

“We Had Whistles, They Had Guns”: Human Rights Violations in U.S. Immigration Enforcement Operations and the Case to Abolish ICE

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Glossary

WORD	DESCRIPTION
287(G) AGREEMENTS	287(g) is a section of the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA) that allows ICE to delegate certain immigration enforcement duties to state and local law enforcement agencies.
ASYLUM SEEKER	An asylum seeker is someone who has left their country seeking protection but has yet to be recognized as a refugee. During the time that their asylum claim is being examined, the asylum seeker must not be forced to return to their country of origin. Under international law, being a refugee is a fact-based status, and arises before the official, legal granting of asylum.
BOND	An immigration bond is a payment made to the US government that allows certain individuals to be released from immigration detention while their immigration proceedings continue. Immigration bond is separate from bail or bond in criminal proceedings.
CHICAGOLAND	Chicagoland is a name for the Chicago metropolitan area, which includes the city of Chicago and its surrounding suburbs.
CUSTOMS AND BORDER PROTECTION (CBP)	US Customs and Border Protection (CBP) is a federal law enforcement agency within the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) responsible for enforcing immigration and customs laws at and near the United States’ borders and ports of entry. CBP includes the U.S. Border Patrol, which patrols the border between ports of entry and conducts immigration enforcement within the United States.
DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY (DHS)	The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) is the federal government department that oversees several agencies responsible for immigration and customs enforcement, including U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP).
DEPORTATION / REMOVAL	Under US immigration law, “removal” refers to the process through which the government expels a non-citizen from the United States under US immigration law. “Deportation” is commonly used more broadly to describe the expulsion of a non-citizen from a country. Throughout this report, Amnesty International uses the term “unlawful removal” to refer to a removal that violated US domestic or international law.

DOMESTIC TERRORISM	Under US federal law (18 U.S.C. § 2331(5)), domestic terrorism is defined as acts dangerous to human life that violate the criminal laws of the United States or any state, occur primarily within the territorial jurisdiction of the United States, and appear intended to: (i) intimidate or coerce a civilian population; (ii) influence government policy by intimidation or coercion; or (iii) affect government conduct by mass destruction, assassination, or kidnapping.
EXPEDITED REMOVAL	Expedited removal is a process by which immigration officers can summarily remove certain non-citizens from the United States without a hearing before an immigration judge.
FACIAL RECOGNITION	Computer vision technology used to identify human faces from images previously used to train an algorithm.
HYPER-LOCAL ORGANIZNG	Hyper-local organizing in the context of this report refers to community organizing at the neighbourhood, block or other very local level, in which residents coordinate to respond to the specific needs of their immediate community, including by sharing information, monitoring immigration enforcement activity and providing mutual aid.
IMMIGRATION AND CUSTOMS ENFORCEMENT (ICE)	US Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) is a federal law enforcement agency within the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) responsible for enforcing immigration laws. ICE has three main components: Enforcement and Removal Operations (ERO), which carries out immigration arrests and manages detention and deportation operations; Homeland Security Investigations (HSI), which investigates immigration-related and transnational crimes; and the Office of the Principal Legal Advisor (OPLA), whose lawyers represent the US government in immigration court proceedings.
IRREGULAR ENTRY	Crossing into a country without a migration status that complies with requirements of domestic immigration legislation and rules. The term “irregular” refers only to a person’s entry or stay.
KNOW-YOUR-RIGHTS (KYR) TRAINING	Know-Your-Rights (KYR) trainings provide individuals and communities with information about their legal rights and how to exercise them during encounters with immigration or other law enforcement agencies, including during stops, questioning, searches and arrests.
LATINX	Latinx is a gender-inclusive term for people of Latin American heritage in the United States. Importantly, “Latinx” covers a diverse group of people of different national origins, cultural backgrounds, social classes, migration histories and experiences of racialization and racism within the US. This report will use the term Latinx in accordance with the self-identification of participants and the political, cultural and racial context of the US.
LAWFUL PERMANENT RESIDENT (LPR)	A Lawful Permanent Resident (LPR) is a non-US citizen who has been granted authorization to live and work permanently in the United States. Lawful permanent residents are commonly referred to as “Green Card” holders.
LESS LETHAL WEAPONS	Less lethal weapons, such as pepper spray, tear gas, kinetic impact projectiles or batons, are weapons used by law enforcement agencies as a less lethal alternative to firearms. Less lethal weapons include all weapons that are designed to only injure and not to kill, even though they may have fatal consequences depending on the circumstances and manner of use.
MASS SURVEILLANCE TECHNOLOGY	A type of surveillance technology that allows the monitoring of large volumes of individuals and territories with greater precision and automation.
METROPOLITAN POLICE DEPARTMENT (MPD)	The Metropolitan Police Department (MPD) is the local police department and primary law enforcement agency for Washington, DC.
MIGRANTS	Migrants are people who move from one country to another, either temporarily or permanently, for a variety of reasons.
MIGRATION-RELATED DETENTION	Migration-related detention refers to the deprivation of an individual’s liberty for an alleged breach of the conditions of entry, stay, or residence in the receiving country. Detention for migration-related purposes can take many forms, including detaining people in penal institutions, specialized detention centres, restricted movement arrangements, as well as in closed camp settings.

NON-REFOULEMENT	Non-refoulement is the principle which prohibits states from returning or transferring anyone to a country or jurisdiction where they would be at real risk of persecution or other serious human rights violations or abuses. Amnesty International considers that the principle of non-refoulement, enshrined in the UN Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees, the UN Convention Against Torture and other international instruments, is part of customary international law and, as such, binding on all states, regardless of whether they are parties to relevant treaties. The prohibition on refoulement applies in all cases where there is a risk of a serious human rights violation upon return or transfer, regardless of whether the person concerned falls outside the scope of the protection afforded by the UN Refugee Convention.
RACIAL DISCRIMINATION	The International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination defines racial discrimination as “any distinction, exclusion, restriction or preference based on race, colour, descent, or national or ethnic origin which has the purpose or effect of nullifying or impairing the recognition, enjoyment or exercise, on an equal footing, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural or any other field of public life.”
RACIAL PROFILING	The Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD) defines racial profiling as the “practice of police and other law enforcement relying, to any degree, on race, colour, descent or national or ethnic origin as the basis for subjecting persons to investigatory activities or for determining whether an individual is engaged in criminal activity.” In assessing racial profiling, Amnesty International considers that race-neutral characteristics, such as language, accent, occupation or location, may function as proxies for race, colour, descent or national or ethnic origin when law enforcement relies on them because of their perceived association with racialized individuals.
RAPID RESPONSE	Rapid response in the context of this report refers to community-led efforts to monitor and respond to immigration enforcement activity, including by observing and documenting the actions of immigration and other federal agents, alerting communities to their presence, connecting affected individuals with legal and other assistance, and providing mutual aid and other forms of support.
REFUGEE	The UN Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees defines refugees as individuals who cannot return to their countries of origin because they have a well-founded fear of persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group, or political opinion. The Cartagena Declaration expands the definition to include individuals fleeing from generalized violence, internal conflicts and massive violations of human rights. Asylum procedures are designed to determine whether someone meets the legal definition of a refugee. When a country recognizes an asylum seeker as a refugee, it gives them international protection as a substitute for the protection of their home country.
SEPARATION ORDINANCES	Separation ordinances, also referred to as “sanctuary policies”, refer to any set of laws and policies that seek to limit or prohibit cooperation or information exchange between state and local agencies, principally law enforcement agencies and federal immigration enforcement agencies.
TEMPORARY PROTECTED STATUS (TPS)	Temporary Protected Status (TPS) is a temporary immigration status that allows eligible people from designated countries experiencing armed conflict, natural disasters or other extraordinary conditions to remain and work in the United States for a designated period.
VOLUNTARY DEPARTURE	Voluntary departure is a process under US immigration law that permits an individual who is otherwise removable to depart from the country at their own expense within a designated amount of time, in order to avoid a final order of removal.
XENOPHOBIA	Xenophobia is a phenomenon whereby migrants and persons belonging to various social groups or minorities are portrayed and perceived as others, outsiders or enemies owing to prejudices, stereotypes and negative perceptions and the belief that they threaten the predominant culture, heritage and wealth. This narrative is used to justify their exclusion and marginalization, leading to discrimination on the basis of their status as non-nationals, and other intersectional grounds. Xenophobia violates human dignity, and the principles of equality and non-discrimination.

1. Executive summary

Amnesty International has documented that, since taking office on 20 January 2025, the Trump administration has subjected migrants, asylum seekers and refugees to a wide range of human rights violations. The administration is implementing a mass detention and deportation system, fuelled by racist, xenophobic and false narratives and white supremacist theories, whose objective is to detain and deport as many racialized migrants, asylum seekers and refugees from the United States as possible. This system is being implemented through a series of laws, directives and practices that have stripped individuals of regular immigration status, expanded federal agents' ability to detain people, severely curtailed due process protections, made release from immigration detention increasingly difficult, and facilitated the removal of people from the United States, often without due process. The administration has also invoked laws in circumstances in which they do not lawfully apply and interpreted others expansively to justify these measures, many of which are subject to ongoing litigation. Taken together, the Trump administration's legal framework, operational practices and public rhetoric demonstrate a coherent state policy directed at the mass detention and deportation of migrants, asylum seekers and refugees, which is being implemented in deliberately cruel and harmful ways intended to instil fear within migrant, asylum seeker and refugee communities.

One of the principal ways in which the Trump administration is implementing this mass immigration detention and deportation policy is through large-scale, militarized federal immigration enforcement operations in cities across the United States. This report examines human rights violations committed by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) and other federal agencies during four such immigration enforcement operations:

- Washington, DC – Federal Takeover: August 2025 to present
- Chicago, Illinois – Operation Midway Blitz: September to December 2025
- New Orleans, Louisiana – Operation Catahoula Crunch: December 2025 to February 2026
- Minneapolis-St. Paul, Minnesota – Operation Metro Surge & Operation PARRIS: December 2025 to February 2026

Amnesty International conducted research in the four locations between March and June 2026, and interviewed 154 people, including individuals from Guatemala, Honduras and Mexico who were directly impacted by immigration enforcement operations and their families, immigrant-led and civil society organizations, rapid responders, community and neighbourhood groups, protesters, legal professionals, educators and school staff, healthcare professionals, faith leaders, academics and elected officials. Amnesty International's Evidence Lab complemented interview testimony with the verification and analysis of 29 videos and three photographs.

Amnesty International documented a wide range of human rights violations committed by ICE, Border Patrol and other federal agents during the immigration enforcement operations in Chicago, Minneapolis-St. Paul, New Orleans and surrounding areas, and the Washington DC metropolitan area (DMV), including racial discrimination, arbitrary and discriminatory arrests and detentions, harassment, intimidation, unlawful use of force, including lethal force – which in some cases may amount to extrajudicial executions –, repression of peaceful protests, unlawful use of less lethal force, unlawful surveillance, cruel, inhumane and degrading detention conditions that may violate the prohibition on torture, and unlawful incommunicado detention and possible acts of enforced disappearance. These violations were committed against migrant communities, other racialized people perceived to be part of migrant communities, and those that defended them. The recurrence of these violations across the four locations examined in this report demonstrates that they were neither isolated nor exceptional, but characteristic of the manner in which the operations were conducted and reflective of broader national patterns.

▪ **Racially discriminatory immigration enforcement operations, and arbitrary and discriminatory detention**

In Chicago, Minneapolis-St. Paul, New Orleans and surrounding areas, and the Washington DC metropolitan area, Amnesty International found that ICE, Border Patrol and other federal agents engaged in widespread and systematic racially discriminatory immigration enforcement resulting in the arbitrary detention of

migrants, asylum seekers, refugees, and other racialized people perceived as such, regardless of their immigration status. Masked and heavily armed ICE, Border Patrol and other federal agents, often wearing no visible identification and travelling in unmarked vehicles, targeted individuals they perceived to be migrants based on their race, skin colour, national origin or ethnicity, and their intersection with other characteristics such as language and accent, as well as occupations, workplaces and locations that federal agents associated with racialized migrant communities. Agents frequently appeared to decide whom to stop, question or detain based on these characteristics and only attempted to verify immigration status after people had already been detained. Agents also often ignored individuals attempting to prove their regular immigration status and detained them anyway. Immigration enforcement was concentrated in neighbourhoods, workplaces and other locations that federal agents associated with migrant and racialized communities, including construction sites, restaurants, hardware-store parking lots and areas where day labourers gathered. Racialized US citizens, people with regular immigration status, asylum seekers, refugees and Indigenous Peoples were also stopped and detained.

Amnesty International concludes that ICE and Border Patrol engaged in widespread racially discriminatory immigration enforcement in violation of the right to equality and non-discrimination. The recurrence of these practices across all four operations demonstrates a systematic pattern of racially discriminatory immigration enforcement. The evidence documented by Amnesty International shows that the selection of individuals for stops and detentions was usually not based on neutral criteria, but on the use of race, skin colour, ethnicity or national origin, as indicators of suspected immigration status. The targeting of neighbourhoods, businesses and other areas where migrant and racialized communities live further reinforces the existence of a systematic pattern of racial profiling. The resulting arrests and detentions were discriminatory and arbitrary under international human rights law. The widespread absence of the use of judicial warrants and other due process protections, as well as the imposition of arrest quotas by the Trump administration, further contributed to the arbitrary nature of these arrests and detentions. The four enforcement operations documented in this report resulted in discriminatory and arbitrary arrests and detentions of thousands of people. Many of those discriminatorily and arbitrarily arrested remain in detention or have been removed from the United States.

▪ **Harassment, intimidation, degrading treatment and unjustified use of force by federal agents**

Across the four enforcement operations, Amnesty International documented a pattern of repeated use of excessive force and other violent actions by ICE, Border Patrol and other federal agents against people they perceived to be migrants whom they were attempting to detain, as well as rapid responders and people observing federal agent activity, protesters and community members.

Federal agents used excessive force and other violent actions while arresting people perceived to be migrants, including breaking down the doors of homes without warrants and with guns drawn, conducting military-style raids in the middle of the night accompanied by Black Hawk helicopters, driving recklessly and boxing in individuals' vehicles that they were attempting to detain, smashing vehicle windows without justification, physically throwing people who were not resisting onto the ground, and injuring individuals in the course of arresting them.

Agents also used excessive force against rapid responders, people observing immigration enforcement operations and protesters, and engaged in other violent conduct, including driving dangerously, smashing vehicle windows without justification, pointing firearms at people, and pushing and tackling people to the ground who were not resisting. Federal agents also arrested a number of people who were observing ICE and Border Patrol activity, often on the grounds that they were allegedly impeding or obstructing their operations.

The incidents documented in this report demonstrate a recurring pattern of unnecessary and excessive force across the four immigration enforcement operations. Amnesty International concludes that ICE, Border Patrol and other federal agents repeatedly and frequently used force in violation of international human rights law and standards, as well as the Department of Homeland Security's own policies governing the use of force, and committed other human rights violations including inhuman and/or degrading treatment, intimidation, harassment and unlawful destruction of property.

▪ **Use of lethal force and unlawful killings by federal agents**

Federal agents used lethal force against seven people in Chicago, Minneapolis-St. Paul and Washington, DC, during the immigration enforcement operations examined in this report. Under international human rights law and standards, law enforcement officials may use lethal force only when strictly necessary to protect life against an imminent threat of death or serious injury.

Amnesty International considers that federal agents unlawfully resorted to lethal force on repeated occasions in violation of international human rights law and standards. Amnesty International concludes that the shootings of Marimar Martínez and Silverio Villegas González in Chicago, the shootings of Julio César Sosa-Celis, Renee Good and Alex Pretti in Minneapolis, and the shots fired at Philip Brown and Justin Bryant Nelson in Washington, DC, constitute unlawful uses of lethal force by federal agents in violation of their human rights. Moreover, the unlawful killings of Villegas González, Good and Pretti may amount to extrajudicial executions.

Amnesty International also documented serious concerns regarding the official accounts provided following several shootings. In some cases, statements by DHS and senior government officials seeking to justify agents' actions were contradicted by video evidence, witness testimony or subsequent investigations. The report further documents failures to promptly, impartially, independently and effectively investigate uses of lethal force and to ensure accountability.

▪ **Repression of protests and use of less lethal weapons by federal agents**

In Chicago and Minneapolis-St. Paul, Amnesty International documented numerous incidents of ICE and Border Patrol unlawfully and unnecessarily using less lethal weapons, including tear gas, pepper spray and other chemical irritants, against rapid responders, observers, protesters and other community members. These incidents demonstrate a pattern in which less lethal weapons were used not to respond to an imminent threat of violence, but to intimidate and disperse – without warning – individuals exercising their rights to freedom of peaceful assembly, expression and association. Amnesty International concludes that their use violated international human rights law and standards governing the use of force, as well as DHS's own policies governing the use of force.

▪ **Unlawful surveillance and facial recognition technology**

Across all four locations, Amnesty International documented the use of facial recognition technology, including the mobile phone application Mobile Fortify, by ICE and Border Patrol against people they perceived to be migrants whom they were attempting to detain, as well as rapid responders, people involved in mutual aid, and protesters. Amnesty International assesses that the facial recognition technology systems used by agents described in this report amount to 1:n systems – meaning a system seeking to identify an individual against a large image reference database, often created through the unlawful scraping of facial images without knowledge and consent –, or facial recognition for identification, which are systems of mass surveillance. Their use violates the rights to privacy and to equality and non-discrimination.

The organization further documented that federal agents photographed and filmed community members who were observing their actions, delivering mutual aid or protesting. On multiple occasions, rapid responders attempting to monitor ICE or Border Patrol operations by following federal vehicles would be “driven home”, a tactic in which federal agents, as a form of intimidation, intentionally drove to the rapid responder's residence while the rapid responder was following them. The use of helicopters was prevalent across all four cities, while the use of drones was common in Chicago, Minneapolis-St. Paul and New Orleans. Amnesty International concludes that these actions constitute unlawful surveillance in violation of the rights to privacy, and equality and non-discrimination.

▪ **Cruel and inhumane detention conditions and denial of due process**

Amnesty International documented ICE's misuse of field offices, processing centres and federal office buildings for prolonged detention, which reflects a pattern that has become widespread across the United States. Individuals detained during Operation Midway Blitz in Chicago were often first taken to the Broadview Processing Facility – an ICE service-processing centre; in Minneapolis-St. Paul people were taken to the Bishop Henry Whipple Federal Building – a federal-building field office; and in the Washington metro area people were often first taken to either ICE's Washington Field Office in Chantilly, Virginia or its Baltimore

Field Office in Baltimore, Maryland. These facilities operate small holding or processing rooms intended for short-term intake, transfer or processing of people detained by ICE – they are not designed for extended stays in detention. However, Amnesty International found that individuals were detained in these facilities for prolonged periods of time, well beyond ICE’s current 72-hour limit, which the agency had increased from 12 hours in June 2025.

Amnesty International concludes that detention conditions at the Broadview Processing Facility, the Bishop Henry Whipple Federal Building and the ICE Washington Field Office did not comply with international human rights law and standards during the immigration surges in Chicago, Minneapolis-St. Paul and Washington, DC. At the three locations, individuals were held in overcrowded and unsanitary conditions, healthcare services were non-existent, and access to legal representatives was severely restricted. Amnesty International concludes that this treatment constitutes cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment. Further, the unnecessary and prolonged detention of people in inhumane conditions in facilities not even equipped for overnight detention, combined with coercion to accept “voluntary” departure, may amount to torture.

Amnesty International also documented that detained individuals were denied access to their lawyers and families, that lawyers were prevented from contacting their clients, and that ICE sometimes refused to confirm whether individuals were in its custody or disclose their whereabouts, which constitutes unlawful incommunicado detention and possible acts of enforced disappearance.

▪ **System of impunity and other institutional failures within ICE**

Amnesty International finds that the human rights violations documented in this report cannot be attributed solely to individual ICE agent misconduct, inadequate training or isolated failures of oversight. ICE agents operated within an institutional environment – openly supported and expanded by the Trump administration – in which violent and racially discriminatory immigration enforcement practices were encouraged by senior government officials, including President Trump. Agents frequently operated without identification, safeguards intended to prevent and address misconduct were weakened or dismantled, and human rights violations were rarely followed by meaningful investigation or accountability. At the same time, the Trump administration dramatically and rapidly expanded ICE’s workforce, resources and operational reach while publicly defending agents accused of human rights violations and, on multiple occasions, shifting blame onto the victims of those violations and labelling them “domestic terrorists”. Importantly, these abuses and the environment of impunity are not new to the Trump administration. Rather, they have been consistent since the inception of ICE in 2003, and across presidential administrations regardless of political party.

Within this institutional environment, the racial discrimination, arbitrary and discriminatory arrests and detentions, harassment, intimidation, unlawful use of force, including lethal force, repression of peaceful protests, unlawful use of less-lethal force, unlawful surveillance, cruel, inhumane and degrading detention conditions that may violate the prohibition on torture, and unlawful incommunicado detention and possible acts of enforced disappearance, as well as many other serious human rights violations documented throughout this report, were not isolated incidents, but formed part of the deliberate manner in which the Trump administration’s mass detention and deportation policy was intended to be, and is being, implemented.

Amnesty International concludes that the scale, persistence and structural nature of these institutional failures cannot be adequately addressed through discrete reforms, such as additional training, revised operational guidance, vetting of or disciplinary measures against individual ICE agents. The failures documented in this report extend across ICE’s leadership, recruitment and training, operational practices, oversight and accountability mechanisms. These failures have plagued the agency for years and have created the institutional environment that allowed ICE to play the primary institutional role in implementing the Trump administration’s mass detention and deportation policy. Amnesty International therefore concludes that fundamental institutional dismantling of ICE, rather than piecemeal reform, is a necessary step to bring the United States’ immigration system into compliance with its international human rights obligations.

▪ **Entire communities living in fear**

Across Chicago, Minneapolis-St. Paul, New Orleans and surrounding areas, and the DMV, Amnesty International found that immigration enforcement operations fundamentally altered daily life for entire communities. Rather than affecting only those who were directly stopped or detained, the operations created a pervasive climate of fear that extended throughout migrant communities and beyond.

Migrants, asylum seekers, refugees and other racialized individuals remained inside their homes for weeks or months because they feared that leaving could expose them to detention. Neighbourhoods became unusually quiet as people withdrew from public life and sheltered inside their homes. Some people gradually resumed leaving their homes as the intensity of the operations decreased, but for others the fear persisted for months, with some individuals continuing to avoid public spaces despite having regular immigration status. As a result of the immigration enforcement operations, people stopped going to work, children missed school, people delayed or avoided medical care, congregants stopped attending places of worship, and people feared travelling to immigration appointments and court hearings. Children were among those most profoundly impacted by the operations, experiencing the consequences in numerous ways, including being approached by federal agents and asked to identify people, being used as bait, witnessing the arrests of parents and caregivers, being separated from family members, being left in the backseats of cars when their parents were detained, being forced to assume new caregiving responsibilities, being displaced from their homes, and living with the constant fear that their loved ones would be detained. Families lost breadwinners and faced food and housing insecurity.

The impacts of immigration enforcement operations extended far beyond the individuals who were directly stopped, detained or deported. Through widespread fear, racialized targeting, militarized tactics and family separation, the operations disrupted nearly every aspect of daily life within affected communities. Schools, healthcare facilities, places of worship, workplaces and neighbourhoods ceased to function as places of safety, while community organizations were forced to assume responsibilities ordinarily fulfilled by public institutions. The cumulative effect was not only the deprivation of individual rights, but the profound disruption of community life itself. Moreover, the operations have had profound and long-lasting psychological impacts on migrants, refugees, asylum seekers, their families and the wider community.

▪ **Communities resisting and protecting one another**

Alongside the scale of the violations documented, the four locations examined in this report demonstrate the extraordinary resistance and resilience of migrant, asylum seeker and refugee communities, and those who mobilized to defend them.

Across the four cities, community members rapidly established intricate rapid response and mutual aid networks. They operated ICE hotlines, developed hyper-local rapid response networks to monitor and document the activities of ICE, Border Patrol and other federal agents, organized neighbourhood patrols, delivered “Know Your Rights” (KYR) and constitutional observer trainings, used whistles and other alert systems to warn communities about immigration enforcement activity, delivered food and essential supplies to families afraid to leave their homes, organized rides and walking school buses, provided rent assistance and family safety planning, and expanded access to legal assistance.

These networks played an essential role in documenting human rights violations committed by ICE, Border Patrol and other federal agents, protecting migrants, asylum seekers, refugees and other racialized people, and providing material and emotional support to affected communities. Their work also demonstrated the importance of community documentation for accountability. Rapid responders and community members filmed immigration enforcement operations and, in several of the most serious incidents documented in this report, video evidence proved critical in establishing what had occurred and challenging official government accounts.

▪ **Key recommendations**

Taking into consideration Amnesty International’s independent findings, the experiences and perspectives of migrants, asylum seekers and refugees, community groups and organizations, and the United States’ human rights obligations under international law, Amnesty International makes a series of recommendations to the government of the United States. In order to create an immigration system that complies with international

human rights law and standards, Amnesty International calls on the Government of the United States to immediately abolish U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE). The organization also calls on the Government of the United States to end its cruel and racist policies of mass immigration detention and deportation; end racially discriminatory immigration enforcement; stop the criminalization of migration; ensure prompt, effective, independent and impartial investigations into human rights violations committed by federal agents and hold those responsible to account; end unlawful surveillance and the use of facial recognition technology for identification; and, protect the rights to peaceful assembly, expression and association.

2. Methodology

This report examines human rights violations committed by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) and other federal agencies during immigration enforcement operations in the United States, focusing on the following cities:

- Washington, DC – Federal Takeover: August 2025 to present
- Chicago, Illinois – Operation Midway Blitz: September to December 2025
- New Orleans, Louisiana – Operation Catahoula Crunch: December 2025 to February 2026
- Minneapolis-St. Paul, Minnesota – Operation Metro Surge: December 2025 to February 2026

Amnesty International selected these four locations because together they provide a diverse set of political, legal and demographic contexts. The four cities include jurisdictions with and without separation ordinances – limiting cooperation between local law enforcement and federal immigration authorities – and encompass different political contexts, including states led by Democratic and Republican governments. Washington, DC is unique because it is not a state and, as the seat of the federal government, federal authorities exercise a greater degree of control over local governance than in other jurisdictions. Focusing on these four locations permitted Amnesty International to analyse how immigration enforcement operations affect diverse communities across different political, legal, and historical contexts, and to assess whether the human rights violations documented in this report reflect broader national patterns rather than being isolated local incidents.

To produce this report, in March and May 2026, Amnesty International conducted research trips to Chicago, Minneapolis-St. Paul, New Orleans and surrounding areas, and Washington, DC. From March to June 2026, the organization interviewed 154 people across the four locations, including individuals from Guatemala, Honduras and Mexico who were directly impacted by immigration enforcement operations and their families, immigrant-led and civil society organizations, rapid responders, community and neighbourhood groups, protesters, lawyers and legal professionals, educators and school staff, healthcare professionals, faith leaders, academics and elected officials. Interviews were conducted both in-person and virtually, and in English or Spanish.

Amnesty International's Evidence Lab complemented interview testimony with the verification and analysis of 29 videos and 3 photographs.

The organization also reviewed relevant laws and policies, court documents, news articles, academic papers, government, United Nations and civil society reports, and statements by government agencies and officials.

Additionally, Amnesty International examined the design and implementation of the Trump administration's mass detention and deportation system to assess whether it constitutes racial discrimination under international human rights law. This assessment considered the language and imagery used in laws, directives, policies and official communications, as well as statements by government officials; the disproportionate impact of facially race-neutral laws, directives and practices on racialized individuals and communities; patterns of racially discriminatory immigration enforcement documented through interviews and other evidence; and available government data.

Amnesty International provided ICE, DHS and the governments of Illinois, Louisiana, Minnesota and Washington, DC, with an opportunity to respond to the findings of this research. The organization did not receive a response from any of these actors.

Acknowledgments

Amnesty International expresses its utmost gratitude and deep appreciation to all those who shared their experiences and expertise with the organization as part of this research. In some cases, names have been anonymized for reasons of confidentiality and safety. Amnesty International recognizes the courage and trust of those who shared their experiences of human rights violations with the organization. While this report cannot fully reflect the complexity of their experiences or the harms that they and their communities have endured as a result of immigration enforcement operations, Amnesty International hopes that this report will contribute to their demands for accountability, justice and reparations.

3. The Trump administration's mass detention and deportation system

3.1 State policy targeting migrants, asylum seekers and refugees

Amnesty International has documented that, since taking office on 20 January 2025, President Trump and his administration have subjected migrants, asylum seekers and refugees to a wide range of human rights violations.¹ The Trump administration has implemented a racist mass immigration detention and deportation system fuelled by racist, xenophobic and false narratives and white supremacist theories the aim of which is to employ the “total and efficient enforcement” of the state’s laws to remove as many racialized individuals from the United States as possible.² The rhetoric and the “rationale” employed by the administration are rooted in white supremacy.³

President Trump has vowed to remove 1 million individuals annually from the United States.⁴ In order to do so, his administration has adopted and implemented a series of laws, directives and practices which have removed regular immigration status from individuals, expanded federal agents’ ability to detain people, made it more difficult for individuals to be released from immigration detention and limited access to due process to make it easier to remove individuals from the United States.⁵ Importantly, the administration has invoked some of these laws in circumstances in which they do not lawfully apply and has interpreted others

¹ Amnesty International, *USA: Lives in Limbo: Devastating impacts of Trump's migration and asylum policies* (Index: AMR 51/9029/2025), 20 February 2025, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/amr51/9029/2025/en/>; Amnesty International, “Unlawful Expulsions to El Salvador Endanger Lives Amid Ongoing State of Emergency”, 25 March 2025, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2025/03/unlawful-expulsions-to-el-salvador-endanger-lives-amid-ongoing-state-of-emergency/>; Amnesty International, *Americas: Enforced disappearances in limbo: the human cost of repressive cooperation between the US and El Salvador* (Index: AMR 01/9259/2025), 14 April 2025, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/amr01/9259/2025/en/>; Amnesty International, *USA: Chaos & cruelty: 10 compounding assaults on human rights: A review of President Trump's first 100 days in office* (Index: AMR 51/9313/2025), 30 April 2025, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/amr51/9313/2025/en/>; Amnesty International, *USA: Dehumanized by design: Human rights violations in El Paso* (Index: AMR 51/9386/2025), 22 May 2025, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/amr51/9386/2025/en/>; Amnesty International, *USA: Torture and enforced disappearances in the Sunshine State: Human Rights Violations at “Alligator Alcatraz” and Krome in Florida* (Index No. AMR 51/0511/2025), 4 December 2025, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/AMR51/0511/2025/en/>; Amnesty International, *Ring the Alarm Bells: Rising authoritarian practices and erosion of human rights in the United States*, 20 January 2026, <https://www.amnestyusa.org/reports/ringing-the-alarm-bells-rising-authoritarian-practices-and-erosion-of-human-rights-in-the-united-states/>.

² Executive Order, *Protecting the American People Against Invasion*, 20 January 2025, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/2025/01/protecting-the-american-people-against-invasion/>; The Heritage Foundation, *Mandate for Leadership – The Conservative Promise – Project 2025 Presidential Transition Project*, 2025, https://static.heritage.org/project2025/2025_MandateForLeadership_FULL.pdf, pp. 133-153; ACLU, “Project 2025, Explained”, <https://www.aclu.org/project-2025-explained>.

³ Tazreena Sajjad, *Still about race: white supremacy, immigration politics and Trumpism*, Institute of Race Relations, 2026, <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/03063968261438746>; The Conversation, “US refugee policy for white South Africans is part of a century-long effort to keep some English-speaking nations white”, 7 April 2026, https://theconversation.com/us-refugee-policy-for-white-south-africans-is-part-of-a-century-long-effort-to-keep-some-english-speaking-nations-white-277171?mc_cid=cf38408b29&mc_eid=9dff22fc30.

⁴ AIC, *Mass deportation: Analyzing the Trump administration's attacks on immigrants, democracy and America*, 23 July 2025, <https://www.americanimmigrationcouncil.org/report/mass-deportation-trump-democracy/>, p. 48; USA Today, “ICE planning dramatic detention expansion as it tries to deport 1 million people annually”, 25 April 2025, <https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/politics/2025/04/25/trump-contractors-ice-detentions-deportations/83250623007/>.

⁵ Executive Order, *Securing Our Borders*, 20 January 2025, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/2025/01/securing-our-borders/>; Executive Order, *Clarifying the Military's Role in Protecting the Territorial Integrity of the United States*, 20 January 2025, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/2025/01/clarifying-the-militarys-role-in-protecting-the-territorial-integrity-of-the-united-states/>; Executive Order, *Guaranteeing the States Protection against Invasion*, 20 January 2025, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/2025/01/guaranteeing-the-states-protection-against-invasion/>; Executive Order, *Declaring a National Emergency At the Southern Border of the United States*, 20 January 2025, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/2025/01/declaring-a-national-emergency-at-the-southern-border-of-the-united-states/>; Executive Order, *Protecting the American People Against Invasion* (previously cited); Executive Order, *Protecting the United States from Foreign Terrorists and Other Public Safety and National Security Threats*, 20 January 2025, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/2025/01/protecting-the-united-states-from-foreign-terrorists-and-other-national-security-and-public-safety-threats/>; Executive Order, *Invocation of the Alien Enemies Act Regarding the Invasion of the United States by Tren de Aragua*, 15 March 2025, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/2025/03/invocation-of-the-alien-enemies-act-regarding-the-invasion-of-the-united-states-by-tren-de-aragua/>.

expansively to justify its attacks on migrants, asylum seekers and refugees.⁶ Many of these laws are subject to ongoing litigation.

3.1.1 Racist, xenophobic and false narratives and rhetoric

The Trump administration's racist mass immigration detention and deportation system is fuelled by racist, xenophobic and false narratives and white supremacist theories. Multiple executive orders refer to notions that the United States is “under attack”, “overrun by cartels, criminal gangs, known terrorists, human traffickers, smugglers, unvetted military-age males from foreign adversaries, and illicit narcotics that harm Americans”, “has endured a large-scale invasion at an unprecedented level” and “oversaw an unprecedented flood of illegal immigration”.⁷ These same orders blame migrants, asylum seekers and refugees for security, economic and social problems within the United States, framing migration and asylum as issues of national security and criminality.⁸ The executive orders then attempt to serve as justification for the Trump administration's mass detention and deportation system as a way of “protect[ing] the American people from the disastrous effects of unlawful mass migration and resettlement.”⁹

The administration has also reinstated the use of terms such as “alien” and “illegal alien” to refer to non-citizens and individuals without regular immigration status and has repeatedly linked this terminology to narratives portraying migration to the United States as an “invasion”.¹⁰ President Trump has said that he is “shrinking the illegal alien population in the United States” in order to “fulfil his legal obligation to end this invasion and protect the American people”.¹¹

3.1.2 De-documentation: Measures taken to make racialized people removable

The Trump administration has adopted a robust de-documentation process aimed at removing lawful temporary immigration status from individuals who are already in the United States – some of whom are waiting for the adjudication of their asylum claims – in order to detain and deport them. The administration cancelled the humanitarian parole program for individuals from Cuba, Haiti, Nicaragua and Venezuela (CHNV) and terminated the parole status of the over 500,000 individuals who had entered the United States through the program.¹² It has also moved to terminate temporary protected status (TPS) designations for Afghanistan, Cameroon, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Haiti, Honduras, Lebanon, Myanmar, Nicaragua, Nepal, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, Syria, Ukraine, Venezuela and Yemen, which would result in over 1.3 million people losing lawful temporary status in the United States, exposing them to detention and deportation.¹³ All of the terminations have been challenged in court. On 25 June 2026, the Supreme Court granted the administration permission to move forward with the terminations of TPS for Haiti and Syria, impacting the other remaining countries.¹⁴

⁶ For example, 8 U.S.C. § 1159(a)(1)(C); The Alien Enemies Act of 1798.

⁷ Executive Order, *Securing Our Borders* (previously cited); Executive Order, *Clarifying the Military's Role in Protecting the Territorial Integrity* (previously cited); Executive Order, *Guaranteeing the States Protection against Invasion* (previously cited); Executive Order, *Declaring a National Emergency At the Southern Border* (previously cited); Executive Order, *Protecting the American People Against Invasion* (previously cited); Executive Order, *Protecting the United States from Foreign Terrorists* (previously cited); Executive Order, *Invocation of the Alien Enemies Act* (previously cited).

⁸ Executive Order, *Securing Our Borders* (previously cited); Executive Order, *Clarifying the Military's Role in Protecting the Territorial Integrity* (previously cited); Executive Order, *Guaranteeing the States Protection against Invasion* (previously cited); Executive Order, *Declaring a National Emergency At the Southern Border* (previously cited); Executive Order, *Protecting the American People Against Invasion* (previously cited); Executive Order, *Protecting the United States from Foreign Terrorists* (previously cited); Executive Order, *Invocation of the Alien Enemies Act* (previously cited).

⁹ Executive Order, *Securing our Borders* (previously cited).

¹⁰ White House, “ALIENS”, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/aliens/>; Immigration Policy Tracking Project, “Trump administration resumes using the words “alien” and “illegal alien” to describe noncitizens and migrants”, 2025, <https://immpolicytracking.org/policies/trump-administration-resumes-using-the-word-alien-to-describe-noncitizens/>.

¹¹ White House, “Fact Sheet: President Donald J. Trump Establishes Project Homecoming”, 9 May 2025, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/fact-sheets/2025/05/fact-sheet-president-donald-j-trump-establishes-project-homecoming/>.

¹² The Supreme Court upheld the cancellation of the CNV parole program on 30 May 2025. DHS, “DHS Issues Notices of Termination for the CHNV Parole Program, Encourages Parolees to Self-Deport Immediately”, 12 June 2025, <https://www.dhs.gov/news/2025/06/12/dhs-issues-notices-termination-chnv-parole-program-encourages-parolees-self-deport>; Executive Order, *Securing our Borders* (previously cited).

¹³ USCIS, “Temporary Protected Status”, 5 November 2025, <https://www.uscis.gov/humanitarian/temporary-protected-status>; NILC, “The Price of Cruelty: How Trump's Mass Deportation Agenda Endangers Us All”, 3 October 2025, <https://www.nilc.org/articles/the-price-of-cruelty-how-trumps-mass-deportation-agenda-endangers-us-all/>.

¹⁴ Supreme Court of the United States, *Mullin v. Doe*, 25 June 2026, https://www.supremecourt.gov/opinions/25pdf/25-1083_f204.pdf; Just Security, “Sanitized and Unreviewable: Unpacking the Supreme Court's Mullin v Doe on Ending Temporary Protected Status for 1.3m Noncitizens”, 26 June 2026, <https://www.justsecurity.org/144302/supreme-court-mullin-doe-tps/>. The Supreme Court case arose from consolidated challenges to the termination of Haitian and Syrian TPS: *Mullin v. Doe* (Syrian) and *Trump v. Miot* (Haitian). However, the decision will impact numerous other lawsuits on TPS termination for other countries that are still pending in the lower courts.

3.1.3 Expansion of federal agents' ability to detain people

Other measures implemented by the Trump administration are designed to facilitate and enhance ICE and other government agencies' ability to detain migrants and people seeking asylum. The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) rescinded guidelines which prohibited immigration enforcement actions near "sensitive locations" such as schools, churches, medical facilities, and public protests, allowing agents to conduct enforcement actions in or near these areas.¹⁵ The Department of Justice (DOJ) issued interim policy changes allowing it to criminally prosecute individuals if they entered the US irregularly and has started criminally charging individuals with "illegal entry" under Title 8, Section 1325 of the U.S. Code.¹⁶ On 29 January 2025, President Trump signed the Laken Riley Act into law which requires that DHS detain any individual who is unlawfully present in the United States and has been "charged with, arrested for, convicted for or admits to having committed acts that constitute the essential elements of burglary, theft, larceny or shoplifting".¹⁷ In February 2025, an ICE email directive instructed agents to review all cases of individuals previously released from ICE detention due to a lack of removal prospects, with the aim of re-detaining and removing them, including people with specific protections against removal to their home countries.¹⁸ In March 2025, the administration invoked the Alien Enemies Act purportedly enabling it to detain and remove Venezuelan citizens that it considered to be members of the criminal group Tren de Aragua.¹⁹ In March and April 2025, 252 Venezuelan migrants and asylum seekers were unlawfully expelled from the United States and transferred to a mega-prison in El Salvador, known as the Terrorism Confinement Centre (CECOT), in clear violation of the United States' non-refoulement obligation under the Convention against Torture.²⁰ The administration has not used the Alien Enemies Act since 2025.

The Trump administration has undertaken large-scale, militarized federal immigration enforcement operations in cities throughout the United States – four of these enforcement operations are analysed in this report. Since January 2025, the administration has pursued increasingly high quotas for the number of individuals that ICE and other agencies should arrest for immigration-related reasons each day. The administration initially imposed a target of 75 arrests per day for each ICE field office – or 1,200 to 1,500 arrests nationwide. In May 2025, the nationwide quota was more than doubled to 3,000 arrests per day.²¹ A media outlet reporting on the quotas interviewed an ICE official who stated, "All that matters is numbers, pure numbers. Quantity over quality."²² From January 2025 to July 2026, ICE and CBP arrested over 597,271 individuals, compared with 423,478 arrests during the preceding 19-month period under the Biden administration – representing a 41% increase in arrests.²³ In July 2026, the monthly number of people

¹⁵ ICE, Interim Guidance: Civil Immigration Enforcement Actions in or near Courthouses, January 2025, https://iptp-production.s3.amazonaws.com/media/documents/2025.01_ICE_Courthouse_Enforcement_Guidance.pdf; DHS, "Statement from a DHS Spokesperson on Directives Expanding Law Enforcement and Ending the Abuse of Humanitarian Parole", 21 January 2025, https://iptp-production.s3.amazonaws.com/media/documents/2025.01.21_DHS_Statement_on_Expanding_Law_Enforcement_and_Humanitarian_Parole.pdf.

¹⁶ DOJ, Interim Policy Changes Regarding Charging, Sentencing and Immigration Enforcement, 21 January 2025, https://iptp-production.s3.amazonaws.com/media/documents/2025.01.21_Acting_Deputy_AG_Memo_on_Interim_Policy_Changes_Regarding_Immigrati_Z9DGfe6.pdf; 8 U.S.C. 1325, <https://uscode.house.gov/view.xhtml?req=granuleid:USC-prelim-title8-section1325&num=0&edition=prelim>.

¹⁷ H.R.7511 - Laken Riley Act, 29 January 2025, <https://www.congress.gov/bills/118th/congress/house-bill/7511>.

¹⁸ Immigration Policy Tracking Project, "2025.02.18 ICE Email Directive on Expedited Removal and Nondetained Docket", <https://immigrationpolicytracking.org/policies/ice-directs-review-on-non-detained-docket-for-redetention-and-removal/#/tab-policy-documents>.

¹⁹ Executive Order, *Invocation of the Alien Enemies Act* (previously cited).

²⁰ Amnesty International, *Americas: Enforced disappearances in limbo* (previously cited); Amnesty International, "Unlawful Expulsions to El Salvador" (previously cited).

²¹ United States District Court for the Northern District of Illinois Eastern Division, *Moreno Gonzalez v. Noem*, Complaint, Case No. 1:25-cv-13323, 30 October 2025, <https://www.aclu-il.org/cases/moreno-gonzalez-v-noem/?document=Moreno-Gonzalez-v-Noem-Complaint>, para. 36; United States District Court for the District of Columbia, *Escobar Molina v. DHS*, Decision of Preliminary Injunction, Case No. 25-3417 (BAH), 2 December 2025, <https://www.acludc.org/cases/escobar-molina-v-dept-of-homeland-security-challenging-warrantless-immigration-arrests-without-probable-cause-in-dc/?document=District-Court-Decision-on-Preliminary-Injunction#documents>, pp. 38 & 52-53; The Guardian, "Trump administration sets quota to arrest 3,000 people a day in anti-immigration agenda", 29 May 2025, <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2025/may/29/trump-ice-arrest-quota>; Reuters, "ICE's tactics draw criticism as it triples daily arrest targets", 10 June 2025, <https://www.reuters.com/world/us/ices-tactics-draw-criticism-it-triples-daily-arrest-targets-2025-06-10/>.

²² United States District Court for the Northern District of Illinois Eastern Division, *Moreno Gonzalez v. Noem*, Complaint (previously cited), para. 38; New York Post, "Trump admin's 3,000 ICE arrests per day quota is taking focus off criminals and 'killing morale': insiders", 17 June 2025, <https://nypost.com/2025/06/17/us-news/trump-admins-3000-ice-arrests-per-day-quota-is-taking-focus-off-criminals-and-killing-morale-insiders/>.

²³ ICE, "FY 2026 ICE Statistics – Detention FY 2026 YTD, Alternatives to Detention FY 2026 YTD and Facilities FY 2026 YTD, Footnotes", 2026, https://view.officeapps.live.com/op/view.aspx?src=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.ice.gov%2Fdoclib%2Fdetention%2FFY26_detentionStats07202026.xlsx&wdOrigin=BROWSELINK; TRAC Immigration, "CBP vs ICE Book-Ins to Detention, October 2018 – 04/04/2026", https://tracreports.org/immigration/detentionstats/book_in_agcn_program_table.html.

arrested by ICE and CBP reached a five-year high with 49,517 individuals arrested that month.²⁴ The Vera Institute of Justice's analysis of ICE statistics demonstrates that the vast majority of people were arrested by ICE and not CBP indicating an increase in interior or community immigration enforcement under the second Trump administration as opposed to enforcement against new arrivals at the border.²⁵

3.1.4 Expansion of the use of immigration detention

As a result of measures adopted by the administration to remove status from individuals along with the adoption of measures to facilitate their detention, the use of immigration detention has substantially increased.²⁶ In January 2026, the number of individuals in ICE detention reached an all-time high of 71,937 people.²⁷ As of July 2026, there were 65,765 individuals in detention, which is largely considered an undercount because it does not include thousands of people in short-term ICE processing facilities, ICE field offices, federal pretrial detention, or other facilities.²⁸ The Vera Institute of Justice's analysis of ICE statistics found that "every month during the current Trump administration has had a higher ADP [average daily population] than at any point during the Biden administration, when the ADP ranged from 14,000 to 39,000 people."²⁹ ICE has adopted a policy which makes individuals who entered the US irregularly ineligible for bond meaning that they are forced to remain in detention for the duration of their removal proceedings.³⁰ At least 50 individuals have died in ICE custody since January 2025.³¹ The administration also resumed family detention.³²

While the Trump administration has expanded ICE's detention capacity, detention conditions have dramatically deteriorated.³³ Amnesty International and other organizations have documented that individuals in immigration detention are frequently pressured or coerced to agree to "voluntary" departure from the United States and declining detention conditions are intended to force people to sign their deportations in order to escape the cruelty of detention.³⁴

3.1.5 Expansion of removals without due process

The Trump administration has also adopted measures enabling it to remove people from the United States as quickly as possible, without due process. DHS expanded the application of expedited removal procedures to anywhere in the country – it was previously limited to within 100 miles (160 kilometres) of a US land

²⁴ ICE, "FY 2026 ICE Statistics" (previously cited); Deportation Data Project, "Arrests", <https://deportationdata.org/index.html>; The Guardian, "ICE arrested 50,000 people in July – quietly the biggest month in Trump's second term", 26 August 2026, <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2026/aug/26/record-arrests-deportations-immigrants>.

²⁵ ICE, "FY 2026 ICE Statistics" (previously cited); Vera Institute of Justice, "ICE Fiscal Year-to-Date (FYTD) Detention Statistics", July 2026, <https://github.com/vera-institute/ice-fytd-stats>.

²⁶ AIC, "Immigration Detention Expansion in Trump's Second Term", 14 January 2026, <https://www.americanimmigrationcouncil.org/report/immigration-detention/>; Stateline, "For-profit immigration detention expands as Trump accelerates his deportation plans States may not be able to limit or block new contracts with private companies", 11 April 2025, <https://stateline.org/2025/04/11/for-profit-immigration-detention-expands-as-trump-accelerates-his-deportation-plans/>; AIC, "Congress Approves Even More Funding for Detention, Deportation," 14 March 2025, <https://www.americanimmigrationcouncil.org/press-release/congress-approves-even-more-funding-detention-deportation/>.

²⁷ ICE, "FY 2026 ICE Statistics" (previously cited); Vera Institute of Justice, "ICE Fiscal Year-to-Date (FYTD) Detention Statistics" (previously cited); TRAC Immigration, "ICE Detainees", https://tracreports.org/immigration/detentionstats/pop_agcn_table.html.

²⁸ ICE, "FY 2026 ICE Statistics" (previously cited); Vera Institute of Justice, "ICE Fiscal Year-to-Date (FYTD) Detention Statistics" (previously cited); TRAC Immigration, "ICE Detainees" (previously cited); CBS News, "ICE's detainee population reaches 66,000, a new record high, statistics show", 6 November 2025, <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/ices-detainee-population-reaches-66000-a-new-record-high-statistics-show/>.

²⁹ Vera Institute of Justice, "ICE Fiscal Year-to-Date (FYTD) Detention Statistics" (previously cited).

³⁰ This policy was upheld by the Board of Immigration Appeals (BIA) in September 2025. *Matter of Yajure Hurtado*, 29 I&N Dec. 216 (BIA 2025), 5 September 2025, <https://www.justice.gov/eoir/media/1413311/dl?inline>; AIC, "BIA Decision Strips Immigration Judges of Bond Authority, All but Guaranteeing Mandatory Detention for Undocumented Immigrants", 12 September 2025, <https://www.americanimmigrationcouncil.org/blog/bia-ruling-immigration-judges-bond-mandatory-detention-undocumented-immigrants/>.

³¹ ICE, "Detainee Death Reporting", 29 June 2026, <https://www.ice.gov/detain/detainee-death-reporting>; NIP, "Mourning Those Who Have Died in ICE Custody", 1 September 2026, <https://nipnl.org/news/mourning-those-who-have-died-ice-custody>; DWN, "DC press conference honors lives lost to ICE detention — the highest death toll in decades", 30 October 2025, <https://www.detentionwatchnetwork.org/pressroom/releases/2025/dc-press-conference-honors-lives-lost-ice-detention-highest-death-toll>; OHCHR, "US: Türk alarmed at deaths in ICE custody, calls for urgent preventive action", 26 June 2026, <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2026/06/us-turk-alarmed-deaths-ice-custody-calls-urgent-preventive-action>.

³² DWN, "Family Detention", <https://www.detentionwatchnetwork.org/issues/family-detention>; HRF & RAICES, *A New Era of ICE Family Prisons*, 1 April 2026, <https://cdn.sanity.io/files/1e7vpawz/production/dc99c82e1021f61af6af68e71b26a15e90540143.pdf>.

³³ Amnesty International, *USA: Torture and enforced disappearances in the Sunshine State* (previously cited); Amnesty International, *USA: Dehumanized by design* (previously cited); HRW & Physicians for Human Rights, *Dying in Detention: Rising Deaths in an Expanding US Immigration Detention System*, 25 June 2026, https://www.hrw.org/sites/default/files/media_2026/06/us_deathsindetention0626web_0.pdf; AIC, "Inhumane Detention Conditions Aren't Uncommon, They're Part of the Problem", 15 July 2026, <https://www.americanimmigrationcouncil.org/blog/inhumane-ice-detention-conditions-delaney-hall/>.

³⁴ Amnesty International, *USA: Torture and enforced disappearances in the Sunshine State* (previously cited).

border –, meaning that individuals who do not have regular immigration status and are unable to demonstrate more than two years of presence in the US, can be subject to mandatory detention and removed without their case being heard by an immigration judge.³⁵ According to government sources, since January 2025, the Trump administration has removed over 605,000 people from the United States – often without due process – and 1.9 million people have self-deported.³⁶

The Trump administration has also significantly expanded the removal of individuals to countries that they are not from, having signed at least 35 agreements to facilitate these removals.³⁷ Since January 2025, over 21,000 individuals have been removed to third countries, in most cases without due process, including in circumstances that violated the United States' non-refoulement obligations. In many cases, individuals had ongoing asylum claims or had already been granted some form of protection, including withholding of removal, in the United States.³⁸

3.1.6 Racial discrimination within the Trump administration's mass detention and deportation system

Article 1.1 of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD) defines racial discrimination as “any distinction, exclusion, restriction or preference based on race, colour, descent, or national or ethnic origin which has the purpose or effect of nullifying or impairing the recognition, enjoyment or exercise, on an equal footing, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural or any other field of public life.”³⁹ According to international human rights law and standards, the United States has the obligation to not only refrain from discriminating against individuals, but to also protect people from direct and indirect racial discrimination.

ICERD's definition of racial discrimination covers direct discrimination, as well as instances of indirect racial discrimination, which also constitute manifestations of systemic racism. Laws, policies and practices may not be aimed or intended to affect a certain group but may inadvertently do so – they may have an “unjustified disparate impact on a group” and thereby constitute discrimination.⁴⁰ Indirect racial discrimination occurs when a seemingly neutral provision, criterion or practice entails a particular disadvantage for persons belonging to a specific group based on a prohibited ground or puts them at a disadvantage unless that provision, criterion or practice has some legitimate objective or justification and is proportional under international law.⁴¹

³⁵ DHS, Designating Aliens for Expedited Removal, 24 January 2025, https://iftp-production.s3.amazonaws.com/media/documents/Expanded_Expedited_Removal_FRN.pdf. Prior to the first Trump administration, expedited removal procedures applied to individuals who entered the US irregularly who were detained within 14 days of their entry into the country and within 100 miles of a US land border. In 2019, the first Trump administration expanded expedited removal procedures to individuals without regular migration status anywhere in the country who could not prove they had resided in the US for at least two years. This expanded expedited removal policy was rescinded by the Biden administration and subsequently reinstated by the second Trump administration. Forum Together, “Fact Sheet: Expanded Expedited Removal”, 14 May 2025, <https://forumtogether.org/article/fact-sheet-expanded-expedited-removal/>.

³⁶ The White House, “Secure the Border”, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/priorities/border-immigration/>; DHS, “DHS removes more than half a million illegal aliens from US”, 27 October 2025, <https://www.dhs.gov/news/2025/10/27/dhs-removes-more-half-million-illegal-aliens-us>.

³⁷ Third Country Deportation Watch, “Banished by bargain: Third country deportation watch – Monitoring the human cost of the U.S. Government's forced third country transfer agreements”, <https://www.thirdcountrydeportationwatch.org/>; Amnesty International, “How do US “third country removals” work and are they legal?”, 19 June 2026, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/campaigns/2026/06/how-do-us-third-country-removals-work-and-are-they-legal/>; Amnesty International, “Eswatini: Fourth US third-country removal operation raises fresh human rights concerns”, 10 July 2026, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2026/07/eswatini-fourth-us-third-country-removal-operation-raises-fresh-human-rights-concerns/>; Council on Foreign Relations, “What Are Third-Country Deportations, and Why Is Trump Using Them?”, 3 September 2025, <https://www.cfr.org/articles/what-are-third-country-deportations-and-why-trump-using-them>.

³⁸ Third Country Deportation Watch, “Banished by bargain: Third country deportation watch” (previously cited); HRF, *Slammed Doors: Use of Asylum Cooperative Agreements to Unlawfully Reject Asylum Cases*, July 2026, <https://cdn.sanity.io/files/1e7vpawz/production/6d7534c9d0a13149ca3e4ae1211a2ec086f2f046.pdf>; HRW, “Casting Us Aside to Die”: Cuban and Other Third-Country Nationals Deported from the US to Mexico, 27 May 2026, https://www.hrw.org/sites/default/files/media_2026/05/us_cubandeportations0526_full.pdf; HRW, “Nobody Cared, Nobody Listened”: The US Expulsion of Third-Country Nationals to Panama, 24 April 2025, https://www.hrw.org/sites/default/files/media_2025/04/us_panama0425%20web.pdf; HRW, “The Strategy Is to Break Us”: The US Expulsion of Third-Country Nationals to Costa Rica, 22 May 2025, https://www.hrw.org/sites/default/files/media_2025/05/costarica0525%20web.pdf.

³⁹ ICERD, Art. 1.1.

⁴⁰ CERD, General recommendation 14 on article 1, paragraph 1, of the Convention, 1993, para. 2.

⁴¹ CIRD, Art. 1; CERD, General Recommendation No. 30 Discrimination against non-citizens, U.N. Doc. CERD/C/64/Misc.11/rev.3, 5 August 2004; UN Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, Report: “Racial discrimination in the context of in the context of laws, policies and practices concerning citizenship, nationality and immigration”, UN Doc. A/HRC/38/52, 25 April 2018, para. 14; The CERD and the UN Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of racism have emphasized the importance of analysing the effects of facially race-neutral laws and policies.

To provide evidence of indirect racial discrimination, the following elements must be considered: (a) that there is a provision, criterion or practice that, on its face, applies equally regardless of race, skin colour, descent, or national or ethnic origin; (b) that the provision, criterion or practice disproportionately disadvantages individuals of a particular group based on race, skin colour, descent, or national or ethnic origin; and, (c) that the differential impact lacks a legitimate aim or, if there is a legitimate aim, the means of achieving it are not proportional.⁴²

According to the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD), states must “ensure that immigration policies do not have the effect of discriminating against persons on the basis of race, colour, descent, or national or ethnic origin.”⁴³ The CERD has called on states to ensure that the implementation of any legislation does not have discriminatory effects on non-citizens, including immigration and visa policies, laws and practices.⁴⁴ The Committee has further called on states to ensure that laws concerning deportation or other forms of removal do not discriminate in purpose or effect among non-citizens on the basis of race, colour, or ethnic or national origin.⁴⁵

Amnesty International has documented systemic racial discrimination in the United States for decades, with Black people disproportionately impacted by human rights violations across areas including policing, the death penalty, surveillance, and online violence and abuse.⁴⁶ Moreover, the organization has previously found that systemic racial discrimination, and especially anti-Black racism, is embedded within the US immigration system.⁴⁷

As stated above, the Trump administration is implementing a mass immigration detention and deportation system which is comprised of a series of laws, directives and practices targeting migrants, asylum seekers and refugees. Some of these measures result in direct discrimination against individuals on the basis of race, skin colour, national or ethnic origin.⁴⁸ For example, the Trump administration has completely banned the entry into the United States of nationals from 19 countries and individuals using travel documents issued by the Palestinian Authority, and partially banned the entry of nationals from an additional 19 countries.⁴⁹ These countries have predominantly Black, Brown and Muslim-majority populations. The former UN Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, E. Tendayi Achiume, stated that, “blanket immigration bans that target particular nationalities with the intent

⁴² HRC, General Comment No. 18: Non-discrimination, 10 November 1989, para. 13; CERD, General recommendation 14 (previously cited), para. 2. This requires the following: (a) The difference in treatment pursues a legitimate aim, such as national security or public order; and (b) There is a reasonable relationship of proportionality between the means employed and the aim, meaning that the means employed are: appropriate, that is the policy is a suitable and effective means of achieving the intended aim; necessary, that is there are no other, less discriminatory policies that could meet the same aim; and proportionate to that aim, that is the significance of the aim pursued outweighs the disadvantage suffered by the targets of discrimination and their wider community. This assessment of appropriateness, necessity, and proportionality is often referred to collectively as the “proportionality principle.”

⁴³ CERD, General Recommendation No. 30 (previously cited), para. 9.

⁴⁴ CERD, General Recommendation No. 30 (previously cited), paras. 7 & 9.

⁴⁵ CERD, General Recommendation No. 30 (previously cited), para. 25.

⁴⁶ Amnesty International, *USA: Torture, ill-treatment and excessive force by police in Los Angeles, California* (Index: AMR 51/076/1992), 31 May 1992, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/amr51/076/1992/en/>; Amnesty International, *The world is watching: Mass violations by U.S. police of Black Lives Matter protesters' rights* (Index: AMR 51/2807/2020), 4 August 2020, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/amr51/2807/2020/en/>; Amnesty International, *USA: Developments on the death penalty during 1993* (Index: AMR 51/002/1994), 1 March 1994, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/amr51/002/1994/en/>; Amnesty International, *USA: The death penalty in Georgia: racist, arbitrary and unfair* (Index: AMR 51/025/1996), 31 May 1996, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/amr51/025/1996/en/>; Amnesty International, *USA: Death by discrimination – the continuing role of race in capital cases* (Index: AMR 51/046/2003), 23 April 2003, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/amr51/046/2003/en/>; Amnesty International, “USA: Facial recognition technology reinforcing racist stop-and-frisk policing in New York”, 15 February 2022, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2022/02/usa-facial-recognition-technology-reinforcing-racist-stop-and-frisk-policing-in-new-york-new-research/>; Amnesty International, “Troll Patrol Findings: Using Crowdsourcing, Data Science & Machine Learning to Measure Violence and Abuse against Women on Twitter”, 18 December 2018, <https://decoders.amnesty.org/projects/troll-patrol/findings>.

⁴⁷ Amnesty International, “They did not treat us like people”: Race and migration-related torture and other ill-treatment of Haitians seeking safety in the USA (Index: AMR 36/5973/2022), 22 September 2022, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/amr36/5973/2022/en/>.

⁴⁸ Amnesty International, “USA: Trump’s travel ban will harm people seeking safety, spread hate and discrimination”, 5 June 2025, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2025/06/usa-trumps-travel-ban-will-harm-people-seeking-safety/>.

⁴⁹ Presidential Proclamation, *Restricting the Entry of Foreign Nationals to Protect the United States from Foreign Terrorists and other National Security and Public Safety Threats*, 4 June 2025, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/2025/06/restricting-the-entry-of-foreign-nationals-to-protect-the-united-states-from-foreign-terrorists-and-other-national-security-and-public-safety-threats/>; Presidential Proclamation, *Restricting and Limiting the Entry of Foreign Nationals to Protect the Security of the United States*, 16 December 2025, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/2025/12/restricting-and-limiting-the-entry-of-foreign-nationals-to-protect-the-security-of-the-united-states/>.

or effect of discriminating on the basis of race, colour, national or ethnic origin are in clear violation of article 1(3) of the [ICERD].”⁵⁰

Other measures within the Trump administration’s mass detention and deportation system are on their face race-neutral, however, they disproportionately impact racialized individuals. As indicated above, racist, xenophobic and false narratives and white supremacist theories underpin the Trump administration’s mass detention and deportation system. The language and imagery used by the Trump administration, both in public statements and official documents, is racist, discriminatory, xenophobic and dehumanizing.⁵¹ Most recently, in August 2026, the White House posted a graphic on social media entitled “The Magic Deportation Bus” – referencing the television cartoon “The Magic School Bus” – depicting handcuffed Brown men in the back of a school bus accompanied by a Fox News headline which stated that ICE had arrested a “jaw dropping number of illegal immigrants in massive DC area operation.”⁵² In a 2026 decision issued by the CERD under its Early Warning and Urgent Action Procedure, the Committee stated that it was “Deeply concerned about the reportedly increased use of racist hate speech, including the use of derogatory and dehumanizing language, and the dissemination of negative and harmful stereotypes targeting migrants, refugees, asylum seekers, including by portraying them as criminals or as a burden, by politicians and influential public figures at the highest level of the State Party, particularly its President, which fosters intolerance and may incite racial discrimination, hate crimes and hate speech, particularly on the Internet and social media, and about the insufficient measures to prevent and address racist hate speech.”⁵³ As set out in Section 5.1, Amnesty International documented the disproportionate impact of immigration enforcement operations carried out by ICE, Border Patrol and other federal agents on racialized individuals.⁵⁴ Federal agents targeted individuals perceived to be migrants based on their race, skin colour, national origin or ethnicity, and their intersection with other characteristics such as language and accent, as well as occupations, workplaces and locations that federal agents associated with racialized migrant communities.

While states have a legitimate interest in administering their immigration laws, measures adopted to pursue that aim must comply with international human rights law and standards, including the principles of equality and non-discrimination, necessity and proportionality. Amnesty International considers that the disproportionate impact of the Trump administration’s mass detention and deportation system on racialized individuals cannot be justified as necessary or proportionate to this aim. As documented in Section 5.1, the system has been implemented through measures that have resulted in serious human rights violations, including racially discriminatory immigrant enforcement and arbitrary and discriminatory arrests and detention. These measures go far beyond what is necessary to administer immigration laws and impose severe and disproportionate harms on racialized individuals and communities.

In order to understand and address the way systemic racial discrimination and xenophobia manifest and intersect, international human rights standards require states to collect data.⁵⁵ The Durban Declaration and

⁵⁰ UN Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, Report: “Racial discrimination in the context of in the context of laws, policies and practices concerning citizenship, nationality and immigration” (previously cited), para. 21.

⁵¹ CAPAC, “CAPAC Members Condemn Trump’s Racist Post Against Indian and Chinese Immigrants”, 24 April 2026, <https://japal.house.gov/2026/04/24/capac-members-condemn-trumps-racist-post-against-indian-and-chinese-immigrants/>; Dick Durbin, US Senator for Illinois, “Durbin Condemns President Trump’s Racist Comments Towards Immigrants In Senate Judiciary Committee Executive Meeting”, 11 December 2025, <https://www.durbin.senate.gov/newsroom/press-releases/durbin-condemns-president-trumps-racist-comments-towards-immigrants-in-senate-judiciary-committee-executive-meeting>; NILC, “Trump’s Words Aren’t Just Insults—They’re Policy Signals”, 12 December 2025, <https://www.nilc.org/articles/trumps-words-arent-just-insults-theyre-policy-signals/>; NPR, “Trump launches fresh attacks from familiar playbook with tirade on Somali immigrants”, 4 December 2025, <https://www.npr.org/2025/12/04/nx-s1-5630915/trump-launches-fresh-attacks-from-familiar-playbook-with-tirade-on-somali-immigrants>; POLITICO, “We watched 20 Trump rallies. His racist, anti-immigrant messaging is getting darker.”, 12 October 2024, <https://www.politico.com/news/2024/10/12/trump-racist-rhetoric-immigrants-00183537>; NBC News, “From ‘rapists’ to ‘eating the pets’: Trump has long used degrading language toward immigrants”, 19 September 2024, <https://www.nbcnews.com/politics/donald-trump/trump-degrading-language-immigrants-rcna171120>; NBC News, “Trump pushes baseless claim about immigrants ‘eating the pets’”, 10 September 2024, <https://www.nbcnews.com/politics/2024-election/trump-pushes-baseless-claim-immigrants-eating-pets-rcna170537>.

⁵² Whitehouse, Instagram, 24 August 2026, https://www.instagram.com/p/DccGgYMoZVa/?img_index=1&igsi=MWhpemdjOWXnamZxZg==.

⁵³ CERD, Decision 1 (2026), 11 March 2026, https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/15/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=INT%2FCERD%2FEWU%2FUSA%2F11429&Lang=en, p. 1; OHCHR, “USA: Racial profiling and racist hate speech by political leaders heightened human rights violations against migrants and asylum seekers, UN committee warns”, 11 March 2026, <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2026/03/usa-racial-profiling-and-racist-hate-speech-political-leaders-heightened>.

⁵⁴ CERD, Decision 1 (2026) (previously cited), p. 1; OHCHR, “USA: Racial profiling and racist hate speech by political leaders heightened human rights violations against migrants and asylum seekers, UN committee warns” (previously cited).

⁵⁵ UN Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent, Report of the Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent on its twenty-third and twenty-fourth sessions, A/HRC/42/59, 15 August 2019, para. 99; HRC, Promotion and protection of the human rights and fundamental freedoms of

Program of Action calls on states to “collect, compile, analyse, disseminate and publish reliable statistical data at the national and local levels and undertake all other related measures which are necessary to assess regularly the situation of individuals and groups of individuals who are victims of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance.”⁵⁶ Without data on race and racial bias, states cannot claim that their laws, policies, and approaches are not, in practice, racist because they are automatically unable to analyse how race impacts decision-making. The United States does not collect immigration enforcement data disaggregated by race and ethnicity, contrary to international human rights standards, limiting the ability to assess the racial impacts of its immigration laws, policies and practices.

3.2 Agencies responsible for the detention and deportation of migrants, asylum seekers and refugees in the United States

Currently, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP), both components of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), are the principal agencies responsible for immigration enforcement in the United States, with ICE predominantly engaging in enforcement in the interior of the country, and CBP at borders and ports of entry.⁵⁷ Their creation marked a significant transformation in the country’s institutional approach to immigration enforcement following the 11 September 2001 attacks and subsequent “war on terror”.

The Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) was established under the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) in 1933 to administer the immigration system, oversee immigration enforcement and manage border patrol activities.⁵⁸ In 1940, INS was moved to the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ).⁵⁹ For more than 70 years, INS was the federal agency responsible for administering the immigration process, enforcement and border patrol activities until Congress passed the Homeland Security Act of 2002.⁶⁰ Following the September 11 attacks and in one of the largest government restructures since World War Two, the Act created the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), a federal department devoted to national security and the prevention of terrorism.⁶¹ The creation of DHS fundamentally reframed immigration as a matter of national security, rather than one primarily concerned with labour, family unity or humanitarian protection. With the creation of DHS, INS was abolished and its functions were divided into ICE, CBP and U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS), establishing the institutional framework that continues to govern immigration in the United States today.

