

Key Points from your *Acompañamientos* Training

*Please sign-in and make sure we have your email. If you respond affirmatively to our email to you about your interest in joining, we will offer dates for you to **shadow** an accompanier. Additional zoom trainings with more how-to information will be given. If you don't get our email- please write us at: accompaniments.nyc@gmail.com*

Accompaniment Ground Rules

- **Do no harm**
Remember that every interaction that you have with immigration officials will reflect on the Friend you are accompanying. If you are polite, that reflects well. Our mission is to support without confrontation. Please remember to silence phones in court. Remember we are not lawyers and do not offer legal advice.
- **No judgment**
Friends come from a variety of cultural backgrounds and life experiences, which may or may not include criminal convictions. Even small comments or well-intentioned advice can seem like judgment. Please refrain from asking prying questions about your friend's case.
- **Respect**
Understand that Friends may be very nervous on the days of their check-ins and hearings. Try to be present for them and be sensitive to their ability to receive information at this time. It may be better to wait until later, or even ask one of our available interpreters, if you don't share a language, to assist you in communicating at a better time. Respect also means respecting guards, court officials and staff. The "respect" ground rule means respecting our friends' privacy and right to confidentiality. Never share any details about friends' cases or court proceedings on social media or take photos of friends.

Your Role as Shadower

The accompaniment is being led by an experienced accompanier whom you can follow and who can act as a mentor to you. The leader will contact you prior to the accompaniment to confirm the date, type of accompaniment, and time/place to meet. Please trust the leader, focus on the friend's needs, help with children, etc., and help create a supportive environment. Know that all your questions will be answered after the accompaniment. If you share a language with the friend, please include the leader in conversations and direct questions back to the lead accompanier. There are other *Acompañamientos* members who are willing to debrief and talk with you by phone or email after accompaniments. **Always remember that your physical presence is hugely beneficial to your friend. Just being there lets ICE, security, immigration clerks and judges know that your friend is part of a community, and that community is witnessing.**

How and When

Court accompaniments generally happen during business hours, Monday through Friday. Some begin at 8am; some begin in the afternoon. Most take 2-4 hours, but this too may change. Lately ICE Check-ins begin before 6am.

We accompany to remind our friends and ourselves that we are all human beings and deserve to be treated as such. We do not lead our friends to their appointments. The courage they have is beyond our comprehension. We are with them to celebrate their bravery as they pick their way through this difficult system. We, by our presence, demand that those they encounter view them as persons deserving dignity. We remind our friends that they are people of value who deserve the chance to lead a full life. We believe in the dignity of humanity and the rights of all people to seek a good, safe life.