

While in sanctuary, Alirio, Hilda and Ivan have grown friendships and built personal ties with hundreds of church members and community leaders. The Austin Sanctuary Network has worked with them on their campaigns for stays of removal for over a year. ASN is a coalition of over 30 congregations and non-profit organizations that work in solidarity with immigrants to stop deportations.

Alirio G3mez, 42, fled El Salvador to save his life after experiencing ongoing violence and threats from people who kill innocent civilians who don't join their criminal activity. Since entering Sanctuary over a year ago Alirio has seen his health deteriorate in the last several months, he's currently facing severe kidney and diabetes issues. While in sanctuary, Alirio had to be escorted to the doctor by sanctuary volunteers over six times, but the only way for Alirio to get the medical care he needs is to walk out of the church free from the stress of a deportation order. Due to the imminent threat of deportation, Alirio was being forced to neglect his medical care, which is an inhumane and cruel situation.

Hilda and Ivan Ramirez, 30 and 12, are indigenous Mam from Guatemala who fled their country due to interpersonal violence. Their lives are threatened by the same family member who has already committed violence against others in their family with no consequence. After arriving in 2014, both spent 11 months in the Karnes City family jail. Hilda spent 7 months wearing an ankle shackle being monitored by ICE before she and her son went into sanctuary. This means that both have felt a form of detention the whole time they have been in the U.S, which has significantly affected their mental health. Since entering sanctuary, Hilda has missed 2 school years, his soccer games and meet-the-teacher nights, and she has been forced to be an absent mother because of her deportation order. Stopping her deportation will allow both of them to be finally free in this country and allow her to be a part of her son's life. Ivan deserves to grow up in a healthy environment, and not be confined to the walls of a church due to the imminent threat of deportation.

All three of them received deferred action for 120 days in October of last year and must report to the Immigration and Customs Enforcement office for a check-in in less than two weeks. Now we are asking ICE to extend their deferred action so that they can continue living their lives free from deportation.