ICE is responsible for enforcing federal immigration laws.⁶² The agency has three operational components: Enforcement and Removal Operations (ERO), Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) and the Office of the Principal Legal Advisor (OPLA). ERO agents mainly operate in the interior of the United States, and carry out arrests and manage detention and deportation operations.⁶³ HSI agents are responsible for investigating violations of immigration law and transnational crime.⁶⁴ OPLA lawyers represent the government in immigration court, serving as opposing counsel to those in removal proceedings.⁶⁵ When referring to “ICE agents” throughout this report, Amnesty International is referring to ERO and HSI agents.

CBP is responsible for overseeing the United States’ borders and has the power to detain individuals who attempt to enter the country irregularly or who have violated immigration laws.⁶⁶ The U.S. Border Patrol, the

Africans and of people of African descent against excessive use of force and other human rights violations by law enforcement officers, A/HRC/47/CRP.1, 28 June 2021, para. 20.

⁵⁶ The Durban Declaration and Programme of Action, para. 92; UN Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent, Report of the Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent on its twenty-third and twenty-fourth sessions (previously cited), para. 81.

⁵⁷ ICE, <https://www.ice.gov/>; CBP, <https://www.cbp.gov/>.

⁵⁸ Federal Register, “Immigration and Naturalization Service”, <https://www.federalregister.gov/agencies/immigration-and-naturalization-service>; USCIS, “Our History”, <https://www.uscis.gov/about-us/our-history>.

⁵⁹ Federal Register, “Immigration and Naturalization Service”, <https://www.federalregister.gov/agencies/immigration-and-naturalization-service>.

⁶⁰ Homeland Security Act of 2002, 25 November 2002, <https://www.dhs.gov/homeland-security-act-2002>.

⁶¹ Homeland Security Act of 2002 (previously cited).

⁶² ICE, “U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement”, <https://www.ice.gov/about-ice>.

⁶³ ICE, “Enforcement and Removal Operations”, <https://www.ice.gov/ero>.

⁶⁴ ICE, “Homeland Security Investigations”, <https://www.ice.gov/hsi>.

⁶⁵ ICE, “Office of the Principal Legal Advisor”, <https://www.ice.gov/opla>.

⁶⁶ CBP, “About CBP”, <https://www.cbp.gov/about>.

mobile, law enforcement arm of CBP, monitors the US border between ports of entry, operates traffic checkpoints within a “reasonable distance” of the US border – generally considered to be 100 miles (or approximately 160 kilometres) –, and may also pull over vehicles or otherwise stop people it reasonably suspects of a federal crime or violating immigration law.⁶⁷ Agents are meant to operate within 100 miles of the border, however, under the Trump administration they have increasingly operated in the interior of the United States.⁶⁸

ICE and Border Patrol agents have criminal and civil arrest authority, which extends beyond immigration violations to other federal offences.⁶⁹ The authority of these agents to stop and question individuals about their immigration status is discussed in more detail in Section 5.

In order to support the Trump Administration’s mass detention and deportation machine, Congress has approved record level funding for immigration enforcement, border security, and prosecutions. On 4 July 2025, President Trump signed H.R.1 – the so-called “One Big Beautiful Bill” – into law, which provides \$170.7 billion USD in additional funding to DHS, ICE, CBP and the Department of Defense for immigration and border enforcement related activities, including \$29.9 billion USD for enforcement and removal, including hiring ICE agents, transportation costs, and detaining families.⁷⁰ In June 2026, an additional \$70 billion USD was allocated to ICE and CBP for immigration enforcement.⁷¹ As a result of this surge in funding, if ICE were its own national military, it would currently rank amongst the 15 top-funded militaries in the world.⁷²

3.3 Expansion of 287(g) agreements

In order to enhance its capacity to detain individuals, the Trump administration has significantly expanded the use of 287(g) agreements. 287(g) is a section of the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA) that allows ICE to delegate certain immigration enforcement duties to state and local law enforcement agencies. ICE can enter into 287(g) agreements with a wide variety of law enforcement agencies, spanning from local sheriff’s offices to university police forces to fish and wildlife agencies.⁷³

There are three 287(g) models: (i) the Jail Enforcement Model (JEM) which targets people already in custody and gives deputized jail and correctional staff the power to interview and question individuals about their immigration status and hand them over to ICE custody; (ii) the Warrant Service Officer (WSO) model which gives corrections and jail staff the power to serve ICE administrative warrants and transfer individuals to ICE custody; and, (iii) the Task Force Model (TFM) which gives deputized officers the power to conduct immigration enforcement in the community, including traffic stops, street encounters, serving civil

⁶⁷ CBP, “Border Patrol Overview”, <https://www.cbp.gov/border-security/along-us-borders/overview>; ACLU, “100 Mile Border Zone”, 8 June 2026, <https://www.aclu.org/know-your-rights/border-zone#overview>; National Immigration Forum, “Explainer: U.S. Border Patrol Authorities and the 100-Mile Border Zone”, 31 March 2026, <https://forumtogether.org/article/explainer-u-s-border-patrol-authorities-and-the-100-mile-border-zone/>; The New York Times, “The Border Patrol Is the Problem. It Always Has Been.”, 29 January 2026, <https://www.nytimes.com/2026/01/29/opinion/border-patrol-ice-minneapolis.html>. Throughout this report, interviewees sometimes use the term “CBP” when referring specifically to U.S. Border Patrol agents. Amnesty International has not edited these direct quotations.

⁶⁸ INA 287(a)(3); 8 CFR § 287(a)(3); ACLU, “100 Mile Border Zone” (previously cited); National Immigration Forum, “Explainer: U.S. Border Patrol Authorities and the 100-Mile Border Zone” (previously cited); The New York Times, “The Border Patrol Is the Problem. It Always Has Been.” (previously cited).

⁶⁹ United States District Court for the Northern District of Illinois Eastern Division, *Chicago Headline Club, et al., v. Noem*, Opinion and Order, Case No. 1:25-cv-12173, 20 November 2025, <https://www.loevy.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/11/CHC-v.-Noem-281-Opinion-and-Order-for-Pl.pdf>, p. 16.

⁷⁰ H.R.1 – One Big Beautiful Bill, 4 July 2025, <https://www.congress.gov/bills/119th-congress/house-bill/1/all-actions>; AIC, “What’s in the Big Beautiful Bill? Immigration and Border Security Unpacked”, 14 July 2025, <https://www.americanimmigrationcouncil.org/fact-sheet/big-beautiful-bill-immigration-border-security/>.

⁷¹ S.2 – Secure America Act, 10 June 2026, <https://www.congress.gov/bills/119th-congress/senate-bill/2/text?s=1&r=1&hl=S.2>; Amnesty International USA, “In Shameful Vote, Congress Gives 70 Billion to Ongoing Cruelty Against Immigrants”, 9 June 2026, <https://www.amnestyusa.org/press-releases/in-shameful-vote-congress-gives-70-billion-to-ongoing-cruelty-against-immigrants/>; NIJC, “NIJC decries Congress’s \$70 billion blank check for ICE and CBP’s mass detention and deportation agenda”, 9 June 2026, <https://immigrantjustice.org/press-release/nijc-decries-congresss-70-billion-blank-check-for-ice-and-cbps-mass-detention-and-deportation-agenda/>.

⁷² Center for International Policy, “Military Spending Monitor – August 29, 2025: Arming and Expanding ICE: The Cost to American Taxpayers and Liberties”, 2025, <https://internationalpolicy.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/09/Military-Spending-Monitor-8.29.25.pdf>; Newsweek, “ICE Budget Compared to World’s Militaries as Government Shutdown Looms”, 28 January 2026, <https://www.newsweek.com/ice-budget-compared-to-worlds-militaries-as-government-shutdown-looms-11432447>; In These Times, “The 13th Largest Army in World Is Unleashing Violence in Chicago”, 5 October 2025, <https://inthesetimes.com/article/ice-immigration-chicago-trump-broadview>.

⁷³ ICE, “Delegation of Immigration Authority Section 287(g) – ICE’s 287(g) Program”, 14 November 2025, <https://www.ice.gov/identify-and-arrest/287g>.

immigration warrants, and making civil immigration arrests under ICE authority.⁷⁴ The TFM is the broadest, street-level model and has been criticized for enabling racial profiling and immigration-related stops and checks of people, including during ordinary law enforcement activities.⁷⁵

In January 2025, there were 133 state and local law enforcement agencies enlisted in the 287(g) program. Since that time, an additional 1,079 agencies have signed agreements with ICE.⁷⁶ A 2026 ACLU study found that, as of February 2026, at least 77.2 million people – 32% of the population of the United States – live in a county with a local law enforcement agency that has a 287(g) agreement with ICE.⁷⁷

Of the four locations covered in this report, there are 59 287(g) agreements in Louisiana – three in Jefferson Parish County which borders New Orleans – and 10 agreements in Minnesota.⁷⁸ Illinois has long prohibited 287(g) agreements. In 2026, Maryland passed legislation banning 287(g) agreements, while the Governor of Virginia issued an executive order directing state law enforcement agencies to end their participation in the program.⁷⁹

Amnesty International considers that the involvement of state and local law enforcement agencies in immigration enforcement through 287(g) agreements increases the risk of racial profiling.⁸⁰ It also undermines the ability of individuals without regular immigration status to access law enforcement services without fear of immigration enforcement. Where local law enforcement agencies participate in immigration enforcement through 287(g) agreements, migrants without regular status, as well as their families and communities, may fear that reporting a crime, seeking protection or otherwise interacting with the police could expose them or others to arrest, detention and deportation. This can erode trust in local law enforcement and deter people from reporting crimes or seeking police protection, including when they are themselves the victims of crime. Amnesty International has therefore called on states to ensure that individuals, regardless of their immigration status, are able to access the public services necessary for the enjoyment of their human rights without fear of being arrested, detained and deported. To achieve this, states should establish “firewalls” between immigration enforcement and public services, including local police, healthcare, and education, among others.⁸¹ Under such “firewalls”, public service providers should not request information about an individual’s immigration status unless strictly necessary, and immigration enforcement authorities should not have access to information about immigration status collected in the provision of public services.

4. The Trump administration’s attacks on US cities

Since January 2025, the Trump administration has launched large-scale, militarized federal immigration enforcement operations and National Guard deployments across the US, that have targeted major Democratic-led and racially diverse cities and metropolitan areas with existing separation ordinances. To

⁷⁴ ICE, “Delegation of Immigration Authority Section 287(g) – ICE’s 287(g) Program” (previously cited); ICE, “Memorandum of Agreement — 287(g) Task Force Model”, <https://www.ice.gov/doclib/about/offices/ero/287g/moaFillableTFM.pdf>; ICE, “Memorandum of Agreement — 287(g) Jail Enforcement Model (MOA template)”, <https://www.ice.gov/doclib/about/offices/ero/287g/moaFillableJEM.pdf>; DHS, Office of Inspector General, “The Performance of 287(g) Agreements: FY 2011/2013 Update”, OIG-13-116, 6 September 2013, <https://www.oig.dhs.gov/reports/2013-09/performance-287g-agreements-fy-2013-update/oig13-116sep13>; AIC, “The 287(g) Program: An Overview”, 8 July 2021, <https://www.americanimmigrationcouncil.org/fact-sheet/287g-program-immigration/>.

⁷⁵ CERD Committee, Concluding Observations on the combined tenth to twelfth reports of the United States of America, CERD/C/USA/CO/10-12, 21 September 2022, <https://www.ohchr.org/en/documents/concluding-observations/cerdcusaco10-12-concluding-observations-combined-tenth-twelfth>, para. 19(c); ACLU, “UN Racial Justice Experts Call on Biden to End the 287(g) Program”, 31 August 2022, <https://www.aclu.org/news/immigrants-rights/un-racial-justice-experts-call-on-biden-to-end-the-287g-program>; AIC, “287(g) Agreements With ICE Threaten Welcoming Communities”, 26 September 2025, <https://www.americanimmigrationcouncil.org/blog/287g-agreements-ice-threaten-communities/>; Amnesty International, *USA: Torture and enforced disappearances in the Sunshine State* (previously cited), pp. 23-24; Amnesty International, *USA: In hostile terrain: Human rights violations in immigration enforcement in the US Southwest* (Index: AMR 51/018/2012), 2012, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/amr510182012en.pdf>, p. 40.

⁷⁶ ACLU, *Deputized for Disaster – How President Trump’s Supersized 287(g) Deportation Force is a Powder Keg for Law Enforcement, Our Communities, and Our Democracy*, 26 February 2026, <https://www.aclu.org/publications/deputized-for-disaster>, p. 5.

⁷⁷ ACLU, *Deputized for Disaster* (previously cited), p. 2.

⁷⁸ ICE, “Delegation of Immigration Authority Section 287(g) Immigration and Nationality Act”, 10 July 2026, <https://www.ice.gov/identify-and-arrest/287g>.

⁷⁹ ACLU, *Deputized for Disaster* (previously cited), p. 3. The Washington metropolitan area includes Washington, DC, and parts of Maryland and Virginia.

⁸⁰ ICCPR, Articles 2(1), 9 & 26; Amnesty International, *USA: Torture and enforced disappearances in the Sunshine State* (previously cited), p. 23; AIC, “287(g) Agreements with ICE Threaten Welcoming Communities” (previously cited).

⁸¹ UNGA, Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights of Migrants, Report to the UN General Assembly, A/68/283, 7 August 2013, para. 82.

justify the deployment of military forces and large-scale immigration enforcement operations into US cities, the Trump administration has pushed racist, xenophobic and false narratives and white supremacist theories centred on the notion of a “war from within”, portraying migrants, asylum seekers and refugees as threats and blaming them for economic, security and social issues.⁸² Situated within the long-standing legal battles between the US federal and state governments over immigration enforcement authority, the Trump administration has exacerbated tensions through its militarized enforcement operations in furtherance of its mass detention and deportation system.⁸³

[INSERT US MAP SHOWING NAME, LOCATION AND DATES OF THE OPERATIONS]

The Trump administration has repeatedly singled out and threatened US cities and mayors who have upheld separation ordinances, also known as “sanctuary laws”, which prohibit cooperation and information sharing between immigration agents and local law enforcement agencies.⁸⁴ Furthermore, President Trump has continued to characterize US cities as “war ravaged”, “rat-infested” and “crime dens” that are in need of “liberation” from progressive leadership and policies.⁸⁵ President Trump initially voiced his desire to deploy National Guard troops into US cities during his first presidential term and promised to do so if elected for a second term.⁸⁶ Within the first year of President Trump’s second term, the administration deployed military forces for domestic law enforcement, a violation of US domestic law, which US federal courts have consistently limited or ruled as illegal.⁸⁷ President Trump has also made consistent threats to invoke the Insurrection Act, which provides an exception to restrictions on the domestic use of military forces, including to suppress protests and conduct immigration enforcement in the interior.⁸⁸ In the summer of 2025, the Trump administration deployed National Guard troops, ICE and other federal agents to Los Angeles, California.

Many of the incidents described in this chapter are examined in greater detail in Section 5, where Amnesty International analyses the human rights violations documented during the four immigration enforcement operations.

On 6 June 2025, ICE and other federal agents conducted immigration enforcement operations across Los Angeles (LA) County and the City of Los Angeles, California that sparked protests that resulted in multiple

⁸² Time, “Trump Signals Greater Use of Military in U.S. Cities, Warning of ‘War From Within’”, 30 September 2025, <https://time.com/7321940/hegseth-trump-generals-meeting/>.

⁸³ *Chy Lung v. Freeman*, 92 U.S. 275, 23 L. Ed. 550 (1875) established federal authority over immigration enforcement. Tenth Amendment limits the federal government’s ability to mandate particular action by states and localities, including in the area of federal immigration law enforcement and investigations; Associated Press, “Justice Department orders investigation of local compliance with Trump immigration crackdown”, 22 January 2025, <https://apnews.com/article/justice-department-immigration-enforcement-f0e3fc616da9746796378d1cd6385b1b>.

⁸⁴ Executive Order, “Protecting American Communities from Criminal Aliens”, 28 April 2025, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/2025/04/protecting-american-communities-from-criminal-aliens/>; DOJ, “Justice Department Publishes List of Sanctuary Jurisdictions”, 5 August 2025, <https://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/justice-department-publishes-list-sanctuary-jurisdictions>; Forbes Breaking News, “BREAKING NEWS: Trump And Top Cabinet Members Detail Major Crime Crackdown For Washington, D.C.”, 11 August 2025, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sD6ENZ0DXzc>.

⁸⁵ KPTV Fox 12 Oregon, “Latest Updates: Texts between Oregon governor, Pres. Trump revealed”, 30 September 2025, <https://www.kptv.com/2025/09/30/latest-updates-trump-plan-send-national-guard-portland-facing-pushback/>; C-SPAN, “Former President Trump Remarks in Davenport, Iowa”, 13 March 2023, <https://www.c-span.org/program/campaign-2024/former-president-trump-remarks-in-davenport-iowa/624884>; NBC Washington, “Trump threatened to ‘take over’ DC if reelected. Here’s what city leaders say”, 16 July 2024, <https://www.nbcwashington.com/news/local/trump-has-threatened-to-take-over-dc-if-reelected-heres-what-city-leaders-say/>; PBS News, “Trump’s DC rhetoric echoes history of racist narratives about urban crime”, 12 August 2025, <https://www.pbs.org/newshour/politics/trumps-d-c-rhetoric-echoes-history-of-racist-narratives-about-urban-crime>.

⁸⁶ Rev, “Former President Donald Trump speaks at CPAC 8/06/22 Transcript”, 7 August 2022, <https://www.rev.com/transcripts/former-president-donald-trump-speaks-at-cpac-8-06-22-transcript>.

⁸⁷ The Posse Comitatus Act (18 U.S.C. § 1385) prohibits federal military personnel from participating in domestic civilian law enforcement, i.e., making arrests or conducting searches. 18 U.S. Code § 1385, <https://www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/text/18/1385>; Brennan Center, “The Posse Comitatus Act, Explained”, 29 September 2025, <https://www.brennancenter.org/our-work/research-reports/posse-comitatus-act-explained>; United States District Court for the District of Columbia, *District of Columbia v. Trump*, Memorandum Opinion, Case No. 25-cv-03005 (JMC), 20 November 2025, https://ecf.dcd.uscourts.gov/cgi-bin/show_public_doc?2025cv3005-88; United States District Court for the Northern District of California, *Newsom v. Trump*, Opinion Granting Injunctive Relief, Case No. 25-cv-04870-CRB, 2 September 2025, https://storage.courtlistener.com/recap/gov.uscourts.cand.450934/gov.uscourts.cand.450934.176.0_1.pdf?inline=1; United States District Court for the District of Oregon Portland Division, *State of Oregon et al v. Trump et al*, Complaint for Declaratory and Injunctive Relief, Case No. 3:25-cv-01756, 28 September 2025, <https://www.justsecurity.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/09/Oregon-v-Trump-Complaint-Case-cv-01756.pdf>; Supreme Court of the United States, *Trump v. Illinois*, No. 25A443, 607 U.S., 23 December 2025, https://www.supremecourt.gov/opinions/25pdf/25a443_new_kkg1.pdf.

⁸⁸ The Insurrection Act (10 U.S.C. §§ 251–255) authorizes the US President to deploy active-duty military forces, federalized National Guard troops or militias domestically, serving as the primary exception to the Posse Comitatus Act. 10 U.S.C. §§ 251–255, <https://www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/text/10/subtitle-A/part-II/chapter-13>; NPR, “Trump threatened to invoke the Insurrection Act (again). What is it?”, 15 January 2026, <https://www.npr.org/2026/01/15/nx-s1-5678612/minneapolis-insurrection-act-trump-threats>; The New York Times, “Deploying on U.S. Soil: How Trump Would Use Soldiers Against Riots, Crime and Migrants”, 23 January 2026, <https://www.nytimes.com/2024/08/17/us/politics/trump-2025-insurrection-act.html>.

arrests, the use of chemical irritants, including tear gas, and flashbang grenades.⁸⁹ On 7 June, President Trump invoked authority under Title 10 of the U.S. Code – the body of federal law that establishes and governs the structure, role, and administration of the United States Armed Forces – to deploy 2,000 National Guard troops and 700 U.S. Marines to Los Angeles County without gubernatorial consent, purportedly to “protect” federal agents and quell protests that the Trump administration cited as a “rebellion”.⁹⁰ The 60-day deployment, which totalled up to 4,000 federalized National Guard troops and cost an estimated \$134 million USD, ended in mid-July.⁹¹

Both Los Angeles Mayor Karen Bass and California Governor Gavin Newsom rejected the deployment, with Mayor Bass describing the operation as “an intentional effort to sow chaos” and stating that “[t]he fear in our city is real, rippling through every community and every family.”⁹² Governor Newsom described the deployment as “purposefully inflammatory” and formally requested the Trump administration demobilize National Guard members, describing the deployment as “unlawful” and a “breach of state sovereignty”.⁹³

A UCLA study found that the Los Angeles County immigration enforcement operation produced an “immediate economic shock” and “generated serious health and psychological consequences” for Latinx business and restaurant owners, food vendors and service providers.⁹⁴ Additionally, the immigration enforcement disproportionately impacted migrants from Latin American countries – 80% of individuals arrested were of Central American origin.⁹⁵

In September 2025, a federal court found that the Trump administration’s deployment of the National Guard in Los Angeles violated the Posse Comitatus Act, which bars federal troops from participating in civilian law enforcement except when expressly authorized by law.⁹⁶ The operation in Los Angeles was also the first of many large-scale immigration enforcement operations carried out by the Trump administration in cities across the United States.

Between August and December 2025, the Trump administration launched federal immigration enforcement operations and National Guard deployments in cities across the country. The National Guard was federalized and deployed to Los Angeles and Washington, DC, while authorized deployments to Chicago, Minneapolis-St. Paul and Portland were blocked by legal challenges led by city and state officials.⁹⁷ In Memphis, Minneapolis-St. Paul and New Orleans, the National Guard was deployed under Title 32 of the U.S. Code, which allows for it to remain under state command and control but perform federal missions, it is paid with federal funds, and receives federal benefits.⁹⁸ Regardless of the status of the National Guard deployments,

⁸⁹ Amnesty International, Ringing the Alarm Bells: Rising authoritarian practices and erosion of human rights in the United States (previously cited), p. 12; Amnesty International, “USA: End the use of military to police protests” (Index: AMR 51/9499/2025), 13 June 2025, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/amr51/9499/2025/en/>; NBC Los Angeles, “45 people arrested during ICE raids at 3 downtown LA locations”, 6 June 2025, <https://www.nbclosangeles.com/news/local/45-people-arrested-during-ice-raids-at-3-downtown-la-locations/3717742/>; KTLA, “Police use flash-bangs, tear gas to quell ICE raid protests in L.A.”, 6 June 2025, <https://ktla.com/news/local-news/flash-bangs-tear-gas-and-arrests-as-ice-raids-protests-continue-in-los-angeles/>.

⁹⁰ Presidential Memoranda, “Department of Defense Security for the Protection of Department of Homeland Security Functions”, 7 June 2025, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/2025/06/departments-of-defense-security-for-the-protection-of-department-of-homeland-security-functions/>; U.S. Department of War, “Marines to Guard Federal Property, Personnel in L.A. as Guard Troops Transition to Protecting Law Enforcement”, 13 June 2025, <https://www.war.gov/News/News-Stories/Article/article/4216935/marines-to-guard-federal-property-personnel-in-la-as-guard-troops-transition-to/>; President Trump invoked Title 10 in his deployment of U.S. troops to the United States-Mexico border. Executive Order, *Declaring a National Emergency At the Southern Border of the United States* (previously cited).

⁹¹ House Appropriations Committee, “Oversight Hearing – The Department of Defense”, 10 June 2025, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1kWjd05DTWc&t=5s>, minute 1:59:52; Defense News, “LA deployments to cost \$134 million and last 60 days, Pentagon says”, 10 June 2025, <https://www.defensenews.com/pentagon/2025/06/10/la-deployments-to-cost-134-million-and-last-60-days-pentagon-says/>; Associated Press, “Pentagon ends deployment of 2,000 National Guard troops in Los Angeles”, 15 July 2025, <https://apnews.com/article/immigration-raids-los-angeles-national-guard-4424658cc059df31317a83cb53c2b59e>.

⁹² NPR, “Los Angeles mayor Karen Bass reacts to federalized National Guard troops in her city”, 8 June 2025, <https://www.npr.org/transcripts/1253877211>.

⁹³ Governor Gavin Newsom (@CAgovernor), X, 8 June 2025, <https://x.com/CAgovernor/status/1931843797312479735>.

⁹⁴ UCLA, Latino Policy & Politics Institute, *The Cost of Fear: The Impacts of Immigration Enforcement on Small Businesses and Latino Entrepreneurs in LA County*, 22 July 2026, <https://latino.ucla.edu/research/immigration-enforcement-small-businesses-los-angeles/>.

⁹⁵ The Rent Brigade, *Disappeared and Displaced: ICE Pushes LA Tenants Toward Eviction*, September 2025, <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/67931cff4d613f32d7b66deb/t/68b77b270078c3404eaf98fa/1756855079588/Disappeared-and-Displaced-September-2025.pdf>.

⁹⁶ United States District Court for the Northern District of California, *Newsom v. Trump*, Opinion Granting Injunctive Relief (previously cited).

⁹⁷ CBS News, “Hundreds of National Guard members to leave Portland, Chicago, source says”, 16 November 2025, <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/hundreds-of-national-guard-members-to-leave-portland-chicago-source-says/>.

⁹⁸ 32 U.S. Code § 502(f), <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/USCODE-2021-title32/html/USCODE-2021-title32.htm>; 32 U.S. Code § 502(f), <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/USCODE-2021-title32/html/USCODE-2021-title32.htm>; Center for American Progress, “Domestic Deployment of

the four locations examined in this report experienced large-scale immigration enforcement operations that resulted in numerous human rights violations committed by ICE, Border Patrol and other federal agents against migrants, asylum seekers, refugees, other racialized communities and the people that defended, that are examined in more detail in Section 5.

Following the National Guard deployment and immigration enforcement operations in Los Angeles, the Trump administration expanded its deployment of federal forces to the nation's capital, Washington, DC.

4.1 Washington, District of Columbia – Federal Takeover

On 11 August 2025, President Trump declared a “crime emergency” in the District of Columbia (DC) and invoked Section 740 of the DC Home Rule Act – an unprecedented move – that granted the federal government control of the Metropolitan Police Department (MPD).⁹⁹ President Trump's subsequent executive order and presidential memorandum mobilized the deployment of federal law enforcement agencies and over 2,000 National Guard troops from 11 states and DC, allegedly to combat the “increase in violent crime rates” in the District – despite data showing violent crime at a 30-year low.¹⁰⁰ Nevertheless, President Trump described the Federal Takeover as a “Liberation Day” from the District's Democratic leadership and the “violent gangs and bloodthirsty criminals” he claimed had overtaken DC.¹⁰¹ The Federal Takeover negatively impacted and fundamentally altered daily life for those in the greater DMV region. The National Guard deployment in DC was originally set to expire at the end of 2026, but was subsequently extended until the end of 2029, with an estimated cost of \$1.4 billion USD.¹⁰² Despite the ongoing presence of National Guard troops and surges in immigration enforcement, DC residents, community leaders and elected officials continue to call for the demobilization of National Guard troops and greater local autonomy from federal intervention.¹⁰³

Given DC's unique position, without full self-government, a governor, full voting representation in Congress and many of the powers and safeguards afforded to states, the District has fewer institutional safeguards against federal overreach than states.¹⁰⁴ This provided the Trump administration with a unique environment in which to expand federal law enforcement and immigration enforcement operations. In addition to over 2,000 National Guard troops, law enforcement agents from multiple agencies were reassigned to assist in immigration enforcement. The following agencies participated in patrolling and assisting immigration enforcement activities:

- *Homeland Security Investigations (HSI)*
- *Enforcement & Removal Operations (ERO)*
- *Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI)*
- *Border Patrol (BP)*
- *Office of Field Operations*

the Military: The Past, Present, and Potential Future”, 4 February 2025, <https://www.americanprogress.org/article/domestic-deployment-of-the-military-the-past-present-and-potential-future/>.

⁹⁹ Section 740 of the District of Columbia Home Rule Act, Public Law 93-198; 87 Stat. 774, D.C. Official Code § 1-201.01 et seq., 24 December 1973, <https://dccouncil.gov/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/Home-Rule-Act-2018-for-printing-9-13-182.pdf>.

¹⁰⁰ Executive Order 14333, *Declaring a Crime Emergency in the District of Columbia* (90 FR 39301), 11 August 2025, <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2025/08/14/2025-15550/declaring-a-crime-emergency-in-the-district-of-columbia>; Presidential Memorandum, *Memorandum on Restoring Law and Order in the District of Columbia*, 11 August 2025, <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/DCPD-202500845/pdf/DCPD-202500845.pdf>; United States Attorney's Office, District of Columbia, “Violent Crime in D.C. Hits 30 Year Low”, 3 January 2025, <https://www.justice.gov/usao-dc/pr/violent-crime-dc-hits-30-year-low>.

¹⁰¹ White House, “It's “Liberation Day” in Washington, D.C.”, 11 August 2025, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/releases/2025/08/its-liberation-day-in-washington-d-c/>; Washington Post, “How D.C. crime became a symbol — and a target — for MAGA and beyond”, 12 August 2025, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2025/08/12/dc-crime-trump-maga/>.

¹⁰² Associated Press, “National Guard troops to stay on Washington, DC, streets through 2026”, 16 January 2026, <https://apnews.com/article/national-guard-washington-dc-trump-d4e232d38ae5978975191eddd496b94c>; Associated Press, “Guard deployment to Washington into 2029 will cost roughly \$1.4B, estimate shows”, 4 August 2026, <https://apnews.com/article/trump-national-guard-washington-dc-64017d169872fe730ef2976504302e7b>.

¹⁰³ Free DC, “DC Council calls Governors to withdraw National Guard from DC”, 22 July 2026, <https://freedcproject.org/news/dc-council-request-governors-to-withdraw-their-national-guard>; WUSA9, “DC activists oppose \$300M National Guard housing contract, call for troop withdrawal”, 25 July 2026, <https://www.wusa9.com/article/news/local/home-rule/300-million-dollar-housing-plan-national-guard-dc/65-3d88e7f8-2093-492b-a5e7-9a3fc28aad1e>.

¹⁰⁴ The ICCPR, to which the United States is a state party, guarantees citizens the right to vote and be elected at genuine periodic elections by universal and equal suffrage. In its 2014 Concluding Observations on the United States, the UN Human Rights Committee expressed “concern that residents of the District of Columbia (D.C.) are denied the right to vote for and elect voting representatives to the United States Senate and House of Representatives” and called on the United States to “provide for the full voting rights of residents of Washington D.C.” HRC, Concluding observations on the fourth periodic report of the United States of America*, UN Doc. CCPR/C/USA/CO/4, 23 April 2014, para. 24.

- *Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA)*
- *Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF)*
- *U.S. Marshals Service (USMS)*
- *Metropolitan Police Department (MPD)*
- *U.S. Park Police (USPP)*
- *Federal Protective Service*
- *Internal Revenue Service (IRS)*
- *Health and Human Services (HHS)*
- *U.S. Secret Service (USSS)*
- *Metro Transit Police Department*

Within days of the Federal Takeover, DC saw a significant influx of National Guard troops, immigration and other law enforcement agents. Agents patrolled metro stations, parks, business corridors, and racially and ethnically diverse neighbourhoods, predominantly migrant and Black neighbourhoods, which chilled public life as many residents feared leaving their homes. As families across the DMV prepared for the beginning of the new school year, residents routinely faced ICE traffic checkpoints where agents questioned individuals about their immigration status, tent encampment sweeps that displaced unhoused individuals, juvenile curfews, and violent immigration enforcement arrests and detentions by masked agents in unmarked vehicles, all of which disproportionately impacted Black and Brown communities.¹⁰⁵ By 10 September 2025 – one month after the Federal Takeover was announced – over 2,300 arrests had been made, 40% of which were related to immigration.¹⁰⁶

Meanwhile, the Trump administration continued to incite fear, escalate tensions and exert control over the District: Defense Secretary Hegseth authorized National Guard troops to carry weapons, including M4 rifles and M17 pistols;¹⁰⁷ the federal government took full control of Union Station, a major transportation hub;¹⁰⁸ President Trump signed measures to extend the use of the death penalty in DC and end cashless bail;¹⁰⁹ and the National Guard troops were deputized to conduct law enforcement duties.¹¹⁰ Additionally, multiple Republican governors sent their National Guard troops to DC – despite multiple cities in their home-states having higher crime rates compared to DC.¹¹¹

Ahead of the Takeover, both DC Mayor Muriel Bowser and the U.S. Congress moved to repeal or nullify DC's separation ordinance, known as the DC Sanctuary Values Amendment Act of 2020.¹¹² These efforts did not advance, and DC's separation ordinance remained in effect. However, once the Federal Takeover was underway, the MPD Chief issued an executive order allowing MPD to collaborate with and assist federal

¹⁰⁵ The Washington Post, "Checkpoint with ICE agents met by protesters in D.C.", 14 August 2025, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/dc-md-v/2025/08/14/dc-checkpoint-homeland-security-trump/>; The Washington Post, "'Nowhere to go': What happened after Trump ordered homeless encampments cleared", 29 August 2025, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/dc-md-v/2025/08/29/trump-dc-homeless-encampments-cleared/>; The Washington Post, "For some in D.C., first day of school to look different under Trump crackdown", 24 August 2025, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/education/2025/08/24/dc-schools-trump-police-crackdown/>.

¹⁰⁶ Associated Press, "Over 40% of arrests in Trump's DC law enforcement surge relate to immigration, AP analysis finds", 10 September 2025, <https://apnews.com/article/dc-immigration-federal-intervention-543a6079974fda90f96bae17ae53729e>.

¹⁰⁷ US Department of War, *Pentagon Press Secretary Kingsley Wilson holds an on-camera, on-the-record press briefing [Transcript]*, 2 December 2025, <https://www.war.gov/News/Transcripts/Transcript/Article/4346661/pentagon-press-secretary-kingsley-wilson-holds-an-on-camera-on-the-record-press/>; CNN, "National Guard troops in Washington, DC, begin carrying weapons", 25 August 2025, <https://www.cnn.com/2025/08/24/politics/national-guard-dc-weapons>.

¹⁰⁸ U.S. Department of Transportation, "Trump's Transportation Secretary Sean P. Duffy Announces Progress in Revitalizing Washington Union Station as Part of President Trump's Agenda to Make D.C. Safe and Beautiful", 19 September 2025, <https://www.transportation.gov/briefing-room/trumps-transportation-secretary-sean-p-duffy-announces-progress-revitalizing>; NPR, "The federal government is taking over D.C.'s Union Station. What does that mean?", 28 August 2025, <https://www.npr.org/2025/08/28/nx-s1-5520588/dc-union-station-federal-government>.

¹⁰⁹ Executive Order 14340, "Measures To End Cashless Bail and Enforce the Law in the District of Columbia", 28 August 2025, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/2025/08/measures-to-end-cashless-bail-and-enforce-the-law-in-the-district-of-columbia/>; The Washington Post, "Trump wants expanded death penalty, longer control over police in D.C.", 26 August 2025, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2025/08/26/trump-death-penalty-washington-dc/>.

¹¹⁰ United States District Court for the District of Columbia, *District of Columbia v. Trump*, Complaint for Declaratory and Injunctive Relief, Case No. 1:25-cv-03005, 4 September 2025, <https://oag.dc.gov/sites/default/files/2025-09/District-v-Trump-Cmpl-2025-09-04.pdf>; The Hill, "Interior deputizes border agents to National Park sites amid DC takeover", 20 August 2025, <https://thehill.com/policy/energy-environment/5462417-border-patrol-nps-national-parks-trump-dc-takeover-burgum/>.

¹¹¹ CNN, "GOP governors are sending troops to DC. Their states have 10 cities with higher crime rates", 22 August 2025, - <https://www.cnn.com/2025/08/22/politics/gop-governors-troops-dc-10-cities-crime-rates>.

¹¹² The District of Columbia Federal Immigration Compliance Act (H.R. 2056/S. 1522) which would repeal the DC Sanctuary Values Act, passed the U.S. House 12 June 2025 and was referred to the Senate, awaiting committee action. The District of Columbia Federal Immigration Compliance Act, H.R. 2056, 119th Cong. (2025), <https://www.congress.gov/bills/119th-congress/house-bill/2056>; The 51st, "Bowser moves to formally repeal D.C.'s 'sanctuary city' status", 29 May 2025, <https://51st.news/bowser-moves-to-formally-repeal-d-c-s-sanctuary-city-status/>; NBC4 Washington, "House committee approves bill mandating DC comply with federal immigration laws", 26 March 2025, <https://www.nbcwashington.com/news/local/house-committee-approves-bill-mandating-dc-comply-with-federal-immigration-laws/3877106/>; The Washington Post, "House votes to nullify D.C.'s 'sanctuary city' law", 12 June 2025, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/dc-md-v/2025/06/12/dc-sanctuary-city-law-house-repeal/>.

immigration agencies – which civil society organizations argued violated the DC Sanctuary Values Amendment Act.¹¹³ DC Mayor Bowser subsequently took measures to strengthen cooperation and limit transparency between joint MPD and federal immigration enforcement activity in the District. Mayor Bowser issued an executive order that formalized local and federal law enforcement cooperation indefinitely and vetoed the Full Accountability in Arrest Reporting (FAAR) Act, that would have required MPD to document arrests involving federal agents – an act unanimously passed by the DC council.¹¹⁴ As set out in Section 5, these measures facilitated the large-scale immigration enforcement operation in and around the District of Columbia during which ICE, MPD and other federal agents committed numerous human rights violations.¹¹⁵

As a result of immigration enforcement around formerly protected “sensitive locations”, such as schools and places of worship, migrant communities and families soon withdrew from public life, avoiding essential and basic services, such as missing medical appointments, school, and work for days or weeks.¹¹⁶ Many chose to forego much needed income, de-prioritize their health, education, religious worship and everyday errands.¹¹⁷ Further, many impacted individuals described the “break in community trust” as victims of violent crimes chose not to report or interact with MPD.¹¹⁸

Amnesty International was told that individuals federal agents perceived to be Latinx or migrants faced an increased risk of being targeted for immigration enforcement.¹¹⁹ For example, MPD and ICE agents conducting joint patrols targeted industries associated with migrant labour, including landscaping, construction and food delivery services, stopping commercial trucks and vans as well as moped food delivery drivers.¹²⁰

“MPD officers targeting moped drivers and would collaborate with ICE. There were cases in which in a prior era, these people would not have gotten detained.”¹²¹

As a result, construction and other work sites became empty as people were fearful to travel to work and be visible in public.¹²² Once busy streets lined with food delivery moped drivers, many of whom are originally from Central and South America, were soon empty as drivers stopped delivering food temporarily or indefinitely, adjusted their routes or took safety precautions in fear of arrest, detention or deportation.¹²³ “The clearing of moped groups was a visible aspect of DC life that had been affected by the Takeover,” shared a local journalist.¹²⁴ These arrests were filmed and widely distributed on social media, adding to the migrant community’s fear of being targeted.¹²⁵

The ICE Washington Field Office (Chantilly), located around 30 miles (around 50 kilometres) outside of the District in Chantilly, Virginia, is an office building which was used by ICE during the Federal Takeover to

¹¹³ Immigrant Legal Resource Center, “DC Police’s Collusion with Federal Immigration Enforcement Agencies Violates DC’s Sanctuary Values Act”, 14 August 2025, <https://www.ilrc.org/press/dc-police%E2%80%99s-collusion-federal-immigration-enforcement-agencies-violates-dc%E2%80%99s-sanctuary-values>

¹¹⁴ Government of the District of Columbia, Office of the Mayor, Mayor’s Order 2025-090: Creation of the Safe and Beautiful Emergency Operations Center, 2 September 2025, https://mayor.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/mayor/mbr/release_content/attachments/2025-090_Creation_of_the_Safe_and_Beautiful_Emergency_Operations_Center.pdf; ACLU of the District of Columbia, “ACLU-DC Statement on Mayor’s Veto of Federal Transparency Legislation”, 25 March 2026, <https://www.acludc.org/press-releases/statement-mayors-veto-federal-transparency/>; The Washington Post, “Bowser to provide indefinite coordination with federal law enforcement”, 2 September 2025, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2025/09/02/bowser-dc-federal-law-enforcement-trump-takeover/>.

¹¹⁵ NBC Washington, “Video of DC traffic stop raises questions”, 3 October 2025, <https://www.nbcwashington.com/news/local/video-of-dc-traffic-stop-raises-questions/3997523/>.

¹¹⁶ In-person and online interviews, Washington, DC, USA, May-June 2026.

¹¹⁷ In-person and online interviews, Washington, DC, USA, May-June 2026.

¹¹⁸ Ayuda, “Testimony: Ayuda Urges D.C. Council to Hold MPD Accountable”, 4 March 2025, <https://ayuda.com/ayuda-urges-d-c-council-to-hold-mpd-accountable/>.

¹¹⁹ In-person and online interviews, Washington, DC, USA, May-June 2026.

¹²⁰ In-person and online interviews, Washington DC, USA May-June 2026; NBC Washington, “Advocates raise concerns about immigration stops on DC-area parkways”, 3 November 2025, <https://www.nbcwashington.com/investigations/advocates-raise-concerns-immigration-stops-dc-area-parkways/4010438/>.

¹²¹ Interview with journalist, Washington, DC, USA, 14 May 2026

¹²² Interview with journalist, Washington, DC, USA, 14 May 2026

¹²³ WAMU, “How ICE is working with D.C. police to detain moped delivery drivers”, 25 August 2025, <https://wamu.org/story/25/08/25/dc-ice-working-with-dc-police-moped-delivery-drivers/>; NBC 4 Washington, “DC food delivery worker swaps her moped for a bike over ICE fears”, 12 September 2025, <https://www.nbcwashington.com/news/local/dc-food-delivery-worker-swaps-her-moped-for-a-bike-over-ice-fears/3987644/>.

¹²⁴ Interview with journalist, Washington, DC, USA, 14 May 2026.

¹²⁵ NBC News, “Detentions of D.C. delivery drivers leave immigrant communities on edge”, 19 August 2025, <https://www.nbcnews.com/news/us-news/dc-delivery-driver-detentions-spark-concern-fear-community-rcna225671>.

detain individuals for multiple days in overcrowded rooms without beds, showers, adequate food and water, or access to legal counsel – discussed in more detail in Section 5.4.2.¹²⁶

Eight in 10 DC residents opposed the federal government's control of the MPD and the National Guard deployment, according to a Washington Post-Schar poll.¹²⁷ Communities and organizations mobilized across the DMV to ensure impacted individuals and families were able to access essential goods, disseminated "Know Your Rights" (KYR) materials and trainings, and monitored immigration and law enforcement activity through mutual aid and rapid response networks.¹²⁸ These mutual aid and community groups established hotlines, led court watch programs, led food distributions, organized school pick-up and drop-off support, and encouraged DC residents to record ICE, MPD, and other agencies' activity while obtaining pertinent information of the individual being detained or arrested.¹²⁹ Migrant Solidarity Mutual Aid (MSMA) stated that "the MSMA hotline has fielded 4,852 incoming calls from community members, an almost six-fold increase in calls" within two months of the Federal Takeover.¹³⁰

Protests sprang up against the Federal Takeover, notably the "We Are All DC" national march in September 2025, where thousands marched throughout the District, calling on the federal government to "End the Federal Occupation" and "Protect DC Home Rule".¹³¹

The DC Attorney General filed a lawsuit against the Trump administration at the onset of the Federal Takeover arguing that it violated the Home Rule Act and that the deployment of the National Guard was unlawful.¹³² In November 2025, a US District Judge ruled that the deployment of National Guard to DC was "illegal" and described how DC's sovereignty had been "irreparably harmed" by the Federal Takeover.¹³³ DC Attorney General Brian Schwab welcomed the ruling, stating that "Normalizing the use of military troops for domestic law enforcement sets a dangerous precedent", and that "This unprecedented federal overreach is not normal, or legal".¹³⁴

By November 2025, ICE had arrested more than 1,400 people in the District.¹³⁵ In the following months, federal immigration enforcement activity and arrests declined within DC as federal immigration agents increasingly targeted the greater DMV region, where ICE arrests reached nearly 20,000 between January 2025 and March 2026.¹³⁶ The National Guard and federal agents remained present in the District throughout 2025 and continue to be a fixture of daily life, particularly for Black communities and Black youth, who already face over policing and racial discrimination.¹³⁷ National Guard troops continue to conduct "community patrols" in neighbourhoods across DC and in metro stations, dressed in military fatigue, armed with military rifles, and driving in military vehicles, and assist MPD and federal law enforcement in arrests.¹³⁸

¹²⁶ ACLU of Virginia & NIP, "Urgent Request for Attorney Access and Improvements to the Conditions at ICE Washington Field Office", 4 September 2025, <https://www.acluva.org/app/uploads/2025/09/ACLU-VA-and-NIP-Demand-Letter-to-DHS-and-ICE-on-ICE-WAS-Conditions.pdf>.

¹²⁷ The Washington Post, "Aug. 14-17, 2025, Washington Post-Schar School poll of D.C. residents", 20 August 2025, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/tablet/2025/08/20/aug-14-17-2025-washington-post-schar-school-poll-dc-residents/>.

¹²⁸ In-person and online interviews, Washington, DC, USA, May-June 2026.

¹²⁹ In-person and online interviews, Washington, DC, USA, May-June 2026.

¹³⁰ Council of the District of Columbia, *Roundtable Report on Potential Human Rights Violations due to Federal Government Intrusion*, 8 January 2026, https://brianneknadeau.com/wp-content/uploads/2026/01/CIRCULATION-DRAFT_PWO-Roundtable-Report-on-Human-Rights-Violations.pdf.

¹³¹ The Washington Post, "Thousands march in D.C. against Trump's law enforcement takeover", 6 September 2025, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/dc-md-va/2025/09/06/we-are-all-dc-march/>. "DC Home Rule" refers to the limited governance, sovereignty and non-existent Congressional representation for the residents of the District of Columbia. While the 1973 Home Rule Act allows for local municipal government and elections, the US president and US Congress continue to hold ultimate authority over DC's budget and local governance.

¹³² CNN, "DC lawsuit challenges Trump's National Guard deployment as a forced 'military occupation'", 4 September 2025, <https://apnews.com/article/washington-dc-trump-federal-takeover-national-guard-lawsuit-f2f76ef685676ee0d3bbd81496c74f2e>.

¹³³ United States District Court for the District of Columbia, *District of Columbia v. Trump*, Memorandum Opinion (previously cited).

¹³⁴ Office of the Attorney General, District of Columbia, "Attorney General Schwab Issues Statement on Court Ruling That National Guard Deployment in DC Is Illegal", 20 November 2025, <https://oag.dc.gov/release/attorney-general-schwab-issues-statement-court>.

¹³⁵ The Washington Post, "ICE arrests in D.C. region reach nearly 20,000 during Trump's second term", 6 April 2026, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/dc-md-va/2026/04/06/ice-arrests-dc-maryland-virginia-surge/>.

¹³⁶ The Washington Post, "ICE arrests in D.C. region reach nearly 20,000 during Trump's second term" (previously cited).

¹³⁷ The New York Times, "2 Weeks, 1,000 Arrests: How a Surge of Feds Changed D.C. Policing", 29 August 2025, <https://www.nytimes.com/2025/08/29/us/federal-crackdown-washington-dc-arrest-data.html>.

¹³⁸ Associated Press, "Guard deployment to Washington into 2029 will cost roughly \$1.4B, estimate shows" (previously cited); PBS, "D.C. will pay \$50,000 to man detained while protesting guard patrol with 'Star Wars' song, record says", 29 June 2026, <https://www.pbs.org/newshour/nation/d-c-will-pay-50000-to-man-detained-while-protesting-guard-patrol-with-star-wars-song-record-says>; NPR, "A veteran was detained by the National Guard in her front yard. Now she's suing", 4 August 2026, <https://www.npr.org/2026/08/04/nx-s1-5918354/national-guard-dc-veteran-detained>; The New York Times, "National Guard Detained Man Who Assaulted a Park Police Officer, Authorities Say", 16 August 2025, <https://www.nytimes.com/2025/08/16/us/politics/national-guard-detained-man.html>.

National Guard troops also continue to support beautification efforts in the city, such as picking up trash in public parks.¹³⁹

From June to August 2026 – almost a year into the Federal Takeover – the DMV witnessed a renewed surge in federal threats, intimidation tactics and immigration enforcement, that included ICE, HSI and HHS agents conducting unannounced visits to various legal services non-profits that serve unaccompanied migrant children, and the launch of “Operation Safe Community” that resulted in over 1,300 arrests.¹⁴⁰ Moreover, ahead of the DC primary election, which essentially decides the DC mayor, President Trump threatened to “take back Washington and run it on a federal basis”, if frontrunner Janeese Lewis George, a Democratic Socialist were to win the general election scheduled to be held on 3 November 2026.¹⁴¹

Further escalating tensions and the National Guard presence in the District, President Trump doubled the National Guard deployment to nearly 5,000 troops for the 4th of July celebrations – a national holiday that celebrates the adoption of the Declaration of Independence – an indication that President Trump’s military deployment into US cities might be far from over.¹⁴²

From the beginning, US Vice President J.D. Vance suggested that the Federal Takeover would serve as a “test case” for other US cities.¹⁴³ After the operations in Los Angeles and the Federal Takeover of Washington, DC, the Trump administration turned its attention to Chicago, Illinois.

4.2 Chicago, Illinois – Operation Midway Blitz

On 6 September 2025, DHS announced Operation Midway Blitz, targeting undocumented migrants in Chicago, Illinois and the greater Chicagoland area.¹⁴⁴ DHS claimed that the operation was in response to “Tren de Aragua gang members, rapists, kidnappers, and drug traffickers on Chicago’s streets”, whom were supposedly released by “Governor Pritzker and his fellow sanctuary politicians.”¹⁴⁵ President Trump made repeated threats of a military deployment into Chicago, calling the city “a mess” and Chicago Mayor Brandon Johnson “grossly incompetent”.¹⁴⁶ Once again, the Trump administration characterized this federal immigration enforcement operation as a “crackdown” on crime, despite data showing a decline in Chicago’s violent crime rate.¹⁴⁷ Despite Mayor Johnson’s objections to the proposed operation, calling it “uncoordinated, uncalled for, and unsound”, Chicago became the next major location targeted by the Trump

¹³⁹ US Department of War, “Guard Provides Security Presence, Aids D.C. Residents, Beautification Cleanup”, 2 September 2025, <https://www.war.gov/News/News-Stories/Article/Article/4291161/guard-provides-security-presence-aids-dc-residents-beautification-cleanup/>.

¹⁴⁰ AMICA, “Trump administration deploys federal agents to intimidate legal services nonprofits representing unaccompanied immigrant children”, 12 June 2026, <https://amicacenter.org/press-releases/trump-administration-deploys-federal-agents-to-intimidate-legal-services-nonprofits-representing-unaccompanied-immigrant-children/>; ICE, “ICE Operation Safe Community – Washington, D.C. nets more than 1,300 arrests throughout Virginia, Maryland”, 26 August 2026, <https://www.ice.gov/news/releases/ice-operation-safe-community-washington-dc-nets-more-1300-arrests-throughout-virginia>.

¹⁴¹ The White House, “President Trump Signs a Proclamation, 11 June 2026, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Kldm14Dno_s&t=4s, minute 48:40; WTOP, “I wouldn’t like it: Trump threatens DC takeover if Janeese Lewis George wins mayor’s race”, 12 June 2026, <https://wtop.com/dc/2026/06/i-wouldnt-like-it-trump-threatens-dc-takeover-if-janeese-lewis-george-wins-mayors-race/>; Primary elections for DC Mayor were held on 16 June 2026 to select party nominees, while the general election for DC Mayor is scheduled on 3 November 2026. DC residents were granted the rights to elect a mayor and 13-member local council after the passing of the DC Home Rule Act of 1973.

¹⁴² The New York Times, “Trump’s National Guard Deployment in Washington Expands Ahead of Holiday”, 3 July 2026, <https://www.nytimes.com/2026/07/03/us/trump-national-guard-washington.html>.

¹⁴³ The Washington Post, “Vance says D.C. police takeover an example for other cities”, 20 August 2025, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2025/08/20/vance-miller-dc-takeover/>.

¹⁴⁴ Chicagoland is a commonly used term referring to the Chicago Metropolitan area, encompassing the City of Chicago and surrounding suburbs and communities.

¹⁴⁵ DHS, “ICE Launches Operation Midway Blitz in Honor of Katie Abraham to Target Criminal Illegal Aliens Terrorizing Americans in Sanctuary Illinois”, 8 September 2025, <https://www.dhs.gov/news/2025/09/08/ice-launches-operation-midway-blitz-honor-katie-abraham-target-criminal-illegal>.

¹⁴⁶ The Washington Post, “Pentagon plans military deployment in Chicago as Trump eyes crackdown”, 23 August 2025, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/national-security/2025/08/23/trump-chicago-military-national-guard/>.

¹⁴⁷ City of Chicago, “Violence Reduction Dashboard”, <https://www.chicago.gov/city/en/sites/vrd/home.html>; Chicago Data Portal, “Violence Reduction – Victims of Homicides and Non-fatal Shootings”, https://data.cityofchicago.org/Public-Safety/Violence-Reduction-Victims-of-Homicides-and-Non-Fatal-Shootings/mgzr/about_data; Chicago Sun-Times, “Why is Chicago violence plummeting? Some credit street outreach workers”, 6 June 2025, <https://chicago.suntimes.com/the-watchdogs/2025/06/06/violence-intervention-frederick-seaton-street-outreach-institute-nonviolence-chicago-cure-violence>.

administration for a large-scale, militarized federal immigration enforcement operation, that resulted in 3,800 detentions and 2,500 deportations.¹⁴⁸

The Trump administration inundated Chicago and the Chicagoland area with Border Patrol, ICE and other federal agents who employed militarized tactics that included large-scale arrests of migrants, asylum seekers, refugees and US citizens, frequently without judicial warrants; the routine use of chemical irritants; targeting of racialized individuals and communities for surveillance; and lethal and non-lethal shootings.¹⁴⁹ Further, the Broadview Processing Center (Broadview) became a focal point during the operation, as protests, lawsuits, and reports of inhumane detention conditions received national media attention – discussed in more detail in Section 5.4.1.¹⁵⁰

On 12 September 2025, an ICE agent shot and killed Silverio Villegas González during a traffic stop in the Franklin Park neighbourhood – examined in greater detail in Section 5.2.3.¹⁵¹ Instead of de-mobilizing troops and rescinding the operation, the Trump administration continued to intensify its enforcement operation tactics.¹⁵²

South Shore Apartment Militarized Immigration Raid

In the early morning hours of 30 September 2025, around 300 armed and masked federal agents led a military-style raid on a 130-unit apartment building located on South Shore Drive, alleging the presence of Tren de Aragua (TdA) members – examined in more detail in Section 5.2.1.¹⁵³ Agents descended from a Blackhawk helicopter and unmarked vehicles before entering the apartment complex, where they physically assaulted tenants, held tenants at gunpoint, dragged them outside, and restrained them in zip-ties for hours.¹⁵⁴ The raid resulted in the arrest of 37 individuals – including children – who were taken to the Broadview ICE processing centre. Many of the individuals were held in detention for months and several were removed from the US.¹⁵⁵

On 4 October 2025, three weeks after the killing of Silverio Villegas González, a Border Patrol agent shot Marimar Martínez, a US Citizen, five times in her vehicle – examined in more detail in Section 5.2.2.¹⁵⁶ Martínez survived the shooting and was subsequently detained, criminally charged and labelled a “domestic terrorist” by DHS.¹⁵⁷ “My own government attempted to execute me, and when they failed, they chose to

¹⁴⁸ City of Chicago, Office of the Mayor, “Mayor Brandon Johnson Statement On President Trumps Comments About Deploying The National Guard To Chicago”, 22 August 2025, https://www.chicago.gov/city/en/depts/mayor/press_room/press_releases/2025/august/Statement-National-Guard-Chicago.html; The Chicago Tribune, “Operation Midway Blitz in charts: Roughly 3,800 detained, and 2,500 deported, most with no criminal record”, 31 March 2026, <https://www.chicagotribune.com/2026/03/31/operation-midway-blitz-in-charts-roughly-3800-detained-and-2500-deported-most-with-no-criminal-record/?share=mgomehrt8tltgedoml3>.

¹⁴⁹ In-person and online interviews, Chicago, IL, USA, March-May 2026; Chicago Sun-Times, “Supreme Court allowed controversial immigration stops in L.A. What does the ruling mean for Chicago?”, 16 September 2025, <https://chicago.suntimes.com/us-supreme-court/2025/09/16/chicago-los-angeles-immigration-ice-supreme-court-sotomayor-brett-kavanaugh>.

¹⁵⁰ In-person and online interviews, Chicago, IL, USA, March-May 2026.

¹⁵¹ In-person and online interviews, Chicago, IL, USA, March-May 2026; ABC7 Chicago, “Man fatally shot after allegedly dragging ICE officer with car in Franklin Park; family speaks out”, 12 September 2025, <https://abc7chicago.com/post/ice-shooting-franklin-park-illinois-kills-suspect-dragged-officer-25th-grand-officials-say/17802348/>; New York Times, “How an Attempted ICE Arrest Turned Deadly”, 1 October 2025, <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2025/09/23/us/ice-shooting-chicago-video.html>.

¹⁵² DHS, “DHS Sets the Record Straight on Gross Smears Against ICE Officer Who Was Seriously Injured in Line of Duty and Shooting in Chicago During Traffic Stop”, 19 September 2025, <https://www.dhs.gov/news/2025/09/19/dhs-sets-record-straight-gross-smears-against-ice-officer-who-was-seriously-injured>.

¹⁵³ Book Club Chicago, “Armed Agents Raid South Shore Apartment Building Overnight Tuesday”, 30 September 2025, <https://blockclubchicago.org/2025/09/30/armed-agents-in-unmarked-vans-target-south-shore-apartment-building/>.

¹⁵⁴ ABC7 News, “Landlord accused of housing discrimination in South Shore immigration raid amid state investigation”, 22 January 2026, <https://abc7chicago.com/post/controversial-south-shore-immigration-raid-chicago-new-investigation-state-officials/18447690/>; The Block Club Chicago, “South Shore Residents Return To Ransacked Apartments After ICE Raid: ‘It Looks Like Hell’”, 2 October 2025, <https://blockclubchicago.org/2025/10/02/south-shore-residents-return-to-ransacked-apartments-try-to-move-out-after-ice-raid-it-looks-like-hell/>.

¹⁵⁵ NIJC, “Federal Tort Claims on Behalf of South Shore Chicago Residents Targeted in 2025 Immigration Raids”, May 2026, <https://immigrantjustice.org/for-attorneys/cases/federal-tort-claims-on-behalf-of-south-shore-chicago-residents-targeted-in-2025-immigration-raids/>.

¹⁵⁶ IAC, *Final Report*, April 2026, <https://ilac.illinois.gov/content/dam/soi/en/web/ilac/documents/final-report/IAC-Final-Report-April-2026.pdf>.

¹⁵⁷ DHS Press Release, “UPDATE: DHS Deploys Special Operations After Multiple Violent Attacks on Federal Law Enforcement by Domestic Terrorists in Chicago”, 4 October 2025, <https://www.dhs.gov/news/2025/10/04/update-dhs-deploys-special-operations-after-multiple-violent-attacks-federal-law>; Chicago Sun-Times, “Marimar Martínez, shot by Border Patrol in Chicago, speaks out after Good, Petti deaths: ‘I am their voice’”, 3 February 2026, <https://chicago.suntimes.com/immigration/2026/02/03/marimar-martinez-shot-border-patrol-chicago-speaks-out-after-good-pretti-deaths-i-am-their-voice>.

vilify me”, shared Martínez in her testimony at a Congressional Committee hearing, where she spoke on the physical and mental trauma she has suffered from her shooting.¹⁵⁸

The first half of October 2025 saw: the use of chemical irritants near an elementary school;¹⁵⁹ an immigration raid at a shelter for the unhoused;¹⁶⁰ the detention of Chicago Alderperson Jessie Fuentes;¹⁶¹ President Trump’s attempt to deploy 300 Illinois and Texas National Guard troops to Chicago, which was halted by *Trump v. Illinois*, followed by subsequent threats to invoke the Insurrection Act;¹⁶² the fining of a Chicago man for not having his Green Card on his person;¹⁶³ and sustained raids and roving patrols across Chicago and Chicagoland. The latter half of October 2025 saw court decisions that aimed to ensure accountability, transparency, limit the use of force, and protect due process.¹⁶⁴ A Cook County Judge banned warrantless arrests in or around courthouses, which was followed by a federal judge’s Temporary Restraining Order (TRO) that required federal agents to “turn on body cameras while conducting arrests” and limited the use of force.¹⁶⁵ Former DHS spokesperson Tricia McLaughlin condemned these developments as “extreme acts of judicial activism.”¹⁶⁶

Despite these rulings, ICE and Border Patrol continued to target racially and ethnically diverse communities across Chicago and Chicagoland, such as Cicero, Albany Park, West Lawn, Lakewood, Old Irving Park and most notably, Little Village.¹⁶⁷ Known as one of Chicago’s most vibrant migrant neighbourhoods and an economic powerhouse, Little Village is home to 26th Street, otherwise known as the “Mexican Magnificent Mile” – the second highest-grossing commercial district in Chicago.¹⁶⁸ Given Little Village’s rich and deeply rooted Mexican and Latin American culture and communities, the neighbourhood was heavily targeted, and experienced routine immigration enforcement operations and the routine deployment of chemical irritants at observers and peaceful protesters – discussed in more detail in Section 5.2.4.¹⁶⁹ Little Village’s public and economic life were negatively impacted, as residents feared racial profiling and violent arrests by agents.¹⁷⁰

Amnesty International was informed of the various local community, city and statewide organizations that mobilized across Chicago and the Chicagoland area to combat the harmful and destructive effects of the operation through mutual aid networks, food delivery and distribution, “Know Your Rights” (KYR) trainings and materials which were available in 21 languages, school pick-up and drop-off groups and patrols, rapid response groups and a city hotline and text alert system for residents to report and get notified about ICE

¹⁵⁸ Testimony of Marimar Martinez, Hearing Before the House Homeland Security Committee, 22 April 2026, <https://homeland.house.gov/wp-content/uploads/2026/04/2026-04-22-HRG-Testimony.pdf>.

¹⁵⁹ Chicago Sun-Times, “‘Sanctuary’ mission of Logan Square grade school tested by fed’s use of tear gas, teacher says”, 9 October 2025, <https://chicago.suntimes.com/education/2025/10/09/funston-elementary-logan-square-school-tear-gas-johnson>.

¹⁶⁰ Block Club Chicago, “Bronzeville Homeless Shelter Residents ‘Traumatized’ After Feds Chase, Arrest 4 People”, 1 October 2025, <https://blockclubchicago.org/2025/10/01/bronzeville-homeless-shelter-residents-traumatized-after-feds-chase-arrest-4-people/>.

¹⁶¹ Chicago Sun-Times, “Ald. Jessie Fuentes handcuffed by ICE while asking agents for patient’s warrant at Humboldt Park hospital”, 3 October 2025, <https://chicago.suntimes.com/immigration/2025/10/03/ald-jessie-fuentes-detention-ice-agents-humboldt-park-hospital>; CBS, “Waukegan mayor intervenes as U.S. citizen detained by Border Patrol agents near city hall”, 7 October 2025, <https://www.cbsnews.com/chicago/news/waukegan-mayor-intervenes-woman-detained-by-border-patrol-agents/>; WGN-TV, “WGN employee Debbie Brockman, detained by Border Patrol agents, issues statement”, 14 October 2025, <https://wgntv.com/news/chicago-news/wgn-employee-debbie-brockman-detained-by-border-patrol-agents-issues-statement/>.

¹⁶² Presidential Memorandum, *Memorandum on Department of War Security for the Protection of Federal Personnel and Property in Illinois*, 4 October 2025, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/2025/10/department-of-war-security-for-the-protection-of-federal-personnel-and-property-in-illinois/>; Supreme Court of the United States, *Trump v. Illinois* (previously cited); NPR, “Trump threatened to invoke the Insurrection Act (again). What is it?” (previously cited).

¹⁶³ In-person interview with ICDI, Chicago, IL, USA, 25 March 2026; NBC Chicago, “Chicago man fined \$130 by ICE agents for not carrying identification”, 15 October 2025, <https://www.nbcchicago.com/news/local/chicago-man-fined-130-by-ice-agents-for-not-carrying-identification/3838101/>.

¹⁶⁴ Circuit Court of Cook County Illinois, *In re Common Law Privilege Against Civil Arrests for People Attending Court*, No. 2025-10, 14 October 2025, <https://www.macarthurjustice.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/10/FINAL-Petition-for-Rule-re-Courthouse-Arrests-1.pdf>; United States District Court for the Northern District of Illinois Eastern Division, *Chicago Headline Club, et al., v. Noem*, Modified Temporary Restraining Order, Case No. 1:25-cv-12173, 17 October 2025, <https://storage.courtlistener.com/recap/gov.uscourts.ilnd.487571/gov.uscourts.ilnd.487571.66.0.pdf>.

¹⁶⁵ Circuit Court of Cook County Illinois, *In re Common Law Privilege Against Civil Arrests for People Attending Court* (previously cited); United States District Court for the Northern District of Illinois Eastern Division, *Chicago Headline Club, et al., v. Noem*, Modified Temporary Restraining Order (previously cited).

¹⁶⁶ ABC 7 Chicago, “Judge orders ICE field director to testify, ‘Operation Midway Blitz’ agents to wear body cameras”, 16 October 2025, <https://abc7chicago.com/post/federal-judge-sara-ellis-orders-ice-field-director-russell-hott-testify-agents-wear-body-cams-chicago-area/18018940/>.

¹⁶⁷ In-person and online interviews, Chicago, IL, USA, March-May 2026.

¹⁶⁸ In-person interview, The Little Village Council, Chicago, IL, USA, 27 March 2026.

¹⁶⁹ In-person and online interviews, Chicago, IL, USA, March-May 2026; IAC, *Final Report* (previously cited).

¹⁷⁰ WBEZ Chicago, “Operation Midway Blitz fallout still being felt in Chicago’s Latino neighborhoods”, 20 February 2026, <https://www.wbez.org/immigration/2026/02/20/operation-midway-blitz-effects-latino-neighborhoods-pilsen-little-village-southeast-side>.

activity.¹⁷¹ The Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights (ICIRR) and Organized Communities Against Deportations (OCAD) launched the ICE hotline ahead of the operation. The most emblematic symbol of community resistance were whistles, used to alert neighbours of ICE sightings and activity, that was spearheaded by the Little Village Community Council.¹⁷²

Chicago's community response and resistance efforts were complemented by local and state government action. At the start of the second Trump administration, Mayor Brandon Johnson established the "Protecting Chicago Initiative" tasked with providing "Know Your Rights" (KYR) materials and issued five executive orders related to protecting the right to freedom of expression, banning immigration enforcement in sensitive areas, directing the Chicago Police Department (CPD) to facilitate the documentation and prosecution of ICE and Border Patrol misconduct, and addressing food insecurity.¹⁷³ At the Illinois state level, Illinois Governor JB Pritzker established the Illinois Accountability Commission (IAC) to create a public record of federal agents' conduct during Operation Midway Blitz, examine the impact on communities and provide policy recommendations in a final report, which was released in April 2026.¹⁷⁴ The IAC conducted investigations, reviewed footage, organized private neighbourhood listening sessions and held five public hearings in an effort to both document the harm caused and prevent future harm. Illinois Governor Pritzker stated, "Once this all ends, I believe there will be people of good faith who will review what the Commission has recorded and will demand answers and accountability."¹⁷⁵

In response to Operation Midway Blitz, Mayor Johnson invited United Nations (UN) independent experts to come to Chicago to witness the abuses of federal immigration agents, which he described as a "worsening human rights crisis in the United States" during a UN Human Rights Council session.¹⁷⁶ Meanwhile, DHS claimed that the operation was a "historic win" for Chicago, attributing an alleged decline in violent crime to the operation.¹⁷⁷ The end of November saw a decrease in federal immigration enforcement activity that allowed for aspects of daily life to resume.¹⁷⁸

At the end of December 2025, President Trump announced that National Guard troops assigned to Chicago would be withdrawn, while hinting at future deployments, stating, "We will come back, perhaps in a much different and stronger form, when crime begins to soar again - Only a question of time!"¹⁷⁹ Although National Guard troops had been sent to support federal law enforcement in Chicago, they did not ultimately operate on the streets, after their deployment was blocked by the courts. National Guard troops fully withdrew from Chicago in February 2026.¹⁸⁰

As of July 2026, various Chicago residents had filed civil lawsuits alleging excessive force and unlawful detentions by federal agents during Operation Midway Blitz.¹⁸¹ Mayor Johnson also reaffirmed Chicago's public position to abolish ICE, noting the cost of human life, community trauma and accountability gaps as systemic failures.¹⁸² Despite mounting lawsuits and public, national and international criticism of Operation

¹⁷¹ In-person and online interviews, Chicago, IL, USA, March-May 2026.

