

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT

for the
Middle District of Florida

JOSEPH CLEAFORD

A

Petitioner

v.

Warden, Baker County Detention Center

Respondent

(name of warden or authorized person having custody of petitioner)

Case No. 3:26-cv-1210-WWB-MCR
(Supplied by Clerk of Court)

PETITION FOR A WRIT OF HABEAS CORPUS UNDER 28 U.S.C. § 2241

Personal Information

1. (a) Your full name: JOSEPH CLEAFORD
- (b) Other names you have used: N/A
2. Place of confinement:
 - (a) Name of institution: Florida Baker Correctional Institute
 - (b) Address: 20706 US 90 W
SANDERSON, FL 32087
 - (c) Your identification number: A
3. Are you currently being held on orders by:

☒ Federal authorities ☐ State authorities ☐ Other - explain:
4. Are you currently:

☐ A pretrial detainee (waiting for trial on criminal charges)

☐ Serving a sentence (incarceration, parole, probation, etc.) after having been convicted of a crime

If you are currently serving a sentence, provide:

 - (a) Name and location of court that sentenced you: _____
 - (b) Docket number of criminal case: _____
 - (c) Date of sentencing: _____

☒ Being held on an immigration charge

☐ Other (explain): _____

Decision or Action You Are Challenging

5. What are you challenging in this petition:

☐ How your sentence is being carried out, calculated, or credited by prison or parole authorities (for example, revocation or calculation of good time credits)

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AO 242 (Rev. 09/17) Petition for a Writ of Habeas Corpus Under 28 U.S.C. § 2241

- ☐ Pretrial detention
☒ Immigration detention
☐ Detainer
☐ The validity of your conviction or sentence as imposed (for example, sentence beyond the statutory maximum or improperly calculated under the sentencing guidelines)
☐ Disciplinary proceedings
☐ Other (explain): _____

6. Provide more information about the decision or action you are challenging:

(a) Name and location of the agency or court: 20706 FL-10 SANDERSON, FL 32087

(b) Docket number, case number, or opinion number: A [REDACTED]

(c) Decision or action you are challenging (for disciplinary proceedings, specify the penalties imposed): _____

(d) Date of the decision or action: 01/28/2026

Your Earlier Challenges of the Decision or Action

7. **First appeal**

Did you appeal the decision, file a grievance, or seek an administrative remedy?

☒ Yes ☐ No

(a) If "Yes," provide:

(1) Name of the authority, agency, or court: Board of Immigration Appeals

(2) Date of filing: 02/27/2026

(3) Docket number, case number, or opinion number: A [REDACTED]

(4) Result: Pending

(5) Date of result: _____

(6) Issues raised: Challenges to the Immigration Judges removal order dated January 28, 2026

(b) If you answered "No," explain why you did not appeal: _____

8. **Second appeal**

After the first appeal, did you file a second appeal to a higher authority, agency, or court?

☐ Yes ☒ No

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(a) If "Yes," provide:

(1) Name of the authority, agency, or court: _____

(2) Date of filing: _____

(3) Docket number, case number, or opinion number: _____

(4) Result: _____

(5) Date of result: _____

(6) Issues raised: _____

(b) If you answered "No," explain why you did not file a second appeal: _____

9. Third appeal

After the second appeal, did you file a third appeal to a higher authority, agency, or court?

☐ Yes☒ No

(a) If "Yes," provide:

(1) Name of the authority, agency, or court: _____

(2) Date of filing: _____

(3) Docket number, case number, or opinion number: _____

(4) Result: _____

(5) Date of result: _____

(6) Issues raised: _____

(b) If you answered "No," explain why you did not file a third appeal: _____

10. Motion under 28 U.S.C. § 2255

In this petition, are you challenging the validity of your conviction or sentence as imposed?

☐ Yes☒ No

If "Yes," answer the following:

(a) Have you already filed a motion under 28 U.S.C. § 2255 that challenged this conviction or sentence?

