

HOW TO BE A SANCTUARY HOUSE OF WORSHIP



TYPES OF SANCTUARY

SAFE SPACE

A Sanctuary House of Worship can open its doors for Short Term Sanctuary in the event of immigration raids or acts of hate occurring in the area. This could be a few hours or a few days.

PHYSICAL SANCTUARY

Long-term sanctuary is appropriate for immigrants facing imminent deportation. Once an immigrant enters physical sanctuary, they may not leave the building for any reason. This could last for weeks or months until they win their advocacy or legal campaign. Physical Sanctuary is the biggest sanctuary commitment a house of worship can make.

SANCTUARY SUPPORT

If your house of worship is not able or ready to commit to offering physical sanctuary, you can support other houses of worship that are designated sanctuary spaces. By helping with food, supplies, company, and other logistics, your house of worship can share the responsibilities of providing physical sanctuary.

WHY SANCTUARY?

The resurgence of the Sanctuary Movement has created a platform for those who are brave enough to speak out against the injustice of deportation. Faith communities play a critical role in responding to the post-election reality where fear, discrimination, and xenophobia have become the driving force behind our country's politics. Because the Trump administration has promised to deport millions, people of faith have a moral responsibility to act. Sanctuary is a unique and powerful tool to stand up against this hatred and bigotry by offering our neighbors safe refuge in our congregations.

WHAT IS SANCTUARY?

Immigration authorities traditionally do not come into religious spaces to deport immigrants, and therefore religious congregations have both a unique ability and imperative to help people who have a fear of deportation. An immigrant facing deportation may seek protection by coming into a house of worship to stay "in sanctuary" for some period of time.

WHAT ARE THE LEGAL CONCERNS?

No house of worship has ever been prosecuted for providing sanctuary to a person at risk of deportation.

However, there is a federal law against anyone who "conceals, harbors, or shields from detection" an immigrant who the person knows is remaining in the country in violation of law. Furthermore, we do not know what the next administration is capable of. That is why we need to stand together in defense of our values and human dignity.

If your faith community or house of worship is interested in offering physical sanctuary or becoming a sanctuary space, the New Sanctuary Coalition can offer a training for your community in the NYC area.

For Any Questions Please Contact: info@newsanctuarynyc.org