¹⁷² In-person and online interviews, Chicago, IL, USA, March-May 2026; Block Club Chicago, "In Little Village, Residents Are Blowing Actual Whistles To Warn Neighbors About ICE", 17 September 2025, <https://blockclubchicago.org/2025/09/17/in-little-village-residents-are-blowing-actual-whistles-to-warn-neighbors-about-ice/>.

¹⁷³ City of Chicago, "Protecting Chicago" <https://www.chicago.gov/city/en/sites/protecting-chicago/home.html>.

¹⁷⁴ State of Illinois, Executive Order No. 2025-06, *Executive Order to Establish the Illinois Accountability Commission*, 23 October 2025, <https://ilac.illinois.gov/about-ilac/executive-order.html>; IAC, *Final Report* (previously cited).

¹⁷⁵ Office of the Governor, "Gov. Pritzker Signs Executive Order to Establish the Illinois Accountability Commission", 23 October 2025, <https://gov-pritzker-newsroom.prezly.com/gov-pritzker-signs-executive-order-to-establish-the-illinois-accountability-commission>.

¹⁷⁶ WBEZ Chicago, "Johnson urges UN panel to hold Trump accountable for 'human rights abuses'", 8 November 2025, <https://www.wbez.org/immigration/2025/11/08/brandon-johnson-united-nations-panel-human-rights-abuses-ice-raids-donald-trump>.

¹⁷⁷ DHS, "Operation Midway Blitz Brings Historic Drop in Crime to J.B. Pritzker and Brandon Johnson's Chicago", 12 November 2025, https://www.dhs.gov/news/2025/11/12/operation-midway-blitz-brings-historic-drop-crime-jb-pritzker-and-brandon-johnsons#:~:text=Since%20the%20start%20of%20Operation%20Midway%20Blitz,48%25%20*%20Transit%20crime%20is%20down%20%25.

¹⁷⁸ In-person and online interviews, Chicago, IL, USA, March-May 2026.

¹⁷⁹ Truth Social Post, Donald J. Trump, 31 December 2025, <https://truthsocial.com/@realDonaldTrump/posts/115816171466225987>.

¹⁸⁰ New York Times, "Guard Troops Fully Withdraw From Chicago, Portland and Los Angeles" 12 February 2026, <https://www.nytimes.com/2026/02/12/us/national-guard-chicago-portland-los-angeles.html>.

¹⁸¹ Chicago Sun-Times, "Lawsuits seek to hold Midway Blitz agents accountable in lieu of state charges", 2 July 2026, <https://chicago.suntimes.com/immigration/2026/07/02/midway-blitz-lawsuit-ice-immigration-officer>.

¹⁸² Office of the Mayor, City of Chicago, Executive Order No. 2026-01, *ICE on notice – Defining CPD action during civil immigration enforcement to further federal accountability*, 2 February 2026, https://chicityclerk.s3.us-west-2.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public-1/reports/0703_001.pdf?VersionId=DB_yGmR8V5vI7_Vm437OdLmUJJZlRH.

Midway Blitz, the Trump administration continued its series of militarized, federal immigration enforcement operations in other cities.

4.3 New Orleans, Louisiana – Operation Catahoula Crunch

On 3 December 2025, DHS launched Operation Catahoula Crunch, also referred to as “Operation Swamp Sweep”, targeting Southeast Louisiana and Mississippi, primarily focused on the New Orleans greater metropolitan area.¹⁸³ When Catahoula Crunch was announced, DHS referred to undocumented migrants as “monsters” who were “released back onto New Orleans streets to commit more crimes”, blaming New Orleans’ separation ordinance and Democratic municipal leadership. Catahoula Crunch deployed around 250 Border Patrol agents who were tasked to conduct 5,000 arrests and led by former Border Patrol Commander Bovino.¹⁸⁴

The racially and ethnically diverse City of New Orleans is at constant odds with the state’s anti-immigrant policies.¹⁸⁵ Top Louisiana officials – also Trump loyalists – welcomed the operation and the increased law enforcement presence, while threatening legal consequences to any residents and elected officials who opposed immigration enforcement.¹⁸⁶ Ahead of Operation Catahoula Crunch, Louisiana Governor Jeff Landry, in partnership with the Trump administration, launched Operation GEAUX, an immigration enforcement initiative that expanded the involvement of Louisiana state law enforcement agencies in federal immigration enforcement, including through 287(g) agreements.¹⁸⁷

New Orleans Police Department (NOPD) Consent Decree

The Trump administration targeted New Orleans because of its Consent Decree, which prohibited the New Orleans Police Department (NOPD) from collaborating with federal immigration authorities.¹⁸⁸ The Consent Decree was signed between the DOJ and NOPD in 2013 to bring NOPD into compliance with constitutional policing standards, after a DOJ investigation identified patterns of civil rights violations and other misconduct, including racial profiling.¹⁸⁹ After 12 years of federal oversight, the Consent Decree, including its “Bias-Free Policing” provisions, was dissolved in November 2025, a decision that community advocates opposed.¹⁹⁰ Within two days of the decree’s termination, federal agents began staging in the New Orleans area for the planned immigration enforcement operation.¹⁹¹

¹⁸³ DHS, “DHS Launches Operation Catahoula Crunch in New Orleans Targeting Criminal Illegal Aliens Released From Jail and Back into American Communities”, 3 December 2025, <https://www.dhs.gov/news/2025/12/03/dhs-launches-operation-catahoula-crunch-new-orleans-targeting-criminal-illegal>.

¹⁸⁴ Associated Press, “DHS plans to deploy 250 border agents to Louisiana in major immigration sweep, AP sources say”, 18 November 2025, <https://apnews.com/article/new-orleans-border-patrol-swamp-sweep-1d30a524e80fa25912a38c3aea79832b>.

¹⁸⁵ Spectrum Local News, “New Orleans awaits arrival of ‘Swamp Sweep’ immigration crackdown”, 20 November 2025, <https://spectrumlocalnews.com/us/snpus/politics/2025/11/20/new-orleans-immigration-crackdown>.

¹⁸⁶ Politico, “Trump administration launches latest immigration crackdown in New Orleans”, 3 December 2025, <https://www.politico.com/news/2025/12/03/trump-immigration-crackdown-new-orleans-00674468>; Louisiana Radio Network, “Louisiana Attorney General Liz Murrill warns of consequences for obstructing ICE, Border Patrol agents”, 2 December 2025, <https://louisianaradionetwork.com/2025/12/02/louisiana-attorney-general-liz-murrill-warns-of-consequences-for-interfering-with-ice-and-border-patrol-agents/>.

¹⁸⁷ Office of the Governor of Louisiana, “Governor Jeff Landry Partners with President Trump to Launch “Operation GEAUX””, 15 May 2025, <https://gov.louisiana.gov/news/4852>; State of Louisiana, Executive Department, Office of the Governor, Executive Order Number JML 25-060, *Operation GEAUX*, 15 May 2025, <https://www.louisianafirstnews.com/wp-content/uploads/sites/80/2025/05/Operation-GEAUX.pdf>; Fox 8, “5 state agencies enter into ICE partnerships under ‘Operation GEAUX’”, 23 May 2025, <https://www.fox8live.com/2025/05/24/5-state-agencies-enter-into-ice-partnerships-under-operation-geaux/>; More than 32 law enforcement agencies in Louisiana have signed 287(g) agreements, including Kenner Police Department (KPD), whose jurisdiction covers the state’s largest Latinx community.

¹⁸⁸ DHS, “DHS Launches Operation Catahoula Crunch in New Orleans Targeting Criminal Illegal Aliens Released From Jail and Back into American Communities” (previously cited).

¹⁸⁹ Verite News, “Judge ends long-running NOPD consent decree”, 19 November 2025, <https://veritenews.org/2025/11/19/judge-ends-long-running-nopd-consent-decree/>.

¹⁹⁰ United States District Court for the Eastern District of Louisiana, *United States of America v. City of New Orleans*, Order, Civil Action No. 12-1924, 19 November 2025, <https://www.documentcloud.org/documents/26287889-order-terminating-nopd-consent-decree/>; United States District Court for the Eastern District of Louisiana, *United States of America v. City of New Orleans*, Second Amended and Restated Consent Decree Regarding the New Orleans Police Department, Civil Action No. 12-CV-01924, 18 April 2024, <https://nola.gov/nola/media/NOPD/Consent%20Decree/778-Second-Amended-and-Restated-Consent-Decree.pdf>; ACLU of Louisiana, “ACLU of Louisiana Statement on Court’s Decision to End NOPD Consent Decree”, 10 October 2025, <https://www.laclu.org/press-releases/aclu-of-louisiana-statement-on-courts-decision-to-end-nopd-consent-decree/>.

¹⁹¹ The Marshall Project, “Why New Orleans Became Trump’s Newest Immigration Target”, 4 December 2025, <https://www.themarshallproject.org/2025/12/04/trump-ice-new-orleans-immigration>.

At the onset Catahoula Crunch, Louisiana saw an influx of federal immigration agents into New Orleans, who conducted immigration enforcement operations within the city and surrounding areas, such as Kenner and Metairie. Louisiana Attorney General Liz Murrill threatened legal action if NOPD did not assist federal immigration agents in their enforcement operations, citing Louisiana's prohibition on "sanctuary policies".¹⁹² Catahoula Crunch then extended into the North Shore of Lake Pontchartrain – Slidell, Louisiana –, Baton Rouge – the Louisiana State Capital – and the neighbouring state of Mississippi.¹⁹³

Throughout Louisiana and parts of Mississippi, masked federal agents in tactical gear, patrolling in unmarked vehicles, arrested and detained migrants through roving patrols, traffic stops and targeting of worksites.¹⁹⁴ "These recent DHS/ICE actions have demonstrated not only violations of basic rights, but they are destabilizing our neighbourhoods and hurting our economy", shared New Orleans Councilmember Harris.¹⁹⁵ By 18 December, ahead of the holiday season, federal immigration agents had conducted a total of 370 arrests.¹⁹⁶

Catahoula Crunch resulted in over 560 arrests and negatively disrupted Louisiana's migrant and racialized communities, primarily its long-standing Honduran and Vietnamese communities.¹⁹⁷ Louisiana residents interviewed by Amnesty International likened Catahoula Crunch to a "hurricane".¹⁹⁸ Individuals and families were forced into self-isolation, as they braced for and weathered the Trump administration's large-scale militarized immigration enforcement operation.

"New Orleans knows how to be in community. Because of storm protocols we also know how to stay home."¹⁹⁹

On 9 January 2026, federal immigration agents were re-assigned to Minneapolis-St. Paul, Minnesota, to support Operation Metro Surge in response to the escalating tensions following the killing of Renee Good.²⁰⁰ Shortly thereafter, on 12 January, Helena Moreno was inaugurated as the new mayor of New Orleans, becoming the city's first Latina and second woman to be elected as mayor.²⁰¹ "Catahoula Crunch has caused significant alarm in our city and created a culture of fear among our most vulnerable residents", shared Mayor Moreno.²⁰²

At the New Orleans municipal level, immigrant rights activists and advocates called on the New Orleans councilmembers to establish "ICE-Free Zones" and other measures to ensure NOPD accountability and limit collaboration with ICE. At the U.S. Congressional level, U.S. House Democrats held a shadow hearing titled, "Operation Catahoula Crunch, ICE Invasion of Louisiana", that Mayor Moreno, migrant rights advocates and

¹⁹² Louisiana Illuminator, "Murrill: NOPD is breaking laws if it doesn't 'fully cooperate' with ICE, Border Patrol", 5 December 2025, <https://lailluminator.com/2025/12/05/nopd-ice/>; Louisiana State Legislature, *Senate Bill 15: Prohibits any act intended to hinder, delay, prevent, or otherwise interfere with or thwart federal immigration enforcement efforts*, 20 June 2025, <https://legis.la.gov/legis/BillInfo.aspx?i=247977>; Louisiana Legislature, *Act No. 314, Senate Bill No. 208*, 2024 Regular Session, <https://legis.la.gov/legis/ViewDocument.aspx?d=1380786>.

¹⁹³ Mississippi Today, "Fear ripples through immigrant communities amid arrests", 15 December 2025, <https://mississippitoday.org/2025/12/15/fear-ripples-through-immigrant-communities-amid-arrests/>; WSDU, "Tensions rise in Slidell over Operation Catahoula Crunch", 12 December 2025, <https://www.wdsu.com/article/slidell-immigration-border-patrol-protest/69714091>; WRKF Baton Rouge, "Louisiana volunteer group brings groceries to families fearing immigration crackdown", 17 December 2026, <https://www.bpr.org/2025-12-17/louisiana-volunteer-group-brings-groceries-to-families-fearing-immigration-crackdown>.

¹⁹⁴ Louisiana Illuminator, "Catahoula Crunch' sees shift in geography, strategy", 19 December 2025, <https://lailluminator.com/2025/12/19/catahoula-crunch-2/>; WAPT, "Immigration crackdown underway in Mississippi and Louisiana", 4 December 2025, <https://www.wapt.com/article/mira-responds-immigration-crackdown-mississippi-and-louisiana/69636555>.

¹⁹⁵ City of New Orleans, "New Orleans City Council Announces 'Know Your Rights' Portal to Report Potential Abuse By Federal Immigration Officers", 3 December 2025, <https://council.nola.gov/news/december-2025/new-orleans-city-council-announces-know-your-right/>.

¹⁹⁶ DHS, "New Orleans: Operation Catahoula Crunch Nabs Criminal Illegal Alien Drug Dealers, Hit-and-Run Criminals, and Domestic Abusers", 18 December 2025, <https://www.dhs.gov/news/2025/12/18/new-orleans-operation-catahoula-crunch-nabs-criminal-illegal-alien-drug-dealers-hit>.

¹⁹⁷ Scripps News, "DHS agents target the Vietnamese community in New Orleans", 5 December 2026, <https://www.scrippsnews.com/politics/immigration/dhs-agents-target-the-vietnamese-community-in-new-orleans>.

¹⁹⁸ In-person interview with A.S., Louisiana, USA, May 2026.

¹⁹⁹ In-person interview with A.S., Louisiana, USA, May 2026.

²⁰⁰ Verite News, "Federal officers are leaving Louisiana immigration crackdown for Minneapolis, documents show", 9 January 2026, <https://veritenews.org/2026/01/09/immigration-officers-leaving-louisiana/>.

²⁰¹ Office of the Mayor, City of New Orleans, Louisiana, "Pledging a Bold New Direction, Mayor Helena Moreno Inaugurated as 63rd Mayor of New Orleans at Saenger Theatre", 12 January 2026, <https://nola.gov/next/mayors-office/news/articles/january-2026/2026-01-12-mayor-helena-moreno-inaugurated-as-63rd-mayor-of-new-orleans-at-saenger-theatre/>.

²⁰² City of New Orleans, "New Orleans City Council Announces 'Know Your Rights' Portal to Report Potential Abuse By Federal Immigration Officers" (previously cited).

a faith leader joined to testify over the operation's impacts on Louisiana residents.²⁰³ At the hearing, Tania Wolf, Southeast Advocacy Manager for the National Immigrant Project (NIP), described Operation Catahoula Crunch as a "humanitarian crisis" that saw a dramatic increase of food distribution from "30 to 400 families", and an "overwhelming request for diapers, wipes and infant formula ... the bare essentials for sustaining new life".²⁰⁴

The Trump administration has relied on Louisiana's historical role as a "Black Hole" of immigrant detention to facilitate its mass detention and deportation system.²⁰⁵ Many of the state's detention centres are located in remote, rural areas, isolating detained individuals from legal and support networks and limiting oversight and accountability for inhuman detention conditions and deportations.²⁰⁶ "Louisiana has become ground zero for the Trump administration's mass detention agenda, with nearly 13% of all detained immigrants nationwide held in our state, subjected to illegal conditions that violate their most basic human rights", according to the ACLU of Louisiana.²⁰⁷

The Alexandria Staging Facility – Alexandria, Louisiana

Given its remote location – roughly 175 miles (280 kilometres) northwest of New Orleans – and attached international airport, the Alexandria Staging Facility in Alexandria, Louisiana is known as the nation's largest deportation hub, that has seen transfers – sometimes within hours – of individuals from across the country, including those arrested during Operation Midway Blitz.²⁰⁸ Organizations have reported that individuals are removed, sometimes to third countries, before accessing legal remedies and counsel, violating due process rights.²⁰⁹ Expansion plans to open a 528-bed holding facility for migrant families and unaccompanied children were confirmed in June 2026.²¹⁰

Operation Catahoula Crunch chilled public life and forced many Louisianans to go into isolation, foregoing urgent and essential services that devastated the economic and social fabric of the greater New Orleans area. The operation resulted in economic shocks to the hospitality, tourism, service, construction and landscaping industries.²¹¹ Louisiana's migrant-led businesses closed out of fear of immigration raids and violent encounters with federal agents. Families were separated, with some families having their main breadwinners deported and young teenagers left to care for their younger siblings, the home and other adult and family responsibilities in the absence of their parent(s).²¹² One of the most severe impacts of Catahoula Crunch was the delaying of medical care and emergency treatment, given federal immigration agents' activity at or near clinics and hospitals.²¹³

New Orleans and other Louisiana residents responded to the operation by organizing food delivery, leading and distributing "Know Your Rights" (KYR) trainings and materials, including whistles, establishing an ICE

²⁰³ Homeland Security Committee Democrats, "Shadow Hearing on Operation Catahoula Crunch, ICE Invasion of Louisiana", 26 January 2026, <https://democrats-homeland.house.gov/activities/other-events/field-hearing-on-operation-catahoula-crunch-ice-invasion-of-louisiana>.

²⁰⁴ Homeland Security Committee Democrats, "Shadow Hearing on Operation Catahoula Crunch, ICE Invasion of Louisiana" (previously cited).

²⁰⁵ ACLU, *Inside the Black Hole: Systemic Human Rights Abuses Against Immigrants Detained & Disappeared in Louisiana*, 26 August 2024, https://www.laclu.org/app/uploads/drupal/sites/default/files/inside_the_black_hole_systemic_human_rights_abuses_against_immigrants_detained_disappeared_in_louisiana.pdf.

²⁰⁶ ACLU of Louisiana, *Year One: Immigrant Detention in Louisiana Under The Trump Administration*, 22 January 2026, <https://www.laclu.org/app/uploads/2026/01/2026.01.19-Year-One.pdf>; ACLU of Louisiana, "NEW REPORT: Immigrant Detention in Louisiana Reaches Crisis Levels Under Trump Administration's First Year", 22 January 2026, <https://www.laclu.org/press-releases/new-report-immigrant-detention-in-louisiana-reaches-crisis-levels-under-trump-administrations-first-year/>.

²⁰⁷ ACLU of Louisiana, "NEW REPORT: Immigrant Detention in Louisiana Reaches Crisis Levels Under Trump Administration's First Year" (previously cited).

²⁰⁸ The Marshall Project, "ICE Data Reveals What Happened to 1,600 People Arrested During Chicago's Blitz", 18 December 2025, <https://www.themarshallproject.org/2025/12/18/ice-chicago-immigration-blitz-data>; Truthout, "Louisiana Residents Are Resisting Plans to Build ICE Jail on Contaminated Site", 12 September 2026, <https://truthout.org/articles/louisiana-residents-are-resisting-plans-to-build-ice-jail-on-contaminated-site/>.

²⁰⁹ The Guardian, "Trump's deportation hub: inside the 'black hole' where immigrants disappear", 12 September 2025, <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/ng-interactive/2025/sep/12/ice-detention-alexandria-staging-facility>.

²¹⁰ Associated Press, "A new ICE facility could speed up deportations for families and kids", 5 July 2026, <https://apnews.com/article/ice-new-deportation-facility-louisiana-children-families-02ce99eb592b4e392b5685b11368ca58>.

²¹¹ Fox 8, "Construction, hospitality hardest hit by Operation Catahoula Crunch", 17 December 2025, <https://www.fox8live.com/2025/12/17/construction-hospitality-hardest-hit-by-operation-catahoula-crunch/>.

²¹² The Guardian, "US immigration crackdown forces teens to caretake after parents are detained", 14 December 2025, <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2025/dec/14/ice-immigration-crackdown-louisiana-teens-family-detained>.

²¹³ In-person and online interviews, Louisiana, USA, May 2026.

hotline, and providing legal and direct assistance support to impacted individuals and their families.²¹⁴ In December 2025, DHS launched Operation Metro Surge in Minneapolis-St. Paul, Minnesota, regarded by DHS as, “the largest immigration operation ever”.²¹⁵

4.4 Minneapolis-St. Paul, Minnesota – Operation Metro Surge

On 4 December 2025, the Trump administration launched Operation Metro Surge, deploying 4,000 federal agents to Minnesota, primarily concentrated in the Minneapolis-St. Paul metropolitan area – commonly known as the Twin Cities –, targeting undocumented migrants and the Somali-American community.²¹⁶ The immigration enforcement operation was linked to allegations of fraud involving federal nutrition pandemic-aid and nutrition programs and childcare centres operated by Somali Minnesotans, which allegedly funded terrorist organizations, according to a media report.²¹⁷ Although these claims were unsubstantiated, the Trump administration expressed its goal to “dismantle” the “fraud empire” in Minnesota, under the leadership of “incompetent Democrats like Tim Walz and his Radical Left enablers.”²¹⁸

The operation expanded in early January 2026, after the Trump administration announced the deployment of 2,000 federal agents to Minneapolis-St. Paul, a number that eclipsed the 600 Minneapolis Police Department and 575 St. Paul Police Department officers, and engulfed neighbourhoods across the Twin Cities.²¹⁹

As the operation escalated, ICE and Border Patrol agents used lethal force against three individuals. On 7 January 2026, an ICE agent shot and killed Renee Good through her car window in Southern Minneapolis as she was observing an immigration enforcement operation – examined in more detail in Section 5.2.3.²²⁰ Protests and vigils ensued, and Minneapolis Public Schools closed temporarily.²²¹ Minneapolis Mayor Frey told ICE to “get the f*** out of Minneapolis” during a press conference about Good’s killing.²²² One week after the killing of Good, an ICE agent shot Julio César Sosa-Celis during an immigration enforcement operation in north Minneapolis – examined in more detail in Section 5.2.2.²²³

On 12 January 2026, Minnesota Attorney General Keith Ellison, alongside the cities of Minneapolis and St. Paul, sued DHS to halt the “unlawful actions of DHS agents” that have “caused fear and terror throughout

²¹⁴ In-person and online interviews, Louisiana, USA, May 2026.

²¹⁵ PBS, “2,000 federal agents sent to Minneapolis area to carry out ‘largest immigration operation ever,’ ICE says”, 6 January 2026, <https://www.pbs.org/newshour/politics/2000-federal-agents-sent-to-minneapolis-area-to-carry-out-largest-immigration-operation-ever-ice-says>.

²¹⁶ City of Minneapolis, *Updated Impact Assessment & Recovery Needs Overview: Operation Metro Surge*, 10 June 2026, <https://www.minneapolismn.gov/media/-/www-content-assets/documents/Updated-Impact-Assessment-Recovery-Needs-Overview---June-10-2026.pdf>; DHS, “ICE Arrests Worst of the Worst Criminal Illegal Aliens During Operation Metro Surge in Minneapolis Including Pedophiles, Domestic Abusers, and Gang Members”, 4 December 2025, <https://www.dhs.gov/news/2025/12/04/ice-arrests-worst-worst-criminal-illegal-aliens-during-operation-metro-surge>; The White House, “Here’s What the Trump Administration Is Doing to Crush Minnesota’s Fraud Epidemic”, 2 January 2026, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/releases/2026/01/heres-what-the-trump-administration-is-doing-to-crush-minnesotas-fraud-epidemic/>; The New York Times, “New ICE Operation Is Said to Target Somali Migrants in Twin Cities”, 2 December 2025, <https://www.nytimes.com/2025/12/02/us/politics/ice-somali-migrants-minneapolis-st-paul.html>.

²¹⁷ In-person and online interviews, Minneapolis-St. Paul, MN, USA, March-May 2026; PBS News, “Surge in federal officers in Minnesota focuses on alleged fraud at day care centers”, 31 December 2025, <https://www.pbs.org/newshour/politics/surge-in-federal-officers-in-minnesota-focuses-on-alleged-fraud-at-day-care-centers>; City Journal, “The Largest Funder of Al-Shabaab Is the Minnesota Taxpayer”, 19 November 2025, <https://www.city-journal.org/article/minnesota-welfare-fraud-somalia-al-shabaab>.

²¹⁸ The White House, “Here’s What the Trump Administration Is Doing to Crush Minnesota’s Fraud Epidemic” (previously cited).

²¹⁹ The New York Times, “‘No Win’ for Minneapolis Police Caught Between Trump and City Residents”, 28 January 2026, <https://www.nytimes.com/2026/01/28/us/politics/minneapolis-police-trump.html>; Saint Paul Minnesota, “21st Century Policing Report”, 1 April 2026, <https://www.stpaul.gov/node/146946/21st-century-policing-report>.

²²⁰ Minneapolis City Council, “Minneapolis City Council Members’ Statement on an ICE agent shooting and killing Renee Nicole Good”, 7 January 2026, <https://fox4kc.com/wp-content/uploads/sites/16/2026/01/FOR-IMMEDIATE-RELEASE-1.pdf>.

²²¹ In-person and online interviews, Minneapolis-St. Paul, MN, USA, March-May 2026; Sahan Journal, “Minneapolis to offer online learning through Feb. 12 amid ICE actions near schools”, 9 January 2026, <https://sahanjournal.com/education/minneapolis-schools-online-learning-ice-actions-schools/>.

²²² NBC News, “Mayor Frey to ICE: ‘Get the f--- out of our city’”, 7 January 2026, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8M3GtZ_sqYI, minute 0:25.

²²³ Al Jazeera, “ICE agent arrested over shooting of Venezuelan man in US immigration raid”, 29 May 2026, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2026/5/29/ice-agent-arrested-over-shooting-of-venezuelan-man-in-us-immigration-raid>.

the Twin Cities.”²²⁴ Attorneys General from 19 states and DC filed an amicus brief in support of the lawsuit.²²⁵ “If left unchecked, the federal government will no doubt be emboldened to continue its unlawful conduct in Minnesota and to repeat it elsewhere”, stated the Attorneys General.²²⁶

In response to the increase in violence experienced during Metro Surge, thousands of Minnesotans took to the streets in below-freezing temperatures to protest Operation Metro Surge and call for accountability for Good’s death.²²⁷ Nevertheless, federal immigration agents continued to demonstrate an unrestrained use of lethal force. On 24 January 2026, Border Patrol agents shot and killed Alex Pretti during an immigration enforcement operation in Minneapolis – examined in more detail in Section 5.2.3.²²⁸

Attacks on Press Freedom

On 30 January 2026, journalists Don Lemon and Georgia Fort were arrested for their coverage of a demonstration inside a church whose pastor also serves as an ICE Field Director.²²⁹ Fort was arrested at her home. Lemon and Fort were charged with “interfering with the First Amendment right of worshippers” to which they pleaded not guilty.²³⁰ “This case doesn’t just leave me fighting for my freedom, it is the government trying to muzzle me -- to make me unable to report on one of the most historic cases not just in our state but in our country,” stated Fort.²³¹ The case is ongoing.

Amnesty International, alongside several civil society organizations, have urged the DOJ to drop the charges against Georgia Fort and other members of the press.²³²

Described as a “home base” for federal immigration agents during the operation, the Bishop Henry Whipple Federal Building (Whipple) at Fort Snelling, Minnesota, was used during Operation Metro Surge to detain over 3,500 individuals for multiple days, despite its designation as a short-term facility.²³³ Organizations and legal providers documented inhumane, unsanitary and overcrowded conditions and lack of access to

²²⁴ United States District Court for the District of Minnesota, *State of Minnesota, City of Minneapolis, and City of St. Paul v. Noem, et al.*, Complaint for Declaratory and Injunctive Relief, Case No. 0:26-cv-00190, 12 January 2026, https://www.ag.state.mn.us/Office/Communications/2026/docs/00190_DHS_Complaint.pdf; Office of Minnesota Attorney General Keith Ellison, “Attorney General Ellison and cities of Minneapolis and Saint Paul sue to halt ICE surge into Minnesota”, 12 January 2026, https://www.ag.state.mn.us/Office/Communications/2026/01/12_ICE.asp.

²²⁵ United States District Court for the District of Minnesota, *State of Minnesota, City of Minneapolis, and City of St. Paul v. Noem, et al.*, [Proposed] Brief of the States of California, Arizona, Colorado, Connecticut, District of Columbia, Delaware, Hawai’i, Illinois, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, Nevada, Oregon, Vermont, Washington, and Wisconsin, As amicus curiae in support of Plaintiffs’ motion for Injunctive relief, Case No. 0:26-cv-00190-KMM-DFJ, 22 January 2026, <https://oag.ca.gov/system/files/attachments/press-docs/Amicus%20Brief%20MN%20v.%20Noem.pdf>; State of California Department of Justice, Rob Banta, Attorney General, Press Release, “Attorney General Bonta Leads Amicus Brief Challenging Militarized and Illegal Deployments in Minnesota”, 23 January 2026, <https://oag.ca.gov/news/press-releases/attorney-general-bonta-leads-amicus-brief-challenging-militarized-and-illegal>.

²²⁶ United States District Court for the District of Minnesota, *State of Minnesota, City of Minneapolis, and City of St. Paul v. Noem, et al.*, [Proposed] Brief of the States of California, Arizona, Colorado, Connecticut, District of Columbia, Delaware, Hawai’i, Illinois, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, Nevada, Oregon, Vermont, Washington, and Wisconsin, As amicus curiae in support of Plaintiffs’ motion for Injunctive relief (previously cited).

²²⁷ NBC News, “Thousands rally against ICE in Minneapolis in below-zero temperatures”, 23 January 2026, <https://www.nbcnews.com/news/us-news/ice-out-rally-minneapolis-immigration-protest-rcna255631>.

²²⁸ New York Times, “New Video Analysis Reveals Flawed and Fatal Decisions in Shooting of Pretti”, 26 January 2026, <https://www.nytimes.com/video/us/100000010668660/new-video-analysis-reveals-flawed-and-fatal-decisions-in-shooting-of-pretti.html>.

²²⁹ Amnesty International, “USA: Journalists face criminal charges” (Index: AMR 51/0815/2026), 13 March 2026, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/amr51/0815/2026/en/>; KARE 11, “‘The 1st Amendment is under attack’: Journalists Don Lemon, Georgia Fort arrested for covering church protest” 30 January 2026, <https://www.kare11.com/article/news/local/ice-in-minnesota/journalists-don-lemon-georgia-fort-arrested-in-connection-with-church-protest-against-ice/89-a9df2642-4f6e-425b-8562-208cefa48843>.

²³⁰ ABC 7 Chicago, “Journalist Don Lemon pleads not guilty to civil rights charges in Minnesota church protest”, 13 February 2026, <https://abc7chicago.com/post/journalist-don-lemon-set-arraigned-minnesota-church-protest-case/18595500/>; MPR News, “Journalist vows to fight federal charges connected to St. Paul church protest”, 17 February 2026, <https://www.mprnews.org/story/2026/02/17/journalist-georgia-fort-vows-to-fight-federal-charges-connected-to-cities-church>.

²³¹ Minnesota Reformer, “Journalist Georgia Fort pleads not guilty to felony charges stemming from church protest” 17 February 2026, <https://minnesotareformer.com/2026/02/17/journalist-georgia-fort-pleads-not-guilty-to-felony-charges-stemming-from-church-protest/>.

²³² Amnesty International USA, “Civil Society Organizations Urge DOJ to Drop Charges Against Georgia Fort and Other Members of the Press”, 30 April 2026, <https://www.amnestyusa.org/blog/civil-society-organizations-urge-doj-to-drop-charges-against-georgia-fort-and-other-members-of-the-press/>.

²³³ The New York Times, “The Out-of-the-Way Building at the Center of Minnesota’s Immigration Drama”, 23 January 2026, <https://www.nytimes.com/2026/01/23/us/minnesota-immigration-whipple-building-minneapolis.html>; Minn Post, “The 12 hours of Whipple evidence that made a judge side with detainees again: non-working phones, treatment like ‘animals’”, 30 March 2026, <https://www.minnpost.com/public-safety/2026/03/the-12-hours-of-whipple-evidence-that-made-a-judge-side-with-detainees-again-non-working-phones-treatment-like-animals/>.

legal counsel at the Whipple Building – discussed in more detail in Section 5.4.3.²³⁴ Outside the facility, multiple protests resulted in arrests and the deployment of tear gas by federal agents.²³⁵

On 12 February, Border Czar Tom Homan announced the end of Operation Metro Surge.²³⁶ The 70-day operation resulted in over 4,000 arrests, primarily of Ecuadorian, Mexican and Guatemalan nationals;²³⁷ the shootings of Sosa-Celis, Good and Pretti;²³⁸ the chilling and disruption of daily life; housing instability; the repeated use of chemical irritants, including near schools;²³⁹ and an estimated \$700 million USD in negative economic impacts on the city of Minneapolis.²⁴⁰

Operation PARRIS

On 9 January 2026, in between the killings of Good and Pretti, DHS announced “Operation Post-Admission Refugee Reverification and Integrity Strengthening” or “Operation PARRIS”, an initiative aimed at conducting additional background checks and interviews for up to 5,600 refugees in Minnesota.²⁴¹ Operation PARRIS was part of the Trump administration’s broader strategy of enhanced screenings under the guise of “national security” with an objective to conduct secondary background checks and interviews for refugees who had not applied for or received their Lawful Permanent Resident (Green Card) status.²⁴² Several individuals were arrested and detained in the process.²⁴³

A class action lawsuit, *U.H.A. v. Bondi*, successfully challenged and halted the operation’s arrest and detention of Minnesota refugees.²⁴⁴ A U.S. District Judge stated in his order that, “The Court will not allow federal authorities to use a new and erroneous statutory interpretation to terrorize refugees who immigrated to this country under the promise that they would be welcomed and allowed to live in peace, far from the persecution they fled.”²⁴⁵

²³⁴ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026; United States District Court for the District of Minnesota, *The Advocates for Human Rights et al. v. U.S. Department of Homeland Security et al.*, Class Action Complaint, Case No. 0:26-cv-749, 27 January 2026, <https://democracyforward.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/01/TAHR-v-DHS-Whipple-access-to-counsel-Class-Action-Complaint.pdf>; The New York Times, “The Out-of-the-Way Building at the Center of Minnesota’s Immigration Drama” (previously cited); CBS News, “Conditions inside Whipple Federal Building are ‘unacceptable,’ Minnesota lawmaker says after visit”, 2 February 2026, <https://www.cbsnews.com/minnesota/news/federal-whipple-building-ice-lawmakers-visit/>; The Minnesota Star Tribune, “‘No humanity’: Detainees describe conditions inside Whipple Federal Building”, 31 January 2026, <https://www.startribune.com/no-humanity-detainees-describe-conditions-inside-whipple-federal-building/601566788>.

²³⁵ ABC News, “Fed agents deploy tear gas outside Minneapolis federal building”, 15 January 2026, <https://abc7news.com/live-updates/minneapolis-ice-shooting-live-updates/18410867/entry/18410989/>; New York Times, “At Least 50 Arrested After Protests Escalate Outside Minnesota Federal Building”, 7 February 2026, <https://www.nytimes.com/2026/02/07/us/minneapolis-immigration-protesters-arrested-whipple-building.html>.

²³⁶ NPR, “‘Operation Metro Surge’ to end in Minnesota”, 12 February 2026, <https://www.npr.org/2026/02/12/nx-s1-5712552/operation-metro-surge-to-end-in-minnesota>.

²³⁷ DHS, “DHS Reaches More than 4,000 Arrests of Illegal Aliens Including Murderers, Sex Offenders, Gang Members, and Terrorists in Minnesota Since Operation Metro Surge Began”, 4 February 2026, <https://www.dhs.gov/news/2026/02/04/dhs-reaches-more-4000-arrests-illegal-aliens-including-murderers-sex-offenders-gang#:~:text=Get%20Involved,said%20Assistant%20Secretary%20Tricia%20McLaughlin>; United States District Court for the District of Minnesota, *Hussen v. Noem*, Declaration of Sam Olson, Case No. 0:26-cv-00324-ECT-ECW, 23 February 2026, <https://storage.courtlistener.com/recap/gov.uscourts.mnd.230424/gov.uscourts.mnd.230424.169.2.pdf>; MPR News, “Data shows three-quarters of ICE arrestees in Minnesota had no criminal record”, 31 March 2026, <https://www.mprnews.org/story/2026/03/31/ice-arrests-in-minnesota-three-quarters-of-arrestees-had-no-criminal-record-data-shows>.

²³⁸ Amicus Curiae Brief by The Advocates for Human Rights, *State of Minnesota et al. v. Kristi Noem et al.*, Case No. 0:26-cv-00190-KMM-DJF, United States District Court, District of Minnesota, filed January 23, 2026 (ECF 97-1), <https://www.theadvocatesforhumanrights.org/r/MN%20Advocates%20-%202026-01-23%20ECF%2097-1%20Amicus%20Curiae%20Brief.pdf>.

²³⁹ In-person and online interviews, Minneapolis-St. Paul, MN, USA, March-May 2026; Minnesota Reformer, “Minneapolis schools cancel class following ICE shooting, separate confrontation on campus”, 8 January 2026, <https://minnesotareformer.com/2026/01/08/minneapolis-schools-cancel-class-following-ice-shooting/>.

²⁴⁰ In-person and online interviews, Minneapolis-St. Paul, MN, USA, March-May 2026; MPR News, “Minneapolis estimates Operation Metro Surge cost the city \$700 million”, 10 June 2026, <https://www.mprnews.org/story/2026/06/10/minneapolis-estimates-ice-surge-cost-the-city-700-million>.

²⁴¹ DHS, “DHS Launches Landmark USCIS Fraud Investigation in Minnesota”, 9 January 2026, <https://www.uscis.gov/newsroom/news-releases/dhs-launches-landmark-uscis-fraud-investigation-in-minnesota>.

²⁴² Executive Order, *Protecting the United States from Foreign Terrorists* (previously cited).

²⁴³ In-person and online interviews, Minneapolis-St. Paul, MN, USA; Forum Together, “Explainer: Operation PARRIS and Refugee Arrests and Re-Vetting”, 24 March 2026, <https://forumtogether.org/article/explainer-operation-parris-and-refugee-arrests-and-re-vetting/>.

²⁴⁴ IRAP, “U.H.A. v. Bondi: Challenging the Trump administration’s detention of refugees in Minnesota”, <https://refugeerights.org/news-resources/u-h-a-v-bondi-challenging-the-trump-administrations-detention-of-refugees-in-minnesota>; Forum Together, “Explainer: Operation PARRIS and Refugee Arrests and Re-Vetting” (previously cited).

²⁴⁵ United States District Court for the District of Minnesota, *U.H.A. v. Bondi*, Memorandum Opinion and Order Granting in Part and Denying in Part Plaintiff’s Motion for a Preliminary Injunction, Civil No. 26-417 (JRT/DLM), 27 February 2026, <https://www.courthousenews.com/wp-content/uploads/2026/02/Tunheim-PI-granting-refugee.pdf>.

Minnesotans' response to Operation Metro Surge was robust, organized, and focused on direct service and harm reduction.²⁴⁶ Hyper-local neighbourhood groups and statewide networks organized to resist Operation Metro Surge and respond to community needs, including through rental assistance, food delivery and distribution, and monitoring immigration enforcement activity.²⁴⁷

Ahead of the operation, organizations began conducting "Know Your Rights" (KYR) trainings. In the days following the killings of Renee Good and Alex Pretti, Minnesotans en masse received constitutional and legal observer training.²⁴⁸ Migrant rights organizations reportedly trained nearly 30,000 Minnesotans in 77 out of 87 counties.²⁴⁹ Several individuals shared with Amnesty International that these expansive mutual aid networks first emerged in response to the killing of George Floyd in May 2020.²⁵⁰ During the operation, whistles were printed and distributed across the Twin Cities to alert community members of ICE activity.²⁵¹ A Twin Cities 3-D whistle printer and distributor stated, "The whistles gave us a voice that couldn't easily be silenced."²⁵²

"The muscle memory was there from George Floyd's murder, to organize, especially hyperlocal organizing."²⁵³

ICE and Border Patrol responded to observers and car patrollers by deploying chemical irritants, blocking their cars, smashing car windows, and detaining them.²⁵⁴ Further, residents organized various donation crowdfunding efforts for rental assistance, as self-isolation and the chilling of public life devastated local economies. This community response was critical for many who faced eviction and housing instability, particularly after Minneapolis Mayor Frey's veto of an eviction moratorium.²⁵⁵

The impacts of Operation Metro Surge are likely to shape the community and state of Minnesota long-term.²⁵⁶ Twin Cities residents experienced killings and shootings, a significant increase in arrests and detentions, food insecurity affecting around 8,000 households, housing instability, and disruptions in accessing healthcare and education.²⁵⁷ By the end of the operation, a federal judge identified "96 court orders that ICE has violated in 74 cases."²⁵⁸

After Operation Metro Surge formally ended, federal immigration agents involved in the various operations were reassigned to other areas in the US to continue immigration enforcement.²⁵⁹ The Trump administration's series of large-scale, militarized federal immigration enforcement operations and National Guard deployments across the US has fundamentally altered daily life for entire communities and has resulted in widespread human rights violations. At the Minnesota state level, Minnesota Governor Tim Walz established the Minnesota Truth Commission, an independent and non-partisan body tasked to "create a historical record of survivor and witness experiences", to produce a report and support legislative and policy reform in response to the operation by the end of 2026.²⁶⁰

²⁴⁶ In-person and online interviews, Minneapolis-St. Paul, MN, USA, March-May 2026.

²⁴⁷ In-person and online interviews, Minneapolis-St. Paul, MN, USA, March-May 2026.

²⁴⁸ In-person and online interviews, Minneapolis-St. Paul, MN, USA, March-May 2026.

²⁴⁹ In-person and online interviews, Minneapolis-St. Paul, MN, USA, March-May 2026; MPR News, "Nearly 30,000 Minnesotans trained as constitutional observers", 2 February 2026, <https://www.mprnews.org/story/2026/02/02/immigrant-defense-network-training-constitutional-observers>.

²⁵⁰ In-person and online interviews, Minneapolis-St. Paul, MN, USA, March-May 2026.

²⁵¹ Minnpost, "Not just a toy: How whistles became a 'tool of resistance' against ICE immigration enforcement", 15 December 2025, <https://www.minnpost.com/metro/2025/12/not-just-a-toy-how-whistles-became-a-tool-of-resistance-against-ice-immigration-enforcement/>.

²⁵² Northeast, "3D printing to help out neighbors, community", 13 April 2026, <https://www.mynortheast.com/news/3d-printing-to-help-out-neighbors-community/>.

²⁵³ In-person interview with The Advocates for Human Rights, Minneapolis, MN, USA, 20 March 2026.

²⁵⁴ Minnesota Reformer, "In the car with the Minneapolis community patrols working to disrupt ICE operations", 13 January 2026, <https://minnesotareformer.com/2026/01/13/in-the-car-with-minneapolis-community-patrols/>.

²⁵⁵ Fox9 KMSP, "Mayor Frey vetoes Minneapolis ordinance to extend eviction notices", 11 March 2026, <https://www.fox9.com/news/minneapolis-eviction-notice-extension-vetoes-march-2026>.

²⁵⁶ In-person and online interviews, Minneapolis-St. Paul, MN, USA, March-May 2026.

²⁵⁷ City of Minneapolis, *Community Impacts from Operation Metro Surge*, 30 June 2026, <https://www.minneapolismn.gov/government/programs-initiatives/minneapolis-forward/community-impacts/>.

²⁵⁸ United States District Court for the District of Minnesota, *Juan T.R. v. Noem*, Order, Case No. 26-CV-0107 (PJS/DLM), 28 January 2026, <https://storage.courtlistener.com/recap/gov.uscourts.mnd.230171/gov.uscourts.mnd.230171.10.0.2.pdf>.

²⁵⁹ Spectrum News, "Homan says Operation Metro Surge is ending in Minneapolis", 31 August 2026, <https://spectrumlocalnews.com/us/snaplus/immigration/2026/02/12/homan-operation-metro-surge-ends-in-minneapolis>.

²⁶⁰ The Advocates for Human Rights, "MN Truth Council", <https://www.theadvocatesforhumanrights.org/MNTruthCouncil/>; State of Minnesota, Governor Tim Walz, *Executive Order 26-05: Establishing a Council to Document the Impacts of Operation Metro Surge and Operation PARRIS on Minnesotans*, 25 March 2026, https://mn.gov/governor/assets/Executive%20Order%2026-05_tcm1055-735580.pdf; Sahan Journal, "How to share your stories about

Between January 2025 and February 2026 – President Trump’s inauguration to the formal end of the operations examined in this report – ICE made an estimated 380,000 arrests.²⁶¹ DHS has touted Operations Midway Blitz, Catahoula Crunch and Metro Surge as examples of its accomplishments since President Trump took office.²⁶²

The human rights violations committed by ICE, Border Patrol and other federal agents, the community impacts and community response in Washington, DC, Chicago, New Orleans and Minneapolis-St. Paul are examined at length in the subsequent sections.

5. Human rights violations committed against migrants, asylum seekers, refugees, racialized communities and the people who defend them

Amnesty International documented a wide range of human rights violations committed by ICE, Border Patrol and other federal agents during immigration enforcement operations in Chicago, Minneapolis-St. Paul, New Orleans and surrounding areas, and the Washington DC Metropolitan area, including racial discrimination, arbitrary and discriminatory arrests and detentions, harassment, intimidation, unlawful use of force, including lethal force – which in some cases may amount to extrajudicial executions –, repression of peaceful protests, unlawful use of less lethal force, unlawful surveillance, cruel, inhumane and degrading detention conditions that may violate the prohibition on torture, and unlawful incommunicado detention and possible acts of enforced disappearance. These violations were committed against migrant communities, other racialized people perceived to be part of migrant communities, and those that defended them.

“Early on ICE agents were masked. There were multiple men in each car wearing military gear. They were carrying militarized weapons, rifles. They were trying to cover themselves up as much as possible; some had body armour on, but there was no consistency about what they were wearing. It was difficult because you couldn’t tell if the people were ICE.”²⁶³

The four immigration enforcement operations documented in this report were characterized by masked and heavily armed ICE, Border Patrol and other federal agents, often with no badges or other visible means of identifying them, who travelled around in unmarked vehicles often with out-of-state license plates.²⁶⁴ ICE agents often wore plain clothes, making them harder to identify, while Border Patrol agents often wore uniforms.²⁶⁵ As indicated above, the Federal Takeover of Washington, DC, involved local law enforcement agencies and over 30 federal agencies all deputized to do immigration enforcement, while Operation Catahoula Crunch relied on local and state law enforcement agencies deputized through 287(g) agreements.²⁶⁶

A rapid responder in Minneapolis-St. Paul described ICE and Border Patrol agents as, “masked, wearing plain clothes, and with vehicles with tinted windows.”²⁶⁷ The Chicago Mayor’s Office of Immigrant, Migrant, and Refugee Rights told Amnesty International, “Agents were almost always masked. They had no identification. They were wearing plain clothes or sometimes had a generic vest that said ‘police’.”²⁶⁸ The organization Unstoppable Kenner said that in Louisiana “agents were masked and walking around with guns.”²⁶⁹ Amnesty International was told that, in DC, “ICE agents were masked almost always.”²⁷⁰

Operation Metro Surge with Minnesota Truth Council”, 27 August 2026, <https://sahanjournal.com/immigration/mn-truth-council-operation-metro-surge-share-your-stories/>.

²⁶¹ Brookings, “Shock, awe, and economic fallout: The employment effects of ICE enforcement in US cities”, 29 May 2026, <https://www.brookings.edu/articles/ice-enforcement-employment-effects-us-cities/>.

²⁶² DHS, “Under President Trump and Secretary Noem, the Department of Homeland Security Has Historic Year”, 19 December 2025, <https://www.dhs.gov/news/2025/12/19/under-president-trump-and-secretary-noem-department-homeland-security-has-historic>.

²⁶³ Online interview with T.F., Minneapolis-St. Paul, MN, USA, 10 April 2026.

²⁶⁴ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026.

²⁶⁵ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026.

²⁶⁶ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026.

²⁶⁷ In-person interview with rapid responder, Minneapolis-St. Paul, MN, USA, 19 March 2026.

²⁶⁸ In-person interview with Chicago Mayor’s Office of Immigrant, Migrant, and Refugee Rights, Chicago, IL, USA, 26 March 2026.

²⁶⁹ In-person interview with Unstoppable Kenner, Metairie, LA, USA, 11 May 2026.

²⁷⁰ In-person interview with Tanya Golash Boza, Washington, DC, USA, 16 May 2026.

“The tactics used by ICE and CBP seemed designed to escalate the situation. There was an overwhelming presence of agents that were armed and masked. They were taking people off of the streets. They were using force, often direct physical force, against people. When there was pushback from observers the tactics escalated including guns drawn and fingers on triggers.”²⁷¹

Justin, a rapid responder in Minneapolis-St. Paul told Amnesty International about an incident where he responded to an ICE sighting alert about a mile from his house. He said, “ICE agents were there in military fatigues, wearing masks. They were armed ... People were asking them to show a warrant, but they wouldn’t provide one. They broke down the door of the house using a battering ram ... There were about twelve SUVs and two to four agents in each SUV. For me this was life changing.”²⁷²

“One of my neighbours was abducted from his car. ICE bashed the window and pulled him out. At the same incident, a pregnant person was dragged by an ICE agent along the street by one arm ... The agents were dressed for war, for counterinsurgency operations more specifically: long guns with silencers on them, multiple forms of chemical agents, a lot of tactical gear – even more than what I’ve seen soldiers in Iraq wearing. They were always masked, rarely had visible badges.”²⁷³

The four immigration enforcement operations were aggressive and militarized in nature demonstrating a significant shift in immigration enforcement tactics. Based on the scale and manner in which the operations were conducted, Amnesty International found that the creation of fear and cruelty was a central objective of the operations. Staff at Universidad Popular in Chicago described the actions of ICE and Border Patrol during Operation Midway Blitz as, “[A] caravan of vans with three to four hooligans driving around very menacingly, grabbing people, street vendors, older folks ... it was a military operation. The community was under siege.”²⁷⁴ The National Immigrant Justice Center (NIJC) stated, “There were a lot of performative fear tactics with how they went about Operation Midway Blitz.”²⁷⁵ Victor Molina, Communications Manager at NAMI Minnesota (The National Alliance on Mental Illness), described the actions of ICE and Border Patrol during Operation Metro Surge as “[e]xcessive and meant to produce trauma. Agents are wearing sand tones with their faces covered, carrying huge weapons and harassing people. They can take you wherever they want to take you. Their interactions with the community were scary.”²⁷⁶

“It looked like a foreign invasion. ICE and CBP agents were menacing an entire community using masked armed officers dressed up like the military. Agents were threatening and frightening migrants, elected officials, everyone. We were traumatized by what we saw.”²⁷⁷

Amnesty International received information about the ways in which ICE and Border Patrol agents adopted different tricks and ruses to enable them to stop and detain people more easily.²⁷⁸ Jessie and Dan, rapid responders in Minneapolis-St. Paul, described the “covert tactics” used by ICE agents, including “wearing plain clothes and jeans, human rights and coexist stickers on their vehicles, My Little Pony toys on the dash, having a man and woman in the front seat to appear as if they were a couple.”²⁷⁹ The organization was also told about the ways in which ICE and Border Patrol shifted their tactics in response to rapid response networks.²⁸⁰ Jules Langlois, a rapid responder in Minneapolis-St. Paul, shared, “Since we created rapid response networks, ICE and CBP have tried to be less on camera, hiding their faces. At least three times a week they’re switching out their vehicles or license plates ... When their licence plates are different, it’s hard to keep track of them.”²⁸¹

“These ICE agents had some wild tactics. They were contracting plumbing vans at one point to be more undercover. They would blend their cars in. They would put up fake stickers to look like they were progressive moms. They didn’t

²⁷¹ In-person interview with ACLU of Illinois, Chicago, IL, USA, 24 March 2026.

²⁷² In-person interview with Justin, Minneapolis-St. Paul, USA, 19 March 2026.

²⁷³ In-person interview with Rev. Susie Hayward, Minneapolis, MN, USA, 18 March 2026.

²⁷⁴ In-person interview with Universidad popular, Chicago, IL, USA, 22 March 2026.

²⁷⁵ Online interview with NIJC, Chicago, IL, USA, 14 April 2026.

²⁷⁶ In-person interview with Victor Molina, NAMI Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN, USA, 19 March 2026.

²⁷⁷ In-person interview with ACLU of Illinois, Chicago, USA, 24 March 2026.

²⁷⁸ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026.

²⁷⁹ In-person interview with Jessie and Dan L., 20 March 2026.

²⁸⁰ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026.

²⁸¹ Online interview with Jules Langlois, Minneapolis-St. Paul, MN, USA, 13 April 2026.

identify themselves ... and then sometimes it would be really obvious. On average, there would be eight to ten people to arrest one person. It was for intimidation and crowd control.”²⁸²

“ICE drives around in unmarked vans. They switch their cars. They use sedans, vans, Ford Explorers. Now they have Minnesota plates instead of out-of-state license plates. Sometimes they have no license plates. I’ve seen ‘Free Palestine’ stickers in their windows. Stuffed animals on the dash. Fully tinted windows. If you see the driver has a mask, it’s likely ICE. They always travel in convoys; they spread out and then converge together.”²⁸³

5.1 Racially discriminatory immigration enforcement operations and arbitrary and discriminatory detentions

In Chicago, Minneapolis-St. Paul, New Orleans and surrounding areas, and the Washington DC metropolitan area, Amnesty International found that ICE, Border Patrol and other federal agents engaged in widespread and systematic racially discriminatory immigration enforcement resulting in the arbitrary and discriminatory detention of migrants, asylum seekers, refugees, and other racialized people perceived to be migrants, regardless of their immigration status.

“I liken it to fishing, ICE agents just sit on a corner and cast. If there’s a Black or Brown person that goes by, they just nab them. It’s not with any purpose. It’s not because they have a warrant. They’re just looking for a Brown person.”²⁸⁴

Article 26 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) prohibits discrimination “on any ground such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth, or other status”.²⁸⁵ The ICERD defines racial discrimination as “any distinction, exclusion, restriction or preference based on race, colour, descent, or national or ethnic origin which has the purpose or effect or nullifying or impairing the recognition, enjoyment or exercise, on an equal footing, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural or any other field of public life.”²⁸⁶ ICERD requires that States not engage in acts or practices of racial discrimination which applies to both citizens and non-citizens.²⁸⁷

The CERD’s General Recommendation No. 36 defines racial profiling as the “practice of police and other law enforcement relying, to any degree, on race, colour, descent or national or ethnic origin as the basis for subjecting persons to investigatory activities or for determining whether an individual is engaged in criminal activity.”²⁸⁸ The CERD has recognized that migrants, asylum seekers and refugees are among the groups that are in the most vulnerable situation with regards to racial profiling.²⁸⁹ It has further stated that States must ensure that measures taken in immigration enforcement do not discriminate, in purpose or effect, on the grounds of race, skin colour, descent, or national or ethnic origin, and that non-citizens are not subjected to racial or ethnic profiling or stereotyping.²⁹⁰ Racial profiling by law enforcement, including in the context of immigration-related operations, violates the right to equality and non-discrimination.

This form of racial discrimination also fosters further human rights violations, such as the excessive use of force or arbitrary detentions.²⁹¹ In accordance with international human rights law and standards, the enjoyment of personal liberty should be any individual’s default condition.²⁹² Article 9 of the ICCPR guarantees the right to liberty and security of the person, and prohibits arbitrary arrest or detention.²⁹³ The

²⁸² Online interview with St. Paul City Council Member Hwa Jeong Kim, St. Paul, MN, USA, 17 March 2026.

²⁸³ Online interview with Russell, Minneapolis-St. Paul, MN, USA, 18 March 2026.

²⁸⁴ In-person interview with Columbia Heights Public Schools, Columbia Heights, MN, USA, 19 March 2026.

²⁸⁵ ICCPR, Art. 26.

²⁸⁶ ICERD, Article 1.

²⁸⁷ ICERD, Article 1; CERD, General Recommendation No. 30 (previously cited).

²⁸⁸ CERD, General Recommendation No. 36 (2020) on preventing and combating racial profiling by law enforcement officials, U.N. Doc. CERD/C/GC/36, 17 December 2020, para. 18.

²⁸⁹ CERD, General Recommendation No. 36 (previously cited), para. 11.

²⁹⁰ CERD, General Recommendation 30 (previously cited), paras. 10 & 12.

²⁹¹ HRC, Promotion and protection of the human rights and fundamental freedoms of Africans and of people of African descent against excessive use of force and other human rights violations by law enforcement officers (previously cited), para. 84.

²⁹² The right to liberty and the related prohibition of arbitrary detention are enshrined in numerous human rights treaties such as the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), Article 9(1); Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR); Convention relating to the Status of Refugees (1951 Refugee Convention), Article 31; American Declaration on the Rights and Duties of Man (American Declaration), Article 1.

²⁹³ ICCPR, Art. 9.

UN Human Rights Committee's General Comment No. 35 states that arbitrary detention includes detention that is discriminatory in purpose or effect, and that arrest or detention on discriminatory grounds is in principle arbitrary.²⁹⁴ The detention of individuals by ICE and Border Patrol on discriminatory grounds is arbitrary.

Moreover, people's right to liberty can only be restricted in specific and exceptional migration-related circumstances.²⁹⁵ Migration-related deprivation of liberty must be clearly prescribed by law and strictly justified by a legitimate purpose that is necessary, proportionate, and non-discriminatory.²⁹⁶ Detention without such a purpose will be considered arbitrary.²⁹⁷ A limited number of specific purposes are recognized as legitimate grounds for migration-related detention under international law and standards, including verifying identity following an individual's arrival in a country and preventing a person from absconding following an objective assessment of flight risk in relation to a transfer, removal, deportation or expulsion procedure that has been initiated, is in progress and has a reasonable prospect of being executed within a reasonable time frame.²⁹⁸

Across Chicago, Minneapolis-St. Paul, New Orleans and surrounding areas, and the DMV, Amnesty International documented a pattern of widespread and systematic racially discriminatory immigration enforcement in which ICE, Border Patrol and other federal agents targeted individuals perceived to be migrants based on their race, skin colour, national origin or ethnicity, and their intersection with other characteristics such as language and accent, as well as occupations, workplaces and locations that federal agents associated with racialized migrant communities. Agents frequently appeared to decide whom to stop, question or detain based on these characteristics and only attempted to verify immigration status after individuals had already been detained. Agents also often ignored individuals attempting to prove their regular immigration status and detained them anyways.

Amnesty International interviewed 5 individuals who had been stopped, arrested or detained by federal agents in the four locations covered in this report, as well as witnesses, legal providers, staff of civil society organizations and elected officials who shared over 35 incidents of individuals being racially profiled and arbitrarily detained by ICE or Border Patrol.²⁹⁹

In each of the four cities, Amnesty International was told that there were incidents of targeted immigration enforcement in which ICE and Border Patrol appeared to be seeking to detain specific individuals whose immigration status was already known to the agents or for whom they had obtained a judicial warrant.³⁰⁰ In accordance with US law, ICE, Border Patrol and other federal agents must have a judicial warrant in order to enter a home, car, or business, or arrest someone for immigration violations.³⁰¹ A judicial warrant names the person ICE wants to arrest, describes why ICE believes that the person has violated immigration law and is signed by a judge. While it is possible for ICE to arrest someone without a judicial warrant – commonly referred to as a warrantless arrest –, agents must have probable cause that a person has broken immigration law and is a flight risk, meaning that they are likely to flee before the agent can obtain a warrant.³⁰² An arrest without a judicial warrant is unlawful when ICE does not have probable cause for either requirement.³⁰³ However, throughout the second Trump administration, DHS has repeatedly made public statements stating that warrantless arrests can be made based on “reasonable suspicion” – which is a lower legal standard than

²⁹⁴ HRC, General comment No. 35: Article 9 (Liberty and security of person), CCPR/C/GC/35, 16 December 2014.

²⁹⁵ UNHCR, Guidelines on the Applicable Criteria and Standards relating to the Detention of Asylum-Seekers and Alternatives to Detention (Detention Guidelines), 2020, <https://www.unhcr.org/il/wp-content/uploads/sites/6/2020/11/UNHCR-Detention-Guidelines-English.pdf>, Guideline 4.1; IACHR, Inter-American Principles on the Human Rights of all Migrants, Refugees, Stateless Persons and Victims of Human Trafficking, Resolution 04/19, 7 December 2019, <https://www.oas.org/en/iachr/decisions/pdf/Resolution-4-19-en.pdf>, Principles 68 & 69.

²⁹⁶ UNWGAD, Revised Deliberation No. 5 on deprivation of liberty of migrants, 7 February 2018, https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/Documents/Issues/Detention/RevisedDeliberation_AdvanceEditedVersion.pdf, para. 20.

²⁹⁷ UNHCR, Detention Guidelines (previously cited), Guideline 4.1.4.

²⁹⁸ UNHCR, Detention Guidelines (previously cited), Guideline 4.1.

²⁹⁹ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026.

³⁰⁰ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026.

³⁰¹ 8 U.S.C § 1226(a); NIP et al., “Community Explainer: Warrantless ICE arrests in D.C.”, December 2025, https://nipnl.org/sites/default/files/2025-12/2025_Escobar-Molina-Explainer.pdf.

³⁰² 8 U.S.C § 1357(a)(2); NIP et al., “Community Explainer: Warrantless ICE arrests in D.C.” (previously cited). “Probable cause” means that the agent can point to specific facts, or evidence, about the person that gives an ICE agent reason to believe that something is true.

³⁰³ NIP et al., “Community Explainer: Warrantless ICE arrests in D.C.” (previously cited).

probable cause – demonstrating that DHS is openly instructing its agents to not follow the law.³⁰⁴ Former Border Patrol Commander Bovino has publicly stated, “We need reasonable suspicion to make an immigration arrest ... You notice I did not say probable cause, nor did I say I need a warrant.”³⁰⁵ Moreover, DHS no longer requires immigration agents to gain prior supervisor approval of, or even fill out a paper form with information, about the person they arrest.³⁰⁶ In July 2025, the DOJ fired the acting U.S. Attorney for the Eastern District of California after she told a Border Patrol official that he could not arrest immigrants without probable cause.³⁰⁷

Following a concurring opinion in a 2025 US Supreme Court decision, federal agents also engage in what are commonly referred to as “Kavanaugh stops” whereby they may stop an individual based on perceived factors such as their presence at specific locations, occupation, spoken language and ethnicity to question them about their immigration status. However, the concurring opinion notes that an individual’s race or ethnicity alone is an insufficient reason to stop and question someone – this must depend on “the ‘totality of the circumstances’ of each case to see whether the detaining officer has a ‘particularized and objective basis’ for suspecting legal wrongdoing.”³⁰⁸ Nevertheless, in accordance with human rights law and standards, stopping individuals on the basis of their ethnicity to question them about their immigration status is contrary to the prohibition on racial discrimination.³⁰⁹

In Chicago, Minneapolis-St. Paul and Washington, DC, as well as other cities across the United States, courts have found ICE and Border Patrol’s policies and practices of carrying out stops and warrantless arrests to be unlawful.³¹⁰ In October 2025, the United States District Court for the Northern District of Illinois Eastern Division found that ICE had unlawfully arrested at least 22 individuals covered by the Castañón Nava settlement agreement, which requires ICE to comply with the legal requirements governing warrantless immigration arrests.³¹¹ In December 2025, the United States District Court for the District of Columbia ordered DHS to stop its “practice of making warrantless civil immigration arrests in D.C. without a pre-arrest individualized determination by the arresting agents of probable cause that the person being arrested is likely to escape before a warrant can be obtained”.³¹² In March 2026, the United States District Court for the District of Minnesota found that ICE and Border Patrol engaged in racial profiling during Operation Metro Surge stopping and detaining people based solely on their race or ethnicity.³¹³

However, across the four locations, incidents of targeted enforcement were far outnumbered by the numerous accounts of ICE and Border Patrol stopping and detaining individuals based on their race, skin colour, national origin or ethnicity. Moreover, even in situations where agents had a judicial warrant or were looking

³⁰⁴ ICE, “Immigration Enforcement Frequently Asked Questions – Why does ICE arrest people, and do they need a warrant?”, 4 February 2026, <https://www.ice.gov/immigration-enforcement-frequently-asked-questions>; DHS, “DHS Scores Major Victory at Supreme Court”, 8 September 2025, <https://www.dhs.gov/news/2025/09/08/dhs-scores-major-victory-supreme-court>; United States District Court for the District of Minnesota, *Hussen v. Noem*, Class Action Complaint for Declaratory and Injunctive Relief, Case No. 26-324, 15 January 2026, <https://www.aclu.org/cases/hussen-v-noem?document=COMPLAINT-Hussen-v-Noem>, para. 99; United States District Court for the District of Columbia, *Escobar Molina v. DHS*, Decision of Preliminary Injunction (previously cited), pp. 53-57.

³⁰⁵ United States District Court for the District of Minnesota, *Hussen v. Noem*, Class Action Complaint for Declaratory and Injunctive Relief (previously cited), para. 100; United States District Court for the District of Columbia, *Escobar Molina v. DHS*, Decision of Preliminary Injunction (previously cited), p. 6.

³⁰⁶ United States District Court for the District of Minnesota, *Hussen v. Noem*, Class Action Complaint for Declaratory and Injunctive Relief (previously cited), para. 103; United States District Court for the District of Columbia, *Escobar Molina v. DHS*, Decision of Preliminary Injunction (previously cited), p. 5.

³⁰⁷ The Guardian, “Trump fires US attorney who told border agents to follow law on immigration raids”, 27 September 2025, <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2025/sep/26/trump-fires-prosecutor-sacramento>; The New York Times, “Trump Fired a U.S. Attorney Who Insisted on Following a Court Order”, 26 September 2025, <https://www.nytimes.com/2025/09/26/us/trump-fires-us-attorney-california-immigration.html>.

³⁰⁸ Supreme Court of the United States, *Noem v. Perdomo*, 8 September 2025, https://www.supremecourt.gov/opinions/24pdf/25a169_5h25.pdf.

³⁰⁹ CERD, General Recommendation No. 36 (previously cited), para. 18.

³¹⁰ ACLU, “Hussen v. Noem”, 9 March 2026, <https://www.aclu.org/cases/hussen-v-noem>; ACLU of the District of Columbia, “Escobar Molina v. Dep’t of Homeland Security – Challenging Warrantless Immigration Arrests Without Probable Cause in D.C.”, 4 March 2026, <https://www.acludc.org/cases/escobar-molina-v-dept-of-homeland-security-challenging-warrantless-immigration-arrests-without-probable-cause-in-d-c/>; NIJC, “Castañón Nava Case Updates”, 20 February 2026, <https://immigrantjustice.org/blog/castanon-nava-case-updates/>.

³¹¹ United States District Court for the Northern District of Illinois Eastern Division, *Castañón Nava v. DHS*, Memorandum Opinion and Order, No. 18-cv-3757, 7 October 2025, <https://www.aclu-il.org/cases/castanon-nava-v-department-homeland-security?document=Castanon-Nava-Memorandum-Opinion-and-Order#documents>; NIJC, “Castañón Nava Case Updates” (previously cited).

³¹² United States District Court for the District of Columbia, *Escobar Molina v. DHS*, Decision of Preliminary Injunction (previously cited); United States District Court for the District of Columbia, *Escobar Molina v. DHS*, Memorandum Opinion, Case No. 25-3417 (BAH), 7 May 2026, <https://www.acludc.org/cases/escobar-molina-v-dept-of-homeland-security-challenging-warrantless-immigration-arrests-without-probable-cause-in-d-c/?document=MEMORANDUM-OPINION>.

