

# Steps for Reducing Your Bond

## What is a Bond?

- **A judge may permit you to leave the detention center if you pay money**, called a bond, and you promise to come to all of your court hearings. (The judge will not give everyone a bond and permission to leave the detention center.) If you get a bond and then miss a court hearing, the judge can order you deported, and you will lose the money you paid for the bond.
- **If you are eligible for a bond, you must show**
  - You are not a person who is dangerous to other people or property and
  - You will attend all of your future court hearings.

## You Can Ask the Judge to Reduce the Amount of Your Bond.

### 1. Ask for a bond hearing

- Ask the judge at your first hearing for a bond hearing or
- Send a message to the immigration court saying you want a bond hearing.

### 2. Collect documents to support your case. Call your family, friends, employers, and religious leaders and ask them to:

#### a. Write letters of support. Letters of support must:

- Be written in English (or translated into English)
- Begin with “Dear Honorable Immigration Judge”
- State your full name and identification number (“A number”)
- Include the writer’s address and immigration status
- Explain why you are a good person and why you can be trusted to return to the immigration court for all future court hearings
- If the writer will be providing help with your housing and food, state this in the letter

#### b. Collect evidence for your bond hearing. Evidence may include:

- Birth certificates, copies of green cards, and other papers showing members of your family are U.S. citizens or legal permanent residents
- Copies of your marriage certificate if your spouse is a U.S. citizen or legal permanent resident
- Employment pay stubs
- Proof that you pay your taxes
- Certificates from any classes you have completed
- Any other information that shows you have connections in the U.S. and are a good person

### 3. Present your evidence at the bond hearing.

- Make three copies of all of your letters of support and other documents.
- Ask anyone who supports your case, and has legal U. S. immigration status, to testify for you. They may come to the court and talk with the judge or talk with the judge by telephone.

## If You Pay Your Bond.

- **If you pay your bond, the judge will transfer your case to an immigration court outside of the detention facility.** If you live in another state, you may ask the judge to transfer your case to that state. It is very important that you give your updated address to the immigration court and to the Department of Homeland Security.
- **Leaving the detention center on bond is not a defense against deportation, and is not permission to work in the U.S.**