☐ Yes☐ No

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If "Yes," provide:

(1) Name of court: _____

(2) Case number: _____

(3) Date of filing: _____

(4) Result: _____

(5) Date of result: _____

(6) Issues raised: _____

- (b) Have you ever filed a motion in a United States Court of Appeals under 28 U.S.C. § 2244(b)(3)(A), seeking permission to file a second or successive Section 2255 motion to challenge this conviction or sentence?

☐ Yes☐ No

If "Yes," provide:

(1) Name of court: _____

(2) Case number: _____

(3) Date of filing: _____

(4) Result: _____

(5) Date of result: _____

(6) Issues raised: _____

- (c) Explain why the remedy under 28 U.S.C. § 2255 is inadequate or ineffective to challenge your conviction or sentence: _____

11. Appeals of immigration proceedings

Does this case concern immigration proceedings?

☒ Yes☐ No

If "Yes," provide:

(a) Date you were taken into immigration custody: 12/08/2025

(b) Date of the removal or reinstatement order: 01/28/2026

(c) Did you file an appeal with the Board of Immigration Appeals?

☒ Yes☐ No

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If "Yes," provide:

(1) Date of filing: 02/27/2026

(2) Case number: 

(3) Result: Pending

(4) Date of result: _____

(5) Issues raised: _____

(d) Did you appeal the decision to the United States Court of Appeals?

☐ Yes☒ No

If "Yes," provide:

(1) Name of court: _____

(2) Date of filing: _____

(3) Case number: _____

(4) Result: _____

(5) Date of result: _____

(6) Issues raised: _____

12. Other appeals

Other than the appeals you listed above, have you filed any other petition, application, or motion about the issues raised in this petition?

☐ Yes☒ No

If "Yes," provide:

(a) Kind of petition, motion, or application: _____

(b) Name of the authority, agency, or court: _____

(c) Date of filing: _____

(d) Docket number, case number, or opinion number: _____

(e) Result: _____

(f) Date of result: _____

(g) Issues raised: _____

Grounds for Your Challenge in This Petition

13. State every ground (reason) that supports your claim that you are being held in violation of the Constitution, laws, or treaties of the United States. Attach additional pages if you have more than four grounds. State the facts supporting each ground. Any legal arguments must be submitted in a separate memorandum.

GROUND ONE: Violation of Due Process

(a) Supporting facts *(Be brief. Do not cite cases or law.)*:

I have been detained since December 8, 2025. Although an Immigration Judge ordered my removal on January 28, 2026, in Sanderson, FL, this decision is not administratively final. I filed a timely appeal that was received by the Board of Immigration Appeals (BIA) on February 27, 2026, and it is currently pending. It is unfair to keep me in jail while I wait for this decision without giving me a personal hearing to see if I can be released on bond.

(b) Did you present Ground One in all appeals that were available to you?

☒ Yes

☐ No

GROUND TWO: Pending Statutory Relief (TPS & Asylum)

(a) Supporting facts *(Be brief. Do not cite cases or law.)*:

I am actively seeking lawful status through multiple applications currently pending with USCIS. I have a pending Application for Temporary Protected Status filed on October 10, 2024. I have a pending Application for Asylum and Withholding of Removal received on July 1, 2025. These applications show that I have a real reason to stay in the United States. Keeping me in jail while the government decides on these forms feels like I am being punished for no reason.

(b) Did you present Ground Two in all appeals that were available to you?

☒ Yes

☐ No

GROUND THREE: The Government is Ignoring Requests to Let Me Out

(a) Supporting facts *(Be brief. Do not cite cases or law.)*:

I should be eligible for release or a small bond based on recent court decisions regarding how people in my situation are treated. On February 27, 2026, my lawyer officially asked the immigration office (ICE) to let me go or set a bond.

(b) Did you present Ground Three in all appeals that were available to you?