³¹³ United States District Court for the District of Minnesota, *Hussen v. Noem*, Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law, Case No. 26-cv-324 (ECT/ECW), 9 March 2026, <https://www.aclu.org/cases/hussen-v-noem?document=PI-Decision->.

for a specific person, Amnesty International was told that agents would also frequently detain anyone else who was present who they perceived to be a migrant – referred to as collateral arrests – even though the agencies did not have judicial warrants for those individuals.³¹⁴ For example, Amnesty International was told that during the November 2025 ICE raid on the Bro-Tex factory in St. Paul, ICE had a warrant for one person but ended up detaining 14 people. Three people were eventually released but the rest were deported.³¹⁵ According to the Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights (ICIRR), “ICE and CBP might have a specific address in mind, but they’ll grab anyone who is outside. Sometimes agents have warrants but they usually don’t. ICE and CBP will grab and tackle people on the street, they’ll pin peoples’ cars in. Once they take one person, they’ll start questioning other people.”³¹⁶

“Often there were no targeted arrests. They were just randomly stopping people on the street in predominately immigrant or perceived immigrant neighbourhoods of Chicago.”³¹⁷

According to interviewees, targeted immigration enforcement operations were more common prior to the specific immigration enforcement surges in each of the four locations.³¹⁸ The Resurrection Project told Amnesty International that, prior to Operation Midway Blitz, ICE was doing more targeted enforcement but once the operation began, things shifted to racially profiling people and picking people up on the street.³¹⁹

Amnesty International found that this pattern of racially discriminatory immigration enforcement manifested in several recurring ways across the four locations examined in this report. First, agents frequently targeted individuals based on their race, skin colour, national origin or ethnicity, and their intersection with other characteristics such as language or accent. Second, agents largely concentrated enforcement operations in places that they associated with migrants and racialized people including certain workplaces like construction sites and specific neighbourhoods across the four locations. Third, agents also targeted other racialized people, based on race, skin colour, or ethnicity, regardless of their immigration status, including US citizens and individuals with regular immigration status, pending immigration processes or asylum claims. Finally, Indigenous Peoples were also subjected to immigration enforcement based on the perception of being migrants because of their skin colour, ethnicity or Indigenous identity.

“What Federal agents were doing was targeting anyone who did not look like a white American. They targeted people based on how they looked. People were targeted and arrested without warrants.”³²⁰

Across the four cities, Amnesty International documented a pattern of ICE and Border Patrol stopping and detaining people based solely on their race, skin colour, national origin or ethnicity, and their intersection with other characteristics such as language and accent, as well as occupations, workplaces and locations that federal agents associated with racialized migrant communities.³²¹ Interviewees described a clear pattern in which these factors appeared to play a central role in ICE and Border Patrol determining who became the subject of immigration enforcement operations.³²² According to NIJC, “The bulk of enforcement was targeted at what people looked like and where they worked. If you looked Latino or looked like a day labourer, you put yourself more at risk.”³²³ Reverend David Black told Amnesty International that during Operation Midway Blitz there were “unmarked SUVs driving around and picking people up, racially profiling individuals. DHS has blatantly said that racial profiling is a part of their strategy and they’re not ashamed about that.”³²⁴ Jules Langlois, a rapid responder in Minneapolis-St. Paul, stated, “ICE has been kidnapping pretty much anyone.

³¹⁴ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026.

³¹⁵ In-person interview with COPAL, Minneapolis, MN, USA, 20 March 2026.

³¹⁶ In-person interview with ICIRR, Chicago, IL, USA, 26 March 2026.

³¹⁷ Online interview with NIJC, Chicago, IL, USA, 14 April 2026.

³¹⁸ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026.

³¹⁹ Online interview with The Resurrection Project, Chicago, IL, USA, 23 April 2026.

³²⁰ In-person interview with a DC-based organization, Washington, DC, USA, 19 May 2026.

³²¹ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026; United States District Court for the District of Minnesota, *Hussen v. Noem*, Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law (previously cited).

³²² In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026; United States District Court for the District of Minnesota, *Hussen v. Noem*, Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law (previously cited); United States District Court for the District of Minnesota, *Hussen v. Noem*, Class Action Complaint for Declaratory and Injunctive Relief (previously cited).

³²³ Online interview with NIJC, Chicago, IL, USA, 14 April 2026.

³²⁴ In-person interview with Rev. David Black, Chicago, USA, 24 March 2026.

It seems like they think, ‘Does this person look like an immigrant? Do they have brown skin?’ If so, they’ll stop or take the person.”³²⁵

“It seemed that ICE and CBP were just detaining everyone and then double checking about a person’s status so that they didn’t miss out on that number for their quota.”³²⁶

ICE and Border Patrol agents stopped and detained racialized individuals in the middle of the street, at traffic stops, from their driveways and yards, while waiting at public transportation stops or while riding public transportation, while walking down the street or while driving.³²⁷ In most cases, individuals were not given the opportunity to show immigration documents or proof of US citizenship. Staff at Columbia Heights Public Schools told Amnesty International that in Columbia Heights, Minnesota, it became so common for individuals to be stopped and detained, with their vehicles left running in the street, that people began preparing for the possibility that they too could be detained. Many printed out their immigration A#s and family contact information on pieces of paper, laminated them and attached them to the inside of their vehicles door handles³²⁸. The ACLU of Minnesota stated that ICE and other agents racially profiled individuals during traffic stops, and that people were stopped in their yards, parking lots and at work and arrested with no warrant or probable cause because of how they looked.³²⁹ The ACLU of Virginia described how many people were detained by federal agents while they were driving, indicating that agents in unmarked vehicles would force cars off the road, they would not ask the individual’s name and would just drag them out of their cars, put them into unmarked vehicles and drive away.³³⁰ A DC-based organization told Amnesty International that “Latin-looking people told me they were stopped 3-5 times. It could even be a daily occurrence for them. It was a very clear, consistent pattern of racial profiling.”³³¹

Several interviewees also stated that people were targeted for speaking Spanish.³³² Jessie and Dan, rapid responders in Minneapolis-St. Paul, shared that they frequently heard of situations where agents would speak Spanish to people to see if the person responded in Spanish; if they did, they would be grabbed.³³³

In this same sense, in response to litigation filed by the ACLU in Minnesota, the US District Court for the District of Minnesota concluded that 23 individuals with pending asylum claims, regular immigration status and US citizens were “stopped based solely on their race or ethnicity” during Operation Metro Surge and that 11 of those individuals were subsequently unlawfully arrested based on their race or ethnicity.³³⁴ Moreover, the court found that DHS has “adopted a policy authorizing federal immigration officers to conduct investigatory stops based on ethnicity or race without reasonable suspicion that the individuals were violating immigration laws ... Defendants’ agents approached people on the street, or pulled them over in their vehicles, and requested identification without any explanation for why the stop occurred and often without identifying themselves. The only salient factor in these cases was the individual’s race or ethnicity. Officers stopped Somali and Hispanic individuals without reasonable suspicion while they did not stop similarly situated nearby white individuals.”³³⁵ Litigation filed by the ACLU of the District of Columbia argued that “plain-clothed, masked, and armed federal agents have flooded the streets of the nation’s capital, indiscriminately arresting without warrants and without probable cause District residents whom the agents perceive to be Latino. Federal agents systematically arrest individuals in these immigration sweeps without

³²⁵ Online interview with Jules Langlois, Minneapolis-St. Paul, MN, USA, 13 April 2026.

³²⁶ In-person interview with ICDI, Chicago, IL, USA, 23 March 2026.

³²⁷ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026.

³²⁸ In-person interview with Columbia Heights Public Schools, Columbia Heights, MN, USA, 19 March 2026.

³²⁹ In-person interview with ACLU of Minnesota, Minneapolis, USA, 20 March 2026.

³³⁰ Online interview with ACLU of Virginia, VA, USA, 15 May 2026.

³³¹ Online interview with a DC-based organization, Washington, DC, USA, 18 June 2026.

³³² In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026.

³³³ In-person interview with Jessie & Dan L., Minneapolis, MN, USA, 20 March 2026.

³³⁴ In-person interview with ACLU of Minnesota, Minneapolis, USA, 20 March 2026; United States District Court for the District of Minnesota, *Hussen v. Noem*, Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law (previously cited), pp. 75-77, paras. 22-24; United States District Court for the District of Minnesota, *Hussen v. Noem*, Class Action Complaint for Declaratory and Injunctive Relief (previously cited).

³³⁵ United States District Court for the District of Minnesota, *Hussen v. Noem*, Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law (previously cited), pp. 85-86, para. 37.

a warrant and without any individualized assessment that they are in the United States unlawfully and/or that they are likely to escape before a warrant can be obtained.”³³⁶

“A twenty-year-old was walking out to his car [in St. Paul] and was detained. It was definitely racial profiling. ICE would ask people for their papers and if the person didn’t show anything, they would grab them. Agents were trying to see if they could catch and whisk someone away. Agents were grabbing people in between five and seven minutes.”³³⁷

KT, a rapid responder who tabled daily outside of the Fort Totten metro station during the Federal Takeover of Washington, DC, said, “I only saw one pale person stopped which was a wild contrast to the amount of Black and Brown people who were being stopped and intimidated by federal agents.”³³⁸ St. Paul City Councilmember Hwa Jeong Kim said, “In my neighbourhood, ICE was knocking on doors, asking neighbours to racially profile each other, saying things like, ‘Do you know any Hmong neighbours? Do you know any Asian people? If so, could you point them out?’ One morning before noon, 15 people in my neighbourhood were gone. All of a sudden there was a fear of leaving the house.”³³⁹ Home is Here NOLA stated that they received a message about a man in St. Charles Parish, Louisiana, who was outside smoking a cigarette on his front lawn. An ICE agent pulled up, said to him “You look like an immigrant”, proceeded to question him and then said, “and you have an accent”, and grabbed him.”³⁴⁰

“People are afraid to be Brown in the streets. There’s a generalized fear regardless of immigration status.”³⁴¹

Amnesty International interviewed several individuals directly impacted by immigration enforcement operations who shared their stories with the organization.

Mónica*, originally from Mexico, has been living in the United States for over 20 years without regular immigration status.³⁴² On 14 December 2025, she was on her way to the laundromat at around 7 in the morning in Richfield, Minnesota. She stopped by her partner’s home and was parked in the building’s parking lot sitting in her car. All of a sudden an ICE vehicle parked in front of her car, and two other ICE vehicles parked behind her. Mónica shared, “I was scared. The agents’ vests said ICE. I was shocked. One of the agents knocked on the window of my car. I called my sister and asked her to go to my house to take care of my children. The agents broke my car window because I didn’t immediately open the door. They told me I was under arrest and took me to the Whipple Building.”³⁴³ The agents did not have a warrant. Mónica was detained for over a month. She was eventually released but remains in deportation proceedings.

Sofia*, originally from Honduras, has been living in the US since 2023 and has a pending asylum claim.³⁴⁴ On 23 December 2025, she was walking with her partner through a Walmart parking lot in Bloomington, Minnesota, on the way back to their vehicle. All of a sudden, three ICE agents appeared. One of them put his arm on her partner and told him that he was not going anywhere. The ICE agents were dressed in civilian clothes and had no visible identification or badges. Moments later, around eight more agents appeared. Sofia and her husband were never asked to show any form of identification or if they had work permits. The agents did not show them a warrant. Sofia told Amnesty International that she was terrified and worried about her six-month-old baby who was at home and needed to be breastfed. She asked the agents if she could call her brother to tell him to go to her house to take her children, but they told her no. Sofia was handcuffed and was taken to the Whipple Building. She was detained for over a month. Sofia was eventually released and remains in deportation proceedings.³⁴⁵

Eustaquio is a labour organizer originally from Mexico. He has been in the United States for over 20 years without regular immigration status. On 9 January 2026, he was on his way to work in Minneapolis when he

³³⁶ United States District Court for the District of Columbia, *Escobar Molina v. DHS*, Class Action Complaint for Declaratory and Injunctive Relief, 25 September 2025, <https://www.acludc.org/cases/escobar-molina-v-dept-of-homeland-security-challenging-warrantless-immigration-arrests-without-probable-cause-in-d-c/?document=Complaint#documents>, p. 1.

³³⁷ Online interview with B.Y., Minneapolis-St. Paul, MN, USA, 7 April 2026.

³³⁸ In-person interview with KT, Washington, DC, USA, 17 May 2026.

³³⁹ Online with St. Paul City Councilmember Hwa Jeong Kim, Minneapolis-St. Paul, MN, USA, 17 March 2026.

³⁴⁰ In-person interview with Here is Home NOLA, New Orleans, LA, USA, 8 May 2026.

³⁴¹ In-person interview with healthcare provider, Washington, DC, USA, 18 May 2026.

³⁴² In-person interview with Mónica*, Richfield, Minnesota, USA, 18 March 2026.

³⁴³ In-person interview with Mónica*, Richfield, Minnesota, USA, 18 March 2026.

³⁴⁴ In-person interview with Sofia*, Richfield, Minnesota, USA, 18 March 2026.

³⁴⁵ In-person interview with Sofia*, Richfield, Minnesota, USA, 18 March 2026.

was stopped by ICE and detained.³⁴⁶ Eustaquio's son told Amnesty International that he had to go find and pick up his father's car, which had just been left on the side of the road. He said, "There was nothing to justify ICE pulling him over. It was racial profiling."³⁴⁷ Eustaquio was held at the Whipple Building for one day and was then transferred to the El Paso Camp East Montana detention facility in Texas. He was detained at Camp East Montana for nearly three weeks before being transferred to the Cibola County Correctional Center in New Mexico where he remained in detention at the time of publication of this report.

Carlos and Inés* are originally from Guatemala and have lived in the United States for decades. On 5 September 2025, they were driving to work in Washington, DC, around 7:30 in the morning when two vehicles pulled in front of them.³⁴⁸ Carlos said, "When I noticed they were ICE, I broke down. I knew I should not resist. What made it more difficult was knowing we're both without status in this country. The whole situation, as it was happening, broke us." The ICE agents asked them both to show identification and decided to detain Carlos but not Inés. Carlos told Amnesty International that his son arrived at the scene as he was being handcuffed. He was then taken to the parking lot of a gas station where he was shackled, put on a bus and taken to the Chantilly ICE Field Office. Inés told the organization how difficult it was when she returned home, "How was I going to console my kids. My youngest was very sad. We've never been without [Carlos], we're always together as a family, we eat breakfast together. It was a profound blow to us." Carlos was detained for around two months and eventually released. He remains in deportation proceedings.³⁴⁹

Three Columbia Heights Public Schools high school students – who are all from Latin American countries and seventeen years old – were on their way to school in Columbia Heights, Minnesota, in January 2026. Staff from the school district stated that, that day, ICE agents had set up a traffic stop on the road leading to their school and were stopping every car. ICE agents pulled the three students out of the car, but ended up detaining only one of them, saying to the other two, "Well it must be your lucky day." Staff shared with Amnesty International that this was what every day looked like for them during Operation Metro Surge.³⁵⁰

These incidents demonstrate that across the four locations, ICE and Border Patrol agents relied on race, skin colour, national origin or ethnicity, and their intersection with other characteristics such as language and accent, to assume a person's immigration status rather than individualized, objective criteria or reasonable justification when deciding whether to stop and detain them.

"ICE and CBP didn't give a crap; they didn't care. It was never about a person's status. It was just so discriminate and blatantly racist."³⁵¹

Across the four locations, ICE and Border Patrol agents also targeted workplaces, businesses and neighbourhoods that they associated with migrant and racialized communities, including construction sites, restaurants, stores, in particular hardware stores, and areas where day labourers gathered. Interviewees across the four locations consistently described agents waiting outside workplaces or conducting raids at construction sites or in areas where day labourers gathered, stopping individuals wearing clothes that could indicate they were doing construction work, stopping work vehicles, stopping rideshare and food delivery application drivers, targeting street vendors and patrolling neighbourhoods known to have large migrant and racialized communities.³⁵² These patterns indicate that agents relied not only on individuals' perceived race, ethnicity or national origin, but also on occupations, workplaces and locations that they associated with racialized migrant communities as proxies for immigration status.

³⁴⁶ In-person interview with Eustaquio's family & LiUNA, St. Paul, MN, USA, 19 March 2026; In These Times, "Worker Organizer Abducted By Federal Agents in Minnesota", 6 February 2026, <https://inthesetimes.com/article/worker-organizer-abducted-immigration-minneapolis>.

³⁴⁷ In-person interview with Eustaquio's family & LiUNA, St. Paul, MN, USA, 19 March 2026.

³⁴⁸ Online interview with Carlos & Inés*, Washington, DC, USA, 16 May 2026.

³⁴⁹ Online interview with Carlos & Inés*, Washington, DC, USA, 16 May 2026.

³⁵⁰ In-person interview with Columbia Heights Public Schools, Columbia Heights, MN, USA, 19 March 2026.

³⁵¹ Online interview with Minnesota State Representative Liish Kozlowski, Minneapolis-St. Paul, MN, USA, 30 April 2026.

³⁵² In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026; United States District Court for the District of Minnesota, *Hussen v. Noem*, Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law (previously cited), paras. 80-81; United States District Court for the District of Columbia, *Escobar Molina v. DHS*, Decision of Preliminary Injunction (previously cited), pp. 11 & 14.

“There was just blatant racial profiling. ICE and CBP were roaming around neighbourhoods looking for workers. They were targeting people based on their race, colour, or job. They targeted day labourers. They targeted rideshare workers at the airport. And obviously they never had warrants.”³⁵³

A pastor at New Life Centers, a Little Village-based church in Chicago, described that ICE and Border Patrol operations in the neighbourhood seemed “very indiscriminate”. He shared, “A lot of people who were picked up were fruit sellers, people selling on the street. It felt like there was no rhyme or reason as to who was getting picked up. ICE and CBP would come through, with helicopters, masks, machine guns. They would grab whoever was outside.”³⁵⁴

The Louisiana Organization for Refugees and Immigrants (LORI) shared the story of two parents who were on their way to a school function in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. They stopped at a Korean store and were detained by ICE as they were leaving it.³⁵⁵ Liliana Z. told Amnesty International about an incident in Minneapolis where ICE agents targeted a taco street food truck and detained a Guatemalan woman who worked there, who was seven months pregnant at the time.³⁵⁶ A Minneapolis City Councilmember described an incident at a Somali restaurant in the Cedar Riverside neighbourhood where agents entered, locked the door behind them and demanded that everyone inside show the agents their US passports.³⁵⁷ Amnesty International was told that, after similar incidents across the four cities, businesses and restaurants began to keep their doors locked so that ICE agents could not enter.³⁵⁸

Interviewees from the four cities noted that it was also common for ICE and Border Patrol to have a presence in the parking lots of hardware stores like Home Depot and Lowes, and other places they thought construction workers and day labourers may be given that they associated these types of jobs with migrants.³⁵⁹ MSMA described an incident at a Home Depot in the DMV where ICE agents took “everyone Brown in the parking lot and detained them.”³⁶⁰ The Illinois Community for Displaced Immigrants (ICDI) stated that there were incidents of ICE agents pretending to be people picking up day labourers and honking at people to try and get them into unmarked vehicles.³⁶¹

Individuals were also targeted for wearing clothes or driving vehicles that federal agents associated with people working construction jobs or other types of day labour.³⁶² MSMA indicated that federal agents in Washington, DC, were targeting trucks and other vehicles that they thought landscapers might be driving.³⁶³ An immigration lawyer in New Orleans shared that one of their clients, who was born in Europe and had been living in the United States since they were a young child, was stopped while driving near New Orleans. An ICE agent told him that he was stopped because he was driving a box truck and “looked like a farmer.”³⁶⁴

“ICE and CBP moved quickly and quietly. They would roll up on construction sites, use their cell phones for facial recognition, would take people and would be gone very quickly. They cornered two people on a roof. That was racial profiling.”³⁶⁵

NIJC stated that, in its review of arrest reports as part of the Castañon-Nava litigation, there were many examples of ICE and Border Patrol in Chicago indiscriminately stopping people on the street and in vehicles. The organization said, “In the arrest reports, sometimes agents provide no justification. Sometimes they will try to justify that it wasn’t race based. The reports say things like, ‘the person was wearing a black shirt and black pants, which is typical of day labourers; or that the person had dirt on their shirt meaning that they

³⁵³ In-person interview with Chicago Mayor’s Office of Immigrant, Migrant, and Refugee Rights, Chicago, IL, USA, 26 March 2026.

³⁵⁴ Online interview with New Life Centers, Chicago, IL, USA, 28 April 2026.

³⁵⁵ In-person interview with the LORI, Baton Rouge, LA, USA, 8 May 2026.

³⁵⁶ In-person interview with Liliana Z., Minneapolis, MN, USA, 19 March 2026.

³⁵⁷ Online interview with a Minneapolis City Councilmember, Minneapolis-St. Paul, MN, USA, 6 April 2026.

³⁵⁸ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026.

³⁵⁹ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026; United States District Court for the District of Columbia, *Escobar Molina v. DHS*, Decision of Preliminary Injunction (previously cited), p. 11.

³⁶⁰ In-person interview with MSMA, Washington, DC, USA, 18 May 2026.

³⁶¹ In-person interview with ICDI, Chicago, IL, USA, 23 March 2026.

³⁶² In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026.

³⁶³ In-person interview with MSMA, Washington, DC, USA, 18 May 2026.

³⁶⁴ In-person interview with an immigration lawyer, New Orleans, LA, USA, 8 May 2026.

³⁶⁵ Online interview with ACLU of Louisiana, New Orleans, LA, USA, 22 May 2026.

were likely a day labourer; or that the person was in the parking lot of a garden centre and because those people are often undocumented, the person they stopped must be undocumented’.”³⁶⁶

“ICE and CBP were stopping anyone who was Brown. They were targeting people driving trucks that had a water cooler, boots or ladder in the back – basically anything that indicates you might be a worker. ICE and CBP are taking people just for being Brown.”³⁶⁷

Interviewees from the four cities shared various incidents where ICE and Border Patrol targeted people doing landscaping or working on the roofs of houses – jobs that federal agents also seemed to associate with migrants.³⁶⁸ ICDI told Amnesty International that one of its clients was picked up by ICE while he was working in the yard of a house.³⁶⁹ Journalist Madison McVan shared the story of two roofers in Chanhassen, Minnesota – an outer Southwestern suburb of Minneapolis-St. Paul – who became trapped on a roof for around four hours in very cold temperatures in December 2025 because ICE approached the house they were working on with the aim of detaining them.³⁷⁰ One of the workers eventually came down and had to be taken to the hospital to be treated for hypothermia. Media outlets reported that an ICE agent got in the ambulance with the man and that ICE detained him after he was discharged from the hospital.³⁷¹ The other worker remained on the roof and ICE eventually left.³⁷²

“I’ll always remember the first time I came across an empty landscaping truck. That was the dreaded thing to come across, right away you think, ‘do you hear them, see them?’, if not, you know it’s really bad. One day I went out for four hours. I was just ping-ponging from abandoned landscape truck to abandoned landscape truck.”³⁷³

Interviewees from Chicago, Minneapolis-St. Paul and Washington, DC, noted that during the immigration enforcement operations rideshare application drivers, food delivery people and street vendors were particularly targeted by federal agents.³⁷⁴ NIJC indicated that, in Chicago, ICE agents would go around rideshare lots questioning people and the corresponding arrest reports for anyone detained would say things like “we have intelligence that many undocumented people work as rideshare drivers.”³⁷⁵ During the Federal Takeover in Washington, DC, moped food application delivery drivers were being detained.³⁷⁶ According to MSMA, “Agents were trying to arrest anyone they could so they started targeting moped drivers who were often newly arrived folks. Agents were just snatching people off mopeds.”³⁷⁷ In Minneapolis, there were many reported incidents of Somali Uber drivers being stopped by ICE and being told “we’re stopping you because you look African”, and being asked to show identification.³⁷⁸ ICDI stated that street vendors were heavily targeted in Chicago.³⁷⁹ Amnesty International also received information about the targeting of commercial truck drivers, many of whom are migrants, at interstate weigh stations. According to NIJC, “given the prevalence of immigrant commercial truck drivers, they’re using that as a pretext to profile people and do unjustified stops at weigh stations.”³⁸⁰

Individuals interviewed by Amnesty International across the four cities indicated that federal agents would target apartment buildings where they believed migrants were living.³⁸¹ Tanya, a rapid responder in Washington, DC, shared “There was one morning where three ICE vehicles were parked outside an apartment

³⁶⁶ Online interview with NIJC, Chicago, IL, USA, 14 April 2026.

³⁶⁷ In-person interview with Unstoppable Kenner, Metairie, LA, USA, 11 May 2026.

³⁶⁸ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026.

³⁶⁹ In-person interview with ICDI, Chicago, IL, USA, 23 March 2026.

³⁷⁰ In-person interview with Madison McVan, Minneapolis, MN, USA, 18 March 2026; MPR News, “ICE agents corner Chanhassen construction workers amid frigid temperatures”, 13 December 2025, <https://www.mprnews.org/story/2025/12/13/ice-agents-corner-chanhassen-construction-workers-amid-frigid-temperatures>; WCCO - CBS Minnesota, “ICE agents try to detain two workers on Twin Cities roof”, 13 December 2025, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TgKa4BRezY8>.

³⁷¹ MPR News, “ICE agents corner Chanhassen construction workers amid frigid temperatures” (previously cited); Sahan Journal, “Man arrested after subzero standoff on Chanhassen roof sues to stop deportation”, 17 December 2025, <https://sahanjournal.com/immigration/chanhassen-ice-operation-roof-arrest/>.

³⁷² In-person interview with Madison McVan, Minneapolis, MN, USA, 18 March 2026; MPR News, “ICE agents corner Chanhassen construction workers amid frigid temperatures” (previously cited).

³⁷³ Online interview with a refugee resettlement agency, Chicago, IL, USA, 21 April 2026.

³⁷⁴ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026.

³⁷⁵ Online interview with NIJC, Chicago, IL, USA, 14 April 2026.

³⁷⁶ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026.

³⁷⁷ In-person interview with MSMA, Washington, DC, USA, 18 May 2026.

³⁷⁸ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026.

³⁷⁹ In-person interview with ICDI, Chicago, IL, USA, 23 March 2026.

³⁸⁰ Online interview with NIJC, Chicago, IL, USA, 14 April 2026.

³⁸¹ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026.

building. I had never seen something like that before. They were just parked there. It felt very helpless because I knew they were going to jump out and grab someone. A Hispanic guy came out of the apartment building and ICE detained him. I couldn't believe my eyes. There was no way they could have known who this person was. It was blatant racial profiling.”³⁸²

“We started seeing people being physically removed off of the streets. Fifteen people a day were being kidnapped off the streets in Ward 4 [in Washington, DC] at the height of the operation. It basically got to us having only two minutes to respond to a reported ICE sighting. We were finding work trucks, you know someone's livelihood, with the door open, keys in the ignition. ICE was just taking people who looked Hispanic from their cars. That was the hardest time for me.”³⁸³

The racially discriminatory nature of enforcement operations in the four cities is further demonstrated by the detention of racialized individuals with work authorization or other regular immigration status, people with ongoing immigration and asylum processes, lawful permanent residents, refugees and US citizens.³⁸⁴ The detentions of these individuals regardless of their immigration status, together with the evidence documented of racial profiling, reinforce that ICE and Border Patrol were targeting people that they simply perceived to be migrants based on their race, skin colour, national origin or ethnicity, or the language they were speaking. According to a New Orleans clinic, “There were a lot of people who had some sort of permanent immigration status who were detained. There were a lot of unlawful detentions.”³⁸⁵ Shubhanjana Das, a journalist in Minneapolis-St. Paul, shared that they began carrying around their immigration paperwork with them at all times.³⁸⁶

Guillermo*, a Mexican-American with US citizenship, was detained by ICE in Chicago's Cicero neighbourhood. He told Amnesty International, “I got kidnapped by ICE for an hour. They just stopped me, asked me where I was going and for my ID [identification] but I didn't have a physical copy with me.”³⁸⁷ Guillermo was handcuffed and put in an ICE vehicle which continued patrolling around the neighbourhood. He explained that after about an hour, ICE agents scanned his face, said “He's right, he's a US citizen” and then offered to drop him off at his house. Guillermo refused as he worried the agents would try and target his mother, and asked to be let out on the street they were on. He explained that he did not leave his home for a week after the incident because he was afraid of being detained again.³⁸⁸

Mubashir Khalif Hussen, a Somali-American with US citizenship, was arrested by ICE agents in Minneapolis because he is Somali.³⁸⁹ Several people interviewed by Amnesty International told the organization that, on 10 December 2025, Hussen was walking outside on his lunch break when a masked ICE agent grabbed him and pushed him into a restaurant in the Cedar Riverside neighbourhood of Minneapolis. The agent never identified himself. Another agent entered the restaurant and then both agents dragged Hussen outside and put him into a headlock on the ground.³⁹⁰ Hussen repeatedly told the agents he was a US citizen and asked the agents to let him get his coat with his cellphone so that he could show them a picture of his US passport.³⁹¹ The agents refused, putting him in the back of an unmarked car.³⁹² At one point, Hussen's employer arrived with a copy of his passport, but the agents ignored him.³⁹³ According to litigation, the

³⁸² In-person interview with Tanya, Washington, DC, USA, 16 May 2026.

³⁸³ In-person interview with a rapid responder, Washington, DC, USA, 14 May 2026.

³⁸⁴ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026; *Hussen v Noem*, Complaint.

³⁸⁵ Online interview with a New Orleans clinic, New Orleans, LA, USA, 7 May 2026.

³⁸⁶ Online interview with Shubhanjana Das, Minneapolis-St. Paul, MN, USA, 14 April 2026.

³⁸⁷ In-person interview with Little Village Community Council, Chicago, IL, USA, 22 March 2026.

³⁸⁸ In-person interview with Little Village Community Council, Chicago, IL, USA, 22 March 2026.

³⁸⁹ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026; United States District Court for the District of Minnesota, *Hussen v. Noem*, Class Action Complaint for Declaratory and Injunctive Relief (previously cited), para. 35; United States District Court for the District of Minnesota, *Hussen v. Noem*, Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law (previously cited), paras. 14-30.

³⁹⁰ United States District Court for the District of Minnesota, *Hussen v. Noem*, Class Action Complaint for Declaratory and Injunctive Relief (previously cited), para. 35.

³⁹¹ United States District Court for the District of Minnesota, *Hussen v. Noem*, Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law (previously cited), paras. 19-21; United States District Court for the District of Minnesota, *Hussen v. Noem*, Class Action Complaint for Declaratory and Injunctive Relief (previously cited), para. 36.

³⁹² United States District Court for the District of Minnesota, *Hussen v. Noem*, Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law (previously cited), para. 21; United States District Court for the District of Minnesota, *Hussen v. Noem*, Class Action Complaint for Declaratory and Injunctive Relief (previously cited), para. 36.

³⁹³ United States District Court for the District of Minnesota, *Hussen v. Noem*, Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law (previously cited), para. 23; United States District Court for the District of Minnesota, *Hussen v. Noem*, Class Action Complaint for Declaratory and Injunctive Relief (previously cited), para. 36.

agents repeatedly told Hussen that they needed to scan his face.³⁹⁴ He was taken to the Whipple building and was eventually released hours later after finally being allowed to show the picture of his US passport that was on his cellphone.³⁹⁵

“Any Brown person was getting profiled and stopped. ICE would try and catch people in a lie. For example, they would ask someone, ‘are you a citizen?’ and if the person responded yes but was actually just a Green Card holder then ICE agents would say that that meant that the person’s status was in question and they were lying.”³⁹⁶

Enrique Espinoza, an immigration attorney, stated that once Operation Midway Blitz was underway, he began receiving many calls from his clients and other people about whether they should carry their US passports or other documents around with them. He said, “People with status were also afraid because they started realizing that ICE was targeting everyone in an abusive manner.”³⁹⁷ He described an incident where ICE and Border Patrol “went into a Walmart to try to detain anyone who looked like an immigrant. The agents were creating chaos and everyone there was afraid seeing heavily armed individuals with masks. ICE went after a guy with a work permit and pending asylum application. The guy saw more than 30 agents raiding the area, so he got scared and tried to run away. He jumped a fence and broke his leg. He was detained by ICE on the other side of the fence and was taken to Humble Health Park hospital.”³⁹⁸

Seven Columbia Heights Public Schools students – all of whom had pending asylum claims – were detained with their parents during Operation Metro Surge in Minneapolis-St. Paul.³⁹⁹ On 20 January 2026, **Liam Conejo Ramos**, a 5-year-old pre-kindergarten student from Ecuador with a pending asylum claim, was detained by ICE on his way home from school.⁴⁰⁰ The agents forced him to knock on the door of his home and then detained his father. Liam and his father were taken to the South Texas Family Residential Center – also known as Dilley – in Dilley, Texas where they were detained until a District Court judge ordered their release on January 31.⁴⁰¹ **Camila***, a 10-year-old elementary school student, was on her way to school with her mother when they were detained by ICE. Columbia Heights Public Schools staff said, “Most of the families had active asylum claims. They had entered the United States using the CBP One mobile application. They were going to their appointments; they were doing everything they were supposed to do but they were still detained.”⁴⁰²

Daniela* is an eighteen-year-old US citizen. Her parents are from Mexico. One day she went to the pharmacy in Apple Valley, Minnesota. ICE agents boxed in her car in the parking lot, but then they heard a car

³⁹⁴ United States District Court for the District of Minnesota, *Hussen v. Noem*, Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law (previously cited), para. 22; United States District Court District of Minnesota, *Hussen v. Noem*, Class Action Complaint for Declaratory and Injunctive Relief (previously cited), para. 36.

³⁹⁵ Online interview with a Minneapolis City Councilmember, 6 April 2026; United States District Court for the District of Minnesota, *Hussen v. Noem*, Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law (previously cited), para. 26; CBS News, “ICE agents wrongfully detained U.S. citizen in Minneapolis for looking Somali, leaders say”, 11 December 2025, <https://www.congress.gov/119/meeting/house/118923/documents/HHRG-119-JU00-20260204-SD006.pdf>.

³⁹⁶ Online interview with Russell, Minneapolis-St. Paul, MN, USA, 18 March 2026.

³⁹⁷ Online interview with Enrique Espinoza, Chicago, IL, USA, 10 April 2026.

³⁹⁸ Online interview with Enrique Espinoza, Chicago, IL, USA, 10 April 2026; United States District Court for the Northern District of Illinois Eastern Division, *Chicago Headline Club, et al., v. Noem*, Opinion and Order (previously cited), p. 107.

³⁹⁹ In-person interview with Columbia Heights Public Schools, Columbia Heights, MN, USA, 19 March 2026.

⁴⁰⁰ In-person interview with Columbia Heights Public Schools, Columbia Heights, MN, USA, 19 March 2026; The Guardian, “The detention of five-year-old Liam Ramos was horrific. What has America become?”, 2 February 2026, <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2026/feb/02/liam-ramos-horrific-ice-detention-outrage>; BBC, “Boy, 5, and father detained by ICE return to Minnesota after release”, 2 February 2026, <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cwyznw7jd4go>.

⁴⁰¹ In-person interview with Columbia Heights Public Schools, Columbia Heights, MN, USA, 19 March 2026; United States District Court for the Western District of Texas San Antonio Division, *Arias v. Noem*, Opinion and Order of the Court, Case No. SA-26-CV-415-FB, 31 January 2026, <https://www.documentcloud.org/documents/26708008-us-district-judge-fred-bierys-opinion-ordering-release-of-5-year-old-liam-arias-and-father/>; Amnesty International, “USA: Shut Down Migrant Family Detention Center” (Index: AMR 51/1033/2026) 21 May 2026, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/amr51/1033/2026/en/>; CNN, “5-year-old Liam Ramos and father are back in Minneapolis after being released from federal custody in Texas”, 1 February 2026, <https://edition.cnn.com/2026/01/31/us/liam-ramos-judge-release-ice-detention/>.

⁴⁰² In-person interview with Columbia Heights Public Schools, Columbia Heights, MN, USA, 19 March 2026. CBP One is a mobile application that serves as a single portal to a variety of CBP services. During the Biden administration, the application included a scheduling function for migrants and asylum seekers to present themselves for an appointment at participating ports-of-entry along the US-Mexico border. In accordance with the Circumvention of Lawful Pathways Final Rule, people seeking asylum through the US-Mexico border were required to use CBP One to schedule a time to arrive at one of eight participating ports of entry along the border to present their asylum claims, unless they met a few limited exceptions. On 20 January 2025, the Trump administration terminated CBP One’s scheduling system for asylum seekers and cancelled all existing appointments. CBP, “CBP One™ Mobile Application”, 20 January 2025, https://iptp-production.s3.amazonaws.com/media/documents/CBP_One_Mobile_Application_Website_Update_1.20.25.pdf; Amnesty International, *USA: Lives in Limbo: Devastating impacts of Trump’s migration and asylum policies* (previously cited), pp. 4-5.

screeching out of the lot and they left to chase it. Sara was terrified and did not want to leave the house after that.⁴⁰³

Interviewees described how racialized US citizens began carrying their US passports with them at all times in case they were stopped.⁴⁰⁴ A staff member of Universidad Popular in Chicago said, “ICE agents don’t care if you’re a US citizen or not, it’s all based on how you look. I know a US citizen who put his US passport on his dashboard when he drives. We need to protect ourselves.”⁴⁰⁵ “Folks knew that regardless of their status they could be targeted. People who were born in the US and spoke perfect English were stopped,” shared a refugee resettlement agency employee. “I was born here, I come from an immigrant family. I was carrying around my passport, but my white husband who is an immigrant didn’t do that.”⁴⁰⁶ However, in many cases, ICE and Border Patrol agents ignored US citizens’ requests to show their passports or other proof of regular immigration status, and often insisted on scanning the person’s face and detaining them.⁴⁰⁷

“A lot of our parishioners got picked up. We had about 10 families that were directly impacted. Many of them were asylum seekers who came into the US using CBP One. They passed their [credible fear] interview and had legal documents to work but were still picked up anyways. I think people are surprised to hear how many people who are asylum seekers were picked up, especially based on the narrative that’s on the news, it’s surprising that so many people who are here legally were picked up.”⁴⁰⁸

Indigenous Peoples were also stopped and detained by ICE and Border Patrol, particularly in Minnesota, further demonstrating that ICE and Border Patrol were targeting people based on how they looked.⁴⁰⁹ Amnesty International was told that Tribal leaders were telling their Tribe members to carry their Tribal identification cards with them but that ICE would stop Indigenous Peoples and demand that they show US passports.⁴¹⁰ Minnesota State Representative Liish Kozlowski, who is Ojibwe-Latine, described a number of instances of ICE and Border Patrol targeting Indigenous Peoples. They stated, “My cousin was in her car going to work with her husband. ICE rolled up, literally looking for Black and Brown people. They smashed her window at gun point. They roughed her up; she was pregnant. Her husband yelled ‘She’s Native American, here’s her Tribal ID card’. An ICE agent responded, ‘That doesn’t f***** matter, this is our land now’.” They also shared the story of an Indigenous man from Red Lake who “was with his auntie going to the grocery store. ICE showed up with guns drawn. They smashed his window and violently detained him, even though he had his Tribal ID card on him. Tribal leaders couldn’t find him, and ICE denied that he was in their custody.”⁴¹¹

Racial profiling and targeting of Black US citizens in Washington, DC

Unlike the other operations covered in this report, the Federal Takeover in Washington, DC, involved not only an increase in immigration enforcement but also a significant increase in federal and local law enforcement activity more broadly. While immigration enforcement disproportionately targeted racialized people perceived to be migrants, this broader law enforcement increase also disproportionately impacted Black Washingtonians, who already experience discriminatory policing and over-policing.⁴¹²

⁴⁰³ Online interview with Ryan C., Minneapolis-St. Paul, MN, USA, 15 April 2026.

⁴⁰⁴ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026; United States District Court for the District of Minnesota, *Hussen v. Noem*, Class Action Complaint for Declaratory and Injunctive Relief (previously cited), para. 151.

⁴⁰⁵ In-person interview with Universidad Popular, Chicago, IL, USA, 22 March 2026.

⁴⁰⁶ Online interview with a refugee resettlement agency, Chicago, IL, USA, 21 April 2026.

⁴⁰⁷ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026; United States District Court for the District of Minnesota, *Hussen v. Noem*, Class Action Complaint for Declaratory and Injunctive Relief (previously cited).

⁴⁰⁸ Online interview with New Life Centers, Chicago, IL, USA, 28 April 2026.

⁴⁰⁹ In-person and online interviews, March-May 2026; United States District Court for the District of Minnesota, *Hussen v. Noem*, Class Action Complaint for Declaratory and Injunctive Relief (previously cited), para. 81; FOX9, “Oglala Sioux Tribe says 3 members arrested in Minneapolis remain in ICE custody”, 14 January 2026, <https://www.fox9.com/news/ogla-sioux-tribe-ice-arrests>; MPR News, “How Native communities pushed back as ICE operations escalated”, 23 February 2026, <https://www.mprnews.org/story/2026/02/23/how-native-communities-pushed-back-as-ice-operations-escalated>; CBS News, “Indigenous Americans rush to prove their citizenship amid ICE crackdown”, 30 January 2026, <https://www.cbsnews.com/minnesota/news/indigenous-americans-citizenship-proof-ice-operation-metro-surge-minnesota/>; TIME, “A State of Panic: Native Americans Left in the Dark Weeks After ICE Arrests”, 18 February 2026, <https://time.com/7379166/ice-native-american-arrests-minneapolis-ogla-sioux-tribe/>.

⁴¹⁰ In-person interview with Victor Molina, NAMI Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN, USA, 19 March 2026; The Minnesota Daily, “As Operation Metro Surge goes on, Native American community is on high alert”, 29 January 2026, <https://mndaily.com/city/as-operation-metro-surge-goes-on-native-american-community-is-on-high-alert/01/29/2026/eicmndaily-com/>.

⁴¹¹ Online interview with Minnesota State Representative Liish Kozlowski, Minneapolis-St. Paul, MN, USA, 30 April 2026.

⁴¹² In-person and online interviews in Washington, DC, USA, May-June 2026; Amnesty International USA, “The United States is Violating the Human Rights of Black People by Failing to Restrict Use of Deadly Force by Police”, <https://www.amnestyusa.org/the-united-states-is-violating-the-human-rights->

Local and federal law enforcement officials, and the National Guard, separately targeted Black communities, parks, and public transportation under the guise of cracking down on the purported rise in crime in Washington, DC.⁴¹³ A DC-based organizer who monitors DC courts told Amnesty International that since the start of the Federal Takeover, the lists of people arrested and attending court increased significantly.⁴¹⁴ Occasionally over 100 people were arrested per day which resulted in court sessions that lasted all day into the early hours of the following morning.⁴¹⁵ The vast majority of individuals who have been targeted by this increase in arrests are Black US citizens. Interviewees described Black U.S. citizens being arrested for nuisance crimes that previously would not result in arrests, but rather warnings or citations.⁴¹⁶ Interviewees described predominately Black areas of the District being targeted by National Guard and other federal agencies, with officers doing “jump outs” and approaching Black citizens in groups as threats.⁴¹⁷ Amnesty International was told that while National Guard members were typically uninvolved in immigration arrests, their involvement in criminal arrests of US citizens has increased, with an increasing number of incidents of National Guard harassing and arresting Black US citizens in clear violation of their prohibition on enforcement against civilians.⁴¹⁸ The organization also received information that judges have responded to this increased criminalization by regularly dismissing criminal charges against those targeted in these arrests, and occasionally scolding government prosecutors for charging individuals with crimes with little evidence.⁴¹⁹

Black and Brown children and youth in the DMV were particularly at risk and prone to targeting by federal agents as a result of teen curfews that aim to criminalize children in groups. The curfew was imposed under the guise of preventing “teen takeovers”, a trend that has been featured in media as groups of young people “taking over” certain areas to manufacture justification for criminalizing racialized youth.⁴²⁰ On 7 July 2025, the DC Mayor Bowser amended the Juvenile Curfew Act of 1995 to start the juvenile curfew hours at 11:00 pm every day from June to August 2025, and to authorize the Chief of Police to establish extended juvenile curfew hour zones starting at 8:00 pm.⁴²¹ In addition to federal agents’ aggressive and racialized enforcement of these curfew laws, interviewees told Amnesty International about multiple incidents of National Guard members and MPD officers grabbing youth in public spaces, as well as targeting youth on buses and the metro for fare evasion.⁴²² Interviewees shared that the excessive and aggressive presence of federal agents created an environment of fear for youth in racialized communities, regardless of their immigration status.⁴²³ One interviewee described an incident in which the National Guard and MPD aggressively interrupted a DC Parks and Recreation event organized for local youth, wherein MPD was seen “grabbing kids”.⁴²⁴ In another particularly egregious example, heavily armed federal agents from the FBI, HSI, ATF, U.S. Secret Service, and MPD swarmed a football game at Coolidge

of-black-people-by-failing-to-restrict-use-of-deadly-force-by-police/; Amnesty International USA, “On the Streets of America: Human Rights Abuses in Ferguson”, 23 October 2014, <https://www.amnestyusa.org/reports/on-the-streets-of-america-human-rights-abuses-in-ferguson/>; Amnesty International, *Deadly Force: Police use of lethal force in the United States*, 2015, https://www.amnestyusa.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/aiusa_deadlyforcereportjune2015-1.pdf; Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, *Police Violence Against Afro-descendants in the United States*, OEA/Ser.L/V/II. Doc. 156, 26 November 2018, <https://www.oas.org/en/iachr/reports/pdfs/PoliceUseOfForceAfrosUSA.pdf>.

⁴¹³ United States Attorney’s Office, District of Columbia, “Violent Crime in D.C. Hits 30 Year Low” (previously cited); Committee on Oversight and Government Reform U.S. House of Representatives, *Exposing the False Claims Justifying the Trump Administration’s Attacks on the Metropolitan Police Department: Evidence Demonstrates Significant Reduction in Crime in D.C. Since 2023*, 19 December 2025, https://oversightdemocrats.house.gov/imo/media/doc/exposing_the_false_claims_justifying_the_trump_administrations_attacks_on_the_metropolitan_police_department.pdf; The Guardian, “‘It’s not safe in DC as an immigrant’: racial profiling surged during Trump’s Washington takeover”, 10 September 2025, <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2025/sep/10/trump-washington-dc-takeover>; The New York Times, “Trump Misstates Washington Crime Data to Justify Takeover”, 12 August 2025, <https://www.nytimes.com/2025/08/12/us/politics/trump-dc-crime-data-fact-check.html>.

⁴¹⁴ In-person interview with a DC-based organization, Washington, DC, USA, 19 May 2026.

⁴¹⁵ In-person interview with a DC-based organization, Washington, DC, USA, 19 May 2026.

⁴¹⁶ In-person and online interviews in Washington, DC, USA, May-June 2026.

⁴¹⁷ In-person and online interviews in Washington, DC, USA, May-June 2026.

⁴¹⁸ In-person and online interviews in Washington, DC, USA, May-June 2026; Free DC, “National Guard soldiers tackle woman to the ground, handcuff her outside her home”, 4 June 2026, <https://freedcproject.org/news/national-guard-soldiers-tackle-woman-to-the-ground-handcuff-her-outside-her-home>.

⁴¹⁹ In-person and online interviews in Washington, DC, USA, May-June 2026.

⁴²⁰ In-person interview with a DC-based organization, Washington, DC, USA, 19 May 2026.

⁴²¹ In-person interview with a DC-based organization, Washington, DC, USA, 19 May 2026; Council of the District of Columbia, *D.C. Act 26-104*.

Juvenile Curfew Emergency Amendment of 2025, 7 July 2025, <https://code.dccouncil.gov/us/dc/council/acts/26-104>; Metropolitan Police Washington DC, “DC Curfew Law”, <https://mpdc.dc.gov/page/dc-curfew-law>.

⁴²² In-person and online interviews in Washington, DC, USA, May-June 2026.

⁴²³ In-person and online interviews in Washington, DC, USA, May-June 2026.

⁴²⁴ In-person interview with legal observer, Washington, DC, USA, 18 May 2026.

High School on 29 August 2025 to reportedly address “skirmishes” in the stands.⁴²⁵ Both teams belonged to high schools with student bodies comprised of over 96% Black and Brown students, further highlighting the disproportionate degree to which federal agents targeted racialized communities throughout the Federal Takeover.⁴²⁶

Interviewees recalled “multiple cases of US citizen father, sons, and brothers being arrested and detained simply for existing while Brown or existing while Black.”⁴²⁷ A DC-based pastor raised concerns that racial profiling by federal agents overwhelmed his community with fear, describing that many of his congregants and neighbours were approached, questioned, and searched by unidentified masked officers in their yards without explanation.⁴²⁸ On 27 August 2025, a Black man from Maryland was reportedly approached by “roughly 30 to 40 vehicles,” many of which were unmarked, and was aggressively arrested by a group of agents from the DEA, FBI, ICE, and U.S. Marshals Service, as well as National Guard troops in camouflage for having a bottle of alcohol in his back pocket.⁴²⁹ Other instances of unlawful lethal force employed by federal agents in Washington, DC, include two shootings by HSI agents: the first of which occurred when federal agents fired at an unarmed Black man at a traffic stop – later omitting any mention of the shooting from the police report – and the second of which ensued when a HSI agent unlawfully shot at a car after it reportedly ran a red light – these incidents are examined in more detail in Section 5.2.2.⁴³⁰

One interviewee reported observing multiple instances in which “the National Guard tackled teenagers and then the National Guard would call MPD in to take people and to read them their rights.”⁴³¹ The National Guard troops deployed in Washington, DC, as part of the Federal Takeover do not have the legal authority to make arrests, and their involvement specifically in law enforcement operations against U.S. citizen youth is one of many examples of how the Federal Takeover in Washington, DC, unjustly attacked Black and Brown communities.

Black and Brown communities were particularly targeted by law enforcement for alleged fare evasion throughout the Federal Takeover.⁴³² Multiple interviewees recounted incidents wherein Black and Brown individuals – often youth – were pepper sprayed in crowded buses and metro cars for fare evasion.⁴³³ One interviewee explained that, during enforcement efforts at the metro, “essentially what federal agents were doing was targeting anyone who did not look like a white American.”⁴³⁴ Another interviewee described an incident in which a Black man on crutches who appeared to be in his 50s was targeted by federal agents for allegedly not paying his bus fare. The interviewee shared that agents pepper sprayed the man on a crowded bus, recounting that afterward “the agents took him off the bus and to the ground...his crutches went flying.”⁴³⁵ The interviewee further shared that, “because of the pepper-spray, a woman on the bus threw up and another woman got sprayed along with her two young children,” adding that “the woman with the two children has cancer and was coming back from chemo.”⁴³⁶ This was not an isolated incident, and consistent violence stemming from fare enforcement operations by federal agents sparked a strong

⁴²⁵ PoVillie, “While the Feds were there, and as misinformation was spreading, no less than 3 small stampedes occurred”, 3 September 2025, <https://www.popville.com/2025/09/coolidge-high-school-federal-police/>.

⁴²⁶ U.S. News & World Report, “Friendship Public Charter School Woodson Collegiate Campus”, <https://www.usnews.com/education/best-high-schools/district-of-columbia/districts/friendship-public-school-system/friendship-public-charter-school-woodson-collegiate-campus-91832>; U.S. News & World Report, “Coolidge High School”, <https://www.usnews.com/education/best-high-schools/district-of-columbia/districts/district-of-columbia-public-schools/coolidge-high-school-4643>.

⁴²⁷ In-person interview with MSMA, Washington, DC, USA, 18 May 2026.

⁴²⁸ The Washington Post, “Resistance to Trump’s D.C. crackdown is taking many forms”, 6 September 2025, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/dc-md-va/2025/09/06/trump-dc-federal-takeover-resistance-pushback/>.

⁴²⁹ The Guardian, “‘It’s not safe in DC as an immigrant’: racial profiling surged during Trump’s Washington takeover” (previously cited).

⁴³⁰ The Trace, “How Many People Have Been Shot in ICE Raids?”, 8 December 2025, <https://www.thetrace.org/2025/12/immigration-ice-shootings-guns-tracker/>; Associated Press, “Police report omits a federal agent’s shooting at a DC driver. The man’s lawyers suspect a cover-up”, 28 October 2025, <https://www.ksat.com/news/national/2025/10/28/police-report-omits-a-federal-agents-shooting-at-a-dc-driver-the-mans-lawyers-suspect-a-cover-up/>; The Washington Post, “Federal agent shoots at car during D.C. chase, police say”, 14 November 2025, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/dc-md-va/2025/11/13/hsi-shooting-car-chase-dc/>.

⁴³¹ In-person interview with DC-based organization, Washington, DC, USA, 19 May 2026.

⁴³² In-person interviews in Washington, DC, USA, May-June 2026.

⁴³³ In-person interviews in Washington, DC, USA, May-June 2026.

⁴³⁴ In-person interview with a DC-based organization, Washington, DC, USA, 19 May 2026.

⁴³⁵ In-person interview with DC-based organization, Washington, DC, USA, 19 May 2026.

⁴³⁶ In-person interview with Free DC, Washington, DC, USA, 14 May 2026.

community response, driving rapid responders to station themselves near metro stations throughout the Federal Takeover.⁴³⁷

Amnesty International concludes that throughout the Federal Takeover in Washington, DC, federal agents have engaged in racially discriminatory immigration enforcement and law enforcement practices by targeting Black and Brown community members, in violation of the right to equality and non-discrimination.

Based on the foregoing, Amnesty International concludes that ICE and Border Patrol engaged in widespread and systematic racially discriminatory immigration enforcement, targeting individuals they perceived to be migrants based on their race, skin colour, national origin or ethnicity, and their intersection with other characteristics such as language and accent, as well as occupations, workplaces and locations that federal agents associated with racialized migrant communities, in violation of the right to equality and non-discrimination. The recurrence of these practices throughout the four immigration enforcement operations demonstrates that racially discriminatory enforcement was neither isolated nor exceptional, but rather characteristic of the manner in which the operations were conducted. The evidence documented by Amnesty International shows that the selection of individuals for stops and detentions was usually not based on neutral criteria, but on the use of race, skin colour, ethnicity or national origin, and language and accent, as indicators of suspected immigration status. The targeting of neighbourhoods, businesses and other areas where migrant and racialized communities live further reinforces the existence of a systematic pattern of racial profiling. Consequently, Amnesty International concludes that the resulting arrests and detentions were discriminatory and arbitrary under international human rights law. The widespread absence of the use of judicial warrants and other due process protections, as well as the imposition of arrest quotas by the Trump administration, further contributed to the arbitrary and discriminatory nature of these arrests and detentions. Many of the individuals who were arbitrarily and discriminatorily arrested during the enforcement operations remain in detention or have been removed from the United States.

“You’re being racially profiled because you’re Somali. We were targeted based on our race and because we’re Somali. It felt that we were being discriminated against by the whole nation. It was really hurtful and damaging.”⁴³⁸

5.2 Harassment, intimidation, degrading treatment and unjustified use of force, including lethal force by federal agents

Across Chicago, Minneapolis-St. Paul, New Orleans and surrounding areas, and the DMV, Amnesty International documented a pattern of repeated use of excessive force and other violent actions by ICE, Border Patrol and other federal agents against people they perceived to be migrants and were attempting to detain, as well as rapid responders and people observing federal agent activity, protesters and community members. Agents drove recklessly, boxed in individuals’ vehicles that they were attempting to detain and used PIT (Precision Immobilization Technique) manoeuvres to forcibly stop vehicles to arrest the person driving for immigration enforcement. Agents also smashed windows without justification, physically threw people on to the ground who were not resisting, and injured individuals in the course of arresting them. During the operations in Chicago, Minneapolis-St. Paul and Washington, DC, federal agents used lethal force against seven individuals who did not pose an imminent threat of death or serious injury. In Chicago and Minneapolis-St. Paul, agents routinely unlawfully deployed less lethal weapons, such as chemical irritants, against people observing ICE and Border Patrol activity, community members and protesters, often without warning.

As set out above, the majority of arrests made by ICE and Border Patrol during immigration enforcement operations in the four cities were done without judicial warrants. Moreover, federal agents consistently stopped people based on their race, skin colour, national origin or ethnicity, and their intersection with other characteristics such as language and accent, making any resulting arrests arbitrary and discriminatory. In

⁴³⁷ In-person interviews in Washington, DC, USA, May-June 2026.

⁴³⁸ Online interview with a Minneapolis City Councilmember, Minneapolis-St. Paul, MN, USA, 6 April 2026.

accordance with international human rights law and standards, if an arrest is unlawful, any use of force is most likely unlawful, unnecessary and excessive.

In the case of lawful arrests, international human rights law and standards require that the use of force by law enforcement officials be a last resort and be guided by the principles of legality, necessity, proportionality and accountability.⁴³⁹ In the event that the use of force is unavoidable, first, international standards stipulate that the use of force must be justified based on a legitimate objective and a regulatory framework detailing what actions are permitted in such a situation. Second, the use of force must be limited to when there are no other means available to achieve a legitimate objective. Third, the means and method employed must be commensurate with the resistance offered and the present danger. That is, law enforcement officials should not cause more harm than they are seeking to avoid. As far as possible, prior to the use of force authorities must use non-violent means and exhaust methods of negotiation and control, and have adequate means so that, if necessary, the use of force is exercised in a differentiated manner and appropriate to the threat and level of resistance encountered.⁴⁴⁰

DHS, ICE and CBP have similar use of force policies which stipulate that agents may only use force when there is no alternative to doing so.⁴⁴¹ Both ICE and CBP's policies explicitly state that the use of excessive force by agents is "strictly prohibited".⁴⁴² Regarding warnings, DHS and CBP's policies state that, when feasible, verbal warnings should be issued before applying force.⁴⁴³ ICE's policy requires that a warning be given, if feasible, prior to using deadly force.⁴⁴⁴

According to a notice published by DHS in August 2026, ICE plans to spend up to \$20 million USD to purchase electric shock gloves for its agents.⁴⁴⁵ Direct contact electric shock weapons, including electric shock gloves, do not incapacitate individuals but deliver painful shocks.⁴⁴⁶ DHS has described the gloves as a "de-escalation device", however, Amnesty International considers that they have no legitimate law enforcement role that could not be achieved through less harmful means.⁴⁴⁷ Research by Amnesty International, UN bodies and other organizations has found that the use of electric shock weapons can cause severe suffering, long-lasting physical disability and psychological distress which can destroy an individual's sense of dignity, and that prolonged use can even result in death.⁴⁴⁸ Amnesty International considers the effects of these devices to be inherently cruel, inhuman and degrading and has long called for their production, promotion, trade and use to be prohibited, a position also adopted by the UN Special Rapporteur on Torture.⁴⁴⁹

5.2.1 Harassment, intimidation, degrading treatment and unjustified use of force by federal agents

Amnesty International documented that, across the four cities, ICE, Border Patrol and other agencies used excessive force and other violent actions while arresting people perceived to be migrants. This included breaking down the doors of homes without warrants and with guns drawn, conducting raids in the middle of

⁴³⁹ UN Basic Principles on the Use of Force and Firearms by Law Enforcement Officials, Principles 1, 4 & 5.

⁴⁴⁰ UN Basic Principles on the Use of Force and Firearms by Law Enforcement Officials, Principles 4 & 5(a).

⁴⁴¹ DHS, "Update to the Department Policy on the Use of Force", 6 February 2023, https://www.dhs.gov/sites/default/files/2023-02/23_0206_s1_use-of-force-policy-update.pdf, p. 2; ICE, *ICE Directive 19009.3: Firearms and Use of Force*, 26 May 2023, <https://www.ice.gov/doclib/policy/19009.3.pdf>, para. 2; CBP, *CBP Use of Force Policy*, January 2021, https://www.cbp.gov/sites/default/files/2024-09/exhibit_09_-_cbp_use_of_force_policy_final_jan_2021.pdf, p. i.

⁴⁴² ICE, *ICE Directive 19009.3: Firearms and Use of Force* (previously cited), para. 2; CBP, *CBP Use of Force Policy* (previously cited), p. i.

⁴⁴³ DHS, "Update to the Department Policy on the Use of Force" (previously cited), p. 4; CBP, *CBP Use of Force Policy* (previously cited), p. 4.

⁴⁴⁴ ICE, *ICE Directive 19009.3: Firearms and Use of Force* (previously cited), para. 5.4(5).

⁴⁴⁵ APFS, "Acquisition Planning Forecast System – Forecast Record Number: F2026074524", 10 August 2026, <https://apfs-cloud.dhs.gov/record/74524/public-print/>; The New York Times, "ICE Plans to Give Officers Gloves That Can Deliver Electric Shocks", 12 August 2026, <https://www.nytimes.com/2026/08/12/us/politics/ice-gloves-shock.html>; Associated Press, "AP Exclusive: ICE plans to give officers gloves that can deliver painful electric shocks", 11 August 2026, <https://apnews.com/article/ice-electric-shock-gloves-85ff746d3e0ee5f39e7a9a3f1f576252>; BBC, "ICE plans to equip agents with gloves that can deliver electric shocks", 12 August 2026, <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/c20d292gdp4o>.

⁴⁴⁶ Amnesty International, "*I still can't sleep at night*": *The global abuse of electric shock equipment* (Index: POL/30/8990/2025), 6 March 2025, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/pol30/8990/2025/en/>, pp. 5, 14 & 17.

⁴⁴⁷ Amnesty International, "*I still can't sleep at night*" (previously cited), pp. 5 & 17; The New York Times, "ICE Plans to Give Officers Gloves That Can Deliver Electric Shocks" (previously cited).

⁴⁴⁸ Amnesty International, "*I still can't sleep at night*" (previously cited), pp. 5 & 15.

⁴⁴⁹ UN Special Rapporteur on torture, Interim report, UN Doc. A/78/324, 24 August 2023, <https://docs.un.org/en/A/78/324>, para. 54; Amnesty International, "*I still can't sleep at night*" (previously cited), p. 17.

the night accompanied by helicopters, driving recklessly and causing car accidents, smashing vehicle windows without justification, pushing or tackling people to the ground, and creating dangerous and frightening situations which resulted in individuals getting injured.⁴⁵⁰ Interviewees from all four locations expressed that violence by federal agents escalated throughout the enforcement operations and that agents seemed to resort to more violence more quickly as time went on.⁴⁵¹ Interviewees also stated that violence and excessive use of force seemed to be a central part of the enforcement operations across the four cities. The ACLU of Illinois told Amnesty International, “ICE and CBP were using chokeholds against people. It was disturbing. It seemed reckless and out of control; it seemed like part of the intent of the operation. The recklessness and violence accelerated with time.”⁴⁵²

Interviewees in the four cities told Amnesty International that federal agents frequently drove aggressively, did not stop at red traffic lights and exceeded the speed limit, including in residential areas.⁴⁵³ C.H. said that, in Minneapolis-St. Paul, “ICE and CBP would run red lights. They would be going 50 miles (80 kilometres) an hour driving down residential streets. They would stop cars, snatch people and leave the person’s car running in the street. One time there was a car left with a kid in the back, one time there was a car left with a dog in the back. It was just so lawless, it pisses me the hell off.”⁴⁵⁴ Amnesty International was told that agents consistently engaged in aggressive and dangerous driving while pursuing individuals that put themselves, the person they were chasing and the public at serious risk of death or serious injury. For instance, in New Orleans, “there were constant high-speed chases through the streets by ICE and CBP”, while in Washington, DC, “ICE agents were driving recklessly on a very regular basis and would run red lights all the time.”⁴⁵⁵ In Chicago’s Cicero neighbourhood, an ICE incident ended with a car crash.⁴⁵⁶

“There were multiple incidents of ICE agents initiating car chases that resulted in accidents. That’s a problem on multiple levels; it puts everyone on the road in harm’s way. If the person they were chasing didn’t get hurt, ICE would grab them right there. If the person did get hurt, ICE would follow the ambulance to the hospital. Imagine getting into a car accident and then being taken to hospital and getting snatched by ICE.”⁴⁵⁷

Amnesty International documented that federal agents commonly tried to arrest people they perceived to be migrants who were driving.⁴⁵⁸ Across the four cities, agents would attempt to force vehicles to pull off the road, would aggressively pull in front, behind and beside vehicles to prevent the person driving from leaving, or would ram or use PIT manoeuvres to stop vehicles, and then jump out and arrest the person inside the vehicle.⁴⁵⁹ According to NIJC, “Another of ICE and CBP’s tactics was using their vehicles to form a perimeter; they will box people in. For example, if they did a license plate scan and decided that the person is undocumented, they would cut people off in traffic and would close them in from in front and behind so that the person couldn’t leave. They would block parked cars in on both sides. They would force people off of the road, sometimes potentially causing traffic accidents.”⁴⁶⁰

“ICE and CBP became more violent over time. They started beating people up.”⁴⁶¹

Amnesty International received information that federal agents frequently smashed vehicle windows and violently pulled out the people inside to detain them.⁴⁶² According to NIJC, window smashing by ICE and Border Patrol became very common during Operation Midway Blitz. “Agents would often give one to two warnings and would then smash the window. Then the agents would physically unlock the car, open the door and forcibly pull the person out and sometimes tase them in the process, particularly if they offered any

⁴⁵⁰ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026; United States District Court for the District of Minnesota, *Hussen v. Noem*, Class Action Complaint for Declaratory and Injunctive Relief (previously cited), paras. 45 & 139; United States District Court for the District of Minnesota, *Hussen v. Noem*, Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law (previously cited).

⁴⁵¹ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026.

⁴⁵² In-person interview with ACLU of Illinois, Chicago, IL, USA, 24 March 2026.

⁴⁵³ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026.

⁴⁵⁴ Online interview with C.H., Minneapolis-St. Paul, MN, USA, 6 April 2026.

⁴⁵⁵ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026.

⁴⁵⁶ Online interview with New Life Centers, Chicago, IL, USA, 28 April 2026.

⁴⁵⁷ Online interview with Jules Langlois, Minneapolis-St. Paul, MN, USA, 13 April 2026.

⁴⁵⁸ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026.

⁴⁵⁹ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026.

⁴⁶⁰ Online interview with NIJC, Chicago, IL, USA, 14 April 2026.

⁴⁶¹ In-person interview with Chicago Mayor’s Office of Immigrant, Migrant, and Refugee Rights, Chicago, IL, USA, 26 March 2026.

⁴⁶² In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026.

resistance at all,” said NIJC.⁴⁶³ **Mónica*** told the organization that ICE agents knocked on her car’s window and when she did not immediately get out of her vehicle, agents smashed her window and pulled her out.⁴⁶⁴

“It was clear that ICE had some sort of guidance that they could smash windows of vehicles. We saw lots of window smashing. In my first 19 years of work, I was only aware of two incidents of window smashing. Now I’m aware of a ton of incidents.”⁴⁶⁵

Amnesty International considers that federal agents frequently used unnecessary and excessive force when detaining people, including shoving and tackling them.⁴⁶⁶ PASO told the organization, “We started seeing blood on the sidewalk after a person was taken.”⁴⁶⁷ NIJC indicated that there have been cases of ICE and Border Patrol roughing people up after they’ve been handcuffed. They also stated that they have noticed a pattern of ICE agents trying to justify the use of force in arrest reports by claiming that the individual was resisting arrest, however, their clients have “disputed the account that they fought back or were resisting arrest.”⁴⁶⁸ A pastor at New Life Centers told Amnesty International that a friend of his – who has a work permit – was stopped by ICE in Chicago. His friend put his hands up and told the agents that he would go with them, but “the agents grabbed him anyways and threw him on the ground”.⁴⁶⁹

On 16 August 2025, Cristian, a Venezuelan man with a pending asylum claim, was violently tackled by six masked federal agents while he was exiting a coffee shop with a food delivery order in Washington, DC.⁴⁷⁰ One agent repeatedly punched him in the head and another agent appeared to use a stun gun on Cristian. Witnesses reported that agents did not ask Cristian for his name or identification. Witnesses yelled at the agents detaining Cristian to identify themselves, but all refused except for the only agent who was wearing an ICE badge.⁴⁷¹

Ricardo was biking to a supermarket in Chicago when ICE agents attempted to detain him in an alley way.⁴⁷² The agents tackled him to the ground and punched him, breaking Ricardo’s ribs and fracturing his hands.⁴⁷³ The agents took him to the hospital, remaining outside his hospital room while he received treatment. Ricardo’s family members reported that hospital staff prevented them from entering Ricardo’s room.⁴⁷⁴ Less than 24 hours later, he was discharged from the hospital and taken to the Broadview facility. He was transferred two to three times between detention centres. PASO told Amnesty International that Ricardo only saw a doctor once while in detention and that he ended up agreeing to “voluntary” departure because the pain was too much. He has “lost function in his hand because the fracture didn’t heal well. He has a lot of nightmares; he can’t sleep well.”⁴⁷⁵

The Chicago Mayor’s Office of Immigrant, Migrant, and Refugee Rights told the story of a Mexican man who was working on a roof, chased by ICE, shoved to the ground and then arrested. In the process, agents knocked over a 70-year-old neighbour and arrested the rapid responder who was blowing their whistle at the scene.⁴⁷⁶ A DC-based organization stated that, in Washington, DC, “There has been a lot of brutality against immigrants; they’ve experienced so much violence. Federal agents have held guns at people, they’ve tackled people on electric scooters.”⁴⁷⁷ In New Orleans, El Pueblo NOLA noted the “fear and violence that the

⁴⁶³ Online interview with NIJC, Chicago, IL, USA, 14 April 2026.

⁴⁶⁴ In-person interview with Mónica*, Richfield, Minnesota, USA, 18 March 2026.

⁴⁶⁵ Online interview with NIJC, Chicago, IL, USA, 14 April 2026.

⁴⁶⁶ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026; The New York Times, “They Were Charged With Assaulting ICE Agents. The Cases Are Crumbling.”, 18 July 2026, <https://www.nytimes.com/2026/07/18/us/ice-assaults-protesters.html>.

⁴⁶⁷ Online interview with Marién Casillas Pabellon, PASO, Chicago, IL, USA, 23 April 2026.

⁴⁶⁸ Online interview with NIJC, Chicago, IL, USA, 14 April 2026.

