



Step by Step Guide to Organizing a TRUTH Act Community Forum

Under the TRUTH Act (AB 2792), effective January 1, 2018, City Councils and Board of Supervisors in California are required to hold at least 1 community forum per year if the Police or Sheriff's department allowed ICE to access at least one individual in their custody in the previous year. The community forums are intended to provide the public with information as to how local law enforcement agencies (LEA) entangle themselves with federal immigration authorities. All community forums must be made public thirty days in advance and allow for public comments.

Organizing a TRUTH Act Community Forum can be a tool to hold your local law enforcement agencies accountable for their involvement in deportations. It's also an opportunity to urge local elected officials to take a stronger stance against POL-ICE entanglement locally.

This guide is encouraged to be adapted to meet local needs and strategy goals.



STEP 1

Connect with the local immigrant rights coalition in your region, if you have not done so already.



STEP 2

Identify how deportations are happening in your county by figuring out how Department of Homeland Security (DHS) agencies are obtaining information and/or access to individuals in law enforcement custody. Obtain data and the updated written policy from your local law enforcement agencies (LEA) regarding how they work with DHS agencies. Refer to [the guide for engaging local LEA](#) for ideas on key questions to ask. Remember, law enforcement officials work for you and you have the right to ask for information from them.



STEP 3

Map out ways to intentionally build with other social justice allies in your region, such as criminal justice, environmental justice, LGBTQ, economic justice movement leaders, among others who are also greatly impacted by local law enforcement policies. The TRUTH Act Community Forum can help foster cross-sector collaboration that unifies and strengthens progressive voice and presence.



STEP 4

Review and analyze the data and written department policy that you've obtained from your local LEA, in addition to documenting ongoing community concerns and testimonies. Compare the current written policy to the ICE out of CA model policy [here](#) to identify areas in the current written policy that you could potentially urge your local LEA to improve upon.





STEP 5

Pick a month as a goal for holding the community forum in 2018. Consider times and a location that is accessible to community members to ensure active participation. Set clear objectives for the community forum and determine how the community forum can be used as a tactic to support the ongoing local strategy to disentangle local law enforcement from deportations.



STEP 6

Create a list of questions that you and the coalition have as well as additional information you'd like to receive from the LEA. Think about how you'd like the LEA to report back this information (i.e. types of data you'd like).



STEP 7

Set-up a meeting with your local elected officials (i.e. Board of Supervisors for Sheriffs Departments and City Council Members and Mayors for Police Departments) to discuss:

- Ongoing community concerns regarding local LEA entanglement with DHS agencies in the region. Create space for impacted community members to share their experiences and ideas to make communities safer for everyone.
- State the requirement of a TRUTH Act community forum in 2018.
- Discuss the coalition's preferred logistics for the community forum (month, times, location, translation needs, etc.) to ensure community participation.
- Provide a list of the information you'd like the LEA to report on.
- Urge local elected officials to make sure that the Sheriff or Police Chief be present at the community forum.



STEP 8

Set-up a meeting with your local law enforcement agency (Sheriff and Police Departments) to request their presence at the community forum and the information the coalition would like to be covered. The TRUTH Act does not require LEAs to be present at the community forum so it's important that they feel community pressure to attend.



STEP 9

Finalize a date for the community forum with your local elected officials and begin outreach to the community and the media.



STEP 10

Hold the community forum! This is the time for the community to share their stories, their concerns, and for everyone to ask questions!