



#FamiliesBelongTogether
Letter Writing Action Toolkit

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Families Belong Together: Letter Writing Action

Background

Since last fall, the Trump administration has instituted a new policy of taking young children from their asylum-seeking parents at the border. Already, more than 1,300 children have been taken from their parents since last October – and 658 in just two weeks in May. To be clear – border enforcement practices under Obama were also very problematic. But family separation is a new low, and it's unprecedented.

Under President Trump's administration, ICE, Border Patrol, the Department of Homeland Security – in collaboration with Jeff Sessions' Justice Department – is cruelly separating families at the border for no legitimate reason. Immigration authorities have separated thousands of children from their families. That's why earlier this year, ACLU attorneys filed a federal lawsuit challenging the Trump administration's practice of forcibly separating asylum-seeking parents and young children.

Taking Action

We know the government will bend to public pressure because they have already reunited one asylum seeker with her child after more than 65,000 activists like you took action with the ACLU. Now we need to make sure our members of Congress take action to end this cruel practice once and for all. Let's reunite every family the Trump administration tore apart – and make sure this never happens again. With a local letter writing action you can help in the fight to end family separation. Here's how:

- **When:** As soon as possible: pick a date and time to hold your event and consider evenings or weekends to optimize availability.
- **Where:** By hosting at a community gathering space or local center, you can partner with organizations who are looking to join your efforts. Consider a quiet location where calls can be made for on the spot action.
- **Who:** Build a list of potential participants (friends, family, coworkers), invite local community groups to unite together.
- **Outreach:** Help spread the word of your event by posting it to map.peoplepower.org to get ACLU People Power activists to join you.

Preparing for your action:

- Reach out to local organizations who are working for immigrants' rights and ask if they would be interested in partnering on the action and help spread the word.
- Determine the logistics for your action and invite your list of potential participants in your community.
- Share your event through a social media push to spread the word.

Hosting your action:

- You can print and utilize the following [sign-in sheets](#) to sign-in everyone who attends your event so that you can thank them for coming after your event and keep in contact with them for your activism in the future.
- Follow the sample event outline we have provided (below) to utilize during your event. You may tailor the program to best fit your event.

After your action:

- Submit your sign-in sheet to our ACLU-IN advocacy team at volunteer@aclu-in.org by taking a clear photo or scanning the sheets.

Sample Invitation/ Email

Subject Line: #FamiliesBelongTogether Letter Writing Action

Friend,

Your voice can help put an end to the Department of Homeland Security's cruel and needless practice of tearing apart immigrant families. In order to join the efforts for change, I've teamed up with the ACLU of Indiana to host a letter writing action to urge our members of Congress to take action to end this cruel practice once and for all.

Recently the ACLU filed a lawsuit to reunite a mother with her seven-year-old daughter, who were separated for four months. Mother and daughter had traveled a long journey from the Democratic Republic of Congo to reach the United States, where they hoped to find safety. Instead, at the border ICE agents forcibly removed the child, who cried and screamed for her mother.

We have the power change this cruel policy - if enough of us raise our voices. Let's push to reunite every family the Trump administration has tore apart – and make sure this never happens again. Please join me on [date] as we write letters to our representatives to end family separation.

Event details

Location:

Time:

Directions:

RSVP: [People Power Event Link]

Thank you for your consideration. I hope to see you on [Date].

In unity,
[Name]

Sample Event Outline/ Preparation

- Prepare a letter writing materials area
 - [Printed sign-in sheets](#)
 - Blank paper
 - Blank envelopes
 - Pens/ Pencils
 - Example letter (below)
 - [Background and Instructions sheet](#)

- Prepare an area for attendees to gather
 - Open table and chairs
 - Place these printable posters in [English](#) or [Spanish](#) on each table for attendees to take photos to post on social media.
 - Hashtags: #FamiliesBelongTogether #EndFamilySeparation
 - Tags: @ACLUIndiana @ACLU @PeoplePower

- Designate an area or point person to collect all letters once completed

Example letter

Dear Senator/Representative [last name],

As your constituent, I am concerned about the Department of Homeland Security's cruel and needless practice of tearing apart immigrant families. I believe families belong together and separating families is more than cruel and unnecessary – it's torture.

[Insert personal motivation for writing the letter and how it connects to your community].

I'm urging you to denounce Trump's family separation policy and use all of Congress' authority to stop it. Thank you for your consideration.

Best,
[Signature]