

## Addressing Cases of Family Separation at the U.S. Border: A Step-by-Step Checklist for USCCB/MRS Affiliates

### Step One – Notify USCCB/MRS

- Notify your USCCB Children’s Services Specialist of any cases in which there is a report of family separation at the U.S. Border during contact with immigration authorities.\*

### Step Two – Locate the Parent & Facilitate Contact

- Contact your regional ICE Field Office Juvenile Coordinator.
  - Ask them where the parent is being detained and why.
  - Make a written request for the child’s communication with the parent.
    - Facilitate telephone or video contact, as well as in-person visits, if possible.
- If you are unable to make contact, please notify USCCB/MRS.

### Step Three - Refer the Case for Appointment of a Child Advocate

- Go to <https://www.clienttrack.net/TYC/portal>. Please note you do not need to sign in or register.
- Click on “Start Referral.”
- Fill out all required fields (indicated by a red star).
- When you are done, click “Save” in the lower right-hand corner of the screen and the referral will be submitted.

### Step Four – File a Significant Incident Report (SIR) or Notification of Concern (NOC)

- Report the incident to ORR in accordance with policies and procedures for SIR or NOC reporting.

### Step Five – Work with USCCB/MRS to File a Complaint with DHS Office of Civil Rights and Civil Liberties (DHS CRCL) and possibly the DHS Office of Inspector General (DHS OIG):

- Prepare a **draft** DHS CRCL complaint and send to USCCB/MRS.
- USCCB will review and provide guidance on submission to file the complaint.
- You can view the CRCL complaint form at: <https://www.dhs.gov/file-civil-rights-complaint>
- All complaints should:
  - Be typed.
  - Include a written description of the circumstances. This should include (if available):
    - Date, time and location;
    - Names and contact information of any witnesses; and
    - Names, job title, and agency of the individuals alleged to have committed the violation.

- Please be as specific as possible.
  - Include relevant documents. Copies of any paperwork related to the complaint or its circumstances (e.g., documents showing the family relationship).
  - A summary of other steps taken, if any, to try to resolve this complaint. For example, correspondence to DHS OIG.
- You should discuss with USCCB/MRS whether submission of a DHS OIG complaint is appropriate. You can find the DHS OIG complaint at:  
<https://hotline.oig.dhs.gov/hotline/hotline.php>

NOTE – Separation from a Non-Parent:

- Please proceed with Steps One through Four. We will discuss with you whether filing a complaint, Step Five, is appropriate.

For questions or additional information related to family separation, please contact USCCB/MRS at [familyseparation@usccb.org](mailto:familyseparation@usccb.org).

*\* If a family separation occurs in the U.S. interior please contact your  
USCCB Children's Services Specialist.*