassies and consulates;
- “5.6 Telephone Access,” in regard to phone calls to legal representatives or to obtain legal representation; and
- “5.7 Visitation,” in regard to visits from attorneys, other legal representatives and legal assistants.

V. Expected Practices

A. Law Library

Each facility shall provide a properly equipped law library in a designated, well-lit room that is reasonably isolated from noisy areas and large enough to provide reasonable access to all detainees who request its use. It shall be furnished with a sufficient number of tables and chairs to accommodate detainees’ legal research and writing needs.

B. Supervision

The facility shall develop procedures that effectively prevent detainees from damaging, destroying or removing equipment, materials or supplies from the law library.

Facilities are encouraged to monitor detainee use of legal materials to prevent vandalism.

Supervision shall not be used to intimidate or otherwise impede detainees’ lawful use of the law library.

C. Hours of Access

Each facility administrator shall devise a flexible schedule that:

1. permits all detainees, regardless of housing or classification, to use the law library on a regular basis;
2. enables maximum possible use without interfering with the orderly operation of the facility (law library hours of operation shall generally be scheduled between official counts, meals and other official detention functions);
3. determines the number of detainees permitted to use the law library at any given time; and
4. takes into consideration any rules and regulations that prohibit or regulate the intermingling of differently classified detainees.

Each detainee shall be permitted to use the law library for a minimum of five hours per week. Detainees may not be forced to forego their minimum recreation time in order to use the law library (see standard “5.4 Recreation”). Staff shall accommodate detainee requests for additional law library time to the extent possible, and requests for the accommodation of work schedules to the extent practicable, consistent with the orderly and secure operation of the facility, and with special priority given to such requests from detainees facing a court deadline.

D. Equipment

The law library shall have an adequate number of computers and printers to support the detainee population. Sufficient writing implements, paper, photocopiers and related office supplies shall be provided to detainees to prepare documents for legal proceedings, special correspondence or legal mail. The law library shall also provide access to two-hole punches, folders, and, where appropriate, computer disk containers. A sign-in sheet shall be maintained to establish fair and orderly use, based on demand.

Typewriters, with replacement ribbons, carbon paper and correction tape may be temporarily substituted for computers and printers only until such time as the facility can provide computers and printers, and if approved by ICE/ERO. However, typewriters are not an adequate substitute if any library materials listed in “Appendix 6.3.A: List of Legal Reference Materials for Detention Facilities” are unavailable in hard copy and only available through electronic access on a computer.

Consistent with the safety and security of the facility, detainees shall be provided with a means of saving any legal work in a secure and private electronic format, password protected, so they may return at a later date to access previously saved legal work products.

Each facility administrator shall designate an employee to inspect equipment daily, at a minimum, to ensure it is in good working order, and to stock sufficient supplies.

E. Maintaining Up-to-Date Legal Materials

1. Materials for Law Libraries

Each law library shall contain the materials listed in “Appendix 6.3.A: List of Legal Reference Materials for Detention Facilities” (unless any are found to be out of print) and may also include the optional legal reference materials in “Appendix 6.3.B: Optional Legal Reference Materials.” Each law library shall also contain any materials provided to the facility by ICE/ERO, including electronic media for legal research systems (e.g. CD-ROMs or External Hard Drives) and any accompanying written training or reference materials.

a. Form of Materials

1) Paper Publications

Facilities are encouraged to make available paper versions of the materials listed in “Appendix 6.3.A: List of Legal Reference Materials for Detention Facilities,” by ordering copies from the publisher. (See “Appendix 6.3.C: Publishers’ Addresses and Phone Numbers.” Ordering information can also be obtained from the ICE Office of the Principal Legal Advisor law librarian, at (202) 732-5000.)

2) Electronic legal research media

Regardless of whether paper versions are provided, facilities must make available in the law library any electronic media provided by ICE/ERO, containing the required publications or other supporting legal research platforms for detainees. This may include CD-ROMs or External Hard Drives developed by legal research services vendors utilized by ICE.
The facility administrator must certify to the respective Field Office Director, with verification from the Field Office Director, that the facility provides detainees sufficient access to:

- a) operable computers capable of running the electronic legal research media;
- b) operable printers;
- c) supplies for both; and
- d) instructions on basic use of the system.