☒ Yes

☐ No

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GROUND FOUR:

(a) Supporting facts (*Be brief. Do not cite cases or law.*):

(b) Did you present Ground Four in all appeals that were available to you?

☐ Yes

☐ No

14. If there are any grounds that you did not present in all appeals that were available to you, explain why you did not:

Request for Relief

15. State exactly what you want the court to do: I am asking the Court to grant my petition and release me from detention. If I am not released immediately, I ask that the Court order an immediate hearing so an Immigration Judge can decide if I can be released on bond. I ask the Court to order that, during this hearing, the government must be the one to prove why I should stay locked up. I want the government to be required to show very strong and clear proof to justify keeping me in jail. I am asking for any other fair treatment or help that the Court think right and just for my situation.

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Declaration Under Penalty Of Perjury

If you are incarcerated, on what date did you place this petition in the prison mail system:

4/30/2025

Joseph Cleaford

I declare under penalty of perjury that I am the petitioner, I have read this petition or had it read to me, and the information in this petition is true and correct. I understand that a false statement of a material fact may serve as the basis for prosecution for perjury.

Date:

4/30/2025

Joseph Cleaford
Signature of Petitioner

Signature of Attorney or other authorized person, if any

MAY 8 2026 PM 2:01
FILED - USDC - FLMD - JHX

**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
MIDDLE DISTRICT OF FLORIDA**

JOSEPH CLEAFORD,

Petitioner,

V.

CASE NO; 3:26-cv-1210-WWB-MCR

WARDEN, BAKER COUNTY DETENTION CENTER,

Respondent.

**MEMORANDUM OF LAW IN SUPPORT OF PETITION FOR WRIT OF
HABEAS CORPUS**

I. PRELIMINARY STATEMENT

I, Joseph Cleaford, am currently held at the Florida Baker Correctional Institute. I am submitting this document to ask the Court to review my continued detention by immigration authorities. I believe my ongoing confinement is unfair and should be ended based on my specific situation

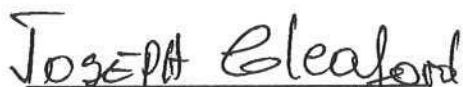
Warden Baker County Detention Center

20706 US 90 W

Sanderson, FL 32087

I declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct.

Respectfully submitted,


Joseph Cleaford, Pro Se

A-Number: 

Florida Baker Correctional Institute

20706 US 90 W

Sanderson, FL 32087

II. STATEMENT OF FACTS

- **Custody Timeline:** I was taken into immigration custody on December 8, 2025.
- **Removal Order:** On January 28, 2026, an Immigration Judge issued an order of removal in Sanderson, Florida.
- **Pending Appeal:** I filed a timely appeal of the removal order with the Board of Immigration Appeals (BIA), which was received on February 27, 2026. This appeal is currently pending.
- **Pending Statutory Relief:** I have a pending Application for Temporary Protected Status (TPS) filed on October 10, 2024. I also have a pending Application for Asylum and for Withholding of Removal (Form I-589) received on July 1, 2025.
- **Request for Release:** On February 27, 2026, my lawyer officially asked the immigration office (ICE) to release me or set a bond.

III. LEGAL ARGUMENT

Ground One: Lack of a Personal Hearing

I have been in jail since December 8, 2025. Even though my case is still being appealed and is not finished, I am being held without a personal hearing. It is not right to keep me locked up for this long without a judge looking at my specific history to see if I can be released

Ground Two: Detention is Punitive and Unnecessary Given Pending Relief

I am actively seeking lawful status through multiple applications currently pending with USCIS. My pending applications for TPS and Asylum demonstrate that I have a legitimate reason to remain in the United States. Keeping me in jail while the government decides on these forms of relief is punitive and serves no administrative purpose.

Ground Three: Failure to Act on Release Requests

I should be eligible for release or a small bond based on current legal standards regarding individuals in my situation. Despite a formal request made to ICE on February 27, 2026, to set a bond or release me, I remain detained.

