

Congregation B'nai Israel  
Immigration Sanctuary

Roles and Rapid Response Plan

# Objectives

- **Speak out** and stand against unjust and unethical treatment of immigrants. “Treat thy neighbor as thyself”.
- Provide sanctuary to undocumented individual(s), under immediate threat of deportation, help keep families together, and **amplify the moral imperative** to stop deportations. “Strangers in a Strange Land.”
- Support **Ethical Immigration** Policy.
- **Prepare for, practice, and implement** a variety of actions that achieve the first three goals.

# Guiding Principles

- We are here to provide housing and sanctuary .
- We do not represent the immigrant or their family.
- The immigrant or their family retains their own legal representative and works with their sponsor i.e., SacACT or PICO to address their specific immigration situation.
- Funds for this initiative will come from a special immigrant fund, or the Rabbi's discretionary fund.

# Guiding Principles

continued

- Congregation is not in charge of negotiating media requests with immigrant or family. If the media requests through the Congregation, they are to be referred to ACT or PICO.
- We will be mindful of our nonprofit status

# Process For Deciding to Accept an Immigrant Guest to Sanctuary

- Is prompted from a referral by PICO or Sacramento ACT to Congregation B'nai Israel.
- Temple Leaders vets candidate
  - President, Immediate Past President, Rabbi and two designated congregants appointed at the discretion of the Rabbi, conduct an assessment and determine whether to house a specific individual or family.
  - In arriving at a decision, the group consults with General Counsel and Outside Counsel/Immigration Attorney.
  - Final decision is subject to immigrant guest(s) agreeing to Temple requirements.

# Legal Documents

- Immigrant Intake Form
- Congregation-Immigrant Agreements
- Release of Liability
- Documentation of Immigrant Having Their Own Legal Counsel
- Letter from Congregation to ICE

# Sanctuary Activation

- Begins when the immigrant individual or family has been formally accepted by the Vetting Group.
- The President, Rabbi or their designee notifies Key Sanctuary leaders of the acceptance and start date.
- Key Sanctuary leaders include:
  - Immigrant Individual/Family Housing Committee Leader
  - Communications Leader
  - Legal Committee Leader
  - Emergency Response Leader

# President's Role

- President, on behalf of Congregation, is responsible **for policy, finances, and non/ religious administration of the initiative.**
  - Co-leads vetting process (with Rabbi).
  - Authorizes spending.
  - Notifies ICE and Homeland Security of Active Sanctuary (in consultation with General Counsel, outside counsel).
  - Makes policy decisions (in consultation with others as appropriate).
  - Keeps Board apprised.
  - Confers with General Counsel and Outside Counsel representing temple as a sanctuary.
  - Resolves escalated issues raised by Sanctuary leaders and troubleshoots where needed.
  - Makes sure we adhere to our guiding principles.
  - Authorizes training for staff and emergency response team by special counsel.

# Joint Role Rabbi and President

- Publicly **announces activation** of sanctuary
- **Updates** and Issues Calls to Action to Temple **Membership.**
- Reaches out to other Congregations for financial or other support to Immigrant Fund.
- Serves as **Spokespeople** in a Rapid Response Situation.
- Contacts and **Confers with Elected Officials** as May Be Appropriate.
- Performs or delegates other **community relations** of general nature.

# Legal Role

- General Counsel, with support of outside immigration counsel, is responsible for **minimizing Congregation risk and liability, and ensures activities do not run afoul of law or our nonprofit status.**
  - Contributes to assessing suitability of candidate for sanctuary
  - Reviews and advises regarding waivers and releases to be executed by the granted sanctuary person(s).
  - Retains copies or secures originals of all required documents.
  - Establishes protocols and procedures to be used in event of an enforcement action.
  - Conducts information session(s) as needed for CBI leadership and CBI Staff.
  - Provides advice on proposed published materials, public announcements and other issues as may arise.
  - Consults with Congregational legal volunteers as needed.
  - Assigns RAID legal monitors, in coordination with Emergency Response Leader .

# Immigration Committee

## Leader Role

- The Chair of the Immigration Committee is responsible for all aspects of the physical sanctuary and for meeting the daily living needs of our immigrant guests.
- These include:
  - Appointing and assisting an individual or group to set up and maintain multipurpose room with appropriate provisions, including furniture, window coverings, cooking supplies, linens, entertainment, etc. and manage ongoing needs.
  - Appointing and assisting a leader to organize food deliveries.
  - Appointing and assisting a Transportation Leader(s) to transport individuals to appointments.
  - Appointing and assisting a Sanctuary host leader, ensuring a nightly host for each night the sanctuary is active.
  - Arranges for native language speakers (creating a roster and calling upon them when needed).
  - Ensures there is an emotional/or cultural resource if needed.