The facility shall provide technical assistance to detainees as needed in using electronic materials, as well as any usage guides or other supporting materials supplied by ICE/ERO.

2. Updating and Replacing Legal Materials

Each facility administrator shall designate a facility law library coordinator to be responsible for inspecting legal materials weekly, updating them, maintaining them in good condition and replacing them promptly as needed. The detainee handbook shall also provide detainees with information regarding the procedure for notifying a designated employee that library material is missing, out of date, or damaged.

a. ICE/ERO Headquarters Coordinator

At ICE/ERO headquarters, the Detention Standards Compliance Unit (DSCU) in the Detention Management Division is designated as the coordinator to assist facilities and Field Offices in maintaining up-to-date law library materials.

Facilities must take care to ensure that the most updated statutes, regulations, and other required legal materials are in the library at all times.

ICE/ERO shall arrange a subscription to the updating service, if available, for each publication on the list.

b. List of Publishers

Information regarding updating can be obtained directly from the publishers. The facility administrator (or designee) may also seek assistance from the DSCU coordinator. Procedures for Replacement of Materials

When a facility receives replacement supplements or other materials, the law librarian or other designated individual shall dispose of the outdated ones.

Damaged or stolen materials shall be replaced promptly. In addition to conducting regular inspections, the facility shall encourage detainees to report missing or damaged materials. The facility may obtain replacements by contacting the DSCU coordinator.

If materials from outside organizations need to be replaced, the facility shall contact ICE/ERO to obtain replacements from the submitting organization.

F. Materials from Outside Persons or Organizations

Outside persons and organizations may submit published or unpublished legal material for inclusion in a facility’s law library. If the material is in a language other than English, an English translation must be provided.

1. Published Material

If a facility receives published material, the facility administrator shall accept or decline this material based on considerations of usefulness and space limitations. If published materials related to immigration law or procedures are declined, the facility administrator shall notify the submitter and the Field Office Director in writing of the reason(s).

2. Unpublished Material

If the facility receives any unpublished legal material, the facility administrator shall forward this material as soon as possible to the Field Office Director for review and approval. Unpublished immigration-related material can include intake questionnaires
from non-governmental legal service provider organizations.

Unpublished material must have a cover page that:

a. identifies the submitter and preparer of the material;

b. clearly states that ICE/ERO did not prepare and is not responsible for the contents; and

c. provides the date of preparation.

If unpublished materials related to immigration law or procedures are declined, ICE/ERO will notify the facility administrator and the submitter in writing of the reason(s). Within 30 days of receipt of the decision to deny the use of submitted material, the submitter may appeal the ICE/ERO decision to the DSCU. ICE headquarters will respond to the appeal in writing within 30 days.

G. Requests for Additional Legal Material

Detainees who require legal material not available in the law library may make a written request to the facility law library coordinator, who shall inform the Field Office of the request as soon as possible.

ICE/ERO will answer all requests within five business days of receipt. Requests from detainees facing imminent deadlines for ER proceedings will be responded to within two (2) business days of receipt. Requests for copies of court decisions will normally be answered within three business days.

If the request is not approved, ICE/ERO shall inform the submitter in writing of the reason for the denial.

H. Photocopying Legal Documents

The facility shall ensure that detainees can obtain at no cost to the detainee photocopies of legal material and special correspondence when such copies are reasonable and necessary for a legal proceeding involving the detainee. This may be accomplished by providing detainees access to a copier, or by making copies for detainees.

Detainees shall also be permitted to photocopy grievances and letters regarding conditions of confinement. Detainees shall not be prohibited from photocopying sick call requests, disciplinary decisions, special needs forms, photographs, newspaper articles or other documents that are relevant to the presentation of any type of immigration proceeding.

The number of copies of documents to be filed with a particular court, combined with the number required for ICE/ERO records and the number required for the detainee’s personal use shall determine the number of photocopies required.

Requests for photocopies of legal material may be denied only if:

1. the document(s) might pose a risk to the security and orderly operation of the facility;

2. copying would constitute a violation of any law or regulation;

3. the request is clearly abusive or excessive; or

4. there are other legitimate security reasons.

Facility staff shall inspect documents offered for photocopying to ensure that they comply with these rules. However, staff may not read a document that on its face is clearly a legal document involving that detainee.