IV. REQUEST FOR RELIEF

I respectfully ask the Court to grant my petition and order my immediate release from custody. In the alternative, I ask that the Court order an immediate hearing where an Immigration Judge can decide on a bond. During such a hearing, I ask the Court to shift the burden to the government to prove, by clear and convincing evidence, why I should remain detained.

I declare under penalty of perjury that the information in this memorandum is true and correct.

Respectfully submitted,

JOSEPH Cleaford

Joseph Cleaford, Petitioner

A-Number:



Florida Baker Correctional Institute

20706 US 90 W

Sanderson, FL 32087



**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
EXECUTIVE OFFICE FOR IMMIGRATION REVIEW
BOARD OF IMMIGRATION APPEALS**

Mentor, Junior
Law Offices of J. Mentor, PLLC
400 Executive Center Drive
Suite 106
West Palm Beach, FL 33401

DHS/ICE Office of Chief Counsel - ORL
500 NORTH ORANGE AVENUE,
SUITE 500
Orlando, FL 32801

Name:
JOSEPH, CLEAFORD



Riders:

Date of Notice: 03/02/2026

FILING RECEIPT FOR APPEAL OR MOTION

The Board of Immigration Appeals (Board or BIA) acknowledges receipt of the appeal or motion and fee or fee waiver request (where applicable) on 02/27/2026, in the above-referenced case, filed by the Respondent.

Additional Comments
N/A

WARNING FOR APPEALS:

Departure. If you leave the United States after filing this appeal but before the Board issues a decision, your appeal may be considered withdrawn and the Immigration Judge's decision will become final as if no appeal had been taken (unless you are an "arriving alien" as defined in the regulations under 8 C.F.R. § 1001.1(q)).

Proof of posting voluntary departure bond. If you have been granted voluntary departure by the Immigration Judge, you must submit proof of having posted the voluntary departure bond set by the Immigration Judge to the Board. Your submission of proof must be provided to the Board within 30 days of filing this appeal. If you do not timely submit proof to the Board that the voluntary departure bond has been posted, the Board cannot reinstate the period of voluntary departure. 8 C.F.R. § 1240.2(c)(3)(ii).

Autostay Bond Appeals. Please note that the automatic stay will expire 90 days from the date of receipt of the DHS' appeal. 8 C.F.R. § 1003.6(c)(3). If the Board grants the respondent's request for additional briefing time, then the 90-day automatic stay period will be tolled for the same number of days. 8 C.F.R. § 1003.6(c)(4).

Form EOIR-27. If the appeal was filed by DHS and the respondent/applicant wishes to be represented by an attorney or accredited representative in these new proceedings, counsel must complete a new Form EOIR-27 (Notice of Entry of Appearance as Attorney or Representative before the Board of Immigration Appeals). Unless a Form EOIR-27 is received from counsel, the respondent/applicant will be considered pro se before the Board and all future notices, including the Board's decision, will be sent directly to the respondent/applicant and not to counsel.

WARNING FOR MOTIONS:

Stay of removal. Filing a motion with the Board does not automatically stop the DHS from executing an order of removal. If the respondent/applicant is in DHS detention and is about to be removed, you may request the Board to stay the removal on an emergency basis. For more information, call the Clerk's Office at (703) 605-1007.

Form EOIR-27. If the motion was filed by DHS and the respondent/applicant wishes to be represented by an attorney or accredited representative in these new proceedings, counsel must complete a new Form EOIR-27 (Notice of Entry of Appearance as Attorney or Representative before the Board of Immigration Appeals). Unless a Form EOIR-27 is received from counsel, the respondent/applicant will be considered pro se before the Board and all future notices, including the Board's decision, will be sent directly to the respondent/applicant and not to counsel.