⁴⁶⁹ Online interview with New Life Centers, Chicago, IL, USA, 28 April 2026.

⁴⁷⁰ Interview with journalist, Washington, DC, USA, 14 May 2026; The Washington Post, “Federal officers detain, tackle moped driver amid Trump D.C. police crackdown”, 17 August 2025, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/dc-md-vi/2025/08/17/dc-arrests-violent-takedown-immigration/>.

⁴⁷¹ Interview with journalist, Washington, DC, USA, 14 May 2026; The Washington Post, “Federal officers detain, tackle moped driver amid Trump D.C. police crackdown” (previously cited).

⁴⁷² Online interview with Marién Casillas Pabellon, PASO, Chicago, IL, USA, 23 April 2026.

⁴⁷³ Online interview with Marién Casillas Pabellon, PASO, Chicago, IL, USA, 23 April 2026; NBC5 Chicago, “Man hospitalized after being detained by federal agents in Chicago suburb”, 3 November 2025, <https://www.nbcchicago.com/news/local/man-hospitalized-after-being-detained-by-federal-agents-in-chicago-suburb/3847082/>.

⁴⁷⁴ NBC5 Chicago, “Man hospitalized after being detained by federal agents in Chicago suburb” (previously cited).

⁴⁷⁵ Online interview with Marién Casillas Pabellon, PASO, Chicago, IL, USA, 23 April 2026.

⁴⁷⁶ In-person interview with Chicago Mayor’s Office of Immigrant, Migrant, and Refugee Rights, Chicago, IL, USA, 26 March 2026.

⁴⁷⁷ In-person interview with a DC-based organization, Washington, DC, USA, 19 March 2026.

migrant community has faced”, from an incident of a man who died after jumping into the water attempting to escape from federal agents, to a man who had his jaw broken by agents.⁴⁷⁸

“We were seeing gangs of federal agents punching people, verbally abusing people, knocking cigarettes out of people’s mouths, punching people in the face. We saw federal agents breaking car windows.”⁴⁷⁹

On 16 September 2025, masked ICE and Border Patrol agents in tactical gear and with military-grade weapons raided a home in Elgin, Illinois, around 5 in the morning.⁴⁸⁰ There were around twenty unmarked SUVs, two armoured vehicles and at least one military helicopter. Agents used an explosive device to blast off the door of a house and raid it.⁴⁸¹ Agents arrested six people, including two US citizens and a person from Venezuela with a pending asylum claim. One of the people arrested had suffered a stroke 12 years ago and cannot speak. His caregiver was also arrested.⁴⁸² Former DHS Secretary Noem was present at the incident and stated afterwards, “President Trump has been clear: if politicians will not put the safety of their citizens first, this administration will. I was on the ground in Chicago today to make clear we are not backing down.”⁴⁸³ According to DHS, the target of the raid was a man who had previously been removed from the United States on three separate occasions.⁴⁸⁴ He was charged with illegal re-entry, however, when he appeared in federal court the judge concluded that there was no justification for detaining him.⁴⁸⁵ NIJC told Amnesty International that they received the arrest reports through the Castañon-Nava settlement and it was clear that ICE and Border Patrol had written inaccurate accounts of many arrests.⁴⁸⁶ For example, the arrest report for the man who had suffered a stroke and could not speak indicated that agents had interviewed him about his immigration status. ICE alleged that the man accepted “voluntary” departure to Mexico despite being separated from his caregiver right after arrest.⁴⁸⁷

In the early morning hours of 30 September 2025, around 300 masked federal agents armed with automatic weapons, flashbang grenades and breaching tools raided an apartment complex located on South Shore Drive in Chicago, Illinois.⁴⁸⁸ Agents rappelled onto the roof of the building from a Blackhawk military helicopter, while those on the street arrived in unmarked vans and armoured trucks.⁴⁸⁹ Former Border Patrol Commander Bovino was present, along with a camera crew from NewsNation that Border Patrol had brought with them who followed federal agents throughout the building while they raided it. The operation was supposedly targeting suspected members of the Venezuelan criminal group Tren de Aragua (TdA) who, according to Bovino, had “taken over” units in the building that federal agents planned “to hit via force with guns”.⁴⁹⁰ Amnesty International’s Evidence Lab verified two videos which show Border Patrol agents armed with lethal weapons surrounding the building, running searches with spotlights, breaking into residential apartments,

⁴⁷⁸ In-person interview with El Pueblo NOLA, New Orleans, LA, USA, 9 May 2026; Undercurrent News, “US immigration crackdown leads to drowning of oyster boat deckhand”, 16 January 2026, <https://www.undercurrentnews.com/2026/01/16/us-immigration-crackdown-leads-to-drowning-of-oyster-boat-deckhand/>.

⁴⁷⁹ In-person interview with Free DC, Washington, DC, USA, 18 March 2026.

⁴⁸⁰ Online interview with NIJC, Chicago, IL, USA, 14 April 2026; Illinois Accountability Commission, *Elgin Investigation Brief – April 2026*, <https://ilac.illinois.gov/content/dam/soi/en/web/ilac/documents/final-report/inv-briefs/IAC-Elgin-Investigation-Brief-r.pdf>, p. 2.

⁴⁸¹ Online interview with NIJC, Chicago, IL, USA, 14 April 2026; Illinois Accountability Commission, *Elgin Investigation Brief* (previously cited), p. 2.

⁴⁸² Online interview with NIJC, Chicago, IL, USA, 14 April 2026; Illinois Accountability Commission, *Elgin Investigation Brief* (previously cited), p. 2; CBS News, “2 U.S. citizens among 7 detailed at early morning Elgin, Illinois ICE raid”, 18 September 2025, <https://www.cbsnews.com/chicago/news/ice-raid-elgin-illinois/>; Chicago Tribune, “Elgin man who is a US citizen was briefly detained in latest Chicago-area immigration enforcement blitz”, 16 September 2025, <https://www.chicagotribune.com/2025/09/16/elgin-man-immigration-blitz-chicago/>.

⁴⁸³ X, Kristi Noem, 17 September 2025, <https://x.com/KristiNoem/status/196810847795331675?s=20>; X, Kristi Noem, 18 September 2025, <https://x.com/KristiNoem/status/1968707084309971440?s=20>.

⁴⁸⁴ Online interview with NIJC, Chicago, IL, USA, 14 April 2026; Illinois Accountability Commission, *Elgin Investigation Brief* (previously cited), p. 3.

⁴⁸⁵ Online interview with NIJC, Chicago, IL, USA, 14 April 2026; Illinois Accountability Commission, *Elgin Investigation Brief* (previously cited), p. 3.

⁴⁸⁶ Online interview with NIJC, Chicago, IL, USA, 14 April 2026; NIJC, “Castañon Nava v. DHS: Challenging Warrantless ICE Arrests”, <https://immigrantjustice.org/for-attorneys/cases/castanon-nava-et-al-v-dhs-et-al/>.

⁴⁸⁷ Online interview with NIJC, Chicago, IL, USA, 14 April 2026.

⁴⁸⁸ Online interview with NIJC, Chicago, IL, USA, 14 April 2026; Illinois Accountability Commission, *South Shore Apartment Raids Investigation Brief – April 2026*, <https://ilac.illinois.gov/content/dam/soi/en/web/ilac/documents/final-report/inv-briefs/IAC-South-Shore-Investigation-Brief-r.pdf>, p. 2; X, Homeland Security, 2 October 2025, <https://x.com/DHSgov/status/1973796727615598738?s=20>; NIJC, “Federal Tort Claims on Behalf of South Shore Chicago Residents Targeted in 2025 Immigration Raids” (previously cited); Chicago Sun-Times, “Massive immigration raid on Chicago apartment building leaves residents reeling: ‘I feel defeated’”, 1 October 2025, <https://chicago.suntimes.com/immigration/2025/10/01/massive-immigration-raid-on-chicago-apartment-building-leaves-residents-reeling-i-feel-defeated>. Multiple agencies participated in the operation, including CBP, ICE, HSI, ATF and FBI.

⁴⁸⁹ DHSgov, Instagram, 4 October 2025, <https://www.instagram.com/p/DPZTrpOCXdc/>; Subx.News, Facebook, 2025, <https://www.facebook.com/reel/1151619063510236>.

⁴⁹⁰ Illinois Accountability Commission, *South Shore Apartment Raids Investigation Brief* (previously cited), p. 2; News Nation, “Raw footage: 300+ federal agents raid Chicago apartments | Bradley on the Border”, 30 September 2025, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IK-IMjwnB88>.

tying residents' wrists with zip ties, and putting them into vehicles.⁴⁹¹ Some of the people being detained were shirtless or barefoot.⁴⁹² According to the IAC, "Federal agents went door to door, forcing their way into apartments, battering down doors and cutting out deadbolts. Federal agents pointed military-style guns at residents, pulled them from their beds, restrained them with zip ties, and marched them out of the building. At least six residents reported that agents physically struck or kicked them. A law enforcement dog bit a tenant, leaving blood on the floor of an apartment. In at least one apartment, federal agents forced a resident to his knees while his 6-year-old nephew clung to him, sobbing."⁴⁹³ Masked federal agents made residents of the building, including many US citizens and children, line up outside of it, asked them their names and countries of origin, and made them lift up their shirts to inspect them for tattoos and asked if they were members of TdA.⁴⁹⁴ DHS stated that two individuals with affiliations to TdA were detained, in addition to 35 individuals – including children – who were detained for "immigration violations".⁴⁹⁵ However, subsequent reporting suggests that the objective of the raid was not specifically focused on alleged TdA members but rather was to detain undocumented tenants.⁴⁹⁶ NIJC told Amnesty International, "The justification was that agents were looking for criminal gang members, but no one who they arrested has been charged. They had no criminal warrant to enter the building or the apartments. No one has been charged criminally, and they haven't identified any gang members."⁴⁹⁷ To date, DHS has not publicly released any judicial warrants related to the raid.⁴⁹⁸ Most of the 37 individuals detained during the raid were held in detention for months and several were removed from the United States.⁴⁹⁹ The IAC found that this was one of the "largest and most aggressive immigration enforcement operations during Operation Midway Blitz."⁵⁰⁰ On 12 May 2026, 18 residents of the building filed legal claims seeking accountability and reparations.⁵⁰¹

⁴⁹¹ DHS/GOV, Instagram, 4 October 2025 (previously cited); Subx.News, Facebook, 2025 (previously cited); Illinois Accountability Commission, *South Shore Apartment Raids Investigation Brief* (previously cited), p. 2; X, Homeland Security, 2 October 2025 (previously cited); NIJC, "Federal Tort Claims on Behalf of South Shore Chicago Residents Targeted in 2025 Immigration Raids" (previously cited).

⁴⁹² DHS/GOV, Instagram, 4 October 2025 (previously cited); Subx.News, Facebook, 2025 (previously cited); NIJC, "Federal Tort Claims on Behalf of South Shore Chicago Residents Targeted in 2025 Immigration Raids" (previously cited).

⁴⁹³ Illinois Accountability Commission, *South Shore Apartment Raids Investigation Brief* (previously cited), p. 3; NIJC, "Federal Tort Claims on Behalf of South Shore Chicago Residents Targeted in 2025 Immigration Raids – Claim 7: Name Redacted", https://immigrantjustice.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/05/FTCA-CLAIM-7-Client_Redacted.pdf.

⁴⁹⁴ Illinois Accountability Commission, *South Shore Apartment Raids Investigation Brief* (previously cited), p. 3; NIJC, "Federal Tort Claims on Behalf of South Shore Chicago Residents Targeted in 2025 Immigration Raids" (previously cited); ProPublica, "'I Lost Everything': Venezuelans Were Rounded Up in a Dramatic Midnight Raid but Never Charged With a Crime", 13 November 2025, <https://www.propublica.org/article/chicago-venezuela-immigration-ice-fbi-raids-no-criminal-charges>; News Nation, "Raw footage: 300+ federal agents raid Chicago apartments | Bradley on the Border" (previously cited).

⁴⁹⁵ DHS, "Statement from Tricia McLaughlin, Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs at the Department of Homeland Security", 6 November 2025, <https://www.documentcloud.org/documents/26219676-2025-11-06-tricia-mclaughlin-statement/>.

⁴⁹⁶ Illinois Accountability Commission, *South Shore Apartment Raids Investigation Brief* (previously cited), p. 5; ProPublica, "The Real Story Behind the Midnight Immigration Raid on a Chicago Apartment Building", 4 February 2026, <https://www.propublica.org/article/chicago-venezuela-immigration-ice-raid-landlord-tren-de-aragua>.

⁴⁹⁷ Online interview with NIJC, Chicago, IL, USA, 14 April 2026.

⁴⁹⁸ Illinois Accountability Commission, *South Shore Apartment Raids Investigation Brief* (previously cited), p. 3.

⁴⁹⁹ NIJC, "Federal Tort Claims on Behalf of South Shore Chicago Residents Targeted in 2025 Immigration Raids – J. Andrades Jimenez", <https://immigrantjustice.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/05/FTCA-CLAIM-1-J-Andrades-Jimenez.pdf>; NIJC, "Federal Tort Claims on Behalf of South Shore Chicago Residents Targeted in 2025 Immigration Raids – J.M. Jimenez", <https://immigrantjustice.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/05/FTCA-CLAIM-3-J.M.-Jimenez.pdf>; NIJC, "Federal Tort Claims on Behalf of South Shore Chicago Residents Targeted in 2025 Immigration Raids – J. Lopez Manzano", <https://immigrantjustice.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/05/FTCA-CLAIM-4-J.-Lopez-Manzano.pdf>; NIJC, "Federal Tort Claims on Behalf of South Shore Chicago Residents Targeted in 2025 Immigration Raids – Claim 5 Name Redacted", https://immigrantjustice.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/05/FTCA-CLAIM-5-Client_Redacted.pdf; NIJC, "Federal Tort Claims on Behalf of South Shore Chicago Residents– Claim 7" (previously cited); NIJC, "Federal Tort Claims on Behalf of South Shore Chicago Residents Targeted in 2025 Immigration Raids – Claim 9 Redacted", https://immigrantjustice.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/05/FTCA-CLAIM-9-Client_Redacted.pdf; NIJC, "Federal Tort Claims on Behalf of South Shore Chicago Residents Targeted in 2025 Immigration Raids – Claim 10", https://immigrantjustice.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/05/FTCA-CLAIM-10-Client_Redacted.pdf; NIJC, "Federal Tort Claims on Behalf of South Shore Chicago Residents Targeted in 2025 Immigration Raids – Claim 11", https://immigrantjustice.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/05/FTCA-CLAIM-11-Client_Redacted.pdf; NIJC, "Federal Tort Claims on Behalf of South Shore Chicago Residents Targeted in 2025 Immigration Raids – Claim 12", https://immigrantjustice.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/05/FTCA-CLAIM-12-Client_Redacted.pdf; NIJC, "Federal Tort Claims on Behalf of South Shore Chicago Residents Targeted in 2025 Immigration Raids – Claim 13", https://immigrantjustice.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/05/FTCA-CLAIM-13-Client_Redacted.pdf; NIJC, "Federal Tort Claims on Behalf of South Shore Chicago Residents Targeted in 2025 Immigration Raids – Claim 14", <https://immigrantjustice.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/05/FTCA-CLAIM-14-N.-Mejias.pdf>; NIJC, "Federal Tort Claims on Behalf of South Shore Chicago Residents Targeted in 2025 Immigration Raids – Claim 15", <https://immigrantjustice.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/05/FTCA-CLAIM-15-D.-Henriquez.pdf>; NIJC, "Federal Tort Claims on Behalf of South Shore Chicago Residents Targeted in 2025 Immigration Raids – Claim 16", <https://immigrantjustice.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/05/FTCA-CLAIM-16-J.M.pdf>; NIJC, "Federal Tort Claims on Behalf of South Shore Chicago Residents Targeted in 2025 Immigration Raids – Claim 17", https://immigrantjustice.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/05/FTCA-CLAIM-17-Client_Redacted.pdf; NIJC, "Federal Tort Claims on Behalf of South Shore Chicago Residents Targeted in 2025 Immigration Raids – Claim 18", https://immigrantjustice.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/05/FTCA-CLAIM-18-Client_Redacted.pdf.

⁵⁰⁰ Illinois Accountability Commission, *South Shore Apartment Raids Investigation Brief* (previously cited), p. 2.

⁵⁰¹ NIJC, "Federal Tort Claims on Behalf of South Shore Chicago Residents Targeted in 2025 Immigration Raids" (previously cited).

“When you’re talking about the federal government who can deprive people of liberty, the way they carried themselves [during Operation Midway Blitz] was radically different from how ICE had acted before. It was much more of a secret police style of operations.”⁵⁰²

Amnesty International was also told of multiple incidents of individuals suffering severe injuries, including having their bones broken, while being arrested by federal agents and having to be taken to the hospital.⁵⁰³ In New Orleans, ICE agents broke an individual’s collarbone.⁵⁰⁴ In Minneapolis-St. Paul, ICE agents brought a man with a head injury to the hospital claiming he had run into a wall but this version of events was heavily contested by hospital staff and local organizations.⁵⁰⁵ Minnesota State Representative Liish Kozlowski spent a significant amount of time at hospitals during Operation Metro Surge. They shared that hospital staff told them that people were being brought in by ICE with broken bones, head injuries or internal bleeding, and that federal agents would allege that the person had “fallen”.⁵⁰⁶ They shared that one of their worst nights doing rapid response was when a father and son were detained at a restaurant. The father had a heart attack and was taken to the hospital where ICE tried to arrest him and impede hospital staff from providing him care. “ICE left him at the hospital still chained to the bed. They were going to deny him lifesaving care for injuries they caused,” said Representative Kozlowski.⁵⁰⁷

Amnesty International was told about multiple cases of ICE agents then waiting inside the person’s hospital room so that they could take them to a detention facility as soon as the hospital released them.⁵⁰⁸ The organization received information about an incident at Hennepin County Medical Center in Minneapolis where ICE agents were present at a patient’s bedside for almost 28 hours, treating the patient as though they were in criminal custody, including denying them access to family visitation and handcuffing them to the hospital bed.⁵⁰⁹ A legal service provider stated that one of their clients, a 60-year-old Somali woman, began deteriorating at the Whipple Building in Fort Snelling, Minnesota, and had to be taken to the hospital. Two ICE agents remained by her bedside for the entire week that she was at the hospital, looming over her while she was receiving care.⁵¹⁰

“ICE agents are chasing people and people have been injured. They’re being taken to the hospital by ICE and ICE is camping out outside their rooms. A city councillor was arrested at a hospital because they asked if ICE had a warrant.”⁵¹¹

Across the four cities covered in this report, Amnesty International also documented that ICE, Border Patrol and other federal agents used excessive force against rapid responders, people observing immigration enforcement operations and protesters, and engaged in other violent conduct. This included driving dangerously, smashing vehicle windows, pointing firearms at people, and pushing and tackling people to the ground.⁵¹² In cases where rapid responders, observers and protesters were women or gender diverse individuals, Amnesty International was told that federal agents often used more violence against them.⁵¹³ Federal agents also arrested a number of people who were observing the activity of federal agents.⁵¹⁴

In accordance with US domestic law, individuals in public spaces have the right to film anything that is in plain view, including law enforcement officers and federal immigration agents.⁵¹⁵ Moreover, the United Nations Declaration on Human Rights Defenders establishes specific protections for human rights defenders

⁵⁰² Online interview with NIJC, Chicago, IL, USA, 14 April 2026.

⁵⁰³ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026; United States District Court for the District of Minnesota, *Hussen v. Noem*, Class Action Complaint for Declaratory and Injunctive Relief (previously cited), para. 151.

⁵⁰⁴ In-person interview with A.S., New Orleans, LA, USA, 10 May 2026.

⁵⁰⁵ In-person interview with the ACLU of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN, USA, 20 March 2026.

⁵⁰⁶ Online interview with Minnesota State Representative Liish Kozlowski, Minneapolis-St. Paul, MN, USA, 30 April 2026.

⁵⁰⁷ Online interview with Minnesota State Representative Liish Kozlowski, Minneapolis-St. Paul, MN, USA, 30 April 2026.

⁵⁰⁸ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026.

⁵⁰⁹ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026; UNIDOS-MN, “When ICE Enters a Hospital: Why Clear Protocols Matter for Patient Safety.”, 6 January 2026, <https://unidos-mn.org/media/2026/1/11/when-ice-enters-a-hospital-why-clear-protocols-matter-for-patient-safety>.

⁵¹⁰ In-person interview with a legal service provider, Minneapolis, MN, USA, 20 March 2026.

⁵¹¹ In-person interview with ICIRR, Chicago, IL, USA, 26 March 2026.

⁵¹² In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026; United States District Court for the District of Minnesota, *Tincher v. Mullin*, Order, Case No. 0:25-cv-4669 (KMM/DTS), 16 January 2026, <https://assets.aclu.org/live/uploads/2026/01/ECF-85-Order-011625.pdf>; The New York Times, “They Were Charged With Assaulting ICE Agents. The Cases Are Crumbling.” (previously cited).

⁵¹³ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026.

⁵¹⁴ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026.

⁵¹⁵ U.S. Constitution, First Amendment; ILRC, *A Brief Guide to Observing and Recording ICE Arrests: Tips learned from Rapid Response Teams Across the Country*, 17 April 2026, <https://www.ilrc.org/community-resources/brief-guide-observing-and-recording-ice-arrests-tips-learned-rapid-response>.

– people who act in the protection of human rights – including the rights to seek, obtain, receive and disseminate information relating to human rights.⁵¹⁶ Amnesty International finds that the individuals across the four locations who undertook rapid response and immigration enforcement observation efforts are human rights defenders.

Amnesty International was told of several incidents of federal agents dangerously following rapid responders and observers.⁵¹⁷ In Washington, DC’s Georgetown neighbourhood, federal agents rammed their vehicle into a rapid responder who was walking.⁵¹⁸ A community organizer with El Pueblo NOLA shared an incident she had while observing ICE agents in her neighbourhood. She said, “I started following ICE in my car up the street in my neighbourhood when they turned around and started driving straight towards me, as if to hit me. My mom was in the car with me, so I put my hand on her to brace for impact. Then they swerved and missed us.” The organizer dropped her mother back at home and kept patrolling, “the same agents returned and said, ‘stop following us or I’ll arrest you’.” “Arrest me for what?”, she replied, to which the agent responded, “obstructing justice”.⁵¹⁹ Russell, a rapid responder in Minneapolis-St. Paul, told Amnesty International that ICE and Border Patrol agents aggressively followed him on several occasions while he was observing them. “An ICE vehicle that I was following got behind me. They turned on their brights [high beams] in a tunnel on the highway. They followed me on the highway, tailing me and flashing their brights at me. It was very aggressive,” he said.⁵²⁰ Dieu Do, an immigrant rights organizer and rapid responder in Minneapolis-St. Paul shared that, on one occasion, ICE agents followed her friend to her house and intimidated her, stating that they knew who she was and where she lived.⁵²¹

“Something else that stands out is the level of violence that ICE and CBP used. We did so much KYR [“Know-Your-Rights”] training, but they didn’t respect our rights. It was surprisingly violent.”⁵²²

Rapid responders and observers had their vehicle windows smashed and were forcibly pulled out of their vehicles by ICE and Border Patrol agents.⁵²³ Patty O’Keefe and another individual were following ICE agents in her car in Minneapolis, honking the horn and blowing whistles to alert community members of ICE’s presence, when the agents stopped their vehicle, surrounded the car, sprayed a chemical irritant into the vehicle’s windshield vent and then smashed the windows, opened the vehicle’s doors and dragged out O’Keefe and her friend. She was detained at the Whipple Building for eight hours in leg shackles in a room reserved for US citizens.⁵²⁴

Based on information received by Amnesty International, it seems that ICE and Border Patrol agents did not like people observing or recording their actions, and that their response to this was to respond with the use of force. Amnesty International was told that federal agents would yell at people who were filming them, or who were trying to interact with the person they were detaining.⁵²⁵ When rapid responders would try and record enforcement operations, ICE and Border Patrol agents would try and knock their cellphones out of their hands or grab them and throw them away.⁵²⁶

The organization also received information about multiple incidents of ICE and Border Patrol agents pulling their firearms on rapid responders, protesters and observers.⁵²⁷ Dan, a rapid responder in Minneapolis-St.

⁵¹⁶ UNGA, 53/144. *Declaration on the Right and Responsibility of Individuals, Groups and Organs of Society to Promote and Protect Universally Recognized Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms*, A/RES/53/144, 8 March 1999.

⁵¹⁷ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026; United States District Court for the District of Minnesota, *Tincher v. Mullin*, Order (previously cited), pp. 16-17.

⁵¹⁸ In-person interview with KT, Washington, DC, USA, 17 May 2026.

⁵¹⁹ In-person interview with El Pueblo NOLA, New Orleans, LA, USA, 9 May 2026.

⁵²⁰ Online interview with Russell, Minneapolis-St. Paul, MN, USA, 18 March 2026.

⁵²¹ Online interview with Dieu Do, Minneapolis-St. Paul, MN, USA, 7 April 2026.

⁵²² Online interview with New Life Centers, Chicago, IL, USA, 28 April 2026.

⁵²³ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026.

⁵²⁴ In-person interview with Madison McVan, Minneapolis, MN, USA, 18 March 2026; CBS Morning, “Woman following ICE agents in Minnesota recalls being detained”, 14 January 2026, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=midKJR0kKsg>; Common Dreams, “‘My US Citizenship Did Not Protect Me’: Community Hearing Details ICE Horrors in Minneapolis”, 16 January 2026, <https://www.commondreams.org/news/minnesota-ice-abuse-testimony>; Minnesota Reformer, “In the car with the Minneapolis community patrols working to disrupt ICE operations” (previously cited).

⁵²⁵ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026; United States District Court for the District of Minnesota, *Tincher v. Mullin*, Order (previously cited).

⁵²⁶ In-person interview with ICDI, Chicago, IL, USA, 23 March 2026.

⁵²⁷ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026; United States District Court for the District of Minnesota, *Tincher v. Mullin*, Order (previously cited), pp. 16 & 18.

Paul, told Amnesty International that one time when he was out doing ICE patrols, there was an ICE agent in a vehicle parked in front of Dan who looked at him and put his finger to his head like a gun.⁵²⁸ B.Y., who frequently did ICE monitoring at a trailer park in Minneapolis-St. Paul, recounted an incident where, after telling ICE agents that the trailer park was private property and that they needed a judicial warrant to be there, an agent threatened to arrest them and at one point, reached for his firearm, but B.Y. and two other observers who were present were able to deescalate the situation. “When interacting with ICE you had to psyche yourself up to potentially get shot or die,” they said.⁵²⁹

Amnesty International received information about federal agents shoving, beating and tackling people who were observing enforcement operations.⁵³⁰ A member of the Little Village Community Council in Chicago was pushed to the ground by ICE agents for telling them not to arrest a family with a baby.⁵³¹ Reverend Susie Hayward told Amnesty International that she has been pushed and assaulted by ICE agents multiple times in response to her offers to provide pastoral care to community members following enforcement operations.⁵³² Enrique Espinoza, an immigration attorney, responded to an ICE sighting where community members told him that federal agents had pinned down an elderly man who had asked the agents why they were detaining people.⁵³³

“ICE and CBP became more violent. There was an incident where a disabled woman with a cane was shoved to the ground by an ICE agent. They had no regard for anyone.”⁵³⁴

Jessie and Dan L., rapid responders in Minneapolis-St. Paul, told Amnesty International that after the unlawful killing of Renee Good, ICE became more violent towards rapid responders and observers.

“They’d bang on your vehicle window saying, ‘Didn’t you learn anything? Do you want to be next?’ That’s what Renee Good showed them. We’re going to be called ‘domestic terrorists’ and the people who assaulted us are going to go free.”⁵³⁵

A pastor at New Life Centers in Chicago said, “Midway Blitz was so jarring. It’s hard when someone is coming at you with a machine gun, with their finger on the trigger. ICE and CBP treated everyone as if we were the worst humans ever. Even when people would say ‘take me’, they would be thrown on the ground, violence would be used against them, they would be injured. It was just totally way over the top.”⁵³⁶

“There were hundreds of people showing up with whistles. People had a sense of desperation, the feeling that we can only stand here, record and blow whistles. We would be standing there holding hands, and ICE and CBP would come and slam people to the ground. I cannot unhear the sound of someone’s head hitting the concrete on the ground; of ICE yelling ‘shut up f***’ at the people they were pushing to the ground.”⁵³⁷**

In cases where rapid responders, observers and protesters were women or gender diverse individuals, Amnesty International was told that federal agents often responded to them with even more violence.⁵³⁸ According to Gender Justice and The Advocates for Human Rights, there were many reports of ICE and Border Patrol agents using gender demeaning language, commenting on rapid responders appearance, making sexist remarks and trying to remove hijabs.⁵³⁹ “Gender diverse rapid responders experienced more violent interactions with federal agents,” said Gender Justice.⁵⁴⁰ The Advocates for Human Rights added, “ICE agents have shot and attacked women protestors, using sexist and misogynistic language. The killing of Renee Good, an unarmed legal observer, is emblematic of a broader pattern of targeting by ICE agents that disproportionately affects women and LGBTIQ+ people.”⁵⁴¹ Interviewees told Amnesty International that

⁵²⁸ In-person interview with Jessie & Dan L., Minneapolis, MN, USA, 20 March 2026.

⁵²⁹ Online interview with B.Y., Minneapolis-St. Paul, MN, USA, 7 April 2026.

⁵³⁰ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026.

⁵³¹ In-person interview with Little Village Community Council, Chicago, IL, USA, 27 March 2026.

⁵³² In-person interview with Rev. Susie Hayward, Minneapolis, MN, USA, 18 March 2026.

⁵³³ Online interview with Enrique Espinoza, Chicago, IL, USA, 10 April 2026.

⁵³⁴ In-person interview with COPAL, Minneapolis-St. Paul, MN, USA, 20 March 2026.

⁵³⁵ In-person interview with Jessie & Dan L., Minneapolis, MN, USA, 20 March 2026.

⁵³⁶ Online interview with New Life Centers, Chicago, IL, USA, 28 April 2026.

⁵³⁷ Online interview with Minnesota State Representative Liish Kozlowski, Minneapolis-St. Paul, MN, USA, 30 April 2026.

⁵³⁸ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026.

⁵³⁹ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026.

⁵⁴⁰ In-person interview with Gender Justice, Minneapolis, MN, USA, 21 March 2026.

⁵⁴¹ In-person interview with The Advocates for Human Rights, Minneapolis, MN, USA, 20 March 2026; The Advocates for Human Rights, “Women at the Center of Harm, Women at the Center of Resistance”, 7 May 2026, <https://www.theadvocatesforhumanrights.org/News/A/index?id=651>.

federal agents would make comments to women rapid responders such as, “Shouldn’t you be home with your kids?”⁵⁴² Columbia Heights Public Schools staff told the organization that ICE and Border Patrol agents frequently said derogatory and misogynistic things to them while they were observing agents.⁵⁴³ Patty O’Keefe, a rapid responder who was arrested by ICE agents in Minneapolis, stated that an agent said to her, “You guys got to stop obstructing us. That’s why that lesbian is dead.”⁵⁴⁴

“ICE and CBP seemed designed to escalate the situation. They were using force, often direct physical force, against people. When there was pushback from observers, the tactics escalated including guns drawn and fingers on triggers. The officers seemed untrained to cope with people; they seemed to have no deescalation training. They actually seemed to relish in escalating situations like by using tear gas.”⁵⁴⁵

Across the four cities, interviewees shared that federal agents seemed inclined to escalate incidents and quickly resorted to using excessive force against rapid responders, protesters and observers.⁵⁴⁶ Interviewees associated the perceived inclination of federal agents to escalate incidents with agents’ lack of proper training to respond to crowds of people.⁵⁴⁷ Reverend Susie Hayward told Amnesty International about an incident at W 29th St and Pillsbury Ave in Minneapolis where an individual had been taken by ICE from inside his car and a pregnant woman had been dragged by her arm along the street. She stated that the ICE agents “seem dysregulated and jumpy”. “They seemed unprepared. They were taunting the crowd ... I got the sense the ICE agents that day felt they needed to stand their ground against the local community,” she said.⁵⁴⁸ Enrique Espinoza said it was clear to him that ICE and Border Patrol agents did not have proper training, noting, “I saw federal agents using excessive force. It was quite clear they didn’t care. They acted like they didn’t know about constitutional rights. Agents were trying to obstruct people legally protesting; they attacked anyone that was exercising their constitutional rights, and they retaliated against anyone that seemed to be against what they were doing; and they lied – a lot.”⁵⁴⁹ At the same time, media outlets have reported that ICE agents who have participated in the operations have decades of experience and have even participated in the training of other officers.⁵⁵⁰

“ICE agents’ behaviour – was it lack of training? Or were they doing this because they were told to? I think it’s a combination of both. It felt like there was a conditioning to treat us as domestic terrorists, to see us as agitators and disruptors, as less than human. That way it becomes more normal to enact violence against us. They didn’t see us as fellow humans because of the rhetoric coming out of DC. The agents seemed dysregulated, untrained. There was no way for us to protect ourselves. It felt like the federal government was at war with us.”⁵⁵¹

Amnesty International was told that ICE and Border Patrol agents would threaten to arrest rapid responders and observers, saying that they were “impeding or obstructing” their operations.⁵⁵² According to Madison McVan, a journalist in Minneapolis-St. Paul, ICE and Border Patrol agents would surround rapid responders’ vehicles with their weapons drawn and say things like, “Stop following us, or we’ll arrest you. Stop obstructing us.”⁵⁵³ “Bystanders and rapid responders who are filming and chanting are being labelled domestic terrorists because they have the audacity to document what they’re seeing or provide support,” said ICIRR. “The government alleges that they’re ‘impeding federal agents’.”⁵⁵⁴

Across the four cities, people were arrested for observing immigration enforcement operations, often on the grounds that they were allegedly impeding or obstructing federal agents in violation of 18 U.S.C. § 111.⁵⁵⁵ In December 2025, following alerts that ICE agents were in her neighbourhood, Sue Tinchier approached

⁵⁴² In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026.

⁵⁴³ In-person interview with Columbia Heights Public Schools, Columbia Heights, MN, USA, 19 March 2026.

⁵⁴⁴ CBS Morning, “Woman following ICE agents in Minnesota recalls being detained” (previously cited).

⁵⁴⁵ In-person interview with the ACLU of Illinois, Chicago, IL, USA, 24 March 2026.

⁵⁴⁶ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026.

⁵⁴⁷ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026.

⁵⁴⁸ In-person interview with Rev. Susie Hayward, Minneapolis, MN, USA, 18 March 2026.

⁵⁴⁹ Online interview with Enrique Espinoza, Chicago, IL, USA, 10 April 2026.

⁵⁵⁰ NBC News, “The ICE officer who killed a Minnesota woman is a war veteran who spent over a decade working for DHS”, 9 January 2026, <https://www.nbcnews.com/news/us-news/ice-officer-jonathan-ross-veteran-spent-decade-dhs-rcna253254>.

⁵⁵¹ In-person interview with Rev. Susie Hayward, Minneapolis-St. Paul, MN, USA, 18 March 2026.

⁵⁵² In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026.

⁵⁵³ In-person interview with Madison McVan, Minneapolis, MN, USA, 18 March 2026.

⁵⁵⁴ In-person interview with ICIRR, Chicago, IL, USA, 26 March 2026.

⁵⁵⁵ AIC, “How ICE Went Rogue”, 11 February 2026, <https://www.americanimmigrationcouncil.org/fact-sheet/ice-cbp-legal-analysis/>; The New York Times, “They Were Charged With Assaulting ICE Agents. The Cases Are Crumbling.” (previously cited); CNN, “How immigration agents are using a once-obscure law to detain US citizens”, 19 February 2026, <https://edition.cnn.com/2026/02/19/us/immigration-law-18-usc-111/>.

individuals in Minneapolis and asked, “Are you ICE?”.⁵⁵⁶ The individuals yelled at her and then tackled her to the ground.⁵⁵⁷ She was arrested and taken to the Whipple Building where her wedding ring was cut off and she was released five hours later without charges.⁵⁵⁸ The US District Court for the District of Minnesota found that ICE agents had no “probable cause” to arrest Tincher.⁵⁵⁹ In Washington, DC, Sydney Lori Reid was filming federal agents detain two individuals. Federal agents pinned her against a wall and later alleged that she had assaulted a FBI agent.⁵⁶⁰ Three federal grand juries declined to indict Reid for assaulting, resisting or impeding federal agents.⁵⁶¹ A New York Times investigation found that the Trump administration has filed assault charges under 18 U.S.C. § 111 against more than 550 people who were observing federal agent activity. The same investigation found that, “a close examination of those cases reveals that in its rush to meet White House demands for deportations, federal law enforcement has engaged in extensive misconduct – ranging from attacking protesters to destroying evidence and misrepresenting facts in court.”⁵⁶² In nearly half of the over 400 cases that have been resolved so far, judges dismissed the charges or prosecutors withdrew them, or juries acquitted the defendants.⁵⁶³ In June 2026, the US DOJ charged 15 individuals who had organized against ICE during Operation Metro Surge with conspiracy to impede or injure a federal officer.⁵⁶⁴ The case is ongoing.

Based on the foregoing, Amnesty International finds that ICE, Border Patrol and other federal agents used excessive force during the four immigration enforcement operations. The incidents set out above demonstrate a recurring pattern of unnecessary and excessive force across the four operations, indicating that its use was not isolated or exceptional, but rather characteristic of the manner in which the operations were conducted. Amnesty International therefore concludes that ICE, Border Patrol and other federal agents repeatedly and frequently used force in violation of international human rights law and standards, as well as DHS’s own policies governing the use of force, and committed other human rights violations such as inhumane and/or degrading treatment, intimidation, harassment, and unlawful destruction of property.

5.2.2 Use of lethal force by federal agents

Federal agents used lethal force against seven people in Chicago, Minneapolis-St. Paul and Washington, DC, during the immigration enforcement operations in the three cities.

The ICCPR protects the right to life and establishes that no one may be arbitrarily deprived of it.⁵⁶⁵ This entails strict limitations on the permissible use of lethal force by law enforcement. According to international law and standards, law enforcement officials “shall not use firearms against persons except in self-defence or defence of others against the imminent threat of death or serious injury, to prevent the perpetration of a particularly serious crime involving grave threat to life, to arrest a person presenting such a danger and resisting their authority, or to prevent his or her escape, and only when less extreme means are insufficient to achieve these objectives.”⁵⁶⁶ This sole purpose of protecting life presupposes that “lethal force may not be used intentionally merely to protect law and order or to serve other similar interests (for example, it may

⁵⁵⁶ United States District Court for the District of Minnesota, *Tincher v. Mullin*, Order (previously cited), pp. 4-8.

⁵⁵⁷ In-person interview with ACLU of Minnesota, Minneapolis-St. Paul, MN, USA, 20 March 2025; United States District Court for the District of Minnesota, *Tincher v. Mullin*, Order (previously cited), pp. 4-8.

⁵⁵⁸ United States District Court for the District of Minnesota, *Tincher v. Mullin*, Order (previously cited), pp. 56-58.

⁵⁵⁹ In-person interview with ACLU of Minnesota, Minneapolis-St. Paul, MN, USA, 20 March 2025; United States District Court for the District of Minnesota, *Tincher v. Mullin*, Order (previously cited), p. 6.

⁵⁶⁰ United States District Court for the District of Minnesota, *Tincher v. Mullin*, Order (previously cited), pp. 56-58.

⁵⁶¹ ICE, “Woman who assaulted federal agents arrested, charged following ICE Washington, D.C. investigation”, 28 July 2025,

<https://www.ice.gov/news/releases/woman-who-assaulted-federal-agents-arrested-charged-following-ice-washington-dc>.

⁵⁶² Reuters, “US prosecutors fail three times to secure indictment in FBI assault case”, 26 August 2025, <https://www.reuters.com/legal/government/us-prosecutors-fail-three-times-secure-indictment-fbi-assault-case-2025-08-26/>.

⁵⁶³ The New York Times, “They Were Charged With Assaulting ICE Agents. The Cases Are Crumbling.” (previously cited).

⁵⁶⁴ The New York Times, “They Were Charged With Assaulting ICE Agents. The Cases Are Crumbling.” (previously cited).

⁵⁶⁵ United States District Court for the District of Minnesota, *United States of America v. Isaac Sant et al.*, Indictment, 11 June 2026, <https://www.documentcloud.org/documents/28266452-usa-v-direct-action-minnesota-defendants-indictment>; U.S. Attorney’s Office, District of Minnesota, “15 Members of Direct Action Minnesota, a Minneapolis-Based Direct Action Group with Antifa Ties, Indicted”, 16 June 2026, <https://www.justice.gov/usao-mn/pr/15-members-direct-action-minnesota-minneapolis-based-direct-action-group-antifa-ties>; Minnesota Reformer, “Feds charge 15 anti-ICE activists”, 16 June 2026, <https://minnesotareformer.com/2026/06/16/feds-charge-anti-ice-activists/>; CBS News, “15 anti-ICE protesters charged with conspiracy to block immigration enforcement plead not guilty”, 1 July 2026, <https://www.cbsnews.com/minnesota/news/anti-ice-protesters-federal-court-july-1-2026/>.

⁵⁶⁶ ICCPR, Art. 6.

⁵⁶⁷ UN Basic Principles on the Use of Force and Firearms by Law Enforcement Officials, Principle 9.

not be used only to disperse protests, to arrest a suspected criminal, or to safeguard other interests such as property).”⁵⁶⁷ Only the protection of life from an imminent threat can provide a legitimate basis for the use of lethal force. According to the former UN Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions, Christof Heyns, “a fleeing thief who poses no immediate danger may not be killed, even if it means that the thief will escape.”⁵⁶⁸

DHS, ICE and CBP’s use of force policies state that agents may use deadly force only when the agent has a “reasonable belief” that the subject of such force poses an imminent threat of death or serious bodily injury to the agent or to another person.⁵⁶⁹ The policies stipulate that deadly force cannot be used solely to prevent someone from escaping.⁵⁷⁰ DHS and CBP’s policies prohibit agents from discharging firearms at the operator of a moving vehicle, unless the operator poses an imminent danger of serious bodily injury or death to the agent or to another person.⁵⁷¹

▪ Shooting of Marimar Martínez (Chicago, Illinois)

On 4 October 2025, Marimar Martínez – a US citizen – was shot five times by a Border Patrol agent. Amnesty International’s Evidence Lab verified three videos and two photographs in relation to the shooting of Martínez. The organization also reviewed the IAC’s investigative brief of the incident, court documents, and witness testimony from court documents, the IAC’s proceedings and news articles and interviews.

Marimar Martínez was driving through the Brighton Park neighbourhood of Chicago when she spotted an unmarked SUV with an “Uber” light in the front windshield, no front license plate and an out-of-state rear license plate.⁵⁷² She then noticed a uniformed Border Patrol agent inside the vehicle.⁵⁷³

Martínez began following the vehicle, honking her horn and shouting “La Migra” (“ICE”).⁵⁷⁴ After about 15 to 20 minutes, the SUV turned onto Kedzie Avenue and Martínez followed.⁵⁷⁵

CCTV footage published by the media shows the moment when the SUV drives into the centre lane of Kedzie Avenue, with Martínez’s car next to it in the left lane and a black SUV behind it. Body camera footage from a Border Patrol agent who was inside the unmarked SUV sitting in the backseat shows another agent’s hands pointing a handgun towards the right, while the agent whose body camera is filming holds a rifle.⁵⁷⁶ It is possible to hear constant vehicle horn honking in the background. The agent whose body camera was on says, “All right, it’s time to get aggressive and get the f*** out cause they’re trying to box us in.”⁵⁷⁷ To which the driver of the SUV says, “We’re going to make contact, we’re boxed in”.⁵⁷⁸

Martínez testified before Congress that, “As we approached the intersection of 39th and Kedzie, my vehicle was two to three feet to the left of the Border Patrol vehicle. He started to swerve into my lane as we were

⁵⁶⁷ UN Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions, Report, UN Doc. A/HRC/26/36, 1 April 2024, paras. 72-73; Amnesty International, *Deadly Force: Police use of lethal force in the United States* (previously cited).

⁵⁶⁸ UN Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions, Report (previously cited), para. 72.

⁵⁶⁹ DHS, “Update to the Department Policy on the Use of Force” (previously cited), p. 7; ICE, *ICE Directive 19009.3: Firearms and Use of Force* (previously cited), para. 5.4(3); CBP, *CBP Use of Force Policy* (previously cited), p. 9.

⁵⁷⁰ DHS, “Update to the Department Policy on the Use of Force” (previously cited), p. 8; ICE, *ICE Directive 19009.3: Firearms and Use of Force* (previously cited), para. 5.4(4); CBP, *CBP Use of Force Policy* (previously cited), p. 9.

⁵⁷¹ DHS, “Update to the Department Policy on the Use of Force” (previously cited), p. 8; CBP, *CBP Use of Force Policy* (previously cited), pp. 9-10.

⁵⁷² “Statement of Marimar Martínez”, 3 February 2026, <https://www.blumenthal.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/2026-2-3-marimar-martinez-statement.pdf#:~:text=is%20,p.1>; PBS NewsHour, “WATCH: Marimar Martínez describes being shot 5 times by CBP agent”, 3 February 2026, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bkRJUwaofss>; Illinois Accountability Commission, *Brighton Park Investigation Brief – April 2026*, April 2026, <https://ilac.illinois.gov/content/dam/soi/en/web/ilac/documents/final-report/inv-briefs/IAC-Brighton-Park-Investigation-Brief-r.pdf>, p. 2.

⁵⁷³ “Statement of Marimar Martínez” (previously cited), p. 1; PBS NewsHour, “WATCH: Marimar Martínez describes being shot 5 times by CBP agent” (previously cited); Illinois Accountability Commission, *Brighton Park Investigation Brief* (previously cited), p. 2.

⁵⁷⁴ “Statement of Marimar Martínez” (previously cited), p. 1; PBS NewsHour, “WATCH: Marimar Martínez describes being shot 5 times by CBP agent” (previously cited); Illinois Accountability Commission, *Brighton Park Investigation Brief* (previously cited), p. 2; The New York Times, “When Trump Officials’ Claims About Shootings Unravel in Court”, 10 February 2026, <https://www.nytimes.com/2026/02/10/us/politics/homeland-security-shootings.html>; The New Yorker, “Shot by Border Patrol, Then Called a ‘Domestic Terrorist’”, 12 March 2026, <https://www.newyorker.com/news/annals-of-immigration/shot-by-border-patrol-then-called-a-domestic-terrorist>.

⁵⁷⁵ “Statement of Marimar Martínez” (previously cited), p. 2; PBS NewsHour, “WATCH: Marimar Martínez describes being shot 5 times by CBP agent” (previously cited); Illinois Accountability Commission, *Brighton Park Investigation Brief* (previously cited), p. 2.

⁵⁷⁶ ABC7, “Newly released video captures Border Patrol shooting of Chicago woman in Brighton Park”, 10 February 2026, <https://abc7chicago.com/post/marimar-martinez-shooting-video-released-border-patrol-chicago/18582281/>.

⁵⁷⁷ ABC7, “Newly released video captures Border Patrol shooting of Chicago woman in Brighton Park” (previously cited); Accountability Commission, *Brighton Park Investigation Brief* (previously cited), p. 2.

⁵⁷⁸ ABC7, “Newly released video captures Border Patrol shooting of Chicago woman in Brighton Park” (previously cited); Accountability Commission, *Brighton Park Investigation Brief* (previously cited), p. 2.

driving. I made eye contact with the driver of the Border Patrol vehicle and watched as he turned the steering wheel once again to his left and sideswiped my vehicle.”⁵⁷⁹

The body camera footage shows the Border Patrol agent steering the wheel to the left and right.⁵⁸⁰ Martínez testified that, after her vehicle was hit by the SUV, she “immediately froze, slammed on my brakes, and stopped my car. The Border Patrol vehicle stopped just one to two car lengths ahead of me.”⁵⁸¹ She then “drove forward and went around the Border Patrol agent who jumped out of his car and pointed his gun at me. I moved to the far-left lane, striking the curb on the far left side of Kedzie.”⁵⁸² The body camera footage shows the Border Patrol agent who was driving the SUV grabbing a handgun and exiting the SUV.⁵⁸³ The agent who was sitting in the backseat of the SUV also exits the vehicle from the left back door. Five gunshots are heard.⁵⁸⁴ The agent with the rifle exits the SUV from the back right door and points his weapon at the black SUV, which drives away.⁵⁸⁵

Photographs of Martínez’s car show at least three bullet holes in the front windshield, and rear passenger seat window shattered.⁵⁸⁶ Martínez was shot in the arm, chest, and three times in the legs.⁵⁸⁷

All three Border Patrol agents claimed that Martínez caused the collision. According to the IAC, the driver of the Border Patrol SUV stated that Martínez came within “inches” of his bumper and that “‘multiple vehicles’ were constraining him.”⁵⁸⁸ However, the video footage verified by Amnesty International does not show multiple vehicles – it does show the unmarked Border Patrol SUV and Martínez’s vehicle driving next to each other, and a black SUV behind the Border Patrol SUV.⁵⁸⁹

The driver of the Border Patrol SUV’s body camera was not turned on during the shooting.⁵⁹⁰ However, according to a witness who provided testimony to the IAC, “the CBP agent crashed his SUV into Martínez’s car, with no apparent threat to agents’ safety preceding the crash.”⁵⁹¹ The witness’ testimony is corroborated by the body camera footage from the agent in the back seat of the vehicle that shows the driver turning the steering wheel to the left immediately before the crash.⁵⁹²

According to the IAC, the witness further testified that the Border Patrol agent exited the SUV and shot into Martínez’s car. The witness further stated that they did not see Martínez drive her car in the agent’s direction, contradicting the agent’s account that he shot in self-defence because Martínez drove at him.⁵⁹³ Martínez stated that as she continued to drive away, “I could hear my back passenger window shatter and I felt bullets continue to pierce my body.”⁵⁹⁴ She drove about a mile from where the incident occurred, pulled into the parking lot of a mechanic shop and called 911 [emergency response].⁵⁹⁵ Martínez was taken to the hospital. While she was being treated, a Border Patrol agent photographed her with a cellphone.⁵⁹⁶ After only three hours, she was discharged from the hospital into FBI custody. She described that while she was at the FBI

⁵⁷⁹ “Statement of Marimar Martínez” (previously cited), p. 2.

⁵⁸⁰ ABC7, “Newly released video captures Border Patrol shooting of Chicago woman in Brighton Park” (previously cited).

⁵⁸¹ “Statement of Marimar Martínez” (previously cited), p. 2.

⁵⁸² “Statement of Marimar Martínez” (previously cited), p. 2.

⁵⁸³ ABC7, “Newly released video captures Border Patrol shooting of Chicago woman in Brighton Park” (previously cited); Illinois Accountability Commission, *Brighton Park Investigation Brief* (previously cited), p. 2.

⁵⁸⁴ ABC7, “Newly released video captures Border Patrol shooting of Chicago woman in Brighton Park” (previously cited); Illinois Accountability Commission, *Brighton Park Investigation Brief* (previously cited), p. 3.

⁵⁸⁵ ABC7, “Newly released video captures Border Patrol shooting of Chicago woman in Brighton Park” (previously cited); Illinois Accountability Commission, *Brighton Park Investigation Brief* (previously cited), p. 2.

⁵⁸⁶ Block Club Chicago, “Evidence Shows Feds Lied To Justify Shooting Marimar Martinez, Lawyer Says”, 11 February 2026,

<https://blockclubchicago.org/2026/02/11/evidence-shows-feds-lied-to-justify-shooting-marimar-martinez-lawyer-says/>.

⁵⁸⁷ Illinois Accountability Commission, *Brighton Park Investigation Brief* (previously cited), p. 3; The New Yorker, “Shot by Border Patrol, Then Called a ‘Domestic Terrorist’” (previously cited).

⁵⁸⁸ Illinois Accountability Commission, *Brighton Park Investigation Brief* (previously cited), p. 2.

⁵⁸⁹ Illinois Accountability Commission, *Brighton Park Investigation Brief* (previously cited), pp. 2-3.

⁵⁹⁰ Illinois Accountability Commission, *Brighton Park Investigation Brief* (previously cited), p. 3.

⁵⁹¹ Illinois Accountability Commission, *Brighton Park Investigation Brief* (previously cited), p. 3.

⁵⁹² ABC7, “Newly released video captures Border Patrol shooting of Chicago woman in Brighton Park” (previously cited).

⁵⁹³ Illinois Accountability Commission, *Brighton Park Investigation Brief* (previously cited), p. 4.

⁵⁹⁴ “Statement of Marimar Martínez” (previously cited), p. 2.

⁵⁹⁵ “Statement of Marimar Martínez” (previously cited), p. 2.

⁵⁹⁶ “Statement of Marimar Martínez” (previously cited), p. 2; Illinois Accountability Commission, *Brighton Park Investigation Brief* (previously cited), p. 5.

office, “blood started soaking through the bandages and dripping on the floor.”⁵⁹⁷ She was taken to a new hospital and was released back into federal custody the next day.⁵⁹⁸

Text messages sent by the Border Patrol agent who was driving the SUV to other Border Patrol agents following the shooting include: “I fired 5 rounds and she had 7 holes. Put that in your book boys.” and “Sweet. My fifteen mins of fame. Lmao”.⁵⁹⁹ While Martínez was still in the hospital, former Border Patrol Commander Bovino sent the agent an email congratulating him for his “excellent service in Chicago”.⁶⁰⁰

That same day, DHS published a press release calling Martínez a “domestic terrorist”, stating that she “ambushed” and “rammed” CBP officers with her vehicle, and “took defensive fire from CBP agents and has been discharged from the hospital and is currently in the custody of the FBI.”⁶⁰¹ The next day, the DOJ charged Martínez with assaulting federal officers.⁶⁰²

“Marimar was shot 5 times by an abusive immigration agent. There’s body camera footage of what happened. DHS lied through their teeth about what happened. They did the same thing with Silverio. They labelled Marimar a domestic terrorist.”⁶⁰³

According to the IAC, a few days after Martínez was shot, the Border Patrol agent who was driving the SUV drove the vehicle from the FBI evidence garage in Chicago to Maine – where the agent is based – which is approximately 1,100 miles away.⁶⁰⁴ A judge later ordered that the SUV be returned to Chicago.⁶⁰⁵

In November 2025, federal prosecutors dropped the charges against Martínez and a judge dismissed all charges with prejudice.⁶⁰⁶

A CBP investigation obtained by the ABC7 I-Team reveals that CBP’s Open Source Intelligence Team had flagged Martínez as a threat five days before the shooting and had disseminated her photo and information to agents, because she reshared a social media post that claimed to identify an ICE agent with the comment “they found him lol.”⁶⁰⁷

⁵⁹⁷ “Statement of Marimar Martínez” (previously cited), p. 3.

⁵⁹⁸ “Statement of Marimar Martínez” (previously cited), p. 3; Illinois Accountability Commission, *Brighton Park Investigation Brief* (previously cited), p. 5.

⁵⁹⁹ Illinois Accountability Commission, *Brighton Park Investigation Brief* (previously cited), pp. 5-6; The New York Times, “When Trump Officials’ Claims About Shootings Unravel in Court” (previously cited); The New Yorker, “Shot by Border Patrol, Then Called a ‘Domestic Terrorist’” (previously cited).

⁶⁰⁰ Illinois Accountability Commission, *Brighton Park Investigation Brief* (previously cited), p. 5; The New Yorker, “Shot by Border Patrol, Then Called a ‘Domestic Terrorist’” (previously cited); CNN, “Text messages and a moved SUV: How the government’s case against a Chicago woman shot by a Border Patrol agent fell apart”, 21 November 2025, <https://edition.cnn.com/2025/11/21/us/marimar-martinez-shooting-case-what-we-know>.

⁶⁰¹ DHS, “UPDATE: DHS Deploys Special Operations After Multiple Violent Attacks on Federal Law Enforcement by Domestic Terrorists in Chicago” (previously cited).

⁶⁰² United States District Court for the Northern District of Illinois Eastern Division, *United States v. Martinez*, Criminal Complaint, Case No. 1:25-cr-00636, 5 October 2025, <https://www.courtlistener.com/docket/71561860/1/united-states-v-martinez/>; United States District Court for the Northern District of Illinois Eastern Division, *United States v. Martinez*, Count One, Case No. 1:25-cr-00636, 9 October 2025, <https://www.courtlistener.com/docket/71561860/22/united-states-v-martinez/>; Illinois Accountability Commission, *Brighton Park Investigation Brief* (previously cited), p. 9; X, FBI Director Kash Patel, “The @FBI just arrested two individuals who were allegedly driving these vehicles and attacking our federal law enforcement officers.”, 6 October 2025, <https://x.com/FBIDirectorKash/status/1975001981828931752>.

⁶⁰³ In-person interview with ICIRR, Chicago, IL, USA, 26 March 2026.

⁶⁰⁴ Illinois Accountability Commission, *Brighton Park Investigation Brief* (previously cited), p. 8; The New York Times, “When Trump Officials’ Claims About Shootings Unravel in Court” (previously cited); The New Yorker, “Shot by Border Patrol, Then Called a ‘Domestic Terrorist’” (previously cited).

⁶⁰⁵ Illinois Accountability Commission, *Brighton Park Investigation Brief* (previously cited), p. 8; CNN, “Text messages and a moved SUV: How the government’s case against a Chicago woman shot by a Border Patrol agent fell apart” (previously cited).

⁶⁰⁶ United States District Court for the Northern District of Illinois Eastern Division, *United States v. Martinez*, Government’s Motion to Dismiss the Indictment, Case No. 1:25-cr-00636, 20 November 2025, <https://www.courtlistener.com/docket/71561860/69/united-states-v-martinez/>; United States District Court for the Northern District of Illinois Eastern Division, *United States v. Martinez*, Order, Case No. 1:25-cr-00636, 20 November 2025, <https://www.courtlistener.com/docket/71561860/70/united-states-v-martinez/>; Illinois Accountability Commission, *Brighton Park Investigation Brief* (previously cited), p. 9; CNN, “Text messages and a moved SUV: How the government’s case against a Chicago woman shot by a Border Patrol agent fell apart” (previously cited).

⁶⁰⁷ Illinois Accountability Commission, *Brighton Park Investigation Brief* (previously cited), pp. 9-10; ABC7, “Immigration authorities had surveilled Chicago woman shot 5 times during ‘Midway Blitz’: CBP Report”, 12 February 2026, https://abc7chicago.com/post/immigration-authorities-had-surveilled-marimar-martinez-chicago-woman-shot-5-times-during-operation-midway-blitz-cbp-report/18593132/?userab=kabc_content_recs-577*variant_c_trending-2482%2Cwls_content_recs-584*variant_a_control_wls-2516%2Cwtvd_content_recs-585*variant_a_control_wtvd-2518%2Cktrk_content_recs-587*variant_b_trending_ktrk-2523%2Cwpvi_content_recs-586*variant_b_trending_wpvi-2521%2Cotv_web_content_rec-539*variant_c_trending-2268%2Cotv_web_topic-580*variant_a_topic-2508%2Cotv_search_page_design_unification-546*variant_b_search_redesign-2300%2Ckgo_content_recs-583*variant_a_control_kgo-2514%2Cabcn_popular_reads_exp-542*variant_b_7days_filter-2288.

There is an ongoing investigation into the shooting of Martínez.⁶⁰⁸ The three Border Patrol agents were placed on administrative leave.⁶⁰⁹ In February 2026, Martínez filed a Federal Tort Claims Act complaint against DHS, which is ongoing.⁶¹⁰

Law enforcement officers may only use lethal force when an individual poses an imminent threat of death or serious physical injury to the officer or another person. Based on its review of video footage and photographs, witness testimony and other available information, Amnesty International considers that Martínez did not pose an imminent threat of death or serious physical injury to the Border Patrol agents or to any other person at the time she was shot. In particular, photographs of Martínez's car show at least three bullet holes in the front windshield and a shattered rear passenger seat window which indicate that the shots were fired while she was driving away from the agents. Amnesty International therefore considers that the shooting of Marimar Martínez constitutes an unlawful use of lethal force in violation of her human rights. Amnesty International calls for a prompt, independent, impartial and effective investigation into the incident.

"I struggle with the memories of that day ... The shots ringing out and the burning sensation as the bullets ripped through my skin and body. And I struggle every day with the physical pain and suffering. I cannot close my hand yet to hold a pen. I try to play with the children at times at school and I am in significant pain as I attempt to do things I was so easily able to do before October 4. The physical scars will always be there. In the mornings and evenings when I get dressed I stare at my body, now permanently disfigured by the five lead bullets ... fired into me. They will be there this summer when I head to the beach with my dog and friends. They will be there when I get down on the floor with my students and work with them on their motor skill activities. And perhaps even worse, the mental scars will always be there as a reminder of the time my own government attempted to execute me and when they failed at that to vilify me. Renee Good, Alex Pretti, Silverio Villegas Gonzalez should all be here today. I know each of them would trade my bullet wounds and lifetime of mental distress in a heartbeat to be able to be back with their loved ones this afternoon, and we must also remember the countless other souls who lost their lives at the hand of those entrusted with authority."⁶¹¹

■ Shooting incident involving Philip Brown (Washington, DC)

On 17 October 2025, Philip Brown, a Black US citizen, was shot at three times by an HSI agent in Washington, DC.

In the evening of October 17, MPD officers were patrolling Northeast Washington together with agents from several federal agencies, including HSI and the FBI, as part of the "Make DC Safe Again" initiative.⁶¹² Brown was driving on Benning Road NE when the officers attempted to pull him over allegedly because his vehicle had tinted windows and was missing a front license plate.⁶¹³ According to court records and media reports, the officers believed that Brown was attempting to flee which led an HSI agent to shoot three times into the vehicle at Brown.⁶¹⁴ Brown was not injured in the shooting.

According to DHS, Brown allegedly "... drove his vehicle at a Metro Police officer and a special agent from HSI, in a deliberate attempt to run them down. The agent—in fear for his life, the lives of others, and the public—fired defensive shots into the suspect's vehicle. No one was injured and Metro Police took the suspect into custody."⁶¹⁵ However, body camera footage from one of the MPD officers present at the scene – which was released in April 2026, more than five months after the shooting – contradicts DHS' version of

⁶⁰⁸ ABC7, "Criminal investigation ongoing into agent who shot Chicago woman 5 times during 'Midway Blitz'", 11 February 2026, <https://abc7chicago.com/post/criminal-investigation-ongoing-border-patrol-agent-shot-chicago-woman-marimar-martinez-5-times-during-midway-blitz/18588359/>.

⁶⁰⁹ Illinois Accountability Commission, *Brighton Park Investigation Brief* (previously cited), p. 9; ABC7, "Criminal investigation ongoing into agent who shot Chicago woman 5 times during 'Midway Blitz'" (previously cited).

⁶¹⁰ Illinois Accountability Commission, *Brighton Park Investigation Brief* (previously cited), p. 9.

⁶¹¹ "Statement of Marimar Martínez" (previously cited), p. 6.

⁶¹² The Washington Post, "After a federal agent shot at a D.C. driver, claims of a police cover-up", 28 October 2025, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/dc-md-vt/2025/10/27/dc-traffic-stop-shooting-dispute/?ref=51st.news>.

⁶¹³ The 51st, "When federal agents shoot people in D.C., there are few details — and little accountability", 20 November 2025, <https://51st.news/federal-police-dc-tactics-accountability/>.

⁶¹⁴ The Washington Post, "After a federal agent shot at a D.C. driver, claims of a police cover-up" (previously cited); The 51st, "When federal agents shoot people in D.C., there are few details — and little accountability" (previously cited); WUSA9, "After federal agent shot at man, DC Police omitted it from reports", 28 October 2025, <https://www.wusa9.com/article/news/police/dc-police-federal-agent-homeland-security-court-documents-omitted-shooting/65-05e803d6-187d-4410-aff3-5a312657d6d7>.

⁶¹⁵ DHS, "DHS Law Enforcement Experienced More Than 180 Vehicle Attacks Since President Trump Took Office", 3 February 2026, <https://www.dhs.gov/news/2026/02/03/dhs-law-enforcement-experienced-more-180-vehicle-attacks-president-trump-took>.

events as it shows that Brown does not appear to be fleeing from the officers and the HSI agent was not in front of his vehicle.⁶¹⁶

Brown was arrested at the scene and held in jail for three days on a charge that he fled law enforcement.⁶¹⁷ However, a judge dropped the charge after learning that the police report from the incident had omitted the fact that the HSI agent had shot at Brown.⁶¹⁸

The media reported that, according to MPD, the use of lethal force by the HSI agent was investigated internally and the findings were referred to the U.S. Attorney's Office, which declined to prosecute.⁶¹⁹

Based on the information available to Amnesty International, the organization considers that Brown posed no imminent threat of death or serious physical injury to MPD or federal agents, or to any other person, and that therefore the shots fired at him by the HSI agent constitute an unlawful use of lethal force. Amnesty International calls for a prompt, independent, impartial and effective investigation into the incident.

▪ **Shooting incident involving Justin Bryant Nelson (Washington, DC)**

On 13 November 2025, Justin Bryant Nelson, a US citizen, was shot at by an HSI agent in Washington, DC.

According to media reports, MPD officers and federal agents, including HSI agents, were patrolling together in Northeast DC as part of the "DC Safe and Beautiful Task Force" initiative, when they saw Nelson's vehicle allegedly fail to stop at a red traffic light at the intersection of Pennsylvania and Minnesota Avenues SE just before 5pm.⁶²⁰ The agents turned on their emergency lights and tried to stop Nelson, but Nelson did not pull over.⁶²¹ The agents then began chasing Nelson's vehicle and at one point, an HSI agent shot at his vehicle.⁶²²

Nelson was not injured. He was later arrested and faces several charges, including fleeing law enforcement.⁶²³ The case is ongoing.

Based on the information available to Amnesty International, the organization considers that Nelson posed no imminent threat of death or serious physical injury to the MPD or federal agents, or to any other person, and that therefore the shots fired at him by the HSI agent constitute an unlawful use of lethal force. Amnesty International calls for a prompt, independent, impartial and effective investigation into the incident.

▪ **Shooting of Julio César Sosa-Celis (Minneapolis, Minnesota)**

On 14 January 2026, Julio César Sosa-Celis, a Venezuelan migrant, was shot in the leg by an ICE agent in North Minneapolis.⁶²⁴ Amnesty International's Evidence Lab verified two videos filmed near Sosa-Celis' house. The organization also reviewed court documents and witness testimony from court documents and news articles and interviews.

⁶¹⁶ WUSA9, "Body camera video shows federal officer shooting aftermath", 7 April 2026, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ozHO_9EjOjQ; DC News Now, "Body camera footage shows federal agent shooting at car during a traffic stop in DC", 8 April 2026, <https://www.dcnnewsnow.com/news/local-news/washington-dc/body-camera-footage-shows-federal-agent-shooting-at-car-during-a-traffic-stop-in-dc/>.

⁶¹⁷ Associated Press, "Police report omits a federal agent's shooting at a DC driver. The man's lawyers suspect a cover-up" (previously cited); WUSA9, "After federal agent shot at man, DC Police omitted it from reports" (previously cited).

⁶¹⁸ WUSA9, "After federal agent shot at man, DC Police omitted it from reports" (previously cited); The Washington Post, "After a federal agent shot at a D.C. driver, claims of a police cover-up" (previously cited); Associated Press, "Police report omits a federal agent's shooting at a DC driver. The man's lawyers suspect a cover-up" (previously cited); The Guardian, "ICE keeps accusing immigrants of 'weaponizing' vehicles. Most claims fall apart", 22 July 2026, <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/ng-interactive/2026/jul/22/ice-claim-immigrants-weaponize-vehicles>.

⁶¹⁹ DC News Now, "Body camera footage shows federal agent shooting at car during a traffic stop in DC" (previously cited).

⁶²⁰ The Washington Post, "Federal agent shoots at car during D.C. chase, police say" (previously cited); ABC7 News, "Federal agent fires shot during car chase in Northeast DC, 1 arrested", 14 November 2025, <https://wjla.com/news/local/washington-northeast-southeast-federal-dc-safe-beautiful-task-force-shots-fired-metropolitan-police-car-chase-pursuit-arrest-benning-road-investigation-internal-affairs-dmv-crime>.

⁶²¹ The Washington Post, "Federal agent shoots at car during D.C. chase, police say" (previously cited).

⁶²² The Washington Post, "Federal agent shoots at car during D.C. chase, police say" (previously cited); The New York Times, "At Least 23 People Have Been Shot at by Federal Immigration Agents Since Last Year", 8 July 2026, <https://www.nytimes.com/2026/07/08/us/immigration-agent-shootings-vehicles.html>; ABC7 News, "Federal agent fires shot during car chase in Northeast DC, 1 arrested" (previously cited); WUSA9, "It almost happened here, twice! I Deadly ICE shooting in Minneapolis shares similarities to cases under investigation in DC", 8 January 2026, <https://www.wusa9.com/article/news/police/deadly-ice-shooting-in-minneapolis-shares-similarities-to-2-cases-in-dc/65-0178a0a8-a756-46f3-9551-afc34bb29763>.