# Communications

## Leader Role

- Supports Rabbi and President’s efforts to communicate widely.
- Prepares recommended media materials.
- Creates 30 signs for use in a rapid response public event using biblical quotes .
- Sets up press conferences and media interviews for Rabbi and President where needed.
- Writes, gains approval and distributes press advisories and press statements
- Develops media packet:
  - Profile of immigrant guest(s)
  - Fact Sheet describing Temple Role and Rationale
  - Statement by Rabbi and President that speaks to the moral imperative
  - Validator Comments from ACT, Jewish Federation, PICO, Elected Officials such as Mayor, Congressional Representatives, etc.
- Sets up media call list.
- Distributes “instant” media advisories (calls, twitters, emails).
- Assists with Rapid Response Event Planning and Execution.
- Documents media coverage and re-distributes .

# Emergency Response Leader Role

- Once a declaration of sanctuary is made, this leader should help develop and maintain a list of all congregation and community members ready to show up in case of an emergency situation with ICE or other law enforcement agents. (Known as the Rapid Response Network.)
- This leader hosts trainings, in concert with outside counsel.
- They will be prepared for how to videotape, observe, sing, pray and otherwise show public support.

# Prime Scenario: Rapid Response Arising from a RAID

- The President and Rabbi Is Notified that a Raid is Imminent
- After confirming, President and Rabbi Issue a “Sanctuary Emergency” Text Alert
  - Texts all members of the Sanctuary group and outside counsel to come to the site or provide other instructions depending on what is needed.
  - Texts immigrant sponsor (ACT, PICO) or other immigration advocate providing support or accompaniment to victim (Directs Communications Leaders to Notify the Media ASAP, signs off on media kit if appropriate.
  - Decides if this warrants a vigil, rally, or other public demonstration of support.
  - In event it does, works with Emergency Response Network Leader to activate the network.
  - Works with Emergency Response Leader and Communications Leader, Inside and Outside Counsel, and others to organize the demonstration of support either at the temple grounds, the City Jail, or elsewhere.

# RAID

continued

- General Counsel, in advance, will line up a pool of First Responder Legal monitors who can be called out to the site immediately.
- Legal Monitors document what is being said, time and location, number of agents, and collect documents.
- Legal Monitors describe any violent actions/and or racist, xenophobic, condescending words, what is happening.
- Communications Leader arranges for instant notification of media to come to site.
- A press briefing is arranged and led by Rabbi and President.
- Upon approval by President and Rabbi, the Congregation leads a vigil at temple grounds, or outside City Jail (if the person is detained there) or at the US Courthouse to show support of the victims.

# Demonstration Ideas

- A Community Prayer Vigil
- A Solidarity March
- A Friday Night Shabbat Special Service In Solidarity with Victims
- A Demonstration in Front of City Jail, or other public building (US Courthouse) inviting prominent elected federal, state and local officials

# Alternative Scenario

- This could be a case in which an order of deportation is announced by ICE, but they will take up to a week before individual or family has to show up somewhere to be detained.
- In this event, Rabbi and President and Key Leaders Should Meet to Develop Messaging, Organize Community Outreach and Support.
- Consider such options as holding a special prayer vigil, demonstration in front of a public facility, or perform other acts in concert with our religious values.

# Perform Lessons Learned Exercise

- Regroup and debrief
- Each Leader should prepare a summary of their work, attach any pertinent documents, forms, or templates, and prepare 5 tips for others in performing that role.
- President holds workshop to share lessons learned
- A document is prepared for internal use.
- Another document is prepared to serve as a case study or model that could be used other congregations interested in becoming a sanctuary.

# Q & As

*Does the family have a single point of contact?*

They will work with our Immigration Committee Leader on all aspects of their housing.

*If ICE shows up, what is the Congregation's role?*

President and Rabbi, in consultation with our legal experts, will make a decision on whether to allow ICE on the premises. If ICE has a judicial warrant, we will allow them on campus. If ICE has an administrative warrant, we may not.

*If a Media person calls and wants to interview the individual, how does the temple handle that?*

We don't have any role in making that decision. It is between the individual or family on advice of their attorney. If we are called and asked by the media for permission, we will refer them to ACT, who is their sponsor.