Law Offices of J. Mentor, PLLC
400 Executive Center Dr., Ste 106
West Palm Beach, Florida 33401

February 27, 2026

VIA ELECTRONIC FILING

ICE/ERO
Orlando Field Office
P.O. Box 953487
Lake Mary, FL 32795-3487

RE: Request for Administrative Bond for Detainee Cleaford Joseph
A-Number: 
Facility: Baker Correctional Institution

RE: Request for Release or Minimal Bond Pursuant to INA §236(a)(2)(A) and Court Order in *Maldonado Bautista et al. v. Santacruz Jr et al.*, No. 5:25-cv-01873-SSS-BFM (C.D. Cal.)

Dear Deportation Officer:

Dear Field Office Director,

I am writing to respectfully request that your office grant an administrative immigration bond for the release of Cleaford Joseph, a current detainee at Baker Correctional Institution.

I am prepared to serve as the obligor for this bond and am able to post the required amount to secure his release and ensure his compliance with all future immigration proceedings.

Cleaford Joseph is not a flight risk and does not pose a danger to the community. Granting him a bond would allow for his release under supervision while his immigration case is pending. My request is based on the following factors:

1. Strong Community and Family Ties: Upon release, Mr. Joseph will reside at with his aunt, at 



This stable residence provides a strong incentive for him to appear for all court hearings and ICE check-ins. I am fully committed to ensuring he meets all his obligations.

2. Employment History: Mr. Joseph has a history of stable employment and is eager to obtain employment authorization to continue contributing to the community. This demonstrates his reliability and good character.

3. Lack of Significant Criminal History / Low Risk: Mr. Joseph does not have a criminal history that would classify him as a danger to the public. He is a person of good moral character.

4. Commitment to Appear in Court: Both Mr. Joseph and I, as the proposed obligor, understand the serious consequences of failing to appear for immigration court hearings or any ICE appointments. We are fully committed to complying with all orders from the immigration court and ICE.

Under ICE's guidelines, a bond serves as a monetary guarantee that the detained individual will appear for all future proceedings and comply with any final orders of removal. By posting an administrative bond, ICE can ensure Mr. Joseph's future compliance without the significant financial and emotional cost of continued detention. Release on bond would also allow him to better assist legal counsel in preparing his defense, which aligns with the efficient resolution of immigration cases.

I am prepared to post the bond at the local ICE ERO office immediately upon approval. Enclosed with this letter, please find evidence of my legal status in the United States, proof



of my residency, and any other documentation you may require to demonstrate my suitability as an obligor.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this request. Please do not hesitate to contact me at (786) 590-1635 or jmentor.law@gmail.com if you require any further information.

Junior Mentor

Junior Mentor, Esq.
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West Palm Beach, FL 33401
Phone (786) 414-9981
Fax (786) 590-1635
Email: jmentor.law@gmail.com
Florida Bar No.: 0115354





An official website of the United States government

Here's how you know



EOIR Automated Case Information

Court Closures Today April 23, 2026

Please check <https://www.justice.gov/eoir-operational-status> for up to date closures.

[Home](#) > **JOSEPH, CLEAFORD**



Automated Case Information

Name: JOSEPH, CLEAFORD | A-Number:



Docket Date: 12/29/2025



Next Hearing Information

There are no future hearings for this case.



Court Decision and Motion Information

The immigration judge ordered **REMOVAL**.

DECISION DATE

January 28, 2026

COURT ADDRESS

20706 FL-10
SANDERSON, FL 32087



BIA Case Information

A case appeal was received on **February 27, 2026**. It is currently pending.

ALIEN BRIEF STATUS

No brief due date exists at this time.

DHS BRIEF STATUS

No brief due date exists at this time.



Court Contact Information

If you require further information regarding your case, or wish to file additional documents, please contact the Board of Immigration Appeals.

COURT ADDRESS

OFFICE OF THE CHIEF CLERK
5107 LEESBURG PIKE, SUITE 2000
FALLS CHURCH, VA 22041

PHONE NUMBER