⁶²³ The Washington Post, "Federal agent shoots at car during D.C. chase, police say" (previously cited); The 51st, "When federal agents shoot people in D.C., there are few details — and little accountability" (previously cited).

⁶²⁴ The New Yorker, "Shot by Border Patrol, Then Called a 'Domestic Terrorist'" (previously cited).

Around 6pm, Sosa-Celis' housemate, Alfredo Aljorna, called his partner and said that he was being followed by ICE agents in a SUV.⁶²⁵ Sosa-Celis and his partner, Indriany Mendoza Camacho, rushed downstairs. Mendoza Camacho remained waiting by the door, while Sosa-Celis went outside.⁶²⁶

CCTV footage from the intersection of North Lyndale Avenue and North 24th Avenue, released by the City of Minneapolis, shows Aljorna driving onto the sidewalk of North 24th Avenue, braking and coming to halt, as another vehicle with blue police lights follows closely behind.⁶²⁷ Aljorna is then seen running down the street, being followed by a person who was later identified as an ICE agent. Sosa-Celis, who is standing outside the house, can be seen tossing down a shovel and moving towards the house's porch.⁶²⁸ Aljorna is also running towards the porch but trips and falls in front of the house. The ICE agent jumps on top of Aljorna. They appear to fight until Sosa-Celis, who was standing on the porch, appears to get involved to help Aljorna.⁶²⁹ According to Mendoza Camacho, Sosa-Celis was trying to separate Aljorna from the ICE agent and pull him into the house.⁶³⁰ The video shows that Sosa-Celis manages to pull Aljorna free and the two run inside the house.⁶³¹

According to Mendoza Camacho, as Sosa-Celis closed the door behind him, she heard a gunshot. The bullet grazed Sosa-Celis' leg, continued through another wall and embedded itself in a wall next to a children's playpen that was being used as a crib.⁶³²

Following the shooting, DHS issued a press release which misidentified Sosa-Celis as the driver of the vehicle.⁶³³ The press release states that Sosa-Celis "began to resist and violently assault the officer. While Sosa-Celis and law enforcement were in a struggle on the ground, two subjects came out of a nearby apartment and attacked the law enforcement officer with a snow shovel and broom handle. As the officer was being ambushed and attacked by the two individuals, Sosa-Celis got loose and began striking the officer with a shovel or broom stick. Fearing for his life and safety as he was being ambushed by three individuals, the officer fired a defensive shot to defend his life. Sosa-Celis was hit in the leg."⁶³⁴ Former DHS Secretary Kristi Noem stated, "What we saw last night in Minneapolis was an attempted murder of federal law enforcement. Our officer was ambushed and attacked by three individuals who beat him with snow shovels and the handles of brooms. Fearing for his life, the officer fired a defensive shot."⁶³⁵

However, a review of the available video footage does not support DHS's version of what happened. Only three people were involved in the incident – Sosa-Celis, Aljorna and the ICE agent – not four as claimed by DHS.⁶³⁶ The footage shows that neither Sosa-Celis nor Aljorna attacked the ICE agent with any sort of object.⁶³⁷ Moreover, although there was a physical interaction between the ICE agent and Aljorna, the footage indicates that it is unlikely that the agent's life was at risk at any point during the interaction.⁶³⁸ Moreover,

⁶²⁵ MPR News, "Minneapolis releases video that undermines ICE claims about non-fatal shooting", 6 April 2026, <https://www.mprnews.org/story/2026/04/06/minneapolis-releases-video-of-non-fatal-shooting-ice-alfredo-aljorna-and-julio-sosacelis>; The New York Times, "Newly Obtained Video of Minneapolis Shooting Undermines ICE Account", 6 April 2026, <https://www.nytimes.com/2026/04/06/us/minnesota-ice-shooting-video.html>.

⁶²⁶ MPR News, "Minneapolis releases video that undermines ICE claims about non-fatal shooting" (previously cited); The New York Times, "Newly Obtained Video of Minneapolis Shooting Undermines ICE Account" (previously cited).

⁶²⁷ City of Minneapolis, "City releases video of shooting involving federal immigration enforcement agents", 6 April 2026, <https://www.minneapolismn.gov/news/2026/april/jan-14-video/>.

⁶²⁸ The New York Times, "Newly Obtained Video of Minneapolis Shooting Undermines ICE Account" (previously cited).

⁶²⁹ City of Minneapolis, "City releases video of shooting involving federal immigration enforcement agents" (previously cited).

⁶³⁰ MPR News, "Minneapolis releases video that undermines ICE claims about non-fatal shooting" (previously cited).

⁶³¹ City of Minneapolis, "City releases video of shooting involving federal immigration enforcement agents" (previously cited).

⁶³² MPR News, "Minneapolis releases video that undermines ICE claims about non-fatal shooting" (previously cited); The Washington Post, Facebook Video, 16 January 2026, <https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=1940922703493045>; The New York Times, "Newly Obtained Video of Minneapolis Shooting Undermines ICE Account" (previously cited).

⁶³³ DHS, "DHS Releases More Details About the Three Violent Criminal Illegal Aliens Who Violently Beat a Law Enforcement Officer with Weapons", 15 January 2026, <https://www.dhs.gov/news/2026/01/15/dhs-releases-more-details-about-three-violent-criminal-illegal-aliens-who-violently>.

⁶³⁴ DHS, "DHS Releases More Details About the Three Violent Criminal Illegal Aliens Who Violently Beat a Law Enforcement Officer with Weapons" (previously cited).

⁶³⁵ DHS, "DHS Releases More Details About the Three Violent Criminal Illegal Aliens Who Violently Beat a Law Enforcement Officer with Weapons" (previously cited).

⁶³⁶ City of Minneapolis, "City releases video of shooting involving federal immigration enforcement agents" (previously cited).

⁶³⁷ City of Minneapolis, "City releases video of shooting involving federal immigration enforcement agents" (previously cited); The New York Times, "Newly Obtained Video of Minneapolis Shooting Undermines ICE Account" (previously cited).

⁶³⁸ City of Minneapolis, "City releases video of shooting involving federal immigration enforcement agents" (previously cited); The New York Times, "Newly Obtained Video of Minneapolis Shooting Undermines ICE Account" (previously cited).

the shot was fired while Sosa-Celis and Aljorna were running into the house in an attempt to escape the ICE agent.⁶³⁹

ICE agents later entered the home and arrested both Sosa-Celis and Aljorna, and their partners.⁶⁴⁰ All four were eventually released from detention and returned to Minnesota, but remain in removal proceedings.⁶⁴¹

On 16 January 2025, Sosa-Celis and Aljorna were charged with assault.⁶⁴² However, on 11 February, prosecutors moved to dismiss the charges based on “newly discovered evidence” that was “materially inconsistent” with the original complaint.⁶⁴³ The next day, the former Acting Director of ICE, Todd Lyons, said that two ICE agents had provided false accounts of what happened on 14 January, and indicated that both agents had been placed on leave.⁶⁴⁴

In May 2026, the Hennepin County Attorney’s Office charged the ICE agent with four counts of second-degree assault and one count of falsely reporting a crime in relation to the shooting of Sosa-Celis.⁶⁴⁵ On 29 May, the agent was arrested.⁶⁴⁶ The criminal case is ongoing.

Law enforcement officers may only use lethal force when an individual poses an imminent threat of death or serious physical injury to the officer or another person. Based on its review of video footage, witness testimony and other available information, Amnesty International considers that Sosa-Celis did not pose an imminent threat of death or serious physical injury to the ICE agent or to any other person at the time he was shot. Amnesty International therefore considers that the shooting of Julio César Sosa-Celis constitutes an unlawful use of lethal force in violation of his human rights. Amnesty International calls for a prompt, independent, impartial and effective investigation into the incident.

Taken together, the shootings documented in this report demonstrate a recurring pattern in which ICE and Border Patrol agents repeatedly resorted to unlawful use of lethal force in violation of international human rights law and standards.

5.2.3 Unlawful killings by federal agents

During the four immigration enforcement operations documented in this report, three individuals were shot and killed by ICE and Border Patrol agents – Silverio Villegas González, Renee Good and Alex Pretti.

Given the fundamental and inalienable nature of the right to life, states have a duty to prevent its agents, or individuals acting on behalf of an authority, from infringing it and to take appropriate measures to protect life from threats.⁶⁴⁷ That is why the UN Human Rights Committee (HRC) considers it “of the utmost gravity” if the security forces themselves deprive a person of life.⁶⁴⁸ Extrajudicial executions are, broadly, unlawful and deliberate killings, carried out by order of a government or with its complicity or acquiescence.⁶⁴⁹

⁶³⁹ City of Minneapolis, “City releases video of shooting involving federal immigration enforcement agents” (previously cited); The New York Times, “Newly Obtained Video of Minneapolis Shooting Undermines ICE Account” (previously cited).

⁶⁴⁰ DHS, “DHS Releases More Details About the Three Violent Criminal Illegal Aliens Who Violently Beat a Law Enforcement Officer with Weapons” (previously cited); Minnesota Reformer, “Federal agents fire into house during Jan. 14 immigration enforcement action in north Minneapolis”, 16 January 2026, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ySxGOCcH5Dk&t=174s>; MPR News, “Minneapolis releases video that undermines ICE claims about non-fatal shooting” (previously cited); The New York Times, “Newly Obtained Video of Minneapolis Shooting Undermines ICE Account” (previously cited).

⁶⁴¹ The New York Times, “Newly Obtained Video of Minneapolis Shooting Undermines ICE Account” (previously cited).

⁶⁴² United States District Court for the District of Minnesota, *United States v. Aljorna*, Criminal Complaint, Case No. 26-mj-23 (DLM), 16 January 2026, <https://www.courtlistener.com/docket/72164500/1/united-states-v-aljorna/>.

⁶⁴³ United States District Court for the District of Minnesota, *United States v. Aljorna*, Government’s Motion to Dismiss Complaint with Prejudice, Case No. 26-mj-23 (PAM/DLM), 12 February 2026, <https://www.courtlistener.com/docket/72164500/48/united-states-v-aljorna/>.

⁶⁴⁴ CBS News Minnesota, “2 ICE agents lied under oath in north Minneapolis shooting investigation, agency says”, 13 February 2026, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1iO_irYOoCY;

⁶⁴⁵ Hennepin County, Minnesota, “Hennepin County Attorney’s Office charges ICE agent in shooting of Julio Sosa-Celis”, May 2026, <https://www.hennepinattorney.org/news/news/2026/may/castro-charges>.

⁶⁴⁶ Hennepin County, Minnesota, “Christian Castro, ICE agent charged in Metro Surge shooting, arrested in Texas”, May 2026, <https://www.hennepinattorney.org/news/news/2026/May/castro-arrested>.

⁶⁴⁷ Inter-American Court of Human Rights, *Case of Ortiz Hernández et al. v. Venezuela*, Judgment of 22 August 2017, para. 101.

⁶⁴⁸ HRC, General comment No. 36: Article 6: right to life, CCPR/C/GC/36, 3 September 2019, para. 19.

⁶⁴⁹ Amnesty International, *14-point program for the prevention of extrajudicial executions* (Index: POL 35/002/1993), 24 February 1993, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/pol35/002/1993/en/>, p. 1.

▪ Unlawful killing of Silverio Villegas González (Franklin Park, Illinois)

On 12 September 2025, an ICE agent shot and killed Silverio Villegas González – a Mexican national who had been living in the United States since 2007 – during a traffic stop in Franklin Park, Illinois.⁶⁵⁰ Amnesty International's Evidence Lab verified six videos published by news outlets and on social media that help reconstruct the sequence of events that led to the unlawful killing of Villegas González. The organization also reviewed the IAC's investigative brief of the incident and witness testimony from the IAC's proceedings and news articles and interviews, and interviewed one individual who arrived at the scene of the shooting shortly after it had happened.

Shortly before 9:00 am in the morning, Villegas González was on his way to work, having just dropped off his seven-year-old son at elementary school and his three-year-old son at day care.⁶⁵¹ CCTV footage shows Villegas González's sedan being chased by an unmarked SUV. The sedan stops near the curb on Grand Avenue in Chicago, and the SUV stops at a diagonal angle in front of it, blocking the right-most lane and part of the second lane of traffic.⁶⁵² Two agents wearing vests with the words "police" and "federal agent" on them get out of the SUV and approach the sedan on both sides, one agent standing beside the driver's seat window and the other beside the front passenger's seat window.⁶⁵³

The agent standing by the passenger's seat window can be seen reaching his arm inside the vehicle. The sedan backs up. The agent that was standing on the driver's side of Villegas González's car can be seen in the CCTV footage moving backward alongside the car.⁶⁵⁴ Villegas González then drives forward past the SUV. The agent who was on the passenger side of the sedan can be seen stepping backwards, pulling out his gun and pointing it at the car, but it is not possible from the video footage to see whether a shot is fired.⁶⁵⁵ The other agent can no longer be seen in the footage.⁶⁵⁶

According to a New York Times investigation, footage from a different camera captures the sound of two gunshots.⁶⁵⁷ Footage filmed by another driver shows Villegas González's car crashed into the undercarriage of a truck.⁶⁵⁸ According to the IAC, in a statement made by the driver of the truck to Franklin Park police he "described the traffic stop, including seeing Villegas González reverse his car and drive around the agents' vehicle before crashing. The truck driver said he could hear one gunshot and assumed Villegas González had been shot prior to the crash."⁶⁵⁹ The Chicago Sun-Times reported that someone who witnessed the encounter stated that they did not see an agent being dragged by Villegas González's car – which is what DHS later alleged had happened.⁶⁶⁰

Following the crash, video footage shows the agents try to open the driver's side door of the sedan and eventually break the window. One of the agents drags Villegas González out of the sedan, while the other appears to speak on a handheld radio. One video, filmed by the truck driver, shows the agents bandaging Villegas González, and another video, filmed by a bystander, shows the agents performing CPR

⁶⁵⁰ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026; Illinois Accountability Commission, *González Shooting Investigation Brief – April 2026*, April 2026, <https://ilac.illinois.gov/content/dam/soi/en/web/ilac/documents/final-report/inv-briefs/IAC-Gonzalez-Investigation-Brief-r.pdf>, p. 2.

⁶⁵¹ Illinois Accountability Commission, *González Shooting Investigation Brief* (previously cited), p. 2; The New York Times, "How an Attempted ICE Arrest Turned Deadly" (previously cited).

⁶⁵² Illinois Accountability Commission, *González Shooting Investigation Brief* (previously cited), p. 3; The New York Times, "How an Attempted ICE Arrest Turned Deadly" (previously cited).

⁶⁵³ Illinois Accountability Commission, *González Shooting Investigation Brief* (previously cited), p. 3; The New York Times, "How an Attempted ICE Arrest Turned Deadly" (previously cited).

⁶⁵⁴ Illinois Accountability Commission, *González Shooting Investigation Brief* (previously cited), p. 3; The New York Times, "How an Attempted ICE Arrest Turned Deadly" (previously cited).

⁶⁵⁵ Illinois Accountability Commission, *González Shooting Investigation Brief* (previously cited), p. 3; The New York Times, "How an Attempted ICE Arrest Turned Deadly" (previously cited).

⁶⁵⁶ Illinois Accountability Commission, *González Shooting Investigation Brief* (previously cited), p. 3; The New York Times, "How an Attempted ICE Arrest Turned Deadly" (previously cited).

⁶⁵⁷ Illinois Accountability Commission, *González Shooting Investigation Brief* (previously cited), p. 3; The New York Times, "How an Attempted ICE Arrest Turned Deadly" (previously cited).

⁶⁵⁸ Illinois Accountability Commission, *González Shooting Investigation Brief* (previously cited), p. 4; The New York Times, "How an Attempted ICE Arrest Turned Deadly" (previously cited).

⁶⁵⁹ Illinois Accountability Commission, *González Shooting Investigation Brief* (previously cited), p. 4; Chicago Sun-Times, "ICE officer said his injuries were 'nothing major' after deadly shooting near Chicago, video shows", 22 September 2025, <https://chicago.suntimes.com/the-watchdogs/2025/09/22/ice-officer-injuries-nothing-major-deadly-franklin-park-shooting-mexican-immigrant-chicago-video>.

⁶⁶⁰ Chicago Sun-Times, "ICE agents didn't have body cams during deadly shooting of Silverio Villegas González outside Chicago", 16 September 2025, <https://chicago.suntimes.com/the-watchdogs/2025/09/16/ice-body-cameras-deadly-shooting-silverio-villegas-gonzalez-chicago>.

[cardiopulmonary resuscitation] on him.⁶⁶¹ According to the IAC, the agents also yelled at bystanders to call 911 [emergency response].⁶⁶²

Villegas González was taken to the Loyola University Medical Center where he was pronounced dead.⁶⁶³ A Cook County Medical Examiner's report concluded that Villegas González was fatally shot at close range, with one bullet entering through the back of his neck and remaining in his chest cavity and another bullet grazing two of his fingers.⁶⁶⁴

Body camera footage shows the moment that Franklin Park police officers arrive at the scene. One of the ICE agents says to them, "he tried to run us over". Later, one of the ICE agents tells the police, "Just a left knee injury and some lacerations on his hands, nothing major" referring to the other agent, who adds "nothing major".⁶⁶⁵ The same footage shows the truck driver describing the scene to the police officers and recalling having heard one gunshot.

That same day, DHS released a press release stating that, "This morning, while carrying out an enforcement operation targeting a criminal illegal alien, the alien resisted arrest, attempted to flee the scene and dragged a U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) officer a significant distance with his car ... Fearing for his own life, the officer fired his weapon."⁶⁶⁶ The same press release states that, "ICE law enforcement is facing a 1000% increase in assaults against them as they carry out enforcement operations."⁶⁶⁷ The press release indicates that the "target of the enforcement operation was Silverio Villegas-Gonzalez, a criminal illegal alien with a history of reckless driving."⁶⁶⁸ On 16 September, former DHS Secretary Noem tweeted, "This week, a brave @ICEgov officer was dragged many yards by a car after a criminal illegal alien resisted arrest. His life was put at risk and he sustained serious injuries."⁶⁶⁹ DHS later released a second press release reinforcing that the ICE agent was dragged a "significant distance", that "the officer followed his training, used appropriate force, and properly enforced the law to protect the public and law enforcement", and that "the ICE officer sustained multiple injuries and has now been discharged from the hospital."⁶⁷⁰ The press release once again emphasized that Villegas González was a "criminal illegal alien with a history of reckless driving."⁶⁷¹

Staff of PASO, an organization that organizes in Melrose Park, Franklin Park and the West Cook County Suburban area, arrived at the scene shortly after the shooting. They told Amnesty International, "I've been an organizer for a long time, but I've never organized in a city where someone gets killed because of a traffic stop. It was hard to make sense of Silverio's death. The FBI, ICE and Franklin Park police were at the scene. Kids were in lock down and parents didn't know why. The streets were closed."⁶⁷² They further recounted that, following Villegas González's death, DHS lied about what happened and tried to justify the ICE agents' actions: "A lot of lies were told about Silverio and what happened. Videos were made available. You could see the blood in the car. Then ICE said that Silverio dragged the ICE agent, but you can't see any of that in the videos. We all knew the truth. It's like somebody getting killed twice – they're disgracing his character and his memory. They're accusing him of being a bad father, that he was violent, that he had a bunch of

⁶⁶¹ Chicago Contrarian, X, 12 September 2025, <https://x.com/ChicagoContrar1/status/1966550512293003380>; The New York Times, "How an Attempted ICE Arrest Turned Deadly" (previously cited).

⁶⁶² Illinois Accountability Commission, *González Shooting Investigation Brief* (previously cited), p. 4; The New York Times, "How an Attempted ICE Arrest Turned Deadly" (previously cited).

⁶⁶³ Illinois Accountability Commission, *González Shooting Investigation Brief* (previously cited), p. 4; The New York Times, "How an Attempted ICE Arrest Turned Deadly" (previously cited).

⁶⁶⁴ Cook County, Illinois, "Medical Examiner Case Archive", <https://datacatalog.cookcountyil.gov/w/cjeq-bs86/qzb8-g2nd?cur=qLzBW7hBgFw>.

⁶⁶⁵ Illinois Accountability Commission, *González Shooting Investigation Brief* (previously cited), 4; Chicago Sun-Times, "ICE officer said his injuries were 'nothing major' after deadly shooting near Chicago, video shows" (previously cited).

⁶⁶⁶ DHS, "DHS Statement on ICE Officer Seriously Injured in Line of Duty and Shooting in Chicago During Traffic Stop", 12 September 2025, <https://www.dhs.gov/news/2025/09/12/dhs-statement-ice-officer-seriously-injured-line-duty-and-shooting-chicago-during>.

⁶⁶⁷ DHS, "DHS Statement on ICE Officer Seriously Injured in Line of Duty and Shooting in Chicago During Traffic Stop" (previously cited).

⁶⁶⁸ DHS, "DHS Statement on ICE Officer Seriously Injured in Line of Duty and Shooting in Chicago During Traffic Stop" (previously cited).

⁶⁶⁹ X, Special Envoy Kristi Noem, "This week, a brave @ICEgov officer was dragged many yards by a car after a criminal illegal alien resisted arrest.", 16 September 2025, <https://x.com/EnvoyNoem/status/1967960074212483503>.

⁶⁷⁰ DHS, "DHS Sets the Record Straight on Gross Smears Against ICE Officer Who Was Seriously Injured in Line of Duty and Shooting in Chicago During Traffic Stop" (previously cited).

⁶⁷¹ DHS, "DHS Sets the Record Straight on Gross Smears Against ICE Officer Who Was Seriously Injured in Line of Duty and Shooting in Chicago During Traffic Stop" (previously cited).

⁶⁷² Online interview with Marién Casillas Pabellón, PASO, Chicago, IL, USA, 23 April 2026.

parking tickets, they keep using all these things against him.”⁶⁷³ Other organizations interviewed by Amnesty International also stated that DHS lied about what happened and attempted to place the blame on Villegas González.⁶⁷⁴

DHS has not indicated whether ICE agents had a warrant for Villegas González’s arrest. Amnesty International has not been able to find information on this.

After months of no investigations and sustained public pressure, the Illinois State Police launched an investigation in Villegas González’s death on 6 May 2026 – seven months after he was killed.⁶⁷⁵

“When Silverio was killed, the reaction was so different than when white Americans were killed.”⁶⁷⁶

Law enforcement officers may only use lethal force when an individual poses an imminent threat of death or serious physical injury to the officer or another person. In accordance with international human rights law and standards, and ICE’s use of force policy, officers cannot use lethal force solely to prevent a person from escaping.⁶⁷⁷ DHS’s use of force policy – which applies to ICE agents – further prohibits agents from discharging firearms at the operator of a moving vehicle, unless the operator poses an imminent danger of serious bodily injury or death to the agent or to another person.⁶⁷⁸ After Villegas González was shot, his vehicle crashed into a truck, illustrating how firing at the operator of a moving vehicle can create additional risks to the safety of others. Based on its review of video footage, witness testimony and other available information, Amnesty International did not find sufficient evidence that Villegas González posed an imminent threat of death or serious physical injury to the ICE agents or to any other person at the time he was shot. Amnesty International therefore considers that the shooting of Silverio Villegas González constitutes an unlawful use of lethal force by an ICE agent and – considering that two shots from very close distance were fired at a person who did not present any threat – may amount to an extrajudicial execution. Amnesty International calls for a prompt, independent, impartial and effective investigation into the incident.

▪ **Unlawful killing of Renee Good (Minneapolis, Minnesota)**

On 7 January 2026, Renee Good – a US citizen – was shot and killed by an ICE agent in Minneapolis. Amnesty International’s Evidence Lab verified four videos published on social media related to the incident. The organization also reviewed court documents and witness testimony from court documents and news articles and interviews, and interviewed seven individuals who were present at the scene following the shooting.

“On Wednesday, January 7th, we stopped to support our neighbours. We had whistles. They had guns.”⁶⁷⁹

A statement released by Good’s wife, Becca Good, following her death indicates that, on the morning of January 7, the two were out on the streets trying to warn their neighbours about the presence of ICE in the community.⁶⁸⁰ A witness told MS NOW News that after hearing whistles alerting people about the presence of ICE, she went out onto her porch and saw Good’s vehicle blocking traffic.⁶⁸¹

⁶⁷³ Online interview with Marién Casillas Pabellon, PASO, Chicago, IL, USA, 23 April 2026.

⁶⁷⁴ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026.

⁶⁷⁵ Congresswoman Delia C. Ramirez, “Ramirez Statement on Illinois State Police Launching an Investigation Into the Murder of Silverio Villegas González”, 6 May 2026, <https://ramirez.house.gov/media/press-releases/ramirez-statement-illinois-state-police-launching-investigation-murder>; United States Congressman Raja Krishnamoorthi, “Krishnamoorthi Responds to Illinois State Police Investigation Into ICE Killing of Silverio Villegas González, Renews Calls for Accountability Over Trump Administration Abuses”, 6 May 2026, <https://krishnamoorthi.house.gov/media/press-releases/krishnamoorthi-responds-illinois-state-police-investigation-ice-killing>; ABC7, “Chicagoans demand FBI investigation into man’s ICE shooting death in Franklin Park”, 20 February 2026, <https://abc7chicago.com/post/chicago-ice-protest-locals-seek-fbi-investigation-shooting-silverio-villegas-gonzalez-franklin-park-illinois/18626069/>; Chicago Sun-Times, “Mexican President Claudia Sheinbaum condemns fatal ICE shooting in Franklin Park”, 17 September 2025, <https://chicago.suntimes.com/immigration/2025/09/17/mexican-president-claudia-sheinbaum-fatal-ice-shooting-franklin-park-silverio-villegas-gonzalez>.

⁶⁷⁶ Online interview with Marién Casillas Pabellon, PASO, Chicago, IL, USA, 23 April 2026.

⁶⁷⁷ UN Basic Principles on the Use of Force and Firearms by Law Enforcement Officials, Principle 9; ICE, *ICE Directive 19009.3: Firearms and Use of Force* (previously cited), para. 5.4(4).

⁶⁷⁸ DHS, “Update to the Department Policy on the Use of Force” (previously cited), p. 8.

⁶⁷⁹ MPR News, “Renee Macklin Good’s wife says she nurtured kindness”, 9 January 2026, <https://www.mprnews.org/story/2026/01/09/renee-goods-wife-releases-statement-about-ice-shooting>.

⁶⁸⁰ MPR News, “Renee Macklin Good’s wife says she nurtured kindness” (previously cited).

⁶⁸¹ MS NOW, “Eyewitness: Minneapolis ICE killing was ‘preventable,’ ‘absolutely unnecessary’”, 8 January 2026, <https://www.ms.now/news/eyewitness-minneapolis-ice-killing-was-preventable-absolutely-unnecessary>.

Video footage shows Good's vehicle parked across the middle of Portland Avenue near 34th Street in Minneapolis honking.⁶⁸² Good's vehicle is stationary in the middle of the street. An unmarked vehicle pulls up perpendicular to her vehicle and stops.⁶⁸³ Two ICE agents get out and walk toward her vehicle shouting at her to move.⁶⁸⁴

Another video, filmed by an ICE agent on a cellphone, shows Good in the driver's seat as the agent walks around her vehicle.⁶⁸⁵ The other two agents approach Good's window and tell her to get out of the vehicle. Footage from a different angle shows one of the agents putting his hand on the window frame and then trying to open the driver's side door of Good's vehicle.⁶⁸⁶ At that moment, Good begins to reverse and rotate – in what appears to be an attempt to get away from the agents – as an ICE agent reaches the front left side of Good's vehicle.⁶⁸⁷ That same agent pulls out his firearm as Good's vehicle advances to the right, and three gunshots are heard. Moments after firing, the ICE agent is heard saying "f***** b*****".⁶⁸⁸ Another video shows that the ICE agent is not directly in front of Good's vehicle when the shots are fired.⁶⁸⁹

Good's vehicle moves a few meters before crashing into an electricity pole.⁶⁹⁰ Autopsy results indicate that Good was shot in her forearm, chest and the left side of her head.⁶⁹¹

A witness told MS NOW News that Good was slumped over in her car. A neighbour approached yelling, "I'm a physician, can I take vitals? Can I get a heartbeat? Can I come administer CPR" and ICE agents were yelling "No, get back" and said there were medics on the way – who took over 15 minutes to get there.⁶⁹²

Liliana Z. told Amnesty International that she arrived at the scene minutes after Good was shot.⁶⁹³ Good had been pulled out of her vehicle and taken around the corner, outside the passenger side window of Liliana Z.'s car. She said, "Her body was on the sidewalk. They were doing compressions on her, you could see her body going up and down, the air going into her body, and the violence of the compressions. It still scars me. Her glassy eyes were staring into the distance. It was obvious she was dead."⁶⁹⁴ Reverend Susie Hayward arrived after Good's body had been taken away by an ambulance. She told Amnesty International that she saw blood inside Good's car and that the FBI was there, but she did not see FBI agents asking witnesses any questions.⁶⁹⁵

DHS published a statement that same day stating, "Today, ICE officers in Minneapolis were conducting targeted operations when rioters began blocking ICE officers and one of these violent rioters weaponized her vehicle, attempting to run over our law enforcement officers in an attempt to kill them—an act of domestic terrorism. An ICE officer, fearing for his life, the lives of his fellow law enforcement and the safety of the public, fired defensive shots. He used his training and saved his own life and that of his fellow officers. The alleged perpetrator was hit and is deceased. The ICE officers who were hurt are expected to make full

⁶⁸² DHS, X, 10 January 2026, <https://x.com/DHSgov/status/2010074554258075966>; NBC News, "Video shows moment ICE agent fatally shoots woman in Minneapolis", 7 January 2026, <https://www.nbcnews.com/video/video-shows-moment-ice-agent-fatally-shoots-woman-in-minneapolis-255558725596>; ABC News, "Minneapolis ICE shooting: A minute-by-minute timeline of how Renee Nicole Good died", 9 January 2026, <https://abcnews.com/US/minneapolis-ice-shooting-minute-minute-timeline-renee-nicole/story?id=129021809>.

⁶⁸³ NBC News, "Video shows moment ICE agent fatally shoots woman in Minneapolis" (previously cited).

⁶⁸⁴ MS NOW, "Eyewitness: Minneapolis ICE killing was 'preventable,' 'absolutely unnecessary'" (previously cited); NBC News, "Video shows moment ICE agent fatally shoots woman in Minneapolis" (previously cited); ABC News, "Minneapolis ICE shooting: A minute-by-minute timeline of how Renee Nicole Good died" (previously cited).

⁶⁸⁵ Laura Ingraham, X, 9 January 2026, <https://x.com/IngrahamAngle/status/2009745677677482461>.

⁶⁸⁶ Max, X, <https://x.com/maxnesterak/status/2008961959731859757>; NBC News, "Video shows moment ICE agent fatally shoots woman in Minneapolis" (previously cited); MS NOW, "Eyewitness: Minneapolis ICE killing was 'preventable,' 'absolutely unnecessary'" (previously cited).

⁶⁸⁷ Max, X, <https://x.com/maxnesterak/status/2008961959731859757>; Alpha News, Video, <https://www.facebook.com/reel/1910127999622693>.

⁶⁸⁸ United States District Court for the District of Minnesota, *United States v. Munoz-Guatemala*, Defendant's Motion for Discovery, Case No. 25-cr-00246 (JMB/SGE), 6 February 2026, <https://www.courtlistener.com/docket/70578979/102/united-states-v-munoz-guatemala/>, p. 6; In-person interview with Gender Justice, Minneapolis, MN, USA, 21 March 2026; Online interview with Minneapolis Mayor Frey, 14 April 2026; Alpha News, Video, <https://www.facebook.com/reel/1910127999622693>.

⁶⁸⁹ KSPTV, Instagram, <https://www.instagram.com/reels/DTOA4tWICIL/>.

⁶⁹⁰ KSPTV, Instagram, <https://www.instagram.com/reels/DTOA4tWICIL/>; NBC News, "Video shows moment ICE agent fatally shoots woman in Minneapolis" (previously cited); MS NOW, "Eyewitness: Minneapolis ICE killing was 'preventable,' 'absolutely unnecessary'" (previously cited); ABC News, "Minneapolis ICE shooting: A minute-by-minute timeline of how Renee Nicole Good died" (previously cited).

⁶⁹¹ United States District Court for the District of Minnesota, *United States v. Munoz-Guatemala*, Defendant's Motion for Discovery (previously cited), p. 6.

⁶⁹² MS NOW, "Eyewitness: Minneapolis ICE killing was 'preventable,' 'absolutely unnecessary'" (previously cited); In-person interview with education centre, Minneapolis, MN, USA, 17 March 2026.

⁶⁹³ In-person interview with Liliana Z., Minneapolis, MN, USA, 19 March 2026.

⁶⁹⁴ In-person interview with Liliana Z., Minneapolis, MN, USA, 19 March 2026.

⁶⁹⁵ In-person interview with Rev. Susie Hayward, Minneapolis, MN, USA, 18 March 2026.

recoveries.”⁶⁹⁶ President Trump later posted, “I have just viewed the clip of the event which took place in Minneapolis, Minnesota. It is a horrible thing to watch. The woman screaming was, obviously, a professional agitator, and the woman driving the car was very disorderly, obstructing and resisting, who then violently, wilfully, and viciously ran over the ICE Officer, who seems to have shot her in self defence. Based on the attached clip, it is hard to believe he is alive, but is now recovering in the hospital.”⁶⁹⁷

Several people interviewed by Amnesty International emphasized the gravity of the ICE agent calling Good a “f***** b*****” after shooting her, stating that she was attacked for being a woman and that her murder was a gender-motivated response from ICE agents.⁶⁹⁸

On 7 January, the Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension (BCA) and the FBI launched a joint investigation into the murder of Good. However, according to the BCA, that same afternoon, the FBI informed it that, “the investigation would now be led solely by the FBI, and the BCA would no longer have access to the case materials, scene evidence or investigative interviews necessary to complete a thorough and independent investigation.”⁶⁹⁹ As a result, the BCA was forced to withdraw from the investigation given that it would not be able to meet investigative standards without access to that evidence.

In February 2026, the New York Times reported that senior officials at the DOJ and FBI had told prosecutors at the U.S. Attorney’s Office for the District of Minnesota to stop an investigation into Good’s death over concerns that an investigation would undermine statements made by the federal government that Good had tried to kill an ICE agent.⁷⁰⁰ At the same time, it was reported that senior DOJ and FBI officials pressured prosecutors to instead investigate whether Good had assaulted the ICE agent who shot her, as well as to investigate Good’s wife for “assaulting resisting or impeding federal officers”.⁷⁰¹ This led to six federal prosecutors in Minnesota resigning.⁷⁰²

In April 2026, a court ordered the federal government to release all of the evidence in its possession regarding the shooting of Renee Good as part of a separate case involving the same ICE agent that shot Good.⁷⁰³ In July 2026, a court found that the government had only partially complied with the order and ordered the government to provide a response by 14 August 2026.⁷⁰⁴

“It felt like the ground is moving. Something’s changed, more people are going to die.”⁷⁰⁵

International human rights law and standards, as well as ICE and DHS’s use of force policies, restrict the use of lethal force to circumstances involving an imminent threat of death or serious physical injury and do not permit its use solely to prevent a person from escaping.⁷⁰⁶ DHS’s policy further restricts the use of firearms against the operator of a moving vehicle to circumstances in which the operator poses such an imminent threat.⁷⁰⁷ After Good was shot, her vehicle crashed into an electricity pole, illustrating how firing at the operator of a moving vehicle can create additional risks to the safety of others. Based on its review of

⁶⁹⁶ X, Homeland Security, 7 January 2026, <https://x.com/DHSGov/status/2008958123092979817>; X, DHS Spokesperson Tricia McLaughlin, 7 January 2026, <https://x.com/TriciaOhio/status/2008957179793998266>.

⁶⁹⁷ Truth Social, Donald J. Trump, 7 January 2026, <https://truthsocial.com/@realDonaldTrump/posts/115855701696773990>.

⁶⁹⁸ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026.

⁶⁹⁹ Minnesota BCA, “BCA statement regarding investigation of ICE fatal shooting in Minneapolis”, 8 January 2026, <https://dps.mn.gov/news/bca/bca-statement-regarding-investigation-ice-fatal-shooting-minneapolis>; United States District Court for the District of Minnesota, *United States v. Munoz-Guatemala*, Defendant’s Motion for Discovery (previously cited), pp. 6-7.

⁷⁰⁰ United States Senate, Letter, 25 February 2026, <https://www.whitehouse.senate.gov/wp-content/uploads/2026/02/2026-02-25-Letter-to-OPR-and-OIG-re-Renee-Good-Investigation.pdf>; The New York Times, “Prosecutors Began Investigating Renee Good’s Killing. Washington Told Them to Stop.”, 7 February 2026, <https://www.nytimes.com/2026/02/07/us/renee-good-investigation-minnesota-trump.html>.

⁷⁰¹ The New York Times, “Prosecutors Began Investigating Renee Good’s Killing. Washington Told Them to Stop.” (previously cited).

⁷⁰² The New York Times, “Six Prosecutors Quit Over Push to Investigate ICE Shooting Victim’s Widow”, 13 January 2026, <https://www.nytimes.com/2026/01/13/us/prosecutors-doj-resignation-ice-shooting.html>.

⁷⁰³ United States District Court for the District of Minnesota, *United States v. Munoz-Guatemala*, Order, Case No. 25-cr-00246 (JMB/SGE), 9 April 2026, <https://www.courtlistener.com/docket/70578979/116/united-states-v-munoz-guatemala/>; MPR News, “Judge orders feds to provide court with evidence in Good killing, as part of separate case”, 9 April 2026, <https://www.mprnews.org/story/2026/04/09/renee-good-killing-ice-judge-orders-feds-turn-over-evidence>; CNN, “Minnesota sues Trump administration over evidence related to shootings, including deaths of Alex Pretti and Renee Good”, 24 March 2026, <https://edition.cnn.com/2026/03/24/us/minnesota-lawsuit-shooting-deaths>.

⁷⁰⁴ United States District Court for the District of Minnesota, *United States v. Munoz-Guatemala*, Order for Government Affidavit, Case No. 25-cr-00246 (JMB/SGE), 31 July 2026, <https://www.courtlistener.com/docket/70578979/117/united-states-v-munoz-guatemala/>.

⁷⁰⁵ In-person interview with Madison McVan, Minneapolis, MN, USA, 18 March 2026.

⁷⁰⁶ UN Basic Principles on the Use of Force and Firearms by Law Enforcement Officials, Principle 9; DHS, “Update to the Department Policy on the Use of Force” (previously cited), p. 8; ICE, *ICE Directive 19009.3: Firearms and Use of Force* (previously cited), para. 5.4(4).

⁷⁰⁷ DHS, “Update to the Department Policy on the Use of Force” (previously cited), p. 8.

video footage, witness testimony and other available information, Amnesty International considers that Good posed no imminent threat of death or serious physical injury to the ICE agents or to any other person at the time she was shot. Amnesty International therefore considers that the shooting of Renee Good constitutes an unlawful use of lethal force by an ICE agent and – considering that, although there was no imminent threat, three shots were directly fired at her, attempts to resuscitate her were wilfully delayed and later investigations attempted to purposefully exclude potential wrongdoing by the ICE agents from their scope – may amount to an extrajudicial execution. Amnesty International calls for a prompt, independent, impartial and effective investigation into the incident.

▪ **Unlawful killing of Alex Pretti (Minneapolis, Minnesota)**

On 24 January 2026, Alex Pretti – a US citizen – was shot and killed by Border Patrol agents in Minneapolis. Amnesty International’s Evidence Lab verified four videos related to the incident. The organization interviewed two individuals who were present at the scene following the shooting, and reviewed court documents and witness testimony from court documents and news articles and interviews.

Pretti and other community members were responding to ICE and Border Patrol presence on Nicollet Avenue, near 26th Street, in Minneapolis.⁷⁰⁸ Pretti was a licensed firearm owner who appeared to be open carrying his firearm that day.⁷⁰⁹ A witness’s sworn declaration, corroborated by video filmed by someone driving by, indicates that Pretti seemed to be directing traffic on Nicollet Avenue because the presence of federal agents and observers was disrupting the flow of traffic.⁷¹⁰ The witness stated that both they and Pretti began recording federal agents, when an agent approached them and asked them to back up. The witness moved back onto the sidewalk and stated that Pretti remained in the street filming. The witness further stated that when an ICE agent began threatening other observers with pepper spray, Pretti “went closer to support them as they got threatened, just with his camera out. I didn’t see him reach for or hold a gun.”⁷¹¹ Another witness stated, “I saw him yelling at the ICE agents, but I did not see him attack the agents or brandish a weapon of any kind.”⁷¹²

Witness testimony and a video filmed by a passerby show an ICE agent shoving a woman observer to the ground.⁷¹³ Pretti stands between the agent and the woman, and the agent then sprays him in the face with pepper spray.⁷¹⁴ Pretti appears to try to help the woman who had been pushed to the ground to stand up, but agents grab him and push him to the ground.⁷¹⁵ At least five agents try to immobilize Pretti, who is on the ground. One person is heard saying, “He has a gun”. One of the agents is filmed beating Pretti with a pepper spray canister, while his hands are pinned down by his head.⁷¹⁶ One of the agents grabs Pretti’s handgun, and walks away.⁷¹⁷ At the same time, another agent points his gun towards Pretti. One gunshot is

⁷⁰⁸ ABC News, “A minute-by-minute timeline of the fatal shooting of Alex Pretti involving federal agents”, 26 January 2026, <https://abcnews.com/Politics/minute-minute-timeline-fatal-shooting-alex-pretti-federal/story?id=129547199>; CNN, “How two federal agents escalated an encounter with Alex Pretti into a deadly shooting”, 29 January 2026, <https://edition.cnn.com/2026/01/29/us/immigration-agents-shooting-alex-pretti-invs>.

⁷⁰⁹ WUNC News, “A Minnesota gun safety expert weighs in on the fatal shooting of Alex Pretti”, 27 January 2026, <https://www.wunc.org/2026-01-27/a-minnesota-gun-safety-expert-weighs-in-on-the-fatal-shooting-of-alex-pretti>.

⁷¹⁰ United States District Court for the District of Minnesota, *Tincher v. Mullin*, Declaration of [REDACTED], Case No. 25-cv-04669, 24 January 2026, <https://storage.courtlistener.com/recap/gov.uscourts.mnd.229758/gov.uscourts.mnd.229758.107.0.1.pdf>, para. 5; Storyful News & Weather, “Footage Shows Alex Pretti Moments Before Fatal Shooting in Minneapolis”, 25 January 2026, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EWMDYZ8kOFw>; The New York Times, “Timeline: A Moment-by-Moment Look at the Shooting of Alex Pretti”, 25 January 2026, <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2026/01/24/us/minneapolis-shooting-alex-pretti-timeline.html>.

⁷¹¹ United States District Court for the District of Minnesota, *Tincher v. Mullin*, Declaration of [REDACTED], <https://storage.courtlistener.com/recap/gov.uscourts.mnd.229758/gov.uscourts.mnd.229758.107.0.1.pdf> (previously cited), paras. 7-10.

⁷¹² United States District Court for the District of Minnesota, *Tincher v. Mullin*, Declaration of [REDACTED], M.D., Case No. 25-cv-04669, 24 January 2026, <https://storage.courtlistener.com/recap/gov.uscourts.mnd.229758/gov.uscourts.mnd.229758.109.0.pdf>, para. 3.

⁷¹³ X, <https://x.com/DropSiteNews/status/2015131503622021472>; NBC News, “Two federal officers fired guns in Alex Pretti shooting, initial DHS report says”, 28 January 2026, <https://www.nbcnews.com/news/us-news/two-federal-officers-fired-guns-alex-pretti-shooting-dhs-report-rcna256274>; The New York Times, “Timeline: A Moment-by-Moment Look at the Shooting of Alex Pretti” (previously cited).

⁷¹⁴ X, <https://x.com/DropSiteNews/status/2015131503622021472>; ABC News, “A minute-by-minute timeline of the fatal shooting of Alex Pretti involving federal agents” (previously cited); United States District Court for the District of Minnesota, *Tincher v. Mullin*, Declaration of C[REDACTED] R[REDACTED], Case No. 25-cv-04669-KMM-DTS, 24 January 2026, <https://storage.courtlistener.com/recap/gov.uscourts.mnd.229758/gov.uscourts.mnd.229758.204.0.pdf>, para. 32.

⁷¹⁵ ABC News, “A minute-by-minute timeline of the fatal shooting of Alex Pretti involving federal agents” (previously cited); The New York Times, “Timeline: A Moment-by-Moment Look at the Shooting of Alex Pretti” (previously cited).

⁷¹⁶ The New York Times, “New Video Analysis Reveals Flawed and Fatal Decisions in Shooting of Pretti” (previously cited).

⁷¹⁷ Associated Press, Facebook, 24 January 2026, <https://www.facebook.com/reel/1668451280794387>; The New York Times, “Timeline: A Moment-by-Moment Look at the Shooting of Alex Pretti” (previously cited).

heard, followed by nine other gunshots in less than five seconds.⁷¹⁸ Another video, filmed after the shooting, shows agents searching Pretti's body and one agent can be heard asking the other ones, "Where is the gun? Where is the f***** gun?"⁷¹⁹

One witness stated, "It didn't look like he was trying to resist, just trying to help the woman up. I didn't see him with a gun. They threw him to the ground. Four or five agents had him on the ground and they just started shooting him. They shot him so many times. I don't know why they shot him. He was only helping. I was five feet from him and they just shot him."⁷²⁰ According to a statement made by a doctor who treated Pretti at the scene, he had at least three bullet wounds in his back, one on his upper chest and another possible wound on his neck.⁷²¹

A Minneapolis City Councilmember told Amnesty International that he arrived when Pretti's body was being moved. He said that there were around 200 ICE agents and observers were yelling at the agents.⁷²² Reverend Susie Hayward stated, "I put on a clergy collar; I got there fast. I asked an ICE agent, 'What happened?' I knew someone had been shot but I didn't know someone had been killed. I said 'I'm clergy, I'm here to provide pastoral care. Are there any victims or family members?' The ICE agent yelled at me, told me to get back and pushed me back."⁷²³

Following the shooting, DHS published a statement saying, "At 9:05 AM CT, as DHS law enforcement officers were conducting a targeted operation in Minneapolis against an illegal alien wanted for violent assault, an individual approached US Border Patrol officers with a 9 mm semi-automatic handgun, seen here. The officers attempted to disarm the suspect but the armed suspect violently resisted ... Fearing for his life and the lives and safety of fellow officers, an agent fired defensive shots."⁷²⁴ That same day, former DHS Secretary Noem said that what Pretti did was "the definition of domestic terrorism".⁷²⁵ She further stated that Pretti was "brandishing" a firearm and that it looked "like a situation where an individual [Pretti] arrived at the scene to inflict maximum damage on individuals and kill law enforcement. The officers attempted to disarm this individual, but the armed suspect reacted violently."⁷²⁶ Former US Border Patrol Commander Bovino said that Pretti had "wanted to do maximum damage and massacre law enforcement."⁷²⁷

According to the Superintendent of the BCA, BCA agents arrived at the scene within an hour of the shooting, however, they were "blocked by federal agents with the DHS from accessing the scene", including after presenting them with a search warrant.⁷²⁸ On 13 February 2026, the FBI notified the BCA that it "will not provide the BCA with access to any information or evidence that it collected in the Jan. 24 shooting death of Alex Pretti."⁷²⁹ A few days later, CBP's Office of Professional Responsibility presented a preliminary report on the shooting to Congress indicating that Pretti had resisted arrest, that two CBP agents had shot him and that HSI would lead the investigation of the incident.⁷³⁰ On January 30, Deputy Attorney General Todd Blanche announced that the FBI would lead on the investigation with support from the DOJ.⁷³¹ In March

⁷¹⁸ Associated Press, Facebook, 24 January 2026 (previously cited); ABC News, "A minute-by-minute timeline of the fatal shooting of Alex Pretti involving federal agents" (previously cited); The New York Times, "Timeline: A Moment-by-Moment Look at the Shooting of Alex Pretti" (previously cited).

⁷¹⁹ X, <https://x.com/sentdefender/status/2015172460082081795>.

⁷²⁰ United States District Court for the District of Minnesota, *Tincher v. Mullin*, Declaration of [REDACTED], https://storage.courtlistener.com/recap/gov.uscourts.mnd.229758/gov.uscourts.mnd.229758.107.0_1.pdf (previously cited), paras. 13-14; ABC News, "A minute-by-minute timeline of the fatal shooting of Alex Pretti involving federal agents" (previously cited).

⁷²¹ ABC News, "A minute-by-minute timeline of the fatal shooting of Alex Pretti involving federal agents" (previously cited).

⁷²² Online interview with a Minneapolis City Councilmember, Minneapolis, MN, USA, 6 April 2026.

⁷²³ In-person interview with Rev. Susie Hayward, Minneapolis, MN, USA, 18 March 2026.

⁷²⁴ X, Homeland Security, 24 January 2026, <https://x.com/DHSGov/status/2015115351797780500>.

⁷²⁵ Courthouse News Service, "Noem refuses to backpedal on calling Alex Pretti a domestic terrorist", 3 March 2026, <https://courthousenews.com/noem-refuses-to-backpedal-on-calling-alex-pretti-a-domestic-terrorist/>.

⁷²⁶ MS Now, "Four statements made by DHS about Alex Pretti's shooting — and what these videos show that contradict them", 25 January 2026, <https://www.ms.now/news/four-statements-made-by-dhs-about-alex-prettis-shooting-and-what-these-videos-show-that-contradict-them>.

⁷²⁷ CBP, "Minneapolis Operations - Press Conference (January 24, 2026) | CBP", 24 January 2026, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zA-3M-WSBM>.
⁷²⁸ United States District Court for the District of Minnesota, *Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension v. Noem*, Declaration of Drew Evans, Case No. 26-cv-00628, 24 January 2026, <https://storage.courtlistener.com/recap/gov.uscourts.mnd.230788/gov.uscourts.mnd.230788.5.0.pdf>, paras. 13-22.

⁷²⁹ Minnesota BCA, "Statement from BCA Superintendent Drew Evans on Alex Pretti shooting investigation", 16 February 2026, <https://dps.mn.gov/news/bca/statement-bca-superintendent-drew-evans-alex-pretti-shooting-investigation>.

⁷³⁰ The New York Times, "D.H.S. Review Does Not Say Pretti Brandished Gun, As Noem Claimed", 27 January 2026, <https://www.nytimes.com/2026/01/27/us/politics/pretti-shooting-minneapolis-dhs-report.html>.

⁷³¹ Associated Press, "The Justice Department has opened a federal civil rights probe into the killing of Alex Pretti", 30 January 2026, <https://apnews.com/article/minneapolis-ice-fbi-alex-pretti-immigration-65a963816603a08bbc9db83961dd173f>.

2026, the State of Minnesota, Hennepin County and the BCA sued the Trump administration for withholding evidence relating to the shootings of Sosa-Celis, Good and Pretti (see above, section 5.2.2).⁷³² Federal law enforcement authorities turned over this evidence in July.⁷³³

International human rights law and standards, as well as ICE and DHS's use of force policies, restrict the use of lethal force to circumstances involving an imminent threat of death or serious physical injury and do not permit its use solely to prevent a person from escaping.⁷³⁴ Using an amount of lethal force that does not give a chance of survival – the “intentional lethal use of firearms” – is only acceptable when strictly unavoidable to protect life.⁷³⁵ This means that the situation must be such that only the “instant death of a person can save another life.”⁷³⁶ Based on its review of video footage, witness testimony and other available information, Amnesty International considers that the number of shots fired at Pretti at close distance indicates that this was an intentional lethal use of a firearm and that this occurred while he posed no imminent threat of death or serious physical injury to the Border Patrol agents or to any other person at the time he was shot. Amnesty International therefore considers that the shooting of Alex Pretti constitutes an unlawful use of lethal force by Border Patrol agents and – given the number of shots fired from a very close distance – may amount to an extrajudicial execution. Amnesty International calls for a prompt, independent, impartial and effective investigation into the incident.

Amnesty International considers that the shootings of Silverio Villegas González, Renee Good and Alex Pretti may amount to extrajudicial executions. Extrajudicial executions constitute fundamental violations of human rights and a crime under international law. States have the obligation to promptly, independently, impartially and effectively investigate suspected extrajudicial executions, identify and prosecute those suspected of responsibility, and provide effective remedies.⁷³⁷ Amnesty International calls on US authorities to promptly, independently, impartially and effectively investigate these incidents.

“When you see murders taking place on the streets of your city, there's no way to go back. Peaceful protesters were being targeted. Executions in public.”⁷³⁸

5.2.4 Repression of protests and use of less lethal weapons by federal agents

“People who posed no threat to agents at all were targeted with tear gas and use of force. These became regular occurrences. If observers showed up to an enforcement action, the response of ICE and CBP was to flood everyone with a bunch of different things including tear gas projectiles and physical force. They just used it because they had it, not because they were threatened. People were targeted for protesting and journalists were also targeted.”⁷³⁹

Across the four cities examined in this report, community rapid response networks would alert people to incidents of ICE and Border Patrol attempting to detain someone. Rapid responders would come to observe immigration enforcement operations and, in Chicago and Minneapolis-St. Paul in particular, this often resulted in federal agents using less lethal weapons against rapid responders. In Chicago, there were also regular protests outside the Broadview ICE processing facility. Amnesty International documented the frequent use of less lethal weapons by ICE and Border Patrol in Chicago and Minneapolis-St. Paul.

The right of peaceful assembly protects the non-violent gathering by persons for specific purposes, principally expressive ones.⁷⁴⁰ Article 21 of the ICCPR protects peaceful assemblies wherever they take place: outdoors, indoors and online; in public and private spaces; or a combination thereof. Such assemblies may take many forms, including demonstrations, protests, meetings, processions, rallies, sit-ins, candlelit vigils and flash

⁷³² United States District Court for the District of Columbia, *State of Minnesota v. U.S. Department of Justice*, Complaint, Case No. 1:26-cv-01007, 24 March 2026, https://storage.courtlistener.com/recap/gov.uscourts.dcd.290713/gov.uscourts.dcd.290713.1.0_3.pdf.

⁷³³ MPR News, “Feds turn over evidence in ICE shootings, but Pretti family says U.S. Attorney won't confirm agreement”, 13 July 2026, <https://www.mprnews.org/story/2026/07/13/feds-have-turned-over-evidence-in-good-pretti-sosacelis-shootings>.

⁷³⁴ UN Basic Principles on the Use of Force and Firearms by Law Enforcement Officials, Principle 9; DHS, “Update to the Department Policy on the Use of Force” (previously cited), p. 8; ICE, *ICE Directive 19009.3: Firearms and Use of Force* (previously cited), para. 5.4(4).

⁷³⁵ UN Basic Principles on the Use of Force and Firearms by Law Enforcement Officials, Principle 9, last sentence.

⁷³⁶ Amnesty International, *Guidelines for the Implementation of the UN Basic Principles on the Use of Force and Firearms by Law Enforcement Officials*, 2015, https://policehumanrightsresources.org/content/uploads/2015/01/ainl_guidelines_use_of_force_0.pdf?x55104, Section 2.3.2, p. 59.

⁷³⁷ HRC, General comment No. 36 (previously cited), para. 27.

⁷³⁸ Online interview with Shubhanjana Das, Minneapolis-St. Paul, MN, USA, 14 April 2026.

⁷³⁹ In-person interview with ACLU of Illinois, Chicago, IL, USA, 24 March 2026.

⁷⁴⁰ HRC, General comment No. 37 (2020) on the right of peaceful assembly (article 21), UN Doc. CCPR/c/GC/37, 17 September 2020, paras. 4 & 6.

mobs. They are protected under Article 21 whether they are stationary, such as pickets, or mobile, such as processions or marches.⁷⁴¹ The right to freedom of peaceful assembly “imposes a corresponding obligation on States to respect and ensure its exercise without discrimination. This requires States to allow such assemblies to take place without unwarranted interference and to facilitate the exercise of the right and to protect the participants.”⁷⁴² “No restrictions may be placed on the exercise of the right of peaceful assembly other than those imposed in conformity with the law” and which are both necessary for and proportionate to “the interests of national security or public safety, public order (*ordre public*), the protection of public health or morals or the protection of the rights and freedoms of others.”⁷⁴³

According to the HRC’s General Comment No. 37 on the right of peaceful assemblies, “The role of journalists, human rights defenders, election monitors and others involved in monitoring or reporting on assemblies is of particular importance for the full enjoyment of the right of peaceful assembly. Those persons are entitled to protection under the Covenant. They may not be prohibited from, or unduly limited in, exercising these functions, including with respect to monitoring the actions of law enforcement officials. They must not face reprisals or other harassment, and their equipment must not be confiscated or damaged.”⁷⁴⁴ During assemblies, “participants, journalists and monitors also have the right to record law enforcement officials.”⁷⁴⁵

International human rights law and standards only protect assemblies that are peaceful.⁷⁴⁶ According to the HRC’s General Comment No. 37, “‘Violence’ in the context of article 21 typically entails the use by participants of physical force against others that is likely to result in injury or death, or serious damage to property. Mere pushing and shoving or disruption of vehicular or pedestrian movement or daily activities do not amount to ‘violence’.”⁷⁴⁷ Moreover, “isolated acts of violence by some participants in an assembly should not be attributed to others.”⁷⁴⁸ Law enforcement officials should seek to de-escalate situations that might result in violence. “They are obliged to exhaust non-violent means and to give prior warning if it becomes absolutely necessary to use force, unless doing either would be manifestly ineffective.” Any force used should only be directed against the specific individual or group that is engaged in or threatening violence.⁷⁴⁹ “Any use of force must comply with the principles of legality, necessity, proportionality, precaution and non-discrimination.”⁷⁵⁰

Assemblies may only be dispersed in exceptional cases, such as situations in which “the assembly is no longer peaceful or if there is clear evidence of an imminent threat of serious violence that cannot be reasonably addressed by more proportionate measures.”⁷⁵¹ “The decision to disperse an assembly does not automatically justify the use of force.”⁷⁵² Law enforcement should always clearly communicate the intention to disperse the assembly and “ask participants to leave voluntarily. They must be given enough time and reasonable opportunities to disperse by themselves and they must be warned of law enforcement’s intention to use force if they do not disperse. Only when they do not disperse may police begin to use force in a necessary and proportionate manner.”⁷⁵³

The use of all weapons, including less lethal weapons, must comply with international human rights law and standards. Less lethal weapons such as batons or kinetic impact projectiles (KIPs) must only be used as a last resort when all other options – including deescalation – have failed, and only to deal with violent individuals in self-defence or in the defence of others against physical violence.⁷⁵⁴ Weapons such as batons

⁷⁴¹ ICCPR, Art. 21; HRC, General comment No. 37 (previously cited), paras. 4 & 6.

⁷⁴² HRC, General comment No. 37 (previously cited), para. 8.

⁷⁴³ ICCPR, Art. 21.

⁷⁴⁴ HRC, General comment No. 37 (previously cited), para. 30.

⁷⁴⁵ HRC, General comment No. 37 (previously cited), para. 94.

⁷⁴⁶ UN Special Rapporteur on the right to freedom of peaceful assembly and association, Report, UN Doc. A/HRC/20/27, 21 May 2012, para. 25.

⁷⁴⁷ HRC, General comment No. 37 (previously cited), para. 15.

⁷⁴⁸ HRC, General comment No. 37 (previously cited), para. 17.

⁷⁴⁹ HRC, General comment No. 37 (previously cited), para. 86.

⁷⁵⁰ HRC, General comment No. 37 (previously cited), para. 78.

⁷⁵¹ HRC, General comment No. 37 (previously cited), para. 85.

⁷⁵² HRC, General comment No. 37 (previously cited), para. 86.

⁷⁵³ UN Basic Principles on the Use of Force and Firearms by Law Enforcement Officials; Amnesty International, *Guidelines on the Right to Freedom of Peaceful Assembly*, 2024, <https://policehumanrightsresources.org/guidelines-on-the-right-to-freedom-of-peaceful-assembly/>, pp. 77-84.

⁷⁵⁴ UN Human Rights Guidance on the Use of Less-Lethal Weapons in Law Enforcement, paras. 7.1 & 7.5.

or kinetic impact projectiles (KIPs) must never be used to disperse demonstrations.⁷⁵⁵ Tear gas has inherently indiscriminate effects, and should only be used to disperse a crowd in case of widespread violence against persons, which can no longer be contained by targeting those engaged in the violence and only when there are no less harmful means to contain violence.⁷⁵⁶ When deploying tear gas, law enforcement must always consider its indiscriminate effects and its potential impacts on bystanders not engaged in the violence or the surrounding community in dense urban areas.⁷⁵⁷ In assemblies, pepper spray may only be used against specific individuals violently resisting or engaged in violence against others, and never against persons offering only passive resistance.⁷⁵⁸ Stun grenades – also known as flashbang grenades – must never be used in the policing of assemblies due to their overly harmful and disorientating effects, and should be reserved only for high risk special operations, such as hostage situations.⁷⁵⁹ As for any use of force, prior to the use of a less lethal weapon, law enforcement officials should issue a clear warning and give time for people to comply.⁷⁶⁰

The use of firearms to disperse an assembly is always unlawful. Open deployment of firearms by law enforcement at public assemblies can be intimidatory, undermining law enforcement's primary role as facilitators of peaceful protest and should where possible be avoided.⁷⁶¹

CBP's Use of Force Policy states that "[a]ny use of less-lethal force must be both objectively reasonable and necessary in order to carry out the Authorized Officer's/Agent's law enforcement duties".⁷⁶² It sets out that agents can use pepper spray (Oleoresin Capsicum spray) and pepperball launching systems (compressed air launchers) against individuals who demonstrate active resistance.⁷⁶³ It provides that controlled noise and light distraction devices can be used "with supervisory approval during pre-planned law enforcement operations when actionable intelligence of pre-assault indicators or other relevant intelligence information has been identified which requires their use to gain a tactical advantage" or as "compliance tools on individual's offering at minimum assaultive resistance".⁷⁶⁴ ICE's Use of Force policy does not make reference to less lethal weapons.⁷⁶⁵

"ICE and CBP agents were tackling people, using excessive force. Tear gas would especially be used if there were rapid responders or crowds present."⁷⁶⁶

In Chicago and Minneapolis-St. Paul, Amnesty International documented numerous incidents of unlawful and unnecessary use of tear gas against rapid responders and protesters, even when the safety of ICE and Border Patrol agents was not at risk. Many interviewees told the organization that ICE and Border Patrol deployed tear gas as a means of dispersing crowds of rapid responders and observers who were peacefully observing federal agent activity.⁷⁶⁷

For example, following the shootings of Julio César Sosa-Celis and Marimar Martínez and the unlawful killings of Renee Good and Alex Pretti, ICE and Border Patrol unlawfully and unnecessarily used chemical irritants, including tear gas, against rapid responders and community members.

⁷⁵⁵ UN Human Rights Guidance on the Use of Less-Lethal Weapons in Law Enforcement, paras. 7.1 & 7.5.

⁷⁵⁶ HRC, General comment No. 37 (previously cited), para. 87; Amnesty International, *Guidelines on the Right to Freedom of Peaceful Assembly* (previously cited), p. 88.

⁷⁵⁷ Amnesty International, *The World is Watching* (previously cited), p. 36.

⁷⁵⁸ Amnesty International, *Guidelines on the Right to Freedom of Peaceful Assembly* (previously cited), p. 89.

⁷⁵⁹ Report of the UN Special Rapporteur on the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and of association, Clément Nyaletsossi Voule* A/HRC/50/42, para. 46; Amnesty International, *Protests are not Battlefields: Patterns of Unlawful Use of Force by Police and Impunity In Greece* (Index: EUR 25/1012/2026), 4 June 2026, www.amnesty.org/en/documents/eur25/1012/2026/en/, pp. 30-31.

⁷⁶⁰ Amnesty International, *Guidelines on the Right to Freedom of Peaceful Assembly* (previously cited), p. 85.

⁷⁶¹ Amnesty International, *The World is Watching* (previously cited), p. 64.

⁷⁶² CBP, *CBP Use of Force Policy* (previously cited), p. 11.

⁷⁶³ CBP, *CBP Use of Force Policy* (previously cited), pp. 15-16 & 18-19.

⁷⁶⁴ CBP, *CBP Use of Force Policy* (previously cited), p. 20.

⁷⁶⁵ ICE, *ICE Directive 19009.3: Firearms and Use of Force* (previously cited).

⁷⁶⁶ In-person interview with ICIRR, Chicago, IL, USA, 26 March 2026.

⁷⁶⁷ In-person interview with ICIRR, Chicago, IL, USA, 26 March 2026; United States District Court for the District of Minnesota, *Tincher v. Mullin*, Order, Case No. 0:25-cv-4669 (KMM-DTC), 16 January 2026, <https://assets.aclu.org/live/uploads/2026/01/ECF-85-Order-011625.pdf>; Illinois Accountability Commission, *Brighton Park Investigation Brief* (previously cited), p. 7; United States District Court for the Northern District of Illinois Eastern Division, *Chicago Headline Club, et al., v. Noem*, Opinion and Order (previously cited).

According to the IAC, following the shooting of Marimar Martínez, ICE and Border Patrol deployed tear gas and pepper spray at least 15 times without giving any warnings.⁷⁶⁸ Enrique Espinoza arrived after Martínez had been shot. He told Amnesty International that there were dozens of masked and heavily armed federal agents. He explained that ICE had set up a perimeter and that community members were standing outside of it with their locked arms and their backs to ICE. ICE SUVs suddenly moved together signalling that they were going to leave. Enrique explained that ICE agents began using tear gas to disperse the crowd so they could leave. “They started shooting tear gas canisters even though there were seniors and children present. The community was just protesting. There was so much tear gas I couldn’t breathe or see. That was the distraction ICE used to leave. There was no reason for them to shoot at us, it was just pure retaliation.”⁷⁶⁹

After Sosa-Celis was shot by ICE agents and detained, a large crowd amassed outside of his home. Community members were yelling at federal agents but otherwise remained peaceful. However, interviewees told Amnesty International that ICE agents used tear gas, pepper balls and flashbang grenades on the crowd with no warning.⁷⁷⁰ Dieu Do, an immigrant rights organizer and rapid responder, who was present said, “No warning about using chemicals by ICE. We saw such an unprecedented level of physical violence, people being shoved, slammed to the ground, beaten.”⁷⁷¹

Following the unlawful killing of Good, hundreds of community members showed up at the scene of the shooting. Amnesty International spoke with five people who were present who noted that the crowd was upset and expressed this by yelling at ICE and Border Patrol agents, including former Border Patrol Commander Bovino who had arrived after Good was shot.⁷⁷² Nevertheless, federal agents began shoving people and calling them derogatory names.⁷⁷³ Agents used tear gas and pepper spray on the crowd.⁷⁷⁴

After the unlawful killing of Pretti, a large crowd also formed at the scene of the shooting. Reverend Susie Hayward who was present told Amnesty International, “Some community members were yelling, some were singing, some were praying, lots were crying. But all were staying behind the barriers that had been erected and I did not see any community members throwing objects or acting violently or unlawfully. We were well within our rights. And then the ICE agents came at us aggressively, with pepper bullets [pepper balls], pepper spray. There was green smoke and flash bangs, which were loud and jarring. It was far more aggressive than what was required. The air was so thick with gas that it was getting into my house three blocks away.”⁷⁷⁵ A Minneapolis City Councilmember said that ICE agents began using pepper spray on the crowd – who was just yelling at agents – with no warning.⁷⁷⁶

Moreover, interviewees in both Minneapolis-St. Paul and Chicago expressed their concerns about the health impacts that the frequent use of chemical irritants could have on residents in both cities.⁷⁷⁷ Exposure to tear gas causes a burning sensation and physical reactions including tears streaming from the eyes, coughing, tightening of the chest, difficulty breathing and skin irritation.⁷⁷⁸ In most cases, the effects wear off in 10 to 20 minutes. However, tear gas affects people differently and children, pregnant people and older people are particularly at risk of harmful effects. Prolonged contact can pose severe health risks. Toxicity levels can vary according to the product specifications, the quantity used and the environment in which it is used.⁷⁷⁹

Amnesty International has previously documented numerous cases of severe pain or suffering caused by the use of tear gas, such as severe burning, suffocation and long-term breathing problems, as well as instances

⁷⁶⁸ Illinois Accountability Commission, *Brighton Park Investigation Brief* (previously cited), p. 6; United States District Court for the Northern District of Illinois Eastern Division, *Chicago Headline Club, et al., v. Noem*, Opinion and Order (previously cited), pp. 107-116.

⁷⁶⁹ Online interview with Enrique Espinoza, Chicago, IL, USA, 10 April 2026.

⁷⁷⁰ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026.

⁷⁷¹ Online interview with Dieu Do, Minneapolis-St. Paul, MN, USA, 7 April 2026.

⁷⁷² In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026.

⁷⁷³ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026.

⁷⁷⁴ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026.

⁷⁷⁵ In-person interview with Rev. Susie Hayward, Minneapolis-St. Paul, MN, USA, 18 March 2026.

