

1. **We need to pass policies banning all local collaboration with ICE.**
City Council must pass legislation that makes it illegal for police or any city agency to coordinate with ICE. We have seen other communities in the state do this. In late 2024, for example, Arlington updated its 2022 Trust Policy to strengthen protections for immigrant communities, after data showed immigrants feared calling 911. Their document was flexible enough to be updated in May 2025, in response to continued change in enforcement and the impact on public safety. Richmond can and must show the same commitment to public safety for *all* our residents.
2. **We need to ban masked and unidentified policing.**
The Richmond City government must declare it illegal for people who are in plain clothes, in unmarked cars, and wearing masks to kidnap anyone, whether or not they have a warrant. It too must be illegal for law enforcement to conceal their identities by removing badges or masking faces. Richmond must also pass policies preventing arrests without judicial warrants, transfers to other jurisdictions and deportations without due process and a fair trial. Judges need to be supported in creating fair decisions that protect our community, and officers who stalk and detain without a warrant and without identifying themselves must be prosecuted.
3. **We need to ensure that Richmond does not renegotiate any contract with Flock surveillance cameras.**
Flock technology passively surveils public space, collecting identifying data like vehicles, travel patterns and traveler identities and “high-crime” neighborhood dynamics — without requiring a warrant, and without making data collected public. This surveillance empowers police to act without accountability and saves vulnerable information designed to abuse our communities. We demand transparency.
4. **We need to ensure legal and financial support for those detained.**
City officials must use their influence and relationships to secure *quality, rapid legal assistance* for detained community members. This requires ongoing, genuine partnerships with immigrant communities — and prioritizing the needs and demands of those most directly impacted. The Richmond city government must also provide resources for families who have lost their breadwinner due to an ICE kidnapping or deportation.
5. **We need to shut down all detention centers in Virginia.**
We call on City Council members, state delegates and senators and U.S. representatives and senators to visit detention centers like Farmville, speak with detained individuals, and take action to stop the expansion of detention facilities and close the current existing facilities permanently.
6. **We need to accompany community members to immigration court.**
Elected local and state representatives must accompany Richmond residents to immigration court hearings to protect against ICE kidnappings and ensure public accountability during proceedings. We also need our city to fight for those who live and work here, and work to free those detained. We want all of our community to always come home.
7. **We need sustainable sources of funding for the groups that have always filled in the gaps between our immigrant communities and local government.**
Institutions like the Sacred Heart Community Center have always stepped up to bridge the gaps of access in our community to un- and under-documented community members, offering critical services like language training and GED classes as well as access to legal clinics. These safe spaces make our whole community safer, connecting people to community by providing dignity to those unrepresented in our local government. Protect and fund sanctuary spaces.
8. **If elected officials won’t protect us — we will.**
If our city and state leaders fail to act, we demand that *all Richmond residents* step up and protect our neighbors from detention, deportation, and police violence. We have no other choice.

Founded in 2002, the Virginia Defenders for Freedom, Justice & Equality is an all-volunteer organization working for the survival of our communities through education and social justice actions.