I. Assistance to Detainees with Disabilities, Detainees with Limited-English Proficiency (LEP), and Illiterate Detainees

1. Assistance from Facility Staff

Facility staff shall provide assistance to detainees in accessing legal materials where needed (e.g. orientation to written or electronic media and materials; assistance in accessing related programs, forms and materials).

2. Assistance from Other Detainees

The facility shall permit detainees to assist other...
detainees in researching and preparing legal documents upon request, except when such assistance poses a security risk. Such assistance is voluntary, and no detainee shall be allowed to charge a fee or accept anything of value for assistance.

Facilities are encouraged to allow outside volunteers and programs who train detainees to help other detainees to access legal materials.

The facility administrator may not provide compensation to a detainee for researching or preparing legal documents.

3. Assistance to Illiterate, Limited-English Proficient, and Disabled Detainees

Detainees with disabilities, LEP detainees and illiterate detainees who wish to pursue a legal claim related to their immigration proceedings or detention, and who request assistance or otherwise indicate difficulty with the legal materials, must be provided assistance beyond access to a set of English-language law books.

The facility shall make efforts to assist detainees who are illiterate, LEP and have disabilities in using the law library. Facilities shall establish procedures to meet this requirement, such as:

a. having the facility’s law librarian assist the detainee’s legal research;

b. permitting the detainee to receive assistance from other detainees in using the law library;

c. assisting in contacting pro bono legal-assistance organizations from the ICE/ERO-provided list; and

d. in the case of detainees with disabilities, providing reasonable accommodations and or auxiliary aids and services identified through the facility’s reasonable accommodation process.

If such attempts are unsuccessful in providing the detainee sufficient assistance, the facility shall contact the ICE/ERO Field Office to determine appropriate further action.

J. Personal Legal Materials

The facility shall permit a detainee to retain all personal legal material upon admittance to the general population or to Administrative Segregation or Disciplinary Segregation units, unless retention of materials creates a safety, security or sanitation hazard.

For a detainee with a large amount of personal legal material, the facility shall make the following provisions.

1. A portion of the materials may be placed in a personal property storage area, with access permitted during designated hours.

2. The facility shall provide an explanation to the detainee as to why the material presents a safety, security or sanitation hazard.

3. Requests for access shall be granted as soon as feasible, but no later than 24 hours after receipt of the request, unless documented security concerns preclude action within that timeframe.

4. Detainees who have a documented, scheduled immigration hearing within 72 hours shall be provided access to their personal legal materials to the extent practicable.

K. Law Library Access for Detainees in Special Management Units (SMUs)

Detainees housed in Administrative Segregation or Disciplinary Segregation units shall have the same law library access as the general population, unless compelling security concerns require limitations.

Facilities may supervise library use by a detainee housed in an SMU, as warranted by the individual’s conduct. Violent or uncooperative detainees may be temporarily denied access to the law library, as necessary to maintain security and until such time as their behavior warrants resumed access. Detainees
who are temporarily denied access to the law library under such circumstances shall be provided legal materials upon request.

Detainees segregated for protection must be provided access to legal materials. Such detainees may be required to use the law library separately or, if that is not feasible, legal materials and a computer must be brought to them upon request and they must be provided with assistance and have access to the list of the law library’s holdings.

Denial of access to the law library must be:

1. supported by compelling security concerns;
2. limited to the shortest duration required for the safety, security and orderly operation of the facility;
3. fully documented in the SMU housing logbook; and
4. documented, with reasons listed, in the detention file.

The facility shall notify the Field Office every time access is denied, and shall send a copy of the proper documentation.

L. Envelopes and Stamps for Indigent Detainees

Ordinarily, a detainee is considered “indigent” if he/she has less than $15.00 in his/her account. Facilities shall make a determination without unreasonable delay as to whether a detainee is indigent.

The facility shall provide indigent detainees with free envelopes and stamps for domestic mail related to a legal matter, including correspondence to a legal representative, a potential legal representative, or any court. Requests to send international mail may also be honored.

Indigent detainees may receive assistance from local consular officials with international mail. As noted above in this standard, envelopes and stamps are provided to indigent detainees for delivery of mail to consulates in the United States.