⁷⁷⁶ Online interview with a Minneapolis City Councilmember, Minneapolis, MN, USA, 6 April 2026.

⁷⁷⁷ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026.

⁷⁷⁸ Amnesty International, *Tear Gas: An investigation*, June 2020, <https://teargas.amnesty.org/#top>; Amnesty International, *The World is Watching* (previously cited), pp. 30-31; Physicians for Human Rights, “Chemical Irritants”, https://s3.amazonaws.com/PHR_other/PHR_INCLO_Fact_Sheets_Chemical_Irritants.pdf; CDC, “Riot Control Agents”, 11 June 2026, <https://www.cdc.gov/chemical-emergencies/chemical-fact-sheets/riot-control-agents.html>.

⁷⁷⁹ Amnesty International, *Tear Gas: An investigation* (previously cited); Amnesty International, *The World is Watching* (previously cited), pp. 30-31; Physicians for Human Rights, “Chemical Irritants” (previously cited); CDC, “Riot Control Agents” (previously cited).

in which its use was clearly punitive.⁷⁸⁰ In such instances, Amnesty International believes the use of tear gas could constitute torture or other ill-treatment under international law. The UN Special Rapporteur on torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, has argued that the use of less lethal weapons such as tear gas could be cruel, inhuman or degrading if used in certain circumstances – for instance in a confined space – and that the use of less lethal weapons “to intentionally and purposefully inflict pain or suffering on a powerless person, always amounts to an aggravated form of cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment or even torture”.⁷⁸¹ International law imposes specific obligations on states to prevent torture and other ill-treatment, to investigate instances where they occur, to criminalize complicity in such activities and to provide reparations to victims.⁷⁸²

“It felt honestly like a movie. ICE and CBP would come through with helicopters, masks, and machine guns. They would grab whoever was outside. It would almost always end with some type of confrontation between federal agents and rapid responders. It often ended with agents using tear gas, with tear gas canisters being thrown, cars being pepper sprayed. As time went on, it felt like things accelerated and that it became more aggressive.”⁷⁸³

■ **Protest at Broadview facility (19 September 2025, Broadview, Illinois)**

“Broadview became a focal point for protests. There we saw the first use of projectiles and gas indiscriminately. There would be people standing in public spaces taking a break from protesting and these people would just be fired on by ICE and CBP. ICE and CBP would use gas to disperse people but then they would go back inside the building. They were just using gas for no reason. It became a regular feature of the way they interacted with people. They then transferred that way of acting from Broadview to the streets.”⁷⁸⁴

The Broadview facility in Chicago became a focal point for protesting against ICE and Border Patrol’s actions in the city.⁷⁸⁵ Amnesty International spoke with Reverend David Black who frequently went to the Broadview facility to do ministry. He said, “The escalation of violence by ICE and CBP at Broadview when we were just praying and chanting was terrifying. We were fully convinced they were going to use live ammunition on the crowd. DHS was lying about what was actually happening outside the facility, they were trying to create justifications for violence.”⁷⁸⁶

Amnesty International’s Evidence Lab verified three videos and one photograph taken on 19 September 2025 in front of the Broadview facility.⁷⁸⁷ That day, Reverend David Black went to the facility for the fourth time. He was dressed as clergy and said that he was there with a clergy colleague to do ministry. Reverend Black explained that he was calling on three federal agents who were standing on the facility’s roof to repent when all of a sudden, the agents shot a pepper ball at his head.⁷⁸⁸ Amnesty International verified video footage of the incident in which Reverend Black can be seen standing below the agents yelling up to them and an agent fire⁷⁸⁹ at him with no warning. The November 2025 decision in the Chicago Headline Club case – a federal civil rights lawsuit challenging the use of excessive force by federal agents against journalists, protesters and clergy in Chicago – stated that “Without warning or any orders or requests to

⁷⁸⁰ Amnesty International, *Tear Gas: An investigation* (previously cited); Amnesty International, *The World is Watching* (previously cited), pp. 30-31.

⁷⁸¹ Amnesty International, *Tear Gas: An investigation* (previously cited); UN Special Rapporteur on torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, *Extra-custodial use of force and the prohibition of torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment*, UN Doc. A/72/178, 20 July 2017, <https://docs.un.org/en/A/72/178>, paras. 55-57.

⁷⁸² UN Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment.

⁷⁸³ Online interview with New Life Centers, Chicago, IL, USA, 28 April 2026.

⁷⁸⁴ In-person interview with ACLU of Illinois, Chicago, IL, USA, 24 March 2026.

⁷⁸⁵ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026.

⁷⁸⁶ In-person interview with Rev. David Black, Chicago, IL, USA, 24 March 2026.

⁷⁸⁷ NBC Chicago, “VIDEO: Tear gas deployed during protests at suburban ICE facility”, 19 September 2025, <https://www.nbcchicago.com/news/local/video-tear-gas-deployed-during-protests-at-suburban-ice-facility/3826711/>; Facebook, 19 September 2025, <https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=1295135495644204>; TikTok, 19 September 2025, <https://www.tiktok.com/@christophersweat5/video/7551824552653901070>; X, 5 November 2025, https://x.com/Ashlee_Rezin/status/1986167364623475072/.

⁷⁸⁸ In-person interview with Rev. David Black, Chicago, IL, USA, 24 March 2026.

⁷⁸⁹ Facebook, 19 September 2025, <https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=1295135495644204>.

disperse, agents fired on Rev. Black, hitting him with exploding pellets of pepper spray [pepper ball] on his arms, face, and torso.^{790,791}

Reverend Black told the organization, “I was hit on the crown of my head. I was in shock. I fell down. People jumped to shield my body as they kept shooting. I couldn’t breathe for a while.”⁷⁹² He explained that then the facility’s gates opened and around 20 to 30 agents came out of the facility to move the crowd. “The agents were shoving people out of the way and shoving them to the ground,” he said. “They sprayed me in the face with pepper spray. The agents were throwing smoke grenades and canisters of tear gas. Then they started grabbing and pulling people into the facility.”⁷⁹³

A statement released by DHS that same day alleged that, “Early this morning, over a hundred rioters surrounded the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) Broadview Processing Center— rioters assaulted law enforcement, threw tear gas cans, slashed tires of cars, blocked the entrance of the building, and trespassed on private property.”⁷⁹⁴ The same statement attacked the state of Illinois’ sanctuary policies.⁷⁹⁵

Reverend Black told Amnesty International that he had severe respiratory issues, persistent headaches and constant pain for months following the incident.⁷⁹⁶

“ICE and CBP used a lot of different weapons against protestors outside Broadview. Agents switched from using riot control gear to holding sniper rifles. Our tactics hadn’t changed, we continued to sing and pray, but there was an increased willingness of agents to use violence. The use of chemical weapons became common in Chicago neighbourhoods.”⁷⁹⁷

■ Incidents in Little Village (22-23 October 2025, Chicago, Illinois)

Members of the Little Village Community Council told Amnesty International that chemical irritants were frequently used in Chicago’s Little Village neighbourhood.⁷⁹⁸ One member said, “I was tear-gassed multiple times. I’ve seen agents use pepper balls.” He shared an incident where Border Patrol agents used tear gas on himself and his friends who were in a car following Border Patrol agents. “My friend couldn’t breathe. He thought he was going to die in that moment,” he said.⁷⁹⁹

On 22 and 23 October 2025, former Border Patrol Commander Bovino and Border Patrol agents roamed the streets of Little Village, racially profiling community members.⁸⁰⁰ On 23 October, at around 10 in the morning, Bovino and Border Patrol agents arrived at the Discount Mall shopping plaza at W 27th Street and S Sacramento Avenue. According to the IAC, “for the next 45 minutes, federal agents deployed tear gas, pepper balls, and flashbangs against an active but non-violent crowd.”⁸⁰¹ Video footage shows Bovino throwing the first of two tear gas grenades into the crowd.⁸⁰² Following Bovino’s actions, other Border Patrol

⁷⁹¹ United States District Court for the Northern District of Illinois Eastern Division, *Chicago Headline Club, et al., v. Noem*, Opinion and Order (previously cited), p. 59; ACLU of Illinois, “Chicago Headline Club v. Noem”, <https://www.aclu-il.org/cases/chicago-headline-club-v-noem/>.

⁷⁹² In-person interview with Rev. David Black, Chicago, IL, USA, 24 March 2026.

⁷⁹³ In-person interview with Rev. David Black, Chicago, IL, USA, 24 March 2026; X, 5 November 2025, https://x.com/Ashlee_Rezin/status/1986167364623475072/.

⁷⁹⁴ DHS, “Violent Rioters Assault Law Enforcement at ICE Broadview Processing Center, Police under JB Pritzker’s Sanctuary Jurisdiction Refuse to Answer Calls to Help Stop Assaults”, 19 September 2025, <https://www.dhs.gov/news/2025/09/19/violent-rioters-assault-law-enforcement-ice-broadview-processing-center-police>.

⁷⁹⁵ DHS, “Violent Rioters Assault Law Enforcement at ICE Broadview Processing Center” (previously cited).

⁷⁹⁶ In-person interview with Rev. David Black, Chicago, IL, USA, 24 March 2026.

⁷⁹⁷ In-person interview with Rev. David Black, Chicago, IL, USA, 24 March 2026.

⁷⁹⁸ In-person interview with Little Village Community Council, Chicago, IL, USA, 27 March 2026.

⁷⁹⁹ In-person interview with Little Village Community Council, Chicago, IL, USA, 27 March 2026.

⁸⁰⁰ In-person interview with Little Village Community Council, Chicago, IL, USA, 27 March 2026; Illinois Accountability Commission, *Little Village Occupation Investigation Brief – April 2026*, 2026, <https://ilac.illinois.gov/content/dam/soi/en/web/ilac/documents/final-report/inv-briefs/IAC-Little-Village-Investigation-Brief-r.pdf>; United States District Court for the Northern District of Illinois Eastern Division, *Chicago Headline Club, et al., v. Noem*, Opinion and Order (previously cited), pp. 129-144.

⁸⁰¹ Illinois Accountability Commission, *Little Village Occupation Investigation Brief* (previously cited), p. 15.

⁸⁰² Illinois Accountability Commission, *Little Village Occupation Investigation Brief* (previously cited), p. 16.

agents threw additional tear gas and flashbang grenades, and also fired pepper balls.⁸⁰³ The IAC documented that as Border Patrol agents were leaving the scene, one agent pointed a pepper ball launcher at a bystander and another agent in a separate vehicle pointed a handgun at the same bystander and said “bang, bang” as the vehicle drove by.⁸⁰⁴

The November 2025 Chicago Headline Club decision found that warnings were not heard on the body-worn camera footage reviewed by the court.⁸⁰⁵ Moreover, the court found that there was no justification for the deployment of chemical irritants and that federal agents created a narrative of what happened in Little Village on 23 October 2025, by misrepresenting the evidence to justify their actions.⁸⁰⁶ In particular, the court found Bovino’s testimony not credible, noting that he “admitted in his deposition that he lied multiple times about the events that occurred in Little Village that prompted him to throw tear gas at protesters.”⁸⁰⁷

▪ Halloween parade (25 October 2025, Chicago, Illinois)

On 25 October 2025, masked, armed Border Patrol agents in at least three unmarked vehicles chased down, tackled and detained Luis Villegas – a migrant from Mexico who came to the United States with his family when he was four years old – in Chicago’s Old Irving Park neighbourhood.⁸⁰⁸ This incident happened as an annual neighbourhood Halloween parade was about to begin. Community members who were on their way to the parade began blowing whistles and observing federal agents detain Villegas.⁸⁰⁹

Amnesty International’s Evidence Lab verified one video showing the use of tear gas in Old Irving Park that day.⁸¹⁰ The video shows residents confronting Border Patrol agents on a residential street. According to the IAC, Border Patrol agents claimed that they were blocked in on both sides of the street by community members, however, the Commission found that video footage and witness testimony contradicted this claim.⁸¹¹ The IAC found that agents threw a tear gas grenade in the opposite direction to the one in which they were attempting to leave the scene.⁸¹² In this same sense, the November 2025 Chicago Headline Club decision found that “While agents claimed that the crowd prevented them from leaving and that they needed to use tear gas to allow them to leave ... their BWC footage instead suggests that they prolonged the encounter.”⁸¹³ The court further found that the use of tear gas was not justified.⁸¹⁴

At one point, a cyclist appears to try to block one of Border Patrol’s vehicles and falls to the ground.⁸¹⁵ The crowd ran to the cyclist’s aid, and a Border Patrol agent throws a tear gas grenade on the street. According to the IAC, no dispersal warnings can be heard on the agents’ body worn camera footage.⁸¹⁶

Prior to Border Patrol agents deploying tear gas on community members, a 67-year-old man was pinned to the ground by an agent and then arrested. Another community member was tackled to the ground by a Border

⁸⁰³ Illinois Accountability Commission, *Little Village Occupation Investigation Brief* (previously cited), p. 16.

⁸⁰⁴ Illinois Accountability Commission, *Little Village Occupation Investigation Brief* (previously cited), p. 18.

⁸⁰⁵ United States District Court for the Northern District of Illinois Eastern Division, *Chicago Headline Club, et al., v. Noem*, Opinion and Order (previously cited), pp. 132, 138-39 & 141; ACLU of Illinois, “Chicago Headline Club v. Noem”, <https://www.aclu-il.org/cases/chicago-headline-club-v-noem/>.

⁸⁰⁶ United States District Court for the Northern District of Illinois Eastern Division, *Chicago Headline Club, et al., v. Noem*, Opinion and Order (previously cited), p. 13; Illinois Accountability Commission, *Little Village Occupation Investigation Brief* (previously cited), p. 19.

⁸⁰⁷ United States District Court for the Northern District of Illinois Eastern Division, *Chicago Headline Club, et al., v. Noem*, Opinion and Order (previously cited), pp. 12-13; Illinois Accountability Commission, *Little Village Occupation Investigation Brief* (previously cited), p. 19.

⁸⁰⁸ Illinois Accountability Commission, *Old Irving Park Investigation Brief – April 2026, 2026*, <https://ilac.illinois.gov/content/dam/soi/en/web/ilac/documents/final-report/inv-briefs/IAC-Old-Irving-Park-Investigation-Brief-r.pdf>, p. 2.

⁸⁰⁹ United States District Court for the Northern District of Illinois Eastern Division, *Chicago Headline Club, et al., v. Noem*, Opinion and Order (previously cited), p. 148.

⁸¹⁰ Hightail, “CHC: Exhibit 88”, 25 October 2025, <https://spaces.hightail.com/space/EVZTY9QHGW/files>.

⁸¹¹ Illinois Accountability Commission, *Old Irving Park Investigation Brief* (previously cited), pp. 2-3.

⁸¹² Illinois Accountability Commission, *Old Irving Park Investigation Brief* (previously cited), p. 4.

⁸¹³ United States District Court for the Northern District of Illinois Eastern Division, *Chicago Headline Club, et al., v. Noem*, Opinion and Order (previously cited), p. 150.

⁸¹⁴ United States District Court for the Northern District of Illinois Eastern Division, *Chicago Headline Club, et al., v. Noem*, Opinion and Order (previously cited); Illinois Accountability Commission, *Old Irving Park Investigation Brief* (previously cited), p. 7.

⁸¹⁵ United States District Court for the Northern District of Illinois Eastern Division, *Chicago Headline Club, et al., v. Noem*, Opinion and Order (previously cited), pp. 149-50.

⁸¹⁶ Illinois Accountability Commission, *Old Irving Park Investigation Brief* (previously cited), p. 4.

Patrol agent and arrested. The IAC documented that both community members suffered broken ribs as a result of the force used against them by the Border Patrol agents.⁸¹⁷

▪ **Rose Avenue raid (25-26 November 2025, St. Paul, Minnesota)**

On 25 November 2025, Jeffrey Suazo, a 20-year-old Honduran man, was chased by federal agents into his home on Rose Avenue in St. Paul.⁸¹⁸ Interviewees explained that the situation turned into a standoff in which around 50 federal agents tried to break down the door of the house to detain Suazo. Interviewees told Amnesty International that ICE did not have a warrant.⁸¹⁹ Hundreds of community members amassed outside of Suazo's home.⁸²⁰ Amnesty International's Evidence Lab verified four videos showing law enforcement agents using pepper spray and firing pepper balls against peaceful protesters.⁸²¹ According to COPAL, three people ended up in the hospital, one with a head injury.⁸²²

Amnesty International was told that Suazo eventually ended up turning himself over to ICE because there were undocumented people inside the house.⁸²³ There was a pregnant person in the house and ICE agents prevented community members from providing help to this person.⁸²⁴ Shubhanjana Das, a journalist, told Amnesty International that she spoke with individuals who lived in the house the day after the incident and they said that federal agents lied about having a warrant and mocked and harassed them.⁸²⁵

Based on the foregoing, Amnesty International concludes that ICE and Border Patrol agents unlawfully used less lethal weapons, including tear gas and other chemical irritants, against protesters, rapid responders and observers, and community members during the immigration enforcement operations in Chicago and Minneapolis-St. Paul. The incidents documented in this report demonstrate a pattern in which less lethal weapons were used not to respond to an imminent threat of violence, but to intimidate and disperse – without warning – individuals exercising their rights to freedom of peaceful assembly, expression and association. Amnesty International therefore concludes that the use of less lethal weapons violated international human rights law and standards governing the use of force, as well as DHS's own policies governing the use of force.

5.2.5 Conclusion

Taken together, the incidents documented in this section demonstrate that ICE, Border Patrol and other federal agents repeatedly used unnecessary and/or excessive force during arrests, unlawfully used lethal force in circumstances where individuals did not pose an imminent threat – resulting in the deaths of three individuals which may amount to extrajudicial executions –, and unlawfully deployed less lethal weapons against observers, protesters and community members. These practices were neither isolated nor exceptional but were intrinsic to the way the immigration enforcement operations were conducted. Amnesty International therefore concludes that federal agents repeatedly used force in violation of international human rights law and standards, contributing to a broader pattern of militarized immigration enforcement intended not only to facilitate arrests but also to intimidate communities and suppress peaceful protest.

⁸¹⁷ United States District Court for the Northern District of Illinois Eastern Division, *Chicago Headline Club, et al., v. Noem*, Opinion and Order (previously cited), p. 150; Illinois Accountability Commission, *Old Irving Park Investigation Brief* (previously cited), p. 4.

⁸¹⁸ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026; Sahan Journal, "'Abhorrent': St. Paul City Council member slams police conduct at federal arrest", 25 November 2025, <https://sahanjournal.com/immigration/st-paul-east-side-ice-police-arrest/>; Sahan Journal, "Family of man swept up in St. Paul ICE raid say agents entered house without a warrant", 26 November 2025, <https://sahanjournal.com/immigration/st-paul-ice-raid-family-speaks-out/>.

⁸¹⁹ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026.

⁸²⁰ MPR News, "Law enforcement, protesters clash as federal agents make arrests in St. Paul", 25 November 2025, <https://www.mprnews.org/story/2025/11/25/federal-operation-in-st-paul-draws-protesters-1-week-after-ice-raid>.

⁸²¹ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026; 50501 Minnesota, Facebook, 25 November 2025, <https://www.facebook.com/reel/1207058124436810>; Mark Wasson, TikTok, 25 November 2025, <https://www.tiktok.com/@reportermark/video/7576714488502570254>; 50501 Minnesota, Facebook, 25 November 2025, <https://www.facebook.com/reel/2299218913835555>; Sahan Journal, Instagram, 25 November 2025, <https://www.instagram.com/reels/DRf8i4jEeTA/>.

⁸²² In-person interview with COPAL, Minneapolis-St. Paul, MN, USA, 20 March 2026.

⁸²³ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026.

⁸²⁴ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026.

⁸²⁵ Online interview with Shubhanjana Das, Minneapolis-St. Paul, MN, USA, 14 April 2026; Sahan Journal, "Family of man swept up in St. Paul ICE raid say agents entered house without a warrant" (previously cited).

5.3 Use of unlawful surveillance and facial recognition technology

Across the four locations, Amnesty International documented the use of facial recognition technology by ICE and Border Patrol against individuals the agencies perceived to be migrants and were attempting to detain, as well as rapid responders, people involved in mutual aid and protesters. The organization also documented that federal agents photographed and filmed community members who were observing their actions, delivering mutual aid or protesting. On multiple occasions, rapid responders attempting to monitor ICE or Border Patrol operations by following federal vehicles would be “driven home”, a tactic in which federal agents, as a form of intimidation, intentionally drove to the rapid responder’s residence while the rapid responder was following them. The use of helicopters was prevalent across all four cities, while the use of drones was common in Chicago, Minneapolis-St. Paul and New Orleans.

The right to privacy is protected under a number of international human rights instruments, including Article 17 of the ICCPR which provides that no one should be subject to “arbitrary or unlawful interference” with their privacy, family, home or correspondence, and this should be protected by law.⁸²⁶ The HRC has long recognized that such protection includes regulating “the gathering and holding of personal information on computers, data banks and other devices, whether by public authorities or private individuals or bodies.”⁸²⁷ Interference with an individual’s right to privacy is only lawful under international human rights law if it serves a legitimate objective, and is necessary and proportionate in light of that objective, and it should never be arbitrary. Facial recognition technology for identification entails widespread bulk monitoring, collection, storage, analysis or other use of material and collection of sensitive personal data (biometric data) – which amounts to indiscriminate mass surveillance.⁸²⁸ Moreover, facial recognition systems are trained with image recognition algorithms that rely on vast amounts of individuals’ faces as input data to improve the system’s “success rate”, without the individuals’ knowledge or consent, and such an action cannot be “undone”. Even where input data or training data is deleted, the faces captured by the system have been used to train a facial recognition system, likely without the individual’s knowledge or control. Such practices cannot satisfy the requirements of necessity and proportionality under international human rights law and as such violate the right to privacy.⁸²⁹

The human rights harms of facial recognition technology are not experienced equally and raise well-known discrimination risks. For instance, certain groups may be disproportionately represented in facial image datasets due to discriminatory policing or other practices. Moreover, it is well-established that facial recognition technology systems perform unequally depending on key characteristics including skin colour, ethnicity and gender.⁸³⁰ This places Black, Brown and other racialized individuals at more risk of being misidentified and falsely arrested.⁸³¹ Amnesty International has further documented that facial recognition technology is often concentrated around areas with a greater presence of Black and Brown individuals, while also often being used to target racialized communities.⁸³² In other words, even when the technology “works”, law enforcement officers can be quick to target and harass historically marginalized communities, and the technology risks reinforcing existing patterns of discriminatory policing. Amnesty International has long held that facial recognition technologies for mass and discriminatory targeted surveillance are incompatible with the right to privacy by design, and have led to significant human rights harms, in particular where the rights to equality and non-discrimination, freedom of expression, freedom of peaceful assembly, and freedom of movement are concerned.⁸³³

⁸²⁶ UDHR, Art. 12; ICCPR, Art. 17.

⁸²⁷ HRC, CCPR General Comment No. 16: Article 17 (Right to Privacy), The Right to Respect of Privacy, Family, Home and Correspondence, and Protection of Honour and Reputation, 8 April 1988.

⁸²⁸ Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms while countering terrorism, Ben Saul, Facial Recognition Technology Protecting Human Rights in Law Enforcement, Counter-Terrorism and National Security Contexts, June 2026, <https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/documents/form/sr-ct-frt-paper-june-2026.pdf>, p. 12.

⁸²⁹ Amnesty International, *Primer: Defending the rights of refugees and migrants in the digital age* (Index: POL 40/7654/2024), 5 February 2024, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/pol40/7654/2024/en/>, p. 17.

⁸³⁰ CERD, General Recommendation No. 36 (previously cited), para. 23.

⁸³¹ Amnesty International, “Ban the Scan: New York City”, <https://banthescan.amnesty.org/nyc/index.html>.

⁸³² Amnesty International, “USA: Facial recognition technology reinforcing racist stop-and-frisk policing in New York” (previously cited).

⁸³³ Amnesty International, *Primer: Defending the rights of refugees and migrants in the digital age* (previously cited); Amnesty International, *Digitally divided: Technology, inequality and human rights* (Index: POL 40/7108/2023), 2 October 2023,

In the four immigration enforcement operations analysed in this report, ICE and Border Patrol used Mobile Fortify, a facial recognition mobile phone application used to identify people.⁸³⁴ The application sends facial images, fingerprints and photos of identity documents to CBP for submission to government biometric matching systems.⁸³⁵ An investigation by 404 Media found that Mobile Fortify “runs facial images against over 200 million DHS and Department of State records” and that the application “represents an unprecedented linking of government databases into a single tool, including from the State Department, Customs and Border Protection (CBP), the FBI, and state records.”⁸³⁶

According to DHS, in the context of immigration enforcement, “the tool helps officers establish the identity of individuals to determine legal status and check for prior immigration or criminal history.”⁸³⁷ When the application “identifies” a person, it displays biographical and personal data about that person pulled from various places, including name, date of birth, citizenship, and immigration information, including whether someone has a deportation order.⁸³⁸ A 2026 study by Mijente, Just Futures Law and Surveillance Resistance Lab indicates that ICE officials have stated that “they consider an identity ‘match’ in Mobile Fortify to be a ‘definitive’ determination of a person’s [citizenship] status and that an ICE officer may ignore evidence of American citizenship—including a birth certificate if the application indicates otherwise. In other words, even if you were to provide evidence of citizenship, ICE officials have stated that they will defer to the determination of the app.”⁸³⁹ Interviewees told Amnesty International that if an individual did not show up in Mobile Fortify – meaning that the application was not able to “identify” the person – federal agents would often assume that was an indication that the person did not have regular immigration status and would detain them.⁸⁴⁰

DHS’ Privacy Threshold Analysis of the application indicates that ICE and CBP do not provide the opportunity for individuals to decline or consent to the collection and use of biometric data or photograph collection.⁸⁴¹ The analysis further indicates that data collected by Mobile Fortify will be stored in DHS traveller systems for 15 years.⁸⁴²

The use of Mobile Fortify by ICE and Border Patrol agents raises serious privacy, equality and non-discrimination concerns. The ACLU of Louisiana told Amnesty International that, “ICE and CBP would roll up on a construction site, use their cellphones for facial recognition, would take people and then be gone

<https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/pol40/7108/2023/en/>; Amnesty International, “USA: Facial recognition technology reinforcing racist stop-and-frisk policing in New York” (previously cited).

⁸³⁴ DHS, “United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement – AI Use Cases – Mobile Fortify (DHS-2577)”, 12 February 2026, <https://www.dhs.gov/ai/use-case-inventory/ice>; United States District Court for the District of Minnesota, *Hussen v. Noem*, Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law (previously cited); United States District Court for the District of Minnesota, *Hussen v. Noem*, Class Action Complaint for Declaratory and Injunctive Relief (previously cited), paras. 36, 44, 50 & 60; United States District Court for the District of Columbia, *Escobar Molina v. DHS*, Decision of Preliminary Injunction (previously cited), p. 15; 404, “ICE and CBP Agents Are Scanning Peoples’ Faces on the Street To Verify Citizenship”, 29 October 2025, <https://www.404media.co/ice-and-cbp-agents-are-scanning-peoples-faces-on-the-street-to-verify-citizenship/>; AIC, “Mission Creep: AI Surveillance at DHS Crosses Dangerous Line Into Tracking Americans”, 6 February 2026, <https://www.americanimmigrationcouncil.org/blog/ice-ai-surveillance-tracking-americans/>; Derechos Digitales, “ICE technologies and the perverse automated system for the persecution of Latino migrants”, 2 April 2026, <https://www.derechosdigitales.org/en/recursos/ice-technologies-and-the-perverse-automated-system-for-the-persecution-of-latino-migrants/>.

⁸³⁵ DHS, “United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement – AI Use Cases – Mobile Fortify (DHS-2577)” (previously cited). According to CBP, “Mobile Fortify runs on a mobile device and can capture facial images, contactless fingerprints, and photographs of identity documents. The application transmits this data to U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) for submission to government biometric matching systems. Those systems use AI-based matching techniques, including facial recognition and fingerprint matching, to compare the captured data against existing records and return possible matches with associated biographic information. The tool also uses optical character recognition to extract text from identity documents to support additional checks. ICE does not own or interact directly with the AI models that perform biometric matching or optical character recognition. CBP owns and operates these models, and Mobile Fortify simply displays the results to ICE users.”

⁸³⁶ 404, “Inside ICE’s Supercharged Facial Recognition App of 200 Million Images”, 17 July 2025, <https://www.404media.co/inside-ices-supercharged-facial-recognition-app-of-200-million-images/>; 404, “ICE and CBP Agents Are Scanning Peoples’ Faces on the Street To Verify Citizenship” (previously cited).

⁸³⁷ DHS, “United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement – AI Use Cases – Mobile Fortify (DHS-2577)” (previously cited).

⁸³⁸ DHS, Privacy Threshold Analysis – Mobile Fortify Mobile Application for ICE Enforcement and Removal Operations, 2025, <https://s3.documentcloud.org/documents/26209262/mobile-fortify-pta.pdf>.

⁸³⁹ Mijente, Just Futures Law & Surveillance Resistance Lab, *The Tech Behind ICE: Oligarchs, Immigration Enforcement, and the Threat to Democracy*, June 2026, <https://notechforice.com/wp-content/uploads/2026/06/Tech-Behind-ICE-Oligarchs-Immigration-Enforcement-and-the-Threat-to-Democracy.pdf>, p. 47.

⁸⁴⁰ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026.

⁸⁴¹ DHS, Privacy Threshold Analysis – Mobile Fortify Mobile Application for ICE Enforcement and Removal Operations (previously cited).

⁸⁴² DHS, Privacy Threshold Analysis – Mobile Fortify Mobile Application for ICE Enforcement and Removal Operations (previously cited).

very quickly.”⁸⁴³ According to NIJC, “DHS often uses Mobile Fortify to identify a person and match it against any images of the person in their databases.”⁸⁴⁴

“Mobile Fortify seems to be searching immigration databases to see if the person is in immigration proceedings, or if they were stopped at the border. There are many people that crossed the border, particularly in recent years, and there are a lot of photos of people upon entry into the US. There seems to be a lot of trying to match photos of people who have been stopped near the border.”⁸⁴⁵

The use of facial recognition technology by federal agents extended to people observing ICE and Border Patrol activity, and to people delivering mutual aid. Individuals that were doing rapid response and mutual aid delivery across the four cities told Amnesty International that ICE and Border Patrol agents frequently scanned their faces with their mobile phones, filmed them, and took pictures of the license plates of their vehicles.⁸⁴⁶ An employee with Columbia Heights Public Schools in Columbia Heights, Minnesota, told Amnesty International that she was responding to ICE presence outside one of the schools in their district on a Saturday when, “The agent got out of his vehicle with his phone in his hand. He scanned my license plate, my car, scrolled up to my face and said, ‘[The employee’s full legal name] at [the employee’s home address], we got you.’ I hadn’t said my name before. I don’t go by my full legal name. No one in the community would recognize me if somebody called me that. He scanned my license plate, my car, my face, and knew all of my information.”⁸⁴⁷ Tanya, a rapid responder in Washington, DC, said that she filmed an ICE agent leaving a police station in DC. MPD detained and questioned Tanya and two other responders after the filming. The next day, Tanya saw the same ICE agent in her neighbourhood, he rolled down his vehicle window and called Tanya by her legal name.⁸⁴⁸ Dan, a rapid responder in Minneapolis-St. Paul said, “ICE and CBP would pull up to your car window and show you a picture of yourself on their phone. They would scan license plates, our faces.”⁸⁴⁹

ICE and Border Patrol also use “license plate capture and analysis” systems which use an “AI-enabled license plate recognition system” that allows the agencies to scan license plates and to identify a car’s past movements using data from “ICE-owned and commercial license plate recognition cameras.”⁸⁵⁰ Interviewees told Amnesty International that it seemed like federal agents would run license plates against both federal and state databases in order to attempt to determine the driver’s identity and that if no results came back, the agents would assume that the person did not have regular immigration status and would arrest them.⁸⁵¹

Amnesty International received information about over thirty incidents in which ICE or Border Patrol agents deliberately drove rapid responders who were following federal vehicles back to their own homes.⁸⁵² Interviewees explained that, while attempting to monitor ICE or Border Patrol operations by following federal vehicles, the vehicle they were following would suddenly drive directly to the rapid responder’s residence and park outside.⁸⁵³ Those interviewed consistently described this tactic as a deliberate form of intimidation intended to signal to the rapid responder that federal agents knew who they were and where they lived.⁸⁵⁴ Other rapid responders reported that federal vehicles would follow them or park outside of their houses.⁸⁵⁵ A staff member at COPAL stated that, one time, five agents wearing civilian clothes in unmarked vehicles waited outside her home located in the Twin Cities for two hours, looking in her windows, going through her mailbox and asking her neighbours questions.⁸⁵⁶ St. Paul City Councilmember Hwa Jeong Kim stated, “ICE

⁸⁴³ Online interview ACLU of Louisiana, New Orleans, LA, USA, 22 May 2026.

⁸⁴⁴ Online interview with NIJC, Chicago, IL, USA, 14 April 2026.

⁸⁴⁵ Online interview with NIJC, Chicago, IL, USA, 14 April 2026.

⁸⁴⁶ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026; NPR, “ICE has spun a massive surveillance web. We talked to people caught in it”, 5 March 2026, <https://www.npr.org/2026/03/04/nx-s1-5717031/ice-dhs-immigrants-surveillance-confrontation-deportation-mobile-fortify>.

⁸⁴⁷ In-person interview with Columbia Heights Public Schools, Columbia Heights, MN, USA, 19 March 2026.

⁸⁴⁸ In-person interview with Tanya, Washington, DC, USA, 16 May 2026.

⁸⁴⁹ In-person interview with Jessie and Dan L., Minneapolis, MN, USA, 20 March 2026.

⁸⁵⁰ DHS, “United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement – AI Use Cases – License Plate Capture and Analysis (DHS-2666)”, 12 February 2026, <https://www.dhs.gov/ai/use-case-inventory/ice>.

⁸⁵¹ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026.

⁸⁵² In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026; NPR, “ICE has spun a massive surveillance web. We talked to people caught in it” (previously cited); Minnesota Reformer, “In the car with the Minneapolis community patrols working to disrupt ICE operations” (previously cited).

⁸⁵³ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026.

⁸⁵⁴ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026.

⁸⁵⁵ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026.

⁸⁵⁶ In-person interview with COPAL, Minneapolis, MN, USA, 20 March 2026.

followed community members home and stayed outside homes to intimidate us from protecting our neighbours.”⁸⁵⁷

“There were multiple incidents of ICE vehicles parking outside and behind our houses. We would call 911 reporting a specific suspicious car and the operator would ask us, ‘Is it just ICE?’”⁸⁵⁸

In August 2026, a lawyer representing one of 15 individuals from Minnesota charged with conspiracy to impede or injure a federal officer during Operation Metro Surge filed a discovery motion alleging that DHS had launched an “unprecedented campaign ... to spy on Minnesotans” through two operations known as Operation Puppet Master and Project Whipple Shield.⁸⁵⁹ According to the motion, as part of these surveillance operations, undercover HSI agents allegedly posed as protesters, surveilled community meetings and infiltrated Signal chats.⁸⁶⁰ The motion further alleges that HSI agents “gathered information about Minnesotans from law enforcement databases and internet searchers, and created dossiers that are apparently now available agency wide”, and “secretly obtained financial records for several national labour unions ... and social justice non-profits ... all with zero criminal predicate to do so.”⁸⁶¹

Amnesty International also received information about the use of helicopters in all four locations and the use of drones in Chicago, Minneapolis-St. Paul and New Orleans during immigration enforcement operations and protests.⁸⁶² Interviewees indicated that drones were being used by federal agents to locate migrants, including flying over construction sites, as well as following people that ICE was trying to detain.⁸⁶³ NIJC shared the story of someone who ICE was trying to detain who got out of their vehicle and federal agents started tracking the person through the streets of Chicago with helicopters. In all four locations, Amnesty International was told that the presence of helicopters was constant and used as form of intimidation by federal agents.⁸⁶⁴ MSMA said, “East of the river [in Washington, DC] there were daily low flying helicopters. There was a 24/7 constant presence of helicopters. Houses were shaking because the helicopters were flying super low.”⁸⁶⁵

“There was a lot of drone and helicopter use. We don’t know what they were doing, we don’t know what information they were collecting.”⁸⁶⁶

People across the four cities doing rapid response and mutual aid delivery also told the organization about seeing drones around their homes.⁸⁶⁷ Columbia Heights Public School staff told the organization that, in Columbia Heights, Minnesota, “There are drones flying around our houses every night to this day. There have been at least 10 drones in the neighbourhood.”⁸⁶⁸ Justin, a rapid responder in Minneapolis-St. Paul, told Amnesty International about an incident where he was bringing a cheque for rental assistance to another family that was also doing mutual aid food deliveries. When he arrived at the family’s house, he noticed that there was a drone above it, which flew off shortly after he arrived. He said, “This was a suburban neighbourhood. There was a drone above the house of the people who had the food box. We didn’t know

⁸⁵⁷ Online interview with St. Paul City Councilmember Hwa Jeong Kim, Minneapolis-St. Paul, MN, USA, 17 March 2026.

⁸⁵⁸ In-person interview with Columbia Heights Public Schools, Columbia Heights, MN, USA, 19 March 2026.

⁸⁵⁹ United States District Court for the District of Minnesota, *United States of America v. Isaac Sant*, Defendant’s Motion for Discovery under Rule 16 and *Brady/Giglio*, Case No. 26-cr-115 (KMM/DTS), 13 August 2026, https://www.documentcloud.org/documents/28554313-mn15_motion_aug13_with_exhibits/, pp. 1, 3-4; Minnesota Reformer, “Documents show how feds spied on protesters, left-wing organizations and unions during Metro Surge”, 13 August 2026, <https://minnesotareformer.com/2026/08/13/feds-spied-on-protesters-left-wing-organizations-and-unions-during-metro-surge/>; The Guardian, “Revealed: How undercover agents spied on anti-ICE protesters in Minnesota”, 25 August 2026, <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2026/aug/25/ice-signal-chat-minnesota>.

⁸⁶⁰ United States District Court for the District of Minnesota, *United States of America v. Isaac Sant*, Defendant’s Motion for Discovery under Rule 16 and *Brady/Giglio* (previously cited), p. 1; Minnesota Reformer, “Documents show how feds spied on protesters, left-wing organizations and unions during Metro Surge” (previously cited); Minnesota Reformer, “New court filings reveal more details of undercover agents’ surveillance of anti-ICE protesters”, 25 August 2026, <https://minnesotareformer.com/2026/08/25/filings-reveal-more-details-of-undercover-agents-surveillance/>.

⁸⁶¹ United States District Court for the District of Minnesota, *United States of America v. Isaac Sant*, Defendant’s Motion for Discovery under Rule 16 and *Brady/Giglio* (previously cited), p. 1.

⁸⁶² In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026.

⁸⁶³ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026.

⁸⁶⁴ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026.

⁸⁶⁵ In-person interview with MSMA, Washington, DC, USA, 18 May 2026.

⁸⁶⁶ Online interview with NIJC, Chicago, IL, USA, 14 April 2026.

⁸⁶⁷ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026; MPR News, “Drone sightings drove surveillance fears as ICE surged in Minnesota”, 13 March 2026, <https://www.mprnews.org/story/2026/03/13/minnesota-drone-sightings-drove-surveillance-fears-as-ice-surged>.

⁸⁶⁸ In-person interview with Columbia Heights Public Schools, Columbia Heights, MN, USA, 19 March 2026.

what to do. The family was scared.”⁸⁶⁹ Reverend David Black stated that there were almost always drones around the Broadview facility in Chicago which he believes ICE and Border Patrol were using to track people who were protesting outside.⁸⁷⁰

Amnesty International was told about Project NOLA which provides “HD crime cameras” to individuals, businesses and municipalities that “transmit video to the Project NOLA Real-Time Crime Information Center at UNO [the University of New Orleans], where video may be live-monitored, stored and re-broadcast to local law enforcement.”⁸⁷¹ Interviewees expressed their concern that this information was being shared with ICE, Border Patrol and other law enforcement agencies for the purposes of immigration enforcement, as well as to monitor local rapid response and mutual aid groups.⁸⁷² They also shared that New Orleans City Council is attempting to expand drone use in the city.⁸⁷³

Individuals told Amnesty International about the mental health impacts of the constant presence of helicopters and drones in their cities. The Coalition for Immigrant Mental Health (CIMH) indicated that “the very visible (SUVs, raids, helicopters, etc.) and violent (tear gas, etc) ICE kidnappings and attempts across Chicago during Midway Blitz created a very intense level of fear and hypervigilance in communities.”⁸⁷⁴ A pastor at New Life Centers said, “There was an emotional toll on people. There were always helicopters flying around.”⁸⁷⁵

“There were helicopters and drones, so many of them all of the time. Now I’m quiet sometimes, and I think I hear them, but they aren’t there. It’s just PTSD. Operation Metro Surge exposed us all to a level of violence we weren’t used to.”⁸⁷⁶

Individuals doing rapid response and mutual aid deliveries shared how being photographed and filmed by federal agents, and followed by them or driven back to their houses, made them feel nervous and afraid.⁸⁷⁷ Liliana Z., who was monitoring ICE activity in Minneapolis-St. Paul, shared that after being followed by a vehicle that looked like ICE she ended up going to the hospital because she had heart palpitations and had to wear a heart monitor for five days.⁸⁷⁸ A member of Mixed Blood Theatre shared, “The level of paranoia was one of the hardest things for me, like driving around and looking to see if you’re being followed was a normal part of your day. All these sorts of things take a toll in different ways.”⁸⁷⁹ However, despite these fears, most individuals interviewed by Amnesty International stated that the constant surveillance by federal agents did not deter them from continuing their rapid response and mutual aid efforts in order to protect and support their migrant neighbours.⁸⁸⁰

Based on the foregoing, Amnesty International assesses that the facial recognition technology systems used by ICE, Border Patrol and other federal agents described in this report amount to 1:n systems – meaning a system seeking to identify an individual against a large image reference database, often created through the unlawful scraping of facial images without knowledge and consent –, or facial recognition for identification, which are systems of mass surveillance. Their use violates the rights to privacy, and equality and non-discrimination, and must be stopped. The organization further considers that the use of automated license plate recognition systems by ICE and Border Patrol to access and search extensive databases of individuals’ vehicle movements constitutes an unjustified and disproportionate interference with the right to privacy. Amnesty International concludes that ICE, Border Patrol and other federal agents unlawfully surveilled individuals they perceived to be migrants and were attempting to detain, as well as rapid responders, people

⁸⁶⁹ In-person interview with Justin/Noodle, Minneapolis-St. Paul, MN, USA, 19 March 2026; MPR News, “Drone sightings drove surveillance fears as ICE surged in Minnesota” (previously cited).

⁸⁷⁰ In-person interview with Rev. David Black, Chicago, IL, USA, 24 March 2026.

⁸⁷¹ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026; Project NOLA, “About Us”, <https://www.projectnola.org/about.html>.

⁸⁷² In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026.

⁸⁷³ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026.

⁸⁷⁴ In-person interview with Coalition for Immigrant Mental Health, Chicago, IL, USA, 25 March 2026.

⁸⁷⁵ Online interview with New Life Centers, Chicago, IL, USA, 28 April 2026.

⁸⁷⁶ In-person interview with Victor Molina, NAMI Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN, USA, 19 March 2026.

⁸⁷⁷ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026.

⁸⁷⁸ In-person interview with Liliana Z., Minneapolis, MN, USA, 18 March 2026.

⁸⁷⁹ Online interview with Mixed Blood Theatre, Minneapolis-St. Paul, MN, USA, 7 April 2026.

⁸⁸⁰ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026.

involved in mutual aid and protesters in violation of their rights to privacy, and equality and non-discrimination.

5.4 Cruel and inhumane detention conditions

Across the four locations covered in this report, Amnesty International documented that ICE is misusing field offices, processing centres and federal office buildings for prolonged detention, reflecting a pattern that has become widespread across the United States.⁸⁸¹ Individuals detained during Operation Midway Blitz in Chicago were often first taken to the Broadview Processing Facility – an ICE service-processing centre; in Minneapolis-St. Paul people were taken to the Bishop Henry Whipple Federal Building – a federal-building field office; and in the Washington metro area people were often first taken to either ICE’s Washington Field Office in Chantilly, Virginia or its Baltimore Field Office in Baltimore, Maryland.⁸⁸²

These four facilities, like other ICE field offices, service-processing centres, and some port and federal-buildings, operate small holding or processing rooms intended for short-term intake, transfer, or processing of people detained by ICE.⁸⁸³ These rooms are not designed for extended stays, in the sense that they do not have beds and usually have limited sanitary facilities.⁸⁸⁴ Prior to the second Trump administration, ICE standards limited hold-room confinement to short periods of time – up to 12 hours – and required inspections, basic sanitation, access to water, food and healthcare, as well as access to legal counsel.⁸⁸⁵ However, on 24 June 2025, ICE issued new guidance waiving the prior standard that limited hold-room stays to 12 hours. The new guidance allows field offices to detain individuals for up to 72 hours and implement related local procedures due to alleged “limited transfer options” and “capacity constraints”.⁸⁸⁶ This new guidance raises human rights concerns given that the prior 12-hour limit was put in place to reduce the risk of inhumane detention conditions, lack of access to adequate medical care and due process violations.

States have an obligation to ensure that conditions of detention meet international human rights law and standards, notably that the conditions are humane and the human rights of detained individuals are respected.⁸⁸⁷ This includes protection against torture, and other cruel, inhumane, or degrading treatment; adequate and suitable food; washing and sanitary facilities; clothing; access to medical care; recreation and exercise; facilities to allow religious practice; and the ability to communicate with the outside world including consulates, lawyers, and family.⁸⁸⁸ Poor conditions of detention will constitute torture where they cause severe pain or suffering, and are afflicted upon detained individuals by the authorities for a discriminatory, punitive or coercive purpose.⁸⁸⁹ Harmful treatment that falls short of causing severe pain or suffering may still constitute inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment (‘other ill-treatment’).⁸⁹⁰

⁸⁸¹ Amnesty International, *USA: Torture and enforced disappearances in the Sunshine State* (previously cited), pp. 30-31; United States District Court for the Northern District of Illinois Eastern Division, *Moreno Gonzalez v. Noem*, Complaint (previously cited), para. 16; United States District Court for the District of Minnesota, *The Advocates for Human Rights et al. v. U.S. Department of Homeland Security et al.*, Class Action Complaint (previously cited), para. 3.

⁸⁸² In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026.

⁸⁸³ ICE, 11087.2: Operations of ERO Holding Facilities, 31 January 2024, <https://www.ice.gov/doclib/foia/policy/directive11087.2.pdf>, para. 3.2.

⁸⁸⁴ U.S. Senate Judiciary Committee, *What is it really like to be in ICE detention? Exclusive insights from two Florida immigration detention facilities*, 18 July 2025,

<https://www.judiciary.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/DURBIN%20REVEALS%20DEVASTATING%20INSIGHTS%20INTO%20FLORIDA%20ICE%20DETENTION%20FACILITIES%20IN%20EXCLUSIVE%20SITE%20VISIT.pdf>, p. 2; TRAC Immigration, “Immigration Detention Primer”, https://tracreports.org/immigration/quickfacts/about_detention.html; El País, “Up to seven days in an ICE hold room: The new normal for detained migrants in the Trump era”, 10 September 2025, <https://english.elpais.com/usa/2025-09-10/up-to-seven-days-in-an-ice-hold-room-the-new-normal-for-detained-migrants-in-the-trump-era.html>.

⁸⁸⁵ ICE, *Performance-Based National Detention Standards 2011, Revised December 2016*, <https://www.ice.gov/detain/detention-management/2011>, Section 2.6.

⁸⁸⁶ ICE, Nationwide Hold Room Waiver, 24 June 2025, <https://immpolicytracking.org/policies/ice-waives-the-12-hour-holding-cell-limit-allowing-detainees-to-be-held-for-72-hours/#/tab-policy-documents>.

⁸⁸⁷ ICCPR, Art. 10(1); American Declaration, Art. XXV; United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners (Nelson Mandela Rules), https://www.unodc.org/documents/justice-and-prison-reform/Nelson_Mandela_Rules-E-book.pdf, Rules 12-35.

⁸⁸⁸ Nelson Mandela Rules (previously cited), Rules 12-49; UNHCR, Detention Guidelines (previously cited), Guideline 8.

⁸⁸⁹ CAT, Article 1.

⁸⁹⁰ CAT, Article 16; IACHR, Inter-American Principles on the Human Rights of all Migrants (previously cited), Principle 15.

At the facilities, Amnesty International documented prolonged periods of detention over the 72-hour limit, severe overcrowding, lack of access to adequate food, water and sanitary facilities such as showers and toilets, complete absence of medical care, and challenges in access to legal representation and due process.

5.4.1 Broadview Processing Center (Broadview, Illinois)

The Broadview Processing Center is an administrative office building meant to be a “holding” facility where people are detained for processing prior to being moved to a longer-term detention facility.⁸⁹¹ The facility is not equipped for overnight or multi-day detention.⁸⁹² The facility does not have beds, showers, or food or healthcare services.⁸⁹³

Organizations and legal providers have documented inhumane, unsanitary and overcrowded conditions at Broadview.⁸⁹⁴ Amnesty International considers that individuals were being detained in a place that completely lacked any infrastructure to hold people for more than a few hours. Interviewees told Amnesty International that, during Operation Midway Blitz, Broadview became overcrowded – over a hundred people were being detained at the facility each night.⁸⁹⁵ Moreover, the amount of time that people were being held at the facility increased from around two to three days to up to two weeks.⁸⁹⁶ A Chicago-based attorney told the organization, “I had clients who were detained at Broadview for more than a week. The facility wasn’t built to hold someone overnight.”⁸⁹⁷

Individuals detained at Broadview were also denied access to medical care and medication.⁸⁹⁸ They were denied access to their lawyers and often experienced difficulties in contacting family members.⁸⁹⁹ Faith leaders who had provided religious services at the facility for years were denied entry.⁹⁰⁰ According to legal providers, ICE considered that the people at Broadview were “in processing” and not yet “detained”, and consequently denied their access to legal representation on this basis.⁹⁰¹ Moreover, Amnesty International was told that individuals detained at the facility were pressured and coerced to sign immigration paperwork they did not understand and to agree to “voluntary” departures.⁹⁰² Nicole Hallett, a clinical professor at the University of Chicago, stated “There are stories of people who were starving and so miserable that they decided to sign removal orders.”⁹⁰³ Requests by elected officials to tour Broadview during Operation Midway Blitz were routinely denied.⁹⁰⁴

⁸⁹¹ United States District Court for the Northern District of Illinois Eastern Division, *Moreno Gonzalez v. Noem*, Complaint (previously cited), paras. 1-2 & 57-58.

⁸⁹² In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026; United States District Court for the Northern District of Illinois Eastern Division, *Moreno Gonzalez v. Noem*, Complaint (previously cited), paras. 59 & 63.

⁸⁹³ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026; United States District Court for the Northern District of Illinois Eastern Division, *Moreno Gonzalez v. Noem*, Complaint (previously cited), paras. 3-5.

⁸⁹⁴ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026; United States District Court for the Northern District of Illinois Eastern Division, *Moreno Gonzalez v. Noem*, Complaint (previously cited); MacArthur Justice Center, “Stories from Broadview”, 3 November 2025, <https://www.macarthurjustice.org/blog2/stories-from-broadview/>; NBC5 Chicago, “What’s it like inside the Broadview ICE facility? Arrested protester shares view”, 3 October 2025, <https://www.nbcchicago.com/news/local/inside-broadview-ice-facility-arrested-protester-shares-view/3832911/>; WTTW, “Broadview ICE Facility Sparks Complaints of Inhumane Conditions”, 25 September 2025, <https://news.wttw.com/2025/09/25/broadview-ice-facility-sparks-complaints-inhumane-conditions>.

⁸⁹⁵ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026; United States District Court for the Northern District of Illinois Eastern Division, *Moreno Gonzalez v. Noem*, Complaint (previously cited), paras. 72-77.

⁸⁹⁶ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026; United States District Court for the Northern District of Illinois Eastern Division, *Moreno Gonzalez v. Noem*, Complaint (previously cited), paras. 61-62 & 75.

⁸⁹⁷ Online interview with immigration lawyer, Chicago, IL, USA, 8 April 2026.

⁸⁹⁸ Online interview with TRP, Chicago, IL, USA, 23 April 2026; United States District Court for the Northern District of Illinois Eastern Division, *Moreno Gonzalez v. Noem*, Complaint (previously cited), paras. 4 & 96-103; NICJ, “Federal Tort Claims on Behalf of South Shore Chicago Residents Targeted in 2025 Immigration Raids – Claim 1: J. Andrades Jiménez”, <https://immigrantjustice.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/05/FTCA-CLAIM-1-J.Andrades-Jimenez.pdf>.

⁸⁹⁹ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026; United States District Court for the Northern District of Illinois Eastern Division, *Moreno Gonzalez v. Noem*, Complaint (previously cited), paras. 8-9 & 114-136.

⁹⁰⁰ United States District Court for the Northern District of Illinois Eastern Division, *Moreno Gonzalez v. Noem*, Complaint (previously cited), para. 12.

⁹⁰¹ Online interview with K. Mosley, Chicago, IL, USA, 8 April 2026.

⁹⁰² In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026; United States District Court for the Northern District of Illinois Eastern Division, *Moreno Gonzalez v. Noem*, Complaint (previously cited), paras. 11 & 137-158.

⁹⁰³ Online interview with Nicole Hallett, Chicago, IL, USA, 15 April 2026.

⁹⁰⁴ Online interview with K. Mosley, 8 April 2026; Dick Durbin, “Durbin Presses ICE Acting Director On Denying Members Of Congress Access To Facilities”, 5 November 2025, <https://www.durbin.senate.gov/newsroom/press-releases/durbin-presses-ice-acting-director-on-denying-members-of-congress-access-to-facilities>; United States District Court for the Northern District of Illinois Eastern Division, *Moreno Gonzalez v. Noem*, Complaint (previously cited), para. 12; Capitol News Illinois, “As Illinois congressional delegation seeks answers, ICE cancels meeting”, 26 September 2025, <https://capitolnewsillinois.com/news/as-illinois-congressional-delegation-seeks-answers-ice-cancels-meeting/>.

“Broadview had overcrowded, squalid conditions. They’re not trying to quickly process people for regular removal proceeding, they’re repeatedly telling people to sign voluntary departure. At some point it ceases to be voluntary because you don’t know what relief you might have; you have no access to the court, no access to a lawyer. You can’t even contact your family. People were forced pretty coercively to sign voluntary departures.”⁹⁰⁵

On 31 October 2025, the ACLU of Illinois, MacArthur Justice Center’s Illinois office and Eimer Stahl’s Chicago office filed an emergency class action lawsuit on behalf of individuals who were being held at the facility, arguing that they were being subject to inhumane and unlawful conditions, including lack of access to adequate medical care, as well as being denied access to legal representation.⁹⁰⁶ According to the complaint, “[I]mmigration detainees ... are being confined at Broadview inside overcrowded holding cells containing dozens of people at a time. People are forced to attempt to sleep for days or sometimes weeks on plastic chairs or on the filthy concrete floor. They are denied sufficient food and water. They cannot shower, they are denied soap, hygiene items, and menstrual products, and they have no way to clean themselves. They are often denied a change of clothes. The temperatures are extreme and uncomfortable. Most nights are freezing cold, yet only some receive a thin foil blanket, sweater, or sweatpants to try to retain warmth. The lights are typically on all night.”⁹⁰⁷

“Defendants have intentionally turned Broadview into a ‘black hole’ where ‘people go missing for days’ and ‘are forced to sign [] voluntary departure forms,’ while their attorneys are denied access to their clients.”⁹⁰⁸

On 5 November 2025, the District Court for the Northern District of Illinois Eastern Division issued a temporary restraining order ordering ICE to improve conditions at the facility and facilitate access to legal counsel.⁹⁰⁹

Following the court’s decision, DHS issued a statement to “set the record straight about conditions” at Broadview stating, “Despite hoaxes spread by criminal illegal aliens, the complicit media, and now an activist judge, the ICE Broadview Facility does NOT have subprime conditions ... When will the media start reporting on the criminal illegal aliens arrested from American communities and stop peddling hoaxes about illegal alien detention centers?”⁹¹⁰

Amnesty International was told that, following the issuance of the temporary restraining order, conditions at Broadview slightly improved, including the installation of an attorney-access telephone line.⁹¹¹ However, what ended up happening in practice is that ICE began transferring detained individuals out of the state of Illinois as quickly as possible.⁹¹² The Resurrection Project stated, “Once the ACLU litigation was successful, it seemed like ICE began moving folks within hours. The list of where people are being transferred has gotten exponentially longer.”⁹¹³

“The Broadview Facility has zero beds. It’s basically an office; it has an office structure. During Midway Blitz, between 30 and 40 people were being detained there a night. I’ve been inside Broadview many times and know what the facility looks like. I can’t fathom people staying overnight there. This never happened before Midway Blitz.”⁹¹⁴

5.4.2 Washington Field Office (Chantilly, Virginia)

The ICE Washington Field Office, an office building located in Chantilly, Virginia, is considered a “holding facility” that is not meant for multi-day detention.⁹¹⁵ The building has small rooms that are normally used

⁹⁰⁵ Online interview with NIJC, Chicago, IL, USA, 14 April 2026.

⁹⁰⁶ United States District Court for the Northern District of Illinois Eastern Division, *Moreno Gonzalez v. Noem*, Complaint (previously cited); ACLU of Illinois, “Federal Court Asked to Address Inhumane Conditions Experienced by Those Held at Broadview ICE Facility”, 31 October 2025, <https://www.aclu-il.org/press-releases/federal-court-asked-to-address-inhumane-conditions-experienced-by-those-held-at-broadview-ice-facility/>.

⁹⁰⁷ United States District Court for the Northern District of Illinois Eastern Division, *Moreno Gonzalez v. Noem*, Complaint (previously cited), para. 3.

⁹⁰⁸ United States District Court for the Northern District of Illinois Eastern Division, *Moreno Gonzalez v. Noem*, Complaint (previously cited), para. 137.

⁹⁰⁹ United States District Court for the Northern District of Illinois Eastern Division, *Moreno Gonzalez v. Noem*, Temporary Restraining Order, Case No. 25-cv-13323, 5 November 2025, <https://www.aclu-il.org/cases/moreno-gonzalez-v-noem/?document=Moreno-Gonzalez-v-Noem-Temporary-Restraining-Order#documents>.

⁹¹⁰ DHS, “DHS Sets the Record Straight on Media and Activist Lies about ICE Broadview Processing Center Conditions”, 5 November 2025, <https://www.dhs.gov/news/2025/11/05/dhs-sets-record-straight-media-and-activist-lies-about-ice-broadview-processing>.

⁹¹¹ Online interview with K. Mosley, Chicago, IL, USA, 8 April 2026.

⁹¹² In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026.

⁹¹³ Online interview with TRP, Chicago, IL, USA, 23 April 2026.

⁹¹⁴ In-person interview with ICDI, Chicago, IL, USA, 23 March 2026.

⁹¹⁵ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026; ACLU of Virginia & NIP, “Urgent Request for Attorney Access and Improvements to the Conditions at ICE Washington Field Office” (previously cited), p. 2.

for processing people before they are transferred somewhere else.⁹¹⁶ Individuals detained in Washington, DC, and Virginia are often first taken to Chantilly before being transferred to other long-term detention facilities in Virginia.⁹¹⁷

Organizations and legal providers have documented inhumane, unsanitary and overcrowded conditions at Chantilly.⁹¹⁸ Amnesty International was told that, during the Federal Takeover, people were being detained at Chantilly for up to two weeks in rooms that were meant for 12 people but were holding as many as 80 to 100 people.⁹¹⁹ Individuals detained at Chantilly did not have access to adequate food, water, healthcare or medication.⁹²⁰ A letter sent by a number of organizations and community members from the DMV to members of Congress stated that individuals detained at the facility were “deprived of access to food and water, do not have adequate sleeping quarters and are sleeping on the floor with makeshift blankets, are denied medical care, and are subjected to unsanitary and degrading conditions. Lawyers have received reports of people opting for self-deportation rather than continue to suffer inhumane conditions at Chantilly.”⁹²¹

“There are at least three rooms with a prison-like toilet. Anywhere from between 30-80 people were being held in rooms that were meant for only 12 people. People were there from 3 days to a week and a half. The smell was awful, the rooms were so hot, the air conditioning couldn’t work with that many people. Some people couldn’t sit down. There are accounts of one meal a day – a frozen burrito – and that’s all they were getting. Anyone with medical conditions were not getting any help. People were fainting due to lack of food. Lots of people got COVID. People were in their street clothes, there was no shower. The water they got was from the sink on top of the toilet, it smelled foul and they tried not to drink it.”⁹²²

Carlos* was taken to Chantilly after being detained by ICE in Washington, DC. He told Amnesty International, “They took me to Chantilly where I was supposed to be processed. Instead, they held me there for four days. They told me I could agree to voluntary departure, but I told them ‘no’ and that I wanted to speak with an attorney.” Carlos shared that the room where he was held had a sign in it that read “maximum capacity 30 people”, but that there were close to 100 individuals in the room. “My last few nights, there was no space to sleep. I have severe back pain and we were only able to sleep pressed up against each other,” which Carlos says, “hurt me a lot to know they just viewed us and were treating us like criminals. Most of us were still in our work clothes because we were picked up either coming from or going to work. We were held in a small room with all these men who had come from work, there were no showers and so much stress. We were held there for days, that room was foul.” Describing the food, Carlos said, “They only gave us frozen burritos that were not warmed up. The beans in it were frozen, it was all they gave us to eat.” He also shared that ICE agents gave priority to individuals who agreed to “voluntary” departure and that agents repeatedly asked people if they wanted to reconsider “voluntary” departure as an option.⁹²³

⁹¹⁶ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026.

⁹¹⁷ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026.

⁹¹⁸ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026; ACLU of Virginia & NIP, “Urgent Request for Attorney Access and Improvements to the Conditions at ICE Washington Field Office” (previously cited); Free Them All Coalition et al., Letter, 27 August 2025, https://www.ffxnow.com/files/2025/08/8_27-Emergency-Letter-to-Elected-Officials-Regarding-Chantilly.pdf; Progress Virginia, “Virginia Coalition for Immigrant Rights (VACIR) Urges Immediate Action to End Inhumane Conditions at Chantilly ICE Facility”, 29 August 2025, <https://progressva.org/press-release/virginia-coalition-for-immigrant-rights-vacir-urges-immediate-action-to-end-inhumane-conditions-at-chantilly-ice-facility/>; The Washington Post, “ICE holding facilities overcrowded amid surge in immigration arrests”, 12 September 2025, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/immigration/2025/09/12/ice-dc-arrests-virginia-immigrants-office/>; MS Now, “One meal a day, no bathing for days: Inside the ‘crisis’ at one Virginia ICE field office”, 29 August 2025, <https://www.ms.now/news/virginia-ice-office-one-meal-day-inhumane-conditions-rcna227976>; FFX Now, “Advocates for immigrants allege ‘degrading’ conditions at ICE office in Chantilly”, 29 August 2025, <https://www.ffxnow.com/2025/08/29/advocates-for-immigrants-allege-degrading-conditions-at-ice-office-in-chantilly/>; WTOP News, “Allegations of ‘inhumane’ treatment prompt ACLU of Virginia to demand changes at Chantilly ICE Field Office”, 5 September 2025, <https://wtop.com/virginia/2025/09/allegations-of-inhumane-treatment-prompt-aclu-of-virginia-to-demand-changes-at-chantilly-ice-field-office/>.

⁹¹⁹ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026; ACLU of Virginia & NIP, “Urgent Request for Attorney Access and Improvements to the Conditions at ICE Washington Field Office” (previously cited), pp. 2-3; United States District Court for the District of Columbia, *Escobar Molina v. DHS*, Decision of Preliminary Injunction (previously cited), pp. 10 & 12.

⁹²⁰ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026; ACLU of Virginia & NIP, “Urgent Request for Attorney Access and Improvements to the Conditions at ICE Washington Field Office” (previously cited), p. 3; United States District Court for the District of Columbia, *Escobar Molina v. DHS*, Decision of Preliminary Injunction (previously cited), pp. 10 & 12.

⁹²¹ Free Them All Coalition et al., Letter (previously cited).

⁹²² Online interview with the ACLU of Virginia, VA, USA, 15 May 2026.

⁹²³ Online interview with Carlos & Inés*, Washington, DC, USA, 16 May 2026.

Individuals detained at Chantilly were unable to contact their family members and experienced challenges in speaking with their lawyers or accessing legal representation.⁹²⁴ Lawyers also experienced difficulties in confirming that their clients were being detained at the facility and lawyers that went to the facility to inquire about their clients were denied information and access.⁹²⁵ Individuals detained at Chantilly have reported being pressured or coerced to agree to “voluntary” departure, despite having no opportunity to speak with their lawyers.⁹²⁶

In a September 2025 demand letter sent by the ACLU of Virginia and the National Immigration Project (NIP) to ICE and DHS, the organizations described that people detained at Chantilly were being held in overcrowded and dangerous conditions, stating, “hundreds of people have been held for days in overcrowded rooms, without beds, sufficient food, medications or medical care, hygiene products, access to showers, or the ability to communicate confidentially with attorneys.”⁹²⁷

On 26 September 2025, elected officials were finally given access to tour Chantilly for a planned inspection – a month after attempting to gain access to the facility, and in violation of their right under US law to make unannounced visits to ICE facilities.⁹²⁸ They reported that “conditions appear to have improved from the horrifying reports we received just weeks ago” but stated that the “pervasive overcrowding and unsafe conditions that occurred are the direct consequence of the Trump administration’s mass detention policies”.⁹²⁹ However, in July 2026, new reports of overcrowding and inhumane conditions at Chantilly emerged.⁹³⁰

5.4.3 Bishop Henry Whipple Federal Building (Fort Snelling, Minnesota)

The Bishop Henry Whipple Federal Building is an office building that houses a number of federal offices, including the ICE St. Paul Field Office, and an immigration courthouse. The building is not equipped to detain people. During Operation Metro Surge, it became DHS’s base of operations, and individuals detained during the operation were often first taken there before being transferred elsewhere.⁹³¹

Organizations and legal providers have documented inhumane, unsanitary and overcrowded conditions at the Whipple Building.⁹³² Prior to December 2025, individuals were usually held at the building for under 12 hours, however, during Operation Metro Surge, people were detained there for days.⁹³³ Organizations interviewed by Amnesty International stated that individuals detained at the Whipple Building were forced to sleep on the floor and did not have access to adequate food, water, medical care, legal counsel or pastoral care.⁹³⁴ Sofia* told the organization that she was forced to sleep overnight at the building on the floor.⁹³⁵

⁹²⁴ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026; ACLU of Virginia & NIP, “Urgent Request for Attorney Access and Improvements to the Conditions at ICE Washington Field Office” (previously cited), pp. 4-5; Free Them All Coalition et al., Letter (previously cited).

⁹²⁵ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026; ACLU of Virginia & NIP, “Urgent Request for Attorney Access and Improvements to the Conditions at ICE Washington Field Office” (previously cited), p. 4; Free Them All Coalition et al., Letter (previously cited).

⁹²⁶ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026; ACLU of Virginia & NIP, “Urgent Request for Attorney Access and Improvements to the Conditions at ICE Washington Field Office” (previously cited), pp. 4-5.

⁹²⁷ ACLU of Virginia & NIP, “Urgent Request for Attorney Access and Improvements to the Conditions at ICE Washington Field Office” (previously cited).

⁹²⁸ Mark Warner, “Warner, Beyer, Subramanyam & Walkinshaw Release Statement Following Visit to Chantilly ICE Field Office”, 26 September 2025, <https://www.warner.senate.gov/newsroom/press-releases/warner-beyer-subramanyam-walkinshaw-release-statement-following-visit-to-chantilly-ice-field-office/>; House Committee on the Judiciary, “Court Rules Trump-Vance Administration Cannot Block Members of Congress From Conducting Oversight at Federal Immigration Detention Facilities”, 17 December 2025, <https://democrats-judiciary.house.gov/media-center/press-releases/court-rules-trump-vance-administration-cannot-block-members-of-congress-from-conducting-oversight-at-federal-immigration-detention-facilities>; United States District Court for the District of Columbia, *Neguse et al., v. U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement*, Complaint, Case No. 1:25-cv-02463, 30 July 2025, <https://www.courtlistener.com/docket/70964222/1/neguse-v-us-immigration-and-customs-enforcement/>.

⁹²⁹ Mark Warner, “Warner, Beyer, Subramanyam & Walkinshaw Release Statement Following Visit to Chantilly ICE Field Office” (previously cited).

⁹³⁰ FFX Now, “At Chantilly ICE office, protestors keep a spotlight on the agency’s treatment of immigrants”, 2 June 2026, <https://www.ffxnow.com/2026/06/02/at-chantilly-ice-office-protestors-keep-a-spotlight-on-the-agencys-treatment-of-immigrants/>.

