



AILA Applauds ICE for Progress on Immigration Case Review

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AILA APPLAUDS ICE FOR PROGRESS ON IMMIGRATION CASE REVIEW

WASHINGTON, DC - The American Immigration Lawyers Association (AILA) commends Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) for today's announcements that the agency will begin its review of certain currently pending cases before the immigration courts, as well as future cases that come before the Offices of Chief Counsel (OCC). The memos outline a formal process for implementing the prosecutorial discretion policies that were announced last summer.

"This is a really good next step for ICE to take. Today's memos show officials in the field how and when they can prioritize their enforcement resources in a way that will make the country safer," said AILA President Eleanor Pelta.

The review of these immigration cases is set to begin immediately and will continue for two months, at which time ICE will asses the process and make any necessary changes. Additionally, the memos provide guidance to ICE agents and attorneys for handling all new cases that come before them. "These guidelines meet the needs of field agents and trial attorneys who, according to AILA's recent survey, were unclear about how to implement prosecutorial discretion as defined by ICE headquarters," Pelta said.

"However, this process is extremely complicated and may cause confusion in immigrant communities," Pelta continued. "Many people will understandably be worried that they don't fit into the criteria described in the memos issued today, which are more narrow and exclude many with minor immigration law violations. But today's memos describe a fast-track for clear cut cases that can be decided quickly. Individuals whose cases aren't included under this process may still qualify for a favorable exercise of prosecutorial discretion after their cases are reviewed pursuant to the June memos.

"We hope that along with today's guidelines, ICE will monitor the field so that we finally see action on the ground that matches agency policies from the top," concluded Pelta.

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