M. Notaries, Certified Mail and Miscellaneous Needs Associated With Legal Matters

The facility shall provide assistance in a timely manner to any unrepresented detainee who requests a notary public, certified mail, or other such services to pursue a legal matter, if the detainee is unable do so through a family member, friend or community organization.

If it is unclear whether the requested service is necessary, the respective ICE Office of Chief Counsel shall be consulted. A reply shall be received in a timely manner; pressing legal matters with a deadline shall be prioritized.

Telephone access for indigent unrepresented detainees requesting legal materials shall be in compliance with standard “5.6 Telephone Access.”

N. Notice to Detainees

The detainee handbook or supplement shall provide detainees the rules and procedures governing access to legal materials, including the following information:

1. that a law library is available for detainee use;
2. the scheduled hours of access to the law library;
3. the procedure for requesting access to the law library;
4. the procedure for requesting additional time in the law library (beyond the five-hours-per-week minimum);
5. the procedure for requesting legal reference materials not maintained in the law library; and
6. the procedure for notifying a designated employee that library material is missing or damaged;
7. the status of required access to computers.
printers and other supplies; and

8. if applicable, that LexisNexis is used at the facility and that instructions for its use are available.

These policies and procedures shall also be posted in the law library, along with a list of the law library’s holdings. The list of the law library’s holdings shall be kept up to date, and shall include the date and content of the most recent updates of all legal materials available to detainees in print and electronic media.

O. Retaliation Prohibited

Staff shall not permit a detainee to be subjected to reprisals, retaliation or penalties because of a decision to seek judicial or administrative relief or investigation of any matter, including but not limited to the following:

1. the legality of his/her confinement;
2. the conditions of confinement or treatment while in detention;
3. any issue relating to his/her immigration proceedings;
4. any allegation that the Government is denying rights protected by law; or
5. any investigation conducted by the DHS Office for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties or the DHS Office of the Inspector General.

A detainee may be denied access to the law library or to legal material only in the event that the safety or security of the facility or detainee is a concern.

A detainee shall not be denied access to law libraries and legal materials as a disciplinary measure, reprisal, retaliation or penalty.
Appendix 6.3.A: List of Legal Reference Materials for Detention Facilities

Revised December 2016

The information in “Appendix 6.3.A: List of Legal Reference Materials for Detention Facilities,” and Appendix 6.3.B: “Optional Legal Reference Materials” was updated as of December 2016. Further information may be obtained directly from the publishers.

1. Constitution of the United States of America: Analysis and Interpretation
Legal analysis and interpretation of the United States Constitution, based primarily on Supreme Court case law.
Also available at: https://www.congress.gov/constitution-annotated/.

2. United States Code, Title 18, Crimes and Criminal Procedure

3. United States Code, Title 8, Aliens and Nationality

4. Code of Federal Regulations, Title 8, Aliens and Nationality
Also available at: https://www.uscis.gov/ilink/docView/SLB/HTML/SLB/8cfr.html.

5. Bender’s Immigration and Nationality Act Set
This is a private service that compiles the Immigration and Nationality Act and updates it quarterly to reflect new amendments and other changes.

6. Bender’s Immigration Regulations Service
This is a private service that compiles immigration-related regulations from the federal government and updates them monthly to reflect any changes.
Order from LexisNexis Matthew Bender (Publication Number 695) at: http://www.lexisnexis.com/store/catalog/booktemplate/productdetail.jsp?pageName=relatedProducts&skuid=SKU10725&catId=cat10920003&prodId=10521.
7. Administrative Decisions Under Immigration and Nationality Laws

Board of Immigration Appeals (BIA) decisions consisting of bound volumes and loose-leaf decisions. Published, precedential decisions from Volume 8 forward are available at: https://www.justice.gov/eoir/ag-bia-decisions.

8. National Immigration Project of the National Lawyers’ Guild Publications

The following are available for order at: https://www.nationalimmigrationproject.org/publications.html.

a. Immigration Law and Defense: A procedural handbook for immigration proceedings, with extensive references to judicial decisions and regulations and many official forms.


