



**HOW TO FIND, CONTACT & SUPPORT  
PEOPLE ARRESTED  
BY THE BORDER POLICE  
AT THE FRENCH-BRITISH BORDER**

*March 2024 - ENGLISH*

*Circulate widely!*

**To ask for or to share information, or to organise together, do not hesitate to contact Calais Migrant Solidarity:**

**[calais\\_solidarity@riseup.net](mailto:calais_solidarity@riseup.net)**

website: <https://calaismigrantsolidarity.wordpress.com/?p=15793>

# FINDING SOMEONE ARRESTED AT THE BORDER

**In the north of France, anyone who is not a French national can be arrested and placed in *retenue administrative* by the Border Police (*Police Aux Frontières – PAF*) following an ID control, eviction from a place of residence, or rescue at sea.**

**The purpose of the *retenue administrative* is to verify the legality of their presence in France and lasts a maximum of 24 hours. Near Calais, it usually takes place in the Coquelles police station, right next to the detention center (*Centre de Rétenue Administrative – CRA*). Please note, *retenue administrative* is different from detention: during these 24 hours the person is not in CRA, and has the right to notify a relative.**

Most of the time, the person will be released after 24 hours, and sometimes given a formal obligation to leave the French territory (*Obligation de Quitter le Territoire Français – OQTF*). This order must be appealed within 48 hours; contact a lawyer as soon as possible. Otherwise, the person can be detained in the CRA and will have a hearing within 48 hours in front of the bail judge (*Juge des Libertés et de la Détention – JLD*), who can extend the detention up to a maximum of 90 days (with a new hearing each month).

**If you don't hear from someone for more than 24 hours, you can:**

- **Contact the association France-Terre-d'Asile (FTDA)** to find out if they are at the Coquelles CRA: [cracoquelles@france-terre-asile.org](mailto:cracoquelles@france-terre-asile.org) / whatsapp +33614741468.
- **Extend the search** to other nearby CRAs:
  - **Lille-Lesquin** : Assfam ([cralille@groupe-sos.org](mailto:cralille@groupe-sos.org) / +33320852559).
  - **Rouen-Oissel, nearest CRA with a Women/Family Zone** : FTDA ([craoissel@France-terre-asile.org](mailto:craoissel@France-terre-asile.org) / +33235687567).
- **Extend the search to other CRAs** in France (details available online).
- **Search via the Red Cross**: Lille (0608522555/[Rlf.lille@croix-rouge.fr](mailto:Rlf.lille@croix-rouge.fr)) / national (0144431260 / [recherches@croix-rouge.fr](mailto:recherches@croix-rouge.fr)).

**Giving as much information as possible about the person speeds up the search:**

- |   |                                     |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| > SURNAME and first name                  | > Nationality                       |
| > Date of Birth or age (even approximate) | > Date (and place) of disappearance |

*Be careful! The person may have given a false identity to the cops in an attempt to avoid deportation or detention. If you have never discussed with this person about their strategy in case of arrest, do not share information that could compromise them. If in doubt, give more vague information (e.g. just the nationality and date of the arrest): even if it makes the search more difficult, it avoids putting the person in danger!*

# SUPPORT ONE/SEVERAL PEOPLE DETAINED AT COQUELLES CRA

## Contact one or more prisoners

The Coquelles CRA is divided into 4 zones, each equipped with a telephone booth. To find out what zone a person is in, you can ask:

- **France-Terre-d'Asile** : +33(0)3.21.85.28.46 / [cracoquelles@france-terre-asile.org](mailto:cracoquelles@france-terre-asile.org) / whatsapp +33(0)6.14.74.14.68.
- The **police station** : +33(0)3.21.19.58.90 (be very careful to not give any incriminating information about the person or information that could compromise their identity!!!)

Number of the telephone booths in each area to contact the prisoners:

**Blue zone**: +33(0)3.21.00.96.99      **Red zone**: +33(0)3.21.00.82.16  
**Green zone**: +33(0)3.21.00.91.55      **Yellow zone**: 03.21.19.89.82 / 03.21.19.88.94

*It is totally possible to contact/support prisoners you don't know: just call one or more booths and ask if any prisoner(s) if they would like to chat with you, receive a visit, some support...*

## Visit a prisoner / bring items

At the Coquelles CRA, it is possible to visit a prisoner and/or drop off items **every day from 9am to 11:30am and from 2pm to 5:30pm** (show up at least 30 minutes before the end of visiting times).

**Location: CRA de Coquelles, Boulevard du Kent, 62231 Coquelles** (ring the intercom next to the access gate to the annex of the Judicial Court – see map).

Remember:

- **You will need to provide proof of identity and regularity of stay** (identity document, proof of an asylum claim...). *It is strongly discouraged for people in an irregular situation to go there!*
- **Know the name and nationality of the person** you want to visit (the police will ask you). **Warning: remember to ask the person the name actually given to the police!**
- **The police will search you** and check what you bring.

**It is only possible to visit one person at a time but you can drop off things for multiple people. The visits last 30 minutes maximum** (sometimes flexible according to the cops). Sometimes you have to wait for the previous visit to finish.

**It is possible to bring: clothes, cigarettes** (unopened), **money, phones** (without camera), **sim cards, books** (pens prohibited), **food** (to be eaten directly during the visit if you want to put it in the person's locker, only take dry food in its original closed packaging). *The rules vary according to the police teams (items prohibited in living areas are put in the locker of the person, who can retrieve them on the way out).*

## Attend court hearings

**Court hearings are public** but most of the time nobody is present. Out of sight, the judges, lawyers, interpreters, representatives of the prefectures and others often believe that everything is allowed (non-respect of the rights of prisoners, insulting remarks, mockery, racist comments...). **The mere presence of the public in the room can calm them down a bit and help the prisoners to have their rights respected.** To enter a court, expect to be searched and to be asked for identification (although in theory it should not be mandatory to enter a court).

### The different courts:

- **Juge des Libertés et de la Détention (JLD):** in the annex of the court in the CRA (Boulevard du Kent, 62231) everyday at 10am except Tuesday and Sunday.
- **Cour d'appel de Douai:** in the Palais de Justice (5 rue Merlin de Douai, 59500) or by videoconference from the court annex in the CRA, Monday to Friday.
- **Tribunal administratif:** in the department where the OQTF was given, generally in Lille (5 rue Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire, 59000), Monday to Friday.

## MAP OF THE COQUELLES CRA :