⁹³¹ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026; The New York Times, “The Out-of-the-Way Building at the Center of Minnesota’s Immigration Drama” (previously cited).

⁹³² In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026; United States District Court for the District of Minnesota, *The Advocates for Human Rights et al. v. U.S. Department of Homeland Security et al.*, Class Action Complaint (previously cited); The New York Times, “The Out-of-the-Way Building at the Center of Minnesota’s Immigration Drama” (previously cited); CBS News, “Conditions inside Whipple Federal Building are ‘unacceptable,’ Minnesota lawmaker says after visit” (previously cited); The Minnesota Star Tribune, “‘No humanity’: Detainees describe conditions inside Whipple Federal Building” (previously cited).

⁹³³ United States District Court for the District of Minnesota, *The Advocates for Human Rights et al. v. U.S. Department of Homeland Security et al.*, Class Action Complaint (previously cited), paras. 26-27.

⁹³⁴ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026.

⁹³⁵ In-person interview with Sofia*, Richfield, Minnesota, USA, 18 March 2026.

Mónica* was pressured to agree to “voluntary” departure while she was being held in the building and was not given any food even though she was detained there for hours.⁹³⁶

Columbia Heights Public Schools staff shared the story of the mother of two of their students who was detained at the Anoka County courthouse and taken to the Whipple building. “They were made to sleep on concrete with no blankets. They had no access to food for 50 hours. They were in a waiting room for I think 17 hours before anyone said anything to them,” staff said. They were then quickly transferred to the South Texas Family Resident Center, located in Dilley, Texas.⁹³⁷

“A guy was detained even though he has a green card. They kept him at Whipple for 3 days and 2 nights. He got a banana each day for food – the banana wasn’t even ripe.”⁹³⁸

Interviewees indicated that people detained at the Whipple Building had no access to legal counsel and that lawyers were unable to contact their clients who were being detained there.⁹³⁹ Moreover, Amnesty International was told that individuals detained at the facility were pressured to agree to “voluntary” departure.⁹⁴⁰

On 27 January 2026, The Advocates for Human Rights and an individual detained at the Whipple Building filed a class action lawsuit arguing that ICE and DHS systemically denied detained individuals access to legal counsel while holding them at the building.⁹⁴¹ The complaint detailed that individuals were often transferred out of state – and sometimes even rapidly removed from the United States – before being able to access legal counsel.⁹⁴²

“We did not have access to people detained there. There was no access to counsel at the Whipple Building. Staff at the facility told us, ‘If even one person gets a lawyer, everyone is going to want a lawyer.’”⁹⁴³

On 12 February 2026, the United States District Court for the District of Minnesota issued a temporary restraining order requiring DHS and ICE to immediately restore meaningful access to legal representation for people detained at the Whipple Building.⁹⁴⁴ Subsequently, on March 26, the same court granted a preliminary injunction ordering DHS and ICE to stop transferring detained individuals outside of Minnesota.⁹⁴⁵ The court found that, since the temporary restraining order was issued in February, DHS and ICE had made “considerable but inconsistent efforts to improve attorney access”, stating, “Due process is not a game of keep-away. ICE recognizes detainees’ right to access counsel in theory and written policy, but not in practice. Instead, it has placed obstacle after obstacle in front of detainees and their attorneys, blocking communication between clients and counsel.”⁹⁴⁶

Interviewees also described challenges in providing pastoral care to people detained at the Whipple Building.⁹⁴⁷ Reverend Susie Hayward said, “We haven’t been able to access Whipple to provide pastoral

⁹³⁶ In-person interview with Mónica*, Richfield, Minnesota, USA, 18 March 2026.

⁹³⁷ In-person interview with Columbia Heights Public Schools, Columbia Heights, MN, USA, 19 March 2026.

⁹³⁸ Online interview with Ryan C., Minneapolis-St. Paul, MN, USA, 15 April 2026.

⁹³⁹ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026.

⁹⁴⁰ In-person interview with Advocates for Human Rights, Minneapolis, MN, USA, 20 March 2026; United States District Court for the District of Minnesota, *The Advocates for Human Rights et al. v. U.S. Department of Homeland Security et al.*, Class Action Complaint (previously cited), para. 34.

⁹⁴¹ United States District Court for the District of Minnesota, *The Advocates for Human Rights et al. v. U.S. Department of Homeland Security et al.*, Class Action Complaint (previously cited); Democracy Forward, “The Advocates for Human Rights, Individual Detained In Minnesota Sue U.S. Department of Homeland Security Over Denial of Access to Lawyers”, 28 January 2026, <https://democracyforward.org/news/press-releases/the-advocates-for-human-rights-individual-detained-in-minnesota-sue-u-s-department-of-homeland-security-over-denial-of-access-to-lawyers/>.

⁹⁴² United States District Court for the District of Minnesota, *The Advocates for Human Rights et al. v. U.S. Department of Homeland Security et al.*, Class Action Complaint (previously cited), para. 4.

⁹⁴³ In-person interview with Advocates for Human Rights, Minneapolis, MN, USA, 20 March 2026.

⁹⁴⁴ United States District Court for the District of Minnesota, *The Advocates for Human Rights et al. v. U.S. Department of Homeland Security et al.*, Order, Case No. 26-cv-749 (NEB/DLM), 12 February 2026, <https://democracyforward.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/02/Dist.Minn..0-26-cv-00749-95.pdf>; Democracy Forward, “Federal Court Orders Trump-Vance Administration to Restore Attorney Access at Minneapolis Detention Facilities”, 12 February 2026, <https://democracyforward.org/news/press-releases/federal-court-orders-trump-vance-administration-to-restore-attorney-access-at-minneapolis-detention-facilities/>.

⁹⁴⁵ United States District Court for the District of Minnesota, *The Advocates for Human Rights et al. v. U.S. Department of Homeland Security et al.*, Preliminary Injunction Order, Case No. 26-cv-749 (NEB/DLM), 26 March 2026, <https://democracyforward.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/03/TAHR-v-DHS-Prelim-Inj.pdf>; The Advocates for Human Rights, “Court Strengthens and Extends Relief for People Detained in Minnesota, Restricting Transfer Out of State and Protecting Access to Counsel”, 26 March 2026, <https://www.theadvocatesforhumanrights.org/News/A/Index?id=643>.

⁹⁴⁶ United States District Court for the District of Minnesota, *The Advocates for Human Rights et al. v. U.S. Department of Homeland Security et al.*, Preliminary Injunction Order (previously cited), p. 3.

⁹⁴⁷ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026; United States District Court for the District of Minnesota, *Minneapolis Area Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America et al. v. U.S. Department of Homeland Security et al.*, Complaint, Case No. 0:26-cv-01576, 23 February 2026,

care. It's a violation of the clergy's ability to practice their faith and to call to ministry, and it's a violation of worshippers' ability to access their faith leaders and spiritual care."⁹⁴⁸ In February 2026, faith leaders filed a lawsuit arguing that ICE was barring them from "offering prayer, pastoral guidance, sacramental ministry, and spiritual comfort" to people detained at the Whipple Building.⁹⁴⁹ On March 20, the court ordered that ICE must ensure that faith leaders are able to access the building to provide pastoral care.⁹⁵⁰

Interviewees also shared that ICE routinely released people from Whipple in the middle of the night in freezing temperatures and without proper clothes for the weather.⁹⁵¹ The organization Haven Watch tries to meet people who are being released, and give them blankets, coats and money.⁹⁵²

5.4.4 Incommunicado detention, enforced disappearances, ill-treatment and torture in the context of ICE detention

Amnesty International's findings on the treatment and conditions in ICE detention raise concern with regards to the commission of the most serious human rights violations, including incommunicado detention, as well as possible enforced disappearances, ill-treatment and torture.

The organization finds that detention conditions at Broadview, Whipple and Chantilly did not comply with international human rights law and standards during the immigration surges in Chicago, Minneapolis-St. Paul and Washington, DC. At the three locations, individuals were held in overcrowded and unsanitary conditions, healthcare services were non-existent, and access to legal representatives was severely restricted. Amnesty International concludes that this treatment constitutes cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment. Further, the unnecessary and prolonged detention of people in inhumane conditions in facilities not even equipped for overnight detention, combined with coercion to accept "voluntary" departure, may amount to torture.

Additionally, the organization received information that individuals detained at Broadview, Chantilly and Whipple were denied access to their lawyers and also experienced difficulties in contacting their family members.⁹⁵³ In an emergency class action lawsuit filed on behalf of individuals who were being detained at Broadview, the filing organizations argued that "... Defendants have cut off detainees from the outside world."⁹⁵⁴ The complaint noted that ICE agents prevented detained individuals from speaking with their lawyer or from obtaining a lawyer if they did not already have one, that agents prevented lawyers from visiting their clients, and that lawyers who attempted to contact their clients were "rebuffed or ignored".⁹⁵⁵ A class action lawsuit about access to counsel at the Whipple Building argued that individuals detained there were systematically denied access to lawyers, including that visitation between lawyers and clients was not permitted, and that ICE did not answer the facility's telephone nor respond to emails sent to the facility's publicly available email address.⁹⁵⁶ The United States District Court for the District of Minnesota found that ICE "...has placed obstacle after obstacle in front of detainees and their attorneys, blocking communication

<https://www.courtlistener.com/docket/72314250/1/minneapolis-area-synod-of-the-evangelical-lutheran-church-in-america-v/>; CBS News, "Feds prevent faith leaders from providing pastoral care to detainees at Whipple, lawsuit says", 23 February 2026, <https://www.cbsnews.com/minnesota/news/faith-leaders-pastoral-care-whipple-building-denied-lawsuit/>; Courthouse News Service, "Minnesota clergy sue Trump for blocking detainee access to pastoral care", 27 June 2026, <https://www.courthousenews.com/minnesota-clergy-sue-trump-for-blocking-detainee-access-to-pastoral-care/>.

⁹⁴⁸ In-person interview with Rev. Susie Hayward, Minneapolis, MN, USA, 18 March 2026.

⁹⁴⁹ United States District Court for the District of Minnesota, *Minneapolis Area Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America et al. v. U.S. Department of Homeland Security et al.*, Complaint (previously cited), para. 1.

⁹⁵⁰ United States District Court for the District of Minnesota, *Minneapolis Area Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America et al. v. U.S. Department of Homeland Security et al.*, Order on Motion for Preliminary Injunction, Case No. 0:26-cv-01576, 20 March 2026, <https://www.courtlistener.com/docket/72314250/57/minneapolis-area-synod-of-the-evangelical-lutheran-church-in-america-v/>.

⁹⁵¹ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026; United States District Court for the District of Minnesota, *Hussen v. Noem*, Class Action Complaint for Declaratory and Injunctive Relief (previously cited), para. 38.

⁹⁵² In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026; MPR News, "Inside the group that helps ICE detainees released from Whipple find warmth, phones and rides", 26 January 2026, <https://www.mprnews.org/episode/2026/01/26/inside-the-group-that-helps-ice-detainees-released-from-whipple-find-warmth-phones-and-rides>.

⁹⁵³ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026.

⁹⁵⁴ United States District Court for the Northern District of Illinois Eastern Division, *Moreno Gonzalez v. Noem*, Complaint (previously cited), para. 8.

⁹⁵⁵ United States District Court for the Northern District of Illinois Eastern Division, *Moreno Gonzalez v. Noem*, Complaint (previously cited), paras. 8-10, 114-136.

⁹⁵⁶ United States District Court for the District of Minnesota, *The Advocates for Human Rights et al. v. U.S. Department of Homeland Security et al.*, Class Action Complaint (previously cited), paras. 29-32.

between clients and counsel.”⁹⁵⁷ In a demand letter sent to ICE about conditions at Chantilly, organizations stated that individuals detained at the facility were often unable to speak with their lawyers and families, and that lawyers were prohibited from accessing the facility.⁹⁵⁸

“Attorney telephone calls are sent to an unattended line, and their calls and emails go unanswered. The ICE online detainee locator fails to accurately reflect the location of individuals in Defendant’s custody so that attorneys cannot physically find their clients.”⁹⁵⁹

Moreover, while ICE’s Online Detainee Locator System is meant to indicate the location of individuals in ICE custody, the system frequently contains inaccurate or missing information.⁹⁶⁰ Amnesty International was told that an individual may not appear when searched for, may be listed at an incorrect detention facility, or may be identified as being in ICE custody with an instruction to contact ICE for more information but without any information about their location.⁹⁶¹ Given that Broadview, Chantilly and Whipple are not ICE detention centres, lawyers interviewed by Amnesty International indicated that their clients would not show up as being detained at the facilities in ICE’s Online Detainee Locator System.⁹⁶² They noted that, in most cases, when searching for their clients, the locator would state “Contact Field Office” instead of listing the facility at which the individual was being detained, and that in some cases, their clients would not show up in the locator at all.⁹⁶³ They further indicated that when they would contact ICE via telephone to attempt to ascertain the location of their clients, the telephone lines were often unattended with no option to leave a message.⁹⁶⁴ If someone did answer the telephone, they often refused to provide information as to whether the individual was in ICE custody or where they were being detained. Interviewees also noted that they did not receive any response from ICE regarding emails they sent to the facilities.⁹⁶⁵ At the same time, lawyers who suspected that their clients might be detained at one of the facilities and showed up looking for them, were often denied access and ICE would not confirm whether their client was being held at the facility.⁹⁶⁶

“Many detainees who arrive at Whipple are not granted an outgoing phone call, which could be used to contact an attorney or to contact family members who might have arranged representation or be able to do so. Instead, officials at Whipple have informed detainees’ attorneys that detainees will not be allowed to make an outgoing phone call until after they have been ‘booked,’ by which time the detainees have generally been transferred to a different immigration detention facility—usually or always outside Minnesota.”⁹⁶⁷

The inability of lawyers to locate their clients in ICE’s Online Detainee Locator System was compounded by the frequent transfers of individuals between ICE facilities. Interviewees told Amnesty International that individuals detained in ICE custody are frequently transferred between ICE detention facilities; a phenomenon that is happening all across the United States and has become more common under the Trump administration with some people being moved between 10 and 20 times.⁹⁶⁸ These transfers move individuals

⁹⁵⁷ United States District Court for the District of Minnesota, *The Advocates for Human Rights et al. v. U.S. Department of Homeland Security et al.*, Preliminary Injunction Order (previously cited), p. 3.

⁹⁵⁸ ACLU of Virginia & NIP, “Urgent Request for Attorney Access and Improvements to the Conditions at ICE Washington Field Office” (previously cited), pp. 4-5.

⁹⁵⁹ United States District Court for the Northern District of Illinois Eastern Division, *Moreno Gonzalez v. Noem*, Complaint (previously cited), paras. 9-10.
⁹⁶⁰ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026; ICE, “Online Detainee Locator System”, <https://locator.ice.gov/odls/#/search>; United States District Court for the Northern District of Illinois Eastern Division, *Moreno Gonzalez v. Noem*, Complaint (previously cited), paras. 10 & 127.

⁹⁶¹ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026; United States District Court for the Northern District of Illinois Eastern Division, *Moreno Gonzalez v. Noem*, Complaint (previously cited), paras. 10 & 127.

⁹⁶² In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026; United States District Court for the Northern District of Illinois Eastern Division, *Moreno Gonzalez v. Noem*, Complaint (previously cited), paras. 10 & 127-30.

⁹⁶³ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026; United States District Court for the Northern District of Illinois Eastern Division, *Moreno Gonzalez v. Noem*, Complaint (previously cited), paras. 10 & 127.

⁹⁶⁴ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026; United States District Court for the Northern District of Illinois Eastern Division, *Moreno Gonzalez v. Noem*, Complaint (previously cited), para. 131.

⁹⁶⁵ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026; United States District Court for the Northern District of Illinois Eastern Division, *Moreno Gonzalez v. Noem*, Complaint (previously cited), para. 133.

⁹⁶⁶ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026; United States District Court for the Northern District of Illinois Eastern Division, *Moreno Gonzalez v. Noem*, Complaint (previously cited), paras. 9-10, 135.

⁹⁶⁷ United States District Court for the District of Minnesota, *The Advocates for Human Rights et al. v. U.S. Department of Homeland Security et al.*, Class Action Complaint (previously cited), para. 32.

⁹⁶⁸ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026; HRF, “ICE Flight Monitor Interactive Dashboard – Domestic Transfer 2026”, <https://www.humanrightsfirst.org/ice-flight-monitor-interactive-dashboard>; Amnesty International, *USA: Torture and enforced disappearances in the Sunshine State* (previously cited), p. 54; AIC, “Council and RMIAN File FOIA Seeking Information about Detrimental Transfers of People in ICE Custody”, 10 February 2025, <https://www.americanimmigrationcouncil.org/foia-request/council-and-rmian-file-foia-seeking-information-about-detrimental-transfers-people-ice-custody/>; Capital & Main, “ICE is transferring people in its custody away from family, lawyers”, 23 September 2025, <https://capitalandmain.com/ice-is-transferring-people-in-its-custody-away-from-family-lawyershttps://capitalandmain.com/ice-is-transferring-people-in-its->

away from their families, support systems, legal representatives and sustained medical care, and can disrupt their immigration cases, hampering their access to effective remedies and adequate legal counselling.⁹⁶⁹ Moreover, frequent transfers between facilities makes it difficult for families and attorneys to know the location of where people are detained. As indicated, there is often a delay in updates to the Online Detainee Locator System meaning that it often does not accurately reflect the facility at which a person is being held.

“The only means by which individuals at ICE WAS [Chantilly] can communicate with the outside world is via a non-confidential phone line. While some people detained at ICE WAS are provided with a short free phone call after arriving at the facility, many families report not hearing from their loved ones at all.”⁹⁷⁰

Based on the foregoing, Amnesty International considers that ICE’s denial of detained individuals’ access to their lawyers and families, its obstruction of lawyers’ attempts to communicate with their clients, its refusal to confirm whether an individual is in ICE custody or their whereabouts, and missing or inaccurate information in ICE’s Online Detainee Locator System facilitates incommunicado detention. Amnesty International further considers that detention of an individual at Broadview, Chantilly and Whipple constitutes an enforced disappearance when ICE refuses to disclose the whereabouts of the detained individual when asked, the detained individual is unable to communicate with their lawyer, family or anyone outside of the detention centre, and the individual is frequently transferred between facilities without ICE informing their family or lawyer of their whereabouts.⁹⁷¹ Further, the frequent transfers of individuals from one facility to another must be considered a strong indicator of a deliberate act seeking to place them outside the protection of the law.

Interviewees further indicated that individuals are shackled any time they are transferred by ICE between facilities.⁹⁷² Amnesty International has previously found that the use of restraints by ICE during transfers is systematic, prolonged and punitive, and is not based on individual risk assessments.⁹⁷³ International law and standards require that restraining measures can only be used when they are strictly necessary and proportionate.⁹⁷⁴ Misuse of restraints will amount to torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment. Amnesty International concludes that the automatic, prolonged and indiscriminate shackling of individuals detained for immigration reasons during transfers is not a matter of operational security, but a deliberate form of humiliation and control that amounts to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment, and in some cases, it may amount to torture or other ill-treatment.⁹⁷⁵

More broadly, Amnesty International considers that the prolonged detention of individuals in overcrowded and unsanitary conditions, without healthcare and with severe restrictions on access to lawyers and family members, demonstrates a pattern of cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment in ICE detention – which Amnesty International has documented at other ICE facilities in the United States.⁹⁷⁶ Where these conditions were combined with coercion to accept “voluntary” departure, such treatment may amount to torture.

Taken together, Amnesty International finds that the treatment of individuals detained at the Broadview Processing Facility, the Bishop Henry Whipple Federal Building and the ICE Washington Field Office during the immigration surges in Chicago, Minneapolis-St. Paul and Washington, DC, resulted in serious human rights violations, including those described above, as well as incommunicado detention and possible

[custody-away-from-family-lawyers](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2025/12/22/us/trump-immigration-deportation-network-ice-arrests.html); The New York Times, “Inside the deportation machine”, 22 December 2025, <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2025/12/22/us/trump-immigration-deportation-network-ice-arrests.html>.

⁹⁶⁹ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026; Amnesty International, *USA: Torture and enforced disappearances in the Sunshine State* (previously cited), p. 54; The Guardian, “Plane to purgatory: how Trump’s deportation program shuttles immigrants into lawless limbo”, 10 September 2025, <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/ng-interactive/2025/sep/10/trump-global-airline-deportation-immigration>.

⁹⁷⁰ ACLU of Virginia & NIP, “Urgent Request for Attorney Access and Improvements to the Conditions at ICE Washington Field Office” (previously cited), p. 4.

⁹⁷¹ Article 2 of the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance provides: For the purposes of this Convention, “enforced disappearance” is considered to be the arrest, detention, abduction or any other form of deprivation of liberty by agents of the State or by persons or groups of persons acting with the authorization, support or acquiescence of the State, followed by a refusal to acknowledge the deprivation of liberty or by concealment of the fate or whereabouts of the disappeared person, which place such a person outside the protection of the law. The United States has not ratified the Convention, however, the prohibition of enforced disappearance is a norm of *jus cogens*.

⁹⁷² In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026.

⁹⁷³ Amnesty International, *USA: Torture and enforced disappearances in the Sunshine State* (previously cited), p. 29.

⁹⁷⁴ Nelson Mandela Rules, Rules 47-48; UN Basic Principles on the Use of Force and Firearms by Law Enforcement Officials, Principle 15.

⁹⁷⁵ Past Amnesty International research has found that the expulsion of Haitian seeking safety in handcuffs and shackles from the US amounts to race and migrant-related torture under international human rights law. Amnesty International, “*They did not treat us like people*” (previously cited), p. 58.

⁹⁷⁶ Amnesty International, *USA: Dehumanized by design* (previously cited); Amnesty International, *USA: Torture and enforced disappearances in the Sunshine State* (previously cited).

enforced disappearances. The organization concludes that these facilities do not have the necessary infrastructure to ensure detention conditions that comply with international human rights law and standards and calls on ICE to stop detaining people at them.

5.5 System of impunity and other institutional failures within ICE

The human rights violations documented throughout this report cannot be understood solely as the misconduct of individual ICE agents. Amnesty International finds that they occurred within an institutional environment – openly supported by the Trump administration – in which agents have been shielded from meaningful accountability and, in some instances, publicly praised by senior government officials for the very conduct that resulted in human rights violations. These institutional failures have exacerbated and reinforced a culture of cruelty and impunity within ICE, and fostered an environment conducive for the commission of the most serious human rights violations.

5.5.1 Long-standing institutional failures

The commission of human rights violations by ICE is not new. Amnesty International and other organizations have documented human rights violations committed by ICE and a troubling lack of oversight and accountability since its creation in 2003.⁹⁷⁷

Concerns about ICE’s institutional structure and the compatibility of its different functions have also existed since shortly after its creation. For example, in 2005, DHS’s Office of the Inspector General suggested the merging of ICE under CBP because ICE’s functions were “redundant” and that the issues with both agencies aiming to do immigration-related law enforcement were “unsolvable”.⁹⁷⁸ In 2018, HSI agents wrote a letter to the then Secretary of DHS calling for a reorganization of ICE, arguing that ERO’s immigration enforcement activities undermined HSI’s law enforcement priorities, including that ERO’s actions complicated HSI agents’ ability to work with other law enforcement partners or gather information from witnesses because of their association with ICE.⁹⁷⁹

These long-standing institutional concerns have been accompanied by systemic human rights violations within the immigration detention system managed by ICE, as repeatedly documented by Amnesty International and other organizations.⁹⁸⁰ In 2009, Congress began funding ICE detention centres by establishing a minimum number of beds to be available at any given time. Even after 2017, when the detention bed quota was eliminated, ICE has continued to expand detention capacity including by purposely mismanaging funds and overspending, and then demanding additional funds during the next fiscal cycle.⁹⁸¹ At the facility level, some contracts between ICE and private prison companies managing detention centres include “guaranteed minimums” which require ICE to keep a minimum number of people detained at all times.⁹⁸² Research into deaths in ICE detention found that, from 2017 to 2021, 95% of deaths in detention were preventable had the individual been given adequate medical care.⁹⁸³ A June 2018 report by DHS’s Office of Inspector General found that ICE’s own internal inspection and compliance provisions fail to

⁹⁷⁷ Amnesty International, *USA: In Hostile Terrain* (previously cited); AIC, “How ICE Went Rogue” (previously cited); The New York Times, “The Rot Goes Deeper Than ICE”, 30 January 2026, <https://www.nytimes.com/2026/01/30/opinion/minneapolis-dhs-ice-security.html?smid=nytcore-ios-share>.

⁹⁷⁸ DHS Office of Inspector General, *An Assessment of the Proposal to Merge Customs and Border Protection with Immigration and Customs Enforcement*, OIG-06-04, November 2005, https://www.oig.dhs.gov/sites/default/files/assets/Mgmt/OIG_06-04_Nov05.pdf.

⁹⁷⁹ Letter to the Honorable Kirstjen Nielsen, 28 June 2018, <https://assets.aila.org/files/d0ba1876-5466-4747-8e82-df05aa618949/18062800.pdf?1697589799>.

⁹⁸⁰ Amnesty International, *USA: Dehumanized by design* (previously cited); Amnesty International, *USA: Torture and enforced disappearances in the Sunshine State* (previously cited); HRW, “You’re Only Getting Out Deported or Dead”: Abusive US Immigration Detention at Ft. Bliss, 15 July 2026, <https://www.hrw.org/report/2026/07/15/youre-only-getting-out-deported-or-dead/abusive-us-immigration-detention-at-ft>; HRW, “You Feel Like Your Life Is Over”: Abusive Practices at Three Florida Immigration Detention Centers Since January 2025, 21 July 2025, <https://www.hrw.org/report/2025/07/21/you-feel-like-your-life-is-over/abusive-practices-at-three-florida-immigration> <https://www.hrw.org/report/2025/07/21/you-feel-like-your-life-is-over/abusive-practices-at-three-florida-immigration>.

⁹⁸¹ DWN, “ICE’s Fiscal Mismanagement: Deceit and Abuse”, <https://www.detentionwatchnetwork.org/sites/default/files/ICE%E2%80%99s%20Fiscal%20Mismanagement-%20Deceit%20and%20Abuse.pdf>.

⁹⁸² NIJC, *Policy Brief – Cut the Contracts: It’s Time to End ICE’s Corrupt Detention Management System*, 16 March 2021, https://immigrantjustice.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/05/Policy-Brief_Cut-the-Contracts_March-2021_Final.pdf.

⁹⁸³ ACLU, *Deadly Failures: Preventable Deaths in U.S. Immigrant Detention*, 21 June 2024, <https://www.aclu.org/publications/deadly-failures-preventable-deaths-in-us-immigrant-detention>.

actually resolve systemic detention issues.⁹⁸⁴ The report found that “neither the inspections nor the onsite monitoring ensure consistent compliance with detention standards, nor do they promote comprehensive deficiency corrections” and that “ICE does not adequately follow up on identified deficiencies or consistently hold facilities accountable for correcting them, which further diminishes the usefulness of inspections.”⁹⁸⁵ Under U.S. law, detention facilities that fail two consecutive inspections should lose federal funding, yet there have been no failed inspections since 2022 in dedicated ICE facilities, despite rising deaths and worsening conditions.⁹⁸⁶ In the House of Representatives accompanying report to the legislative language prohibiting funding after two failed inspections, Congress named that this was intended to resolve chronic failures in detention stating, “it is important that chronic failures to meet detention standards are not ignored.”⁹⁸⁷ The Project on Government Oversight (POGO) found that between 2022 and 2026, only six facilities failed consecutive inspections, and those were all local or country jails that ICE used for bedspace. Five of those facilities remain open, receiving federal funds, despite the repeated failures.⁹⁸⁸ Further, approximately 86% of people in ICE custody are detained in private for-profit detention centres.⁹⁸⁹ Private detention creates a perverse incentive for contracted providers to lower costs in order to maximize profits. In response to a 2022 letter sent to ICE by Amnesty International and other organizations pushing for an end to private immigration detention, the agency responded that ending the practise of private-for-profit detention was not “feasible”.⁹⁹⁰ Moreover, ICE has consistently failed to adhere to Congressional reporting and budgeting requirements, and has blocked attempts at Congressional oversight.⁹⁹¹

These long-standing institutional failures predate the second Trump administration. However, since January 2025, the administration has significantly exacerbated them while dramatically expanding ICE’s resources, workforce and operational reach, and at the same time, weakening or dismantling oversight and accountability mechanisms.

5.5.2 Entrenched impunity and weakened accountability and oversight

Across the four immigration enforcement operations documented in this report, Amnesty International has found a pattern of ICE agents evading accountability. ICE agents systematically operated without visible identification. In all four locations, ICE agents wore masks covering their faces, often had no badges or name or number tags, frequently wore plain clothes and travelled around in unmarked vehicles.⁹⁹² Interviewees described multiple situations in which individuals who were either being detained by ICE or observing ICE activity asked the agents to identify themselves and the agents refused to do so.⁹⁹³ In the case of individuals being detained by ICE, Amnesty International was told that the agents’ lack of identification often made individuals feel that they were being kidnapped adding to the fear they were already experiencing.⁹⁹⁴ Moreover, ICE has long used ruses in immigration enforcement operations. In 2007, former ICE Acting Director John P. Torres issued a memorandum permitting ruses, such as “impersonating employment with other federal, state, local or private entities”, in immigration enforcement, stating that they are “a valuable and effective tool.”⁹⁹⁵ Amnesty International finds that the widespread use of masks, absence of visible individual identification and the use of ruses not only facilitated the ability of ICE agents to target people they perceived to be migrants and contributed to fear among those targeted by ICE, but also made it

⁹⁸⁴ DHS Office of Inspector General, *ICE’s Inspections and Monitoring of Detention Facilities Do Not Lead to Sustained Compliance or Systemic Improvements*, OIG-18-67, 26 June 2018, <https://www.oig.dhs.gov/sites/default/files/assets/2018-06/OIG-18-67-Jun18.pdf>.

⁹⁸⁵ DHS Office of Inspector General, *ICE’s Inspections and Monitoring of Detention Facilities Do Not Lead to Sustained Compliance or Systemic Improvements* (previously cited).

⁹⁸⁶ POGO, “Inside ICE’s Broken System for Inspecting Detention Facilities”, 18 August 2026, <https://www.pogo.org/investigates/inside-ices-broken-system-for-inspecting-detention-facilities>.

⁹⁸⁷ POGO, “Inside ICE’s Broken System for Inspecting Detention Facilities” (previously cited).

⁹⁸⁸ POGO, “Inside ICE’s Broken System for Inspecting Detention Facilities” (previously cited).

⁹⁸⁹ TRAC, “Immigration Detention Statistics: A Retrospective and a Look Forward”, 21 February 2025, <https://tracreports.org/reports/753/>.

⁹⁹⁰ ICE, Letter, 22 December 2022, on file with Amnesty International.

⁹⁹¹ DWN, “ICE’s Fiscal Mismanagement: Deceit and Abuse” (previously cited); AIC, “How ICE Went Rogue” (previously cited); Securing America’s Promise, “ICE: The Agency Congress Never Created and Can No Longer Control”, 22 June 2026, <https://securingamericaspromise.substack.com/p/ice-the-agency-congress-never-created>.

⁹⁹² In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026.

⁹⁹³ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026.

⁹⁹⁴ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026; United States District Court for the District of Minnesota, *Hussen v. Noem*, Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law (previously cited); United States District Court for the District of Columbia, *Escobar Molina v. DHS*, Decision of Preliminary Injunction (previously cited).

⁹⁹⁵ ICE, “Juveniles Encountered During Fugitive Operations”, 24 August 2007, <https://www.immigrantdefenseproject.org/raids-foia/#memos>.

significantly more difficult for victims and witnesses to identify individual agents and seek accountability for human rights violations.

Amnesty International documented a pattern of repeated use of excessive force and other violent actions by ICE agents against people they perceived to be migrants and were attempting to detain, as well as rapid responders and people observing federal agent activity, protesters and community members. These actions not only violate international human rights law and standards, as set out above, but also constitute a lack of compliance on behalf of ICE agents with their own internal guidance and policies.

Moreover, Amnesty International found that ICE agents provided false accounts about incidents involving the unlawful use of lethal force. For example, following the shooting of Julio César Sosa-Celis, court documents reveal that the ICE agent stated that, while he and Aljorna were on the ground, Sosa-Celis grabbed a broom stick and began hitting him with it, that a third individual approached him with a snow shovel and began hitting him with it, and that once Aljorna managed to pull himself free from the agent's grasp, Sosa-Celis handed Aljorna the broom stick and he began hitting the agent with it.⁹⁹⁶ The ICE agent's account of what happened was adopted by DHS and former DHS Secretary Noem who, following the incident, stated, "What we saw last night in Minneapolis was an attempted murder of federal law enforcement. Our officer was ambushed and attacked by three individuals who beat him with snow shovels and the handles of brooms. Fearing for his life, the officer fired a defensive shot."⁹⁹⁷ However, as set out above, video footage shows that neither Sosa-Celis nor Aljorna attacked the ICE agent and that the agent fired at them while they were running into the house in an attempt to escape him. Moreover, prosecutors dropped the assault charges against Sosa-Celis and Aljorna based on evidence that was "materially inconsistent" with the original complaint.⁹⁹⁸ The former Acting Director of ICE later stated that two ICE agents had provided false accounts of what happened.⁹⁹⁹

Documents obtained by American Oversight through a lawsuit filed after DHS refused to comply with a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request indicate that, "[I]n the first two months of Trump's second administration, DHS was aware of a 353 percent increase in use of force incidents involving officers."¹⁰⁰⁰ The documents reveal that ICE and the Texas Department of Public Safety withheld information about an ICE agent's involvement in the fatal shooting of a U.S. citizen in Texas for over a year.¹⁰⁰¹ The documents further reveal that, between 19 January and 20 March 2025, 67 incidents of use of force by ICE agents were reported, in comparison to 28 "assaults" on ICE agents. American Oversight's review of the documents found that, in response to these incidents, a senior ICE official suggested "ways to increase prosecutions" for "assaults" on ICE agents, but "did not make any similar comments on addressing the use of force by ICE officers, though there were more than twice as many of such incidents reported."¹⁰⁰²

The ability to establish what occurred during incidents involving alleged misconduct by ICE agents was further undermined by the absence of body worn camera (BWC) footage. BWCs can provide important contemporaneous evidence of agents' actions and can be important for ensuring transparency and accountability where accounts of an incident are disputed. In accordance with a 2025 ICE Directive, ICE agents "must activate BWCs to capture footage of Enforcement Activities at the start of the activity or, if not practicable, as soon as safely possible thereafter."¹⁰⁰³ However, in many of the incidents set out in this

⁹⁹⁶ United States District Court for the District of Minnesota, *United States v. Aljorna*, Affidavit in Support of Criminal Complaint, Case No. 26-mj-23 (DLM), 16 January 2026, <https://www.courtlistener.com/docket/72164500/1/1/united-states-v-aljorna/>, paras. 8-10.

⁹⁹⁷ DHS, "DHS Releases More Details About the Three Violent Criminal Illegal Aliens Who Violently Beat a Law Enforcement Officer with Weapons" (previously cited).

⁹⁹⁸ United States District Court for the District of Minnesota, *United States v. Aljorna*, Government's Motion to Dismiss Complaint with Prejudice (previously cited).

⁹⁹⁹ CBS News Minnesota, "2 ICE agents lied under oath in north Minneapolis shooting investigation, agency says" (previously cited).

¹⁰⁰⁰ American Oversight, "What We Know About How ICE is Being Trained on the Use of Force", 17 February 2026, <https://americanoversight.org/what-we-know-about-how-ice-is-being-trained-on-the-use-of-force/>.

¹⁰⁰¹ American Oversight, "What We Know About How ICE is Being Trained on the Use of Force" (previously cited); The Texas Tribune, "How the unreported killing of an American by ICE shattered two Texas families", 4 May 2026, <https://www.texastribune.org/2026/05/04/ruben-ray-martinez-josh-orta-south-padre-ice-shooting-death/>.

¹⁰⁰² American Oversight, "What We Know About How ICE is Being Trained on the Use of Force" (previously cited).

¹⁰⁰³ ICE, *ICE Directive 19010.3: Body Worn Camera (BWC)*, 19 February 2025, <https://www.ice.gov/doclib/foia/policy/19010.3.pdf>, paras. 2, 3.6, 3.7, 5.1, 5.5; American Oversight, "What We Know About How ICE is Being Trained on the Use of Force" (previously cited).

report, ICE agents did not activate their BWCs or they were not equipped with BWCs at all.¹⁰⁰⁴ As a result, potentially important evidence that could have helped establish the circumstances surrounding these incidents and assess agents' compliance with applicable laws and policies was unavailable.

Additionally, Amnesty International has found that senior government officials, including President Trump, have spread false narratives about what happened during these operations, while justifying and commending the actions of ICE agents, despite available and contradicting evidence showing the commission of serious human rights violations. For example, following the unlawful killing of Silverio Villegas González, DHS attempted to justify the ICE agent's unlawful use of lethal force stating that he did so in self-defence, while at the same time repeatedly emphasizing that Villegas González was a "criminal illegal alien with a history of reckless driving."¹⁰⁰⁵ Following the unlawful killing of Renee Good, DHS stated, "one of these violent rioters weaponized her vehicle, attempting to run over our law enforcement officers in an attempt to kill them—an act of domestic terrorism. An ICE officer, fearing for his life, the lives of his fellow law enforcement and the safety of the public, fired defensive shots. He used his training and saved his own life and that of his fellow officers."¹⁰⁰⁶ President Trump called Good a "professional agitator" and stated that she "violently, wilfully, and viciously ran over the ICE Officer."¹⁰⁰⁷

Amnesty International finds that ICE agents continue to operate with almost absolute impunity. No ICE agents have been held accountable for the human rights violations committed during operations Midway Blitz, Catahoula Crunch, Metro Surge, PARRIS and the Federal Takeover. In the small number of investigations that have been opened, federal government officials have taken actions to obstruct them. For example, following the unlawful killing of Good, the Minnesota BCA and the FBI launched a joint investigation, however, the same day that the investigation was launched, the FBI informed the BCA that it would be responsible for leading the investigation and that the BCA "would no longer have access to the case materials, scene evidence or investigative interviews."¹⁰⁰⁸ It was also reported that senior DOJ and FBI officials had told prosecutors at the U.S. Attorney's Office for the District of Minnesota to stop an investigation into Good's death over concerns that an investigation would undermine statements made by the federal government that Good had tried to kill an ICE agent, and that prosecutors were pressured to instead investigate whether Good had assaulted the ICE agent and whether Good's wife had assaulted, resisted or impeded federal officers.¹⁰⁰⁹ Amnesty International also found that ICE and the federal government have failed to provide evidence in response to several incidents and have failed to produce information in court proceedings. For example, in response to a court order to the federal government to release all of the evidence in its possession regarding the shooting of Good, the court reported that the "Government claims that the material does not exist or cannot be obtained."¹⁰¹⁰

Government agencies and officials have also reinforced the notion that ICE agents have "immunity". On 13 January 2026 – six days after Good was killed – DHS published a statement by the White House's Deputy Chief of Staff for Policy:

"REMINDER. To all ICE officers: You have federal immunity in the conduct of your duties. Anybody who lays a hand on you or tries to stop you or tries to obstruct you is committing a felony. You have immunity to perform your duties, and no one—no city official, no state official, no illegal alien, no leftist agitator or domestic insurrectionist—can prevent you from fulfilling your legal obligations and duties. The Department of Justice has made clear that if officials cross that line into obstruction, into criminal conspiracy against the United States or against ICE officers, then they will face justice."¹⁰¹¹

¹⁰⁰⁴ Illinois Accountability Commission, *González Shooting Investigation Brief* (previously cited), p. 2; Illinois Accountability Commission, *Brighton Park Investigation Brief* (previously cited), p. 3.

¹⁰⁰⁵ DHS, "DHS Sets the Record Straight on Gross Smears Against ICE Officer Who Was Seriously Injured in Line of Duty and Shooting in Chicago During Traffic Stop" (previously cited).

¹⁰⁰⁶ X, Homeland Security, 7 January 2026, <https://x.com/DHSgov/status/2008958123092979817>; X, DHS Spokesperson Tricia McLaughlin, 7 January 2026, <https://x.com/TriciaOhio/status/2008957179793998266>.

¹⁰⁰⁷ Truth Social, Donald J. Trump, 7 January 2026, <https://truthsocial.com/@realDonaldTrump/posts/115855701696773990>.

¹⁰⁰⁸ Minnesota BCA, "BCA statement regarding investigation of ICE fatal shooting in Minneapolis" (previously cited); United States District Court for the District of Minnesota, *United States v. Munoz-Guatemala*, Defendant's Motion for Discovery (previously cited), pp. 6-7.

¹⁰⁰⁹ United States Senate, Letter, 25 February 2026 (previously cited); The New York Times, "Prosecutors Began Investigating Renee Good's Killing. Washington Told Them to Stop." (previously cited).

¹⁰¹⁰ United States District Court for the District of Minnesota, *United States v. Munoz-Guatemala*, Order for Government Affidavit (previously cited).

¹⁰¹¹ @DHS, X, 13 January 2026, <https://x.com/DHSgov/status/2011213308968538361?s=20>.

At the same time, the Trump administration has systematically dismantled oversight bodies responsible for monitoring the operations of DHS, ICE and CBP, and investigating complaints of wrongdoing and abuse by agents from these agencies, including the Office for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties (CRCL) and the Office of Immigration Detention Ombudsman (OIDO).¹⁰¹² The media reported that, according to a DHS spokesperson, the offices were being reduced because they “obstructed immigration enforcement by adding bureaucratic hurdles and undermining DHS’s mission.”¹⁰¹³ In March 2025, CRCL’s workforce was reduced by 80% and OIDO’s was reduced by 96%, essentially rendering both offices non-operational.¹⁰¹⁴ OIDO was later completely shut down in May 2026.¹⁰¹⁵ With regards to CRCL, organizations have reported that additional policy changes have made it more difficult for complaints to be submitted to the office given that it now only receives complaints via a web portal that is only available in English.¹⁰¹⁶ According to the Kino Border Initiative and WOLA, “Even before the Trump administration took an axe to them, these offices were far too small and under-resourced ... They lacked the authority to initiate investigations and to make their recommendations stick ... But since the agencies’ near-total dismantling on March 21, the experience has been far worse. Many complaint investigations have been halted. No new recommendations have been issued.”¹⁰¹⁷

The administration has also blocked members of Congress from accessing detention centres and started requiring members to provide at least one week notice prior to visiting a facility, despite federal law granting them unfettered access to conduct unannounced inspections and visits.¹⁰¹⁸ After lawmakers sued the Trump Administration for violating the law, a federal judge overturned this policy in March 2026.¹⁰¹⁹ Despite this ruling, ICE continues to restrict the ability of members of Congress to conduct unannounced oversight visits to ICE detention facilities and meet with detained individuals.¹⁰²⁰ For example, in May 2026, elected officials who attempted to conduct an unannounced visit at Delaney Hall Detention Facility, an ICE detention facility in Newark, New Jersey, were denied access.¹⁰²¹

Against this backdrop of weakened oversight and accountability, the human rights violations documented in this report are not geographically isolated. The ACLU reviewed more than 1,200 incidents of immigration enforcement in 2025 across eight states, identifying 432 incidents involving “misconduct by agents”, including 375 incidents of “use of force or threatened force by agents”, 132 incidents of chemical irritants

¹⁰¹² United States District Court for the Northern District of Illinois Eastern Division, *Moreno Gonzalez v. Noem*, Complaint (previously cited), para. 54; Kino Border Initiative & WOLA, *Denouncing Into the Void: The Dismantling of Internal Oversight and Accountability at DHS*, March 2026, https://www.wola.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/03/denouncing_into_the_void-3.pdf; ProPublica, “‘They Don’t Care About Civil Rights’: Trump’s Shuttering of DHS Oversight Arm Freezes 600 Cases, Imperils Human Rights”, 8 April 2025, <https://www.propublica.org/article/homeland-security-crcl-civil-rights-immigration-border-patrol-trump-kristi-noem>; The New York Times, “Trump Shuts Down 3 Watchdog Agencies Overseeing Immigration Crackdown”, 21 March 2025, <https://www.nytimes.com/2025/03/21/us/politics/trump-civil-rights-homeland-security-deportations.html>.

¹⁰¹³ Kino Border Initiative & WOLA, *Denouncing Into the Void: The Dismantling of Internal Oversight and Accountability at DHS* (previously cited), pp. 7-8; Democracy Forward, “Challenging the Department of Homeland Security’s Abolishment of Three Key Civil Rights Offices”, 24 April 2025, <https://democracyforward.org/work/legal/challenging-the-department-of-homeland-securitys-abolishment-of-three-key-civil-rights-offices/>; Associated Press, “Homeland Security makes cuts to offices overseeing civil rights protections”, 21 March 2025, <https://apnews.com/article/civil-rights-homeland-security-trump-immigration-0902c38dc7daf0a7960eb0d433c67f2f>.

¹⁰¹⁴ Kino Border Initiative & WOLA, *Denouncing Into the Void: The Dismantling of Internal Oversight and Accountability at DHS* (previously cited), p. 9; Government Accountability Project, “DHS Halted 500+ Civil Rights Investigations When It Shut Down Oversight Office, Whistleblowers Say”, 15 May 2025, <https://whistleblower.org/press-release/dhs-halted-500-civil-rights-investigations-when-it-shut-down-oversight-office-whistleblowers-say/>.

¹⁰¹⁵ DHS, “Requesting Assistance from the Office of the Immigration Detention Ombudsman (OIDO) – Archived Content”, 1 May 2026, <https://www.dhs.gov/archive/requesting-assistance-oido>; The Hill, “DHS closes office of immigration detention watchdog”, 5 May 2026, <https://thehill.com/homenews/5864182-oido-dhs-watchdog-closure/>; NPR, “DHS blames funding lapse for shutdown of internal detention oversight”, 7 May 2026, <https://www.npr.org/2026/05/07/g-s1-120834/trump-immigration-detention-ombudsman-shutdown>.

¹⁰¹⁶ Kino Border Initiative & WOLA, *Denouncing Into the Void: The Dismantling of Internal Oversight and Accountability at DHS* (previously cited), pp. 11-12.

¹⁰¹⁷ Kino Border Initiative & WOLA, *Denouncing Into the Void: The Dismantling of Internal Oversight and Accountability at DHS* (previously cited), p. 2.

¹⁰¹⁸ House Committee on the Judiciary, “Court Rules Trump-Vance Administration Cannot Block Members of Congress From Conducting Oversight at Federal Immigration Detention Facilities” (previously cited).

¹⁰¹⁹ United States District Court for the District of Columbia, *Neguse v. U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement*, Memorandum Opinion Case No. 25-cv-2463 (JMC), 2 March 2026, https://ecf.dcd.uscourts.gov/cgi-bin/show_public_doc?2025cv2463-61; POLITICO, “Judge restores lawmakers’ unfettered access to ICE detention facilities”, 2 March 2026, <https://www.politico.com/news/2026/03/02/lawmaker-access-ice-detention-ruling-00807198>.

¹⁰²⁰ X, Rep. Mike Levin, 11 May 2026, <https://x.com/RepMikeLevin/status/2053919488782073993?s=20>; Rep. Mike Levin, “Rep. Mike Levin and Colleagues Demand ICE Reverse New Restrictions on Oversight Visits to Detention Facilities”, 12 June 2026, <https://levin.house.gov/media/press-releases/rep-mike-levin-and-colleagues-demand-ice-reverse-new-restrictions-on-oversight-visits-to-detention-facilities>; AIC, “ICE Doesn’t Want the Public to See What Happens in Its Detention Centers”, 27 May 2026, <https://www.americanimmigrationcouncil.org/blog/ice-what-happens-in-detention-centers/>.

¹⁰²¹ CBS News, “Delaney Hall ICE protests escalate after N.J. Gov. Mikie Sherrill denied access to Newark detention facility”, 26 May 2026, <https://www.cbsnews.com/newyork/news/mikie-sherrill-delaney-hall-ice-facility-protests-nj/>.

being “aimed directly at individuals”, 16 incidents where “agents used lethal force”, 130 instances in which “agents brandished weapons”, 69 instances in which agents “verbally threatened the use of weapons or force”, and 119 “confirmed or reported injuries to individuals following agents’ use of force”.¹⁰²² Moreover, ICE, Border Patrol and other federal agents continue to commit human rights violations during immigration enforcement operations across the United States.¹⁰²³ At least 22 people have been shot and 11 of them killed by ICE and Border Patrol agents during the second Trump administration, with some of them possibly amounting to extrajudicial executions as explained in section 5.2.3 of this report.¹⁰²⁴ Most recently, on 7 July 2026, Lorenzo Salgado Araujo – a Mexican national who had been living in the US for 35 years – was shot and killed by an ICE agent travelling in an unmarked vehicle during a traffic stop in Houston, Texas.¹⁰²⁵ Just six days later, on July 13, Joan Sebastián Durán Guerrero – a Colombia national with work authorization – was shot and killed by ICE agents during a traffic stop in Biddeford, Maine.¹⁰²⁶ It was reported that, in both incidents, ICE agents were conducting targeted immigration enforcement operations but neither Salgado Araujo nor Durán Guerrero were the targets of those operations.¹⁰²⁷ The agents were also not wearing BWCs.¹⁰²⁸ Following the killing of Durán Guerrero, DHS issued a temporary pause on traffic stops during federal immigration enforcement operations.¹⁰²⁹ However, within 24 hours, President Trump overturned the suspension and praised the actions of ICE agents, stating, “The men and women of ICE are doing a GREAT job, one that has to be done ... we must be strong, tough, and smart, and we CANNOT give up one of I.C.E.’s most important and effective Crime Fighting tools, THE TRAFFIC STOP! ...”¹⁰³⁰ This demonstrates that the patterns of arbitrary and discriminatory arrests and detentions, racial discrimination, unlawful interference with the right to privacy, intimidation, harassment, degrading treatment and unlawful use of force including lethal force documented by Amnesty International in the four locations examined in this report extend beyond those operations and are characteristic of the manner in which ICE is carrying out immigration enforcement operations across the United States.

Deaths of individuals in ICE detention have increased dramatically during the second Trump administration. As of September 2026, at least 26 people had died in ICE custody in 2026. In 2025, at least 33 people died in ICE custody, the highest total in more than two decades.¹⁰³¹ Further, Amnesty International’s findings presented in this report include other serious human rights violations in the context of ICE detention, such

¹⁰²² ACLU, *Agents of Chaos and Cruelty: How the Trump Administration’s National Deporting Policing Force Has Attacked American Communities*, 16 July 2026, <https://www.aclu.org/publications/agents-of-chaos-and-cruelty-how-the-trump-administrations-national-deportation-policing-force-has-attacked-american-communities>, pp. 3-6.

¹⁰²³ AIC, “6 Deaths in ICE Custody and 2 Fatal Shootings: A Horrific Start to 2026”, 11 February 2026, <https://www.americanimmigrationcouncil.org/blog/ice-deaths-shootings-2026/>; TIME, “When ICE Kills, We Cannot Look Away”, 17 July 2026, <https://time.com/article/2026/07/17/when-ice-kills-we-cannot-look-away/>.

¹⁰²⁴ The Guardian, “‘New terrifying levels’: 10 people fatally shot by immigration officials in Trump’s second term”, 9 July 2026, <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2026/jul/09/ice-immigration-shooting-deaths-trump>; The New York Times, “Fatal Encounters”, 15 July 2026, <https://www.nytimes.com/2026/07/15/briefing/ice-shootings-houston-maine.html>; Al Jazeera, “ICE kills 26-year-old in Maine: What happened, and who else has ICE killed?”, 14 July 2026, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2026/7/14/ice-kills-26-year-old-in-maine-what-happened-and-who-else-has-ice-killed>.

¹⁰²⁵ The New York Times, “What We Know About the ICE Shooting of Lorenzo Salgado Araujo”, 9 July 2026, <https://www.nytimes.com/2026/07/09/us/houston-ice-shooting-lorenzo-salgado-araujo.html>; The Washington Post, “He saw a video of a Mexican man shot by ICE. It was his father.”, 8 July 2026, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/immigration/2026/07/08/son-mexican-immigrant-shot-by-ice-describes-anguished-search-his-dad/>.

¹⁰²⁶ The New York Times, “Colombian Immigrant Killed by ICE in Maine Had Legal Status, Father Says”, 14 July 2026, <https://www.nytimes.com/2026/07/14/us/joan-sebastian-guerrero-maine-ice-shooting.html>; The New York Times, “Videos Detail Moments Surrounding Fatal Maine ICE Shooting”, 14 July 2026, <https://www.nytimes.com/2026/07/14/us/maine-ice-shooting-video-joan-sebastian-guerrero.html>; The Washington Post, “Man killed by ICE came to Maine seeking better life for young daughter”, 15 July 2026, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/immigration/2026/07/14/man-killed-maine-ice-shooting-was-26-year-old-colombian-father/>.

¹⁰²⁷ Associated Press, “Mexican man killed in Houston ICE shooting was not the target of operation, lawmaker says”, 9 July 2026, <https://apnews.com/article/ice-shooting-houston-lorenzo-salgado-0617ba03542531e793ca1b78151d8af9>; The New York Times, “Colombian Immigrant Killed by ICE in Maine Had Legal Status, Father Says”, 14 July 2026, <https://www.nytimes.com/2026/07/14/us/joan-sebastian-guerrero-maine-ice-shooting.html> (previously cited).

¹⁰²⁸ Houston Public Media, “Lorenzo Salgado Araujo’s passengers dispute ICE’s account of his fatal shooting, their attorney says”, 10 July 2026, <https://www.houstonpublicmedia.org/articles/news/politics/immigration/2026/07/10/556770/ice-shooting-houston-lorenzo-salgado-araujo-passengers-dispute-dhs-account/>; CNN, “What we know about the 25-year-old father from Colombia who was fatally shot by an ICE officer in Maine”, 15 July 2026, <https://edition.cnn.com/2026/07/15/us/joan-sebastian-guerrero-ice-shooting-maine>.

¹⁰²⁹ ABC News, “Trump overturns temporary pause on ICE traffic stops: Source”, 15 July 2026, <https://abcnews.com/US/ice-temporarily-stop-conducting-vehicle-stops-sources/story?id=134751678>.

¹⁰³⁰ @realDonaldTrump, TruthSocial, 15 July 2026, <https://truthsocial.com/@realDonaldTrump/posts/116923585931908111>; CBS News, “Trump overturns pause of ICE vehicle stops implemented after Maine, Texas shootings”, 15 July 2026, <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/ice-agents-halt-vehicle-stops-after-shootings-maine-texas/>.

¹⁰³¹ ICE, “Detainee Death Reporting” (previously cited); NIP, “Mourning Those Who Have Died in ICE Custody” (previously cited); HRW & Physicians for Human Rights, *Dying in Detention* (previously cited).

as incommunicado detention and ill-treatment, as well as possible acts of enforced disappearance and torture. This is compounded by institutionalized racism, with Black and Brown communities, as well as those seeking to protect them, repeatedly targeted for human rights violations.

These widespread patterns of human rights violations across all areas of ICE's operations provide evidence of a blatant and generalized disrespect for human rights and the rule of law, which is the result of a political and institutional environment in which rampant impunity and openly declared immunity place an entire organization and its members above the law.

5.5.3 Rapid recruitment and expansion of ICE's capacity

As indicated above, ICE has received a massive surge in funding since January 2025 in order to carry out the Trump administration's mass detention and deportation system. According to the American Immigration Council, "Since the creation of DHS in 2003, ICE's annual appropriations spending nearly tripled from \$3.3 billion to \$10 billion USD in [Fiscal Year] 2025."¹⁰³² On top of that, throughout the second Trump administration, ICE received an additional \$75 billion USD in budget reconciliation funding through the One Big Beautiful Bill Act of 2025 and an additional \$38.5 billion USD in the Secure America Act of 2026, to be spent over the next 3 years.¹⁰³³

This increased funding has enabled ICE to rapidly expand its workforce. In July 2025, DHS launched "Defend the Homeland", a nationwide recruitment drive to hire ICE agents, with the tagline "Murderers, rapists, terrorists, and child pedophiles—ICE is recruiting patriotic, brave Americans to remove these criminal illegal aliens from America's streets."¹⁰³⁴ At the time, former DHS Secretary Noem stated:

"Your country is calling you to serve at ICE. In the wake of the Biden administration's failed immigration policies, your country needs dedicated men and women of ICE to get the worst of the worst criminals out of our country. This is a defining moment in our nation's history. Your skills, your experience, and your courage have never been more essential. Together, we must defend the homeland."¹⁰³⁵

ICE's recruitment page on its website also draws on military and patriotic imagery, prominently featuring Uncle Sam – a personification of the US government historically associated with military recruitment and patriotic duty – alongside the slogan "America Needs You".¹⁰³⁶ Some ICE recruitment advertisements promote anti-migrant and racist tropes, including one which calls on potential recruits to "defend your culture" and another which states "You took an oath to protect and serve, to keep your family, your city safe, but in sanctuary cities, you're ordered to stand down while dangerous illegals walk free."¹⁰³⁷ A review by Hatewatch, an extremism watchdog run by the Southern Poverty Law Center, of DHS social media posts and web content found that the agency "utilizes white nationalist and anti-immigrant images and slogans in recruitment materials" and that "while recruitment images feature white people almost exclusively, the agency's social media disproportionately posts images of Black and Brown people accused of violating federal immigration laws."¹⁰³⁸

As of January 2026, ICE had hired over 12,000 new agents, expanding its headcount to over 22,000.¹⁰³⁹ A DHS press release stated, "That's a 120% increase in our workforce. And that's in just about four months

¹⁰³² AIC, "The Cost of Immigration Enforcement and Border Security", 13 August 2026, <https://www.americanimmigrationcouncil.org/fact-sheet/the-cost-of-immigration-enforcement-and-border-security/>.

¹⁰³³ H.R.1 – One Big Beautiful Bill (previously cited); S.2 – Secure America Act (previously cited); AIC, "The Cost of Immigration Enforcement and Border Security" (previously cited).

¹⁰³⁴ DHS, "DHS Launches 'Defend the Homeland' Nationwide to Recruit Patriots to Join ICE Law Enforcement and Remove Worst of the Worst from U.S.", 29 July 2025, <https://www.dhs.gov/news/2025/07/29/dhs-launches-defend-homeland-nationwide-recruit-patriots-join-ice-law-enforcement>.

¹⁰³⁵ DHS, "DHS Launches 'Defend the Homeland' Nationwide to Recruit Patriots to Join ICE Law Enforcement and Remove Worst of the Worst from U.S." (previously cited).

¹⁰³⁶ ICE, "Join", <https://www.ice.gov/join>.

¹⁰³⁷ @DHS, X, 11 August 2025, <https://x.com/DHSgov/status/1955011982488228231>; United States Senate, Committee on the Judiciary, Letter to Secretary Noem, 21 October 2025, <https://www.judiciary.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/2025-10-21%20Letter%20to%20DHS%20re%20ICE%20Hiring.pdf>, pp. 2-3; Hatewatch, "Homeland Security deploys white nationalist, anti-immigrant graphics to recruit", 28 August 2025, <https://www.splcenter.org/resources/hatewatch/dhs-white-nationalist-anti-immigrant-social-media/>; The New Republic, "DHS's Neo-Nazi Memes Show the Agency for What It Is", 14 August 2025, <https://newrepublic.com/article/199094/dhs-neo-nazi-memes-no-surprise>; Associated Press, "ICE airs ads stirring up local frustration to recruit police for mass deportation efforts", 6 October 2025, <https://apnews.com/article/trump-mass-deportations-ice-immigration-ads-473a7ac193cff625476f1ee21f82facd>.

¹⁰³⁸ Hatewatch, "Homeland Security deploys white nationalist, anti-immigrant graphics to recruit" (previously cited).

¹⁰³⁹ DHS, "ICE Announces Historic 120% Manpower Increase, Thanks to Recruitment Campaign that Brought in 12,000 Officers and Agents", 3 January 2026, <https://www.dhs.gov/news/2026/01/03/ice-announces-historic-120-manpower-increase-thanks-recruitment-campaign-brought>; Brookings,

... Thousands of these newly hired officers and agents are already deployed nationwide and actively supporting enforcement operations, including arrests, investigations, and removals. The accelerated hiring tempo has allowed ICE to place officers in the field faster than any previous recruitment effort in the agency's history."¹⁰⁴⁰ This means that more than half of ICE's current workforce are individuals who were likely hired within the last year.

Government agencies and officials praised ICE's rapid workforce increase, emphasizing that the additional personnel would enable the agency to significantly expand immigration enforcement. DHS stated, "With these new patriots on the team, we will be able to accomplish what many say was impossible and fulfil President Trump's promise to make America safe again."¹⁰⁴¹ A former ICE Deputy Director stated, "We continue to call on American patriots to serve the homeland because we know that there's still more work to do – and we will not stop until every community in this nation is safe."¹⁰⁴²

As set out above in Section 3.1.1, the imagery and statements used in ICE recruitment advertisements, as well as statements by government agencies and officials reproduce the same "invasion" and "under attack" narratives repeatedly invoked by the Trump administration to justify its mass detention and deportation system. By framing ICE recruitment as a call for "patriots" to "serve the homeland" and make communities "safe", the administration has positioned migrants, asylum seekers and refugees as "threats" from whom the country requires protection. The use of this rhetoric to recruit and rapidly expand ICE's workforce further demonstrates how the administration's racist, xenophobic and white supremacist narratives are the foundation not only of its migration and asylum policies, but also of the institutional expansion of the agency responsible for implementing them. By appealing to prospective recruits through racist, xenophobic and white supremacist narratives, ICE also risks attracting individuals who identify with these narratives and reinforcing an institutional culture in which racist, xenophobic and discriminatory attitudes towards migrant, asylum seeker and refugee communities are normalized.¹⁰⁴³ While perhaps most explicit under the current Trump Administration, these racist and xenophobic narratives have long fuelled racial profiling and disparate treatment of racialized groups since the agency's inception. Black migrants, for example, constitute a small minority of people in ICE detention yet face higher rates of abuse, misconduct, and mistreatment in custody. For example, from 2012 to 2017, Black migrants made up only 4% of the detained population, but represented nearly a quarter of all people placed in solitary confinement.¹⁰⁴⁴

At the same time, the push to quickly expand ICE's workforce has resulted in a decrease in rigour in vetting and hiring processes and lack of training for new hires.¹⁰⁴⁵ ICE has adopted measures to incentivize people to join the agency including lowering previous age requirements from 21 to 18, waiving the 37-year-old hiring cap, introducing a signing bonus of \$50,000 USD and providing student loan forgiveness.¹⁰⁴⁶ An investigative journalist reported that she attended an ICE career expo and received a tentative job offer a week later without having completed any background checks.¹⁰⁴⁷ In February 2026, the media reported on an internal ICE email sent to ERO supervisors which allegedly stated that the "high volume of new hires and stalled background checks could create uncertainty for field officers when allegations arise related to actions

"ICE expansion has outpaced accountability. What are the remedies?", 26 January 2026, <https://www.brookings.edu/articles/ice-expansion-has-outpaced-accountability-what-are-the-remedies/>.

¹⁰⁴⁰ DHS, "ICE Announces Historic 120% Manpower Increase" (previously cited).

¹⁰⁴¹ DHS, "ICE Announces Historic 120% Manpower Increase" (previously cited).

¹⁰⁴² ICE, "ICE announces most successful federal law enforcement agency recruitment campaign in American history", 18 December 2025, <https://www.ice.gov/news/releases/ice-announces-most-successful-federal-law-enforcement-agency-recruitment-campaign>.

¹⁰⁴³ The Washington Post, "Who is ICE actually recruiting?", 29 January 2026, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/ripple/2026/01/27/ice-recruitment-white-supremacists/>; The Intercept, "ICE Recruitment Tweets are so Racist that Cops Feared they Could Incite Neo-Nazi Violence", 21 May 2026, <https://theintercept.com/2026/05/21/ice-dhs-social-media-white-supremacist-violence/>; CBC News, "ICE nodding to far-right extremists in recruitment posts, experts say", 25 January 2026, <https://www.cbc.ca/news/ice-recruiting-9.7058294>.

¹⁰⁴⁴ Freedom for Immigrants, *UNCOVERING THE TRUTH: Violence and Abuse Against Black Migrants in Immigration Detention*, 2022, <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5a33042eb078691c386e7bce/t/6358c4c94b39565ec808f049/1666761932698/Uncovering+the+Truth.pdf>.

¹⁰⁴⁵ Brookings, "ICE expansion has outpaced accountability. What are the remedies?" (previously cited); NBC Washington, "ICE officers' use of force and training: ICE retiree sees agency he doesn't recognize", 3 March 2026, <https://www.nbcwashington.com/investigations/ice-officers-use-of-force-and-training-ice-retiree-sees-agency-he-doesnt-recognize/4067790/>; MS Now, "'We've lowered our standards': Former ICE Dir. on agents being put in escalating situations", 11 January 2026, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bpuLAgQxfHQ>.

¹⁰⁴⁶ DHS, "DHS Launches 'Defend the Homeland' Nationwide to Recruit Patriots to Join ICE Law Enforcement and Remove Worst of the Worst from U.S." (previously cited); ICE, "ICE announces most successful federal law enforcement agency recruitment campaign in American history" (previously cited); Brookings, "ICE expansion has outpaced accountability. What are the remedies?" (previously cited).

¹⁰⁴⁷ SLATE, "You've Heard About Who ICE Is Recruiting. The Truth Is Far Worse. I'm the Proof", 13 January 2026, <https://slate.com/news-and-politics/2026/01/ice-recruitment-minneapolis-shooting.html>.

before joining ICE.”¹⁰⁴⁸ This would not only confirm the over-rushed nature of the recruitment process, but also indicate that ICE leadership was aware that a number of field officers might have problematic backgrounds that could have affected decisions regarding their suitability for employment with ICE had they been subjected to a proper and thorough vetting process. An investigation by the Associated Press released in April 2026 which “focused on more than 40 officers who recently made public their new jobs as ICE officers on LinkedIn pages” found that “applicants with questionable histories were either not fully vetted before they were brought on or were hired in spite of their past.”¹⁰⁴⁹ This included individuals who had failed to graduate from local law enforcement academies, individuals with unpaid debts, a former law enforcement officer who faced a lawsuit for allegedly arresting someone on false allegations and another former law enforcement officer who had been sued for allegedly improperly using force in a prior law enforcement job.¹⁰⁵⁰ The same investigation found that, according to DHS, “some applicants received ‘tentative selection letters’ and offers to begin working on a temporary status before they had been subjected to full background checks.”¹⁰⁵¹ A 2026 study by the Ohio Immigrant Alliance documented 31 cases of ICE agents who had been charged with or convicted of crimes including “sexual abuse, child sexual abuse and domestic violence.”¹⁰⁵²

In February 2026, Ryan Schwank, a former ICE lawyer who worked at the agency’s training academy, resigned and came forward as a whistle-blower revealing that the Trump administration is severely dismantling basic training for ICE agents, including cutting 240 hours from a 584-hour training program.¹⁰⁵³ The New York Times reported that, according to a former official at the federal government’s law enforcement academy who spoke on the condition of anonymity, this reduced training includes reduced “training on how to handle vehicle stops.”¹⁰⁵⁴ A previously required 5 weeks of Spanish language lessons was also eliminated.¹⁰⁵⁵ Local and state law enforcement officers being deputized to work with ICE were previously required to participate in a four week in-person training but this has been reduced to a 40-hour online course.¹⁰⁵⁶

Members of Congress have expressed their concerns about ICE’s current vetting, hiring and training practices. For example, a letter sent by the United States Senate Committee on the Judiciary to former DHS Secretary Noem in October 2025 stated, “Whether it is an officer mishandling a gun and pointing it at bystanders or federal agents arresting U.S. citizen children in the dead of night, these mishaps have terrible consequences on immigrants and U.S. citizens alike. We are deeply concerned that these cruel, unlawful, and unprofessional actions will be worsened by lowering standards for recruiting law enforcement officials to work at ICE ... The loosening of hiring standards and training requirements is unacceptable and will likely result in increased officer misconduct ... Exacerbating our concerns, DHS has gutted offices responsible for

¹⁰⁴⁸ Reuters, “ICE struggles to vet recruits amid US immigration enforcement push, internal email shows”, 26 February 2026, <https://www.reuters.com/world/ice-struggles-vet-recruits-amid-us-immigration-enforcement-push-internal-email-2026-02-26/>.

¹⁰⁴⁹ Associated Press, “ICE went on a hiring spree. Sterling credentials were not required, AP investigation finds”, 17 April 2026, <https://apnews.com/article/ice-background-checks-vetting-immigration-8ae6b7b850f7c0265b3cb8b5060ef8fd>; Associated Press, “Takeaways from AP investigation that found problems in the backgrounds of some new ICE officers”, 17 April 2026, <https://apnews.com/article/ice-background-checks-immigration-takeaways-31b38620cf2fea7783042e61d6d27ce9>.

¹⁰⁵⁰ Associated Press, “ICE went on a hiring spree. Sterling credentials were not required, AP investigation finds” (previously cited); Associated Press, “Takeaways from