

# INCLUSIVE, INTERSECTIONAL MESSAGING FOR IMMIGRANT RIGHTS DURING COVID19

In this time of crisis, we're all learning from each other as we fight to free people who are locked up. One thing that we've learned is that since the right-wing has spent decades building a messaging infrastructure, it's easy for all of us to unintentionally slip into frames that ultimately do more harm than good. In the spirit of sharing, here are few quick tips for inclusive framing. We'd love to hear what you think!

INSTEAD OF ...	CONSIDER SAYING ...	BECAUSE ...
<b>Detained immigrants will get COVID19 and spread it to others, even outside detention.</b>	Abuses and medical neglect are <b>systematic</b> , which will <b>cause</b> COVID19 to spread outside detention. We all have a stake in #FreeThemAll.	Let's avoid accidentally implying that immigrants are spreaders of diseases.
<b>Most immigrants in detention don't have criminal convictions or only have minor, low-level offenses.</b>	Shockingly, the government <b>systematically deprives tens of thousands of immigrants of liberty</b> . Even before COVID19, people had died from rampant medical neglect in ICE custody.	Let's indict the systems at play. Both the criminal legal and immigration systems are full of racial profiling and severe obstacles to justice. That makes these labels inaccurate and harmful.
<b>Release non-violent/ all but violent offenders from immigration detention.</b>	Release all people suffering in detention, starting with the <b>elderly and people who are most medically vulnerable</b> .	Let's flip the question of safety to focus on who is most vulnerable inside.
<b>Immigration detention is a civil matter, so people detained there are not being held for any crime and should be freed.</b>	Whether community members are locked up in <b>jail, prison, or detention centers, there is no way to flatten the curve</b> . That's why doctors are urging decarceration.	Most of us have made this point before. We do want to highlight that ICE has always had broad power to free people. But if we draw a line between "civil" and "criminal," that may unintentionally imply people in jail or prison are less deserving, when their lives are equally at risk.

INSTEAD OF ...	CONSIDER SAYING ...	BECAUSE ...
<b>Release immigrants who don't pose a safety risk.</b>	Virtually all detained people have <b>family or community ready to welcome them home</b> , where they can practice social distancing.	This language unintentionally reinforces ICE's framing. Let's aim to soothe concerns by emphasizing community ties and contributions.
<b>Criminal, felon, convict, inmate</b>	<b>People</b> , people in/with/who...	f we center people, rather than labels, that helps recognize our common humanity.

Comm/Unity is a collective of communicators from over a dozen organizations working at the intersection of mass deportation and mass incarceration. More resources are available [here](#). Contact [jon@immdefense.org](mailto:jon@immdefense.org) to share suggestions or request support. Messaging in second row from Comm/Unity member Detention Watch Network.