9. Immigrant Legal Resource Center Publications

The following are available for order at: https://www.ilrc.org/publications.


b. Inadmissibility & Deportability: A manual introducing all common grounds of inadmissibility and deportability, as well as waivers.

c. Essentials of Asylum Law: A comprehensive survey of the basic elements of asylum law, including an overview of asylum procedure.

d. Removal Defense: A quick reference to key issues in removal defense, with overviews of immigration proceedings, grounds of inadmissibility and deportability, pleadings, and common forms of relief.

e. The U Visa: Obtaining Status for Immigrant Victims of Crime: A step-by-step guide through the process of handling an immigration case for a U visa applicant.

10. American Immigration Lawyers Association Publications

The following are available for order at: http://agora.aila.org/.


c. Tooby’s Guide to Criminal Immigration Law

A summary of criminal and immigration law and the connections between the two evolving areas of law.

Available for order at: https://nortontooby.com/node/657.


Also available at: www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/.
The annual World Report summarizes key human rights issues in more than 90 countries and territories worldwide.
Available for order or online from Human Rights Watch at http://www.hrw.org.

A guide for government officials, judges, practitioners, and United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) staff in applying the refugee definition.
The latest versions of the “Guidelines on International Protection,” which complement and update the Handbook, are available online at http://www.unhcr.org/.

15. USCIS RAIO and Asylum Division Lessons Plans
The Asylum Officer Basic Training Course lesson modules are used to train Asylum Officers and to articulate and communicate Asylum Division guidance on the substantive adjudication of asylum cases.
Available at: https://www.uscis.gov/humanitarian/refugees-asylum/asylum/asylum-division-training-programs.

16. Immigration Court Practice Manual
This is a publicly-accessible practice manual for immigration court proceedings from the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) Executive Office for Immigration Review (EOIR).
Available at: https://www.justice.gov/eoir/office-chief-immigration-judge-0.

17. Board of Immigration Appeals Practice Manual
This is a publicly-accessible practice manual for appellate immigration court proceedings from DOJ EOIR.
Available at: https://www.justice.gov/eoir/office-chief-immigration-judge-0.

18. Directory of Nonprofit Agencies that Assist Persons in Immigration Matters
Immigration legal services providers by state, county, or detention facility. Only nonprofit organizations that provide free or low-cost immigration legal services are included in this directory. State by state lists are available at: https://www.immigrationadvocates.org/nonprofit/legaldirectory.

19. Rights of Prisoners (3rd Edition), by Michael B. Mushlin

Order from LexisNexis at:

21. **Criminal Procedure (Hornbook) by LaFave, Israel and King**

Order from Thomson Reuters at:

22. **Legal Research in a Nutshell (9th Edition), by Cohen and Olson**

Order from Thomson West at:

23. **Legal Research, Writing and Analysis** by Murray and DeSanctis

Order from Thomson West at:

24. **Federal Rules of Practice and Procedure**
   A. Rules of Appellate Procedure
   B. Rules of Civil Procedure
   C. Rules of Criminal Procedure
   D. Rules of Evidence
   E. Rules Governing Section 2254 (Habeas Corpus) and Section 2255 (Vacatur) Proceedings

Published when updated by the U.S. Courts, and available at:

25. **Federal Civil Judicial Procedure and Rules**

Order from Thomson West at:

26. **ICE Detainee Handbook**

To be provided by ICE.

27. **Legal Orientation Program (LOP) Self-Help Materials**

These are materials from the EOIR LOP program that educates detainees about their rights and the immigration court process. To be provided by ICE.

28. **Legal Dictionaries**
   A. **Black’s Law Dictionary (8th Edition)**
      Order from Thomson Reuters at:
   B. English-Spanish Legal Dictionary
The specific dictionary may be selected by the facility administrator or law librarian. Examples include the following:

i. McGraw-Hill’s Spanish-English Legal Dictionary

ii. Butterworth’s Spanish/English Legal Dictionary


29. Other Translation Dictionaries

To be selected in accordance with the most common languages spoken by the respective detainee population.
Appendix 6.3.B: Optional Legal Reference Materials

Revised December 2016

1. *Bender’s Immigration Case Reporter*

Decisions from Federal Court, BIA, AAU and BALCA from 1984 forward

Order from LexisNexis Matthew Bender at:

2. *Kurzban’s Immigration Law Sourcebook*

Reference on U.S. immigration law with comprehensive concise analysis.

Available for order from AILA at:
https://agora.aila.org/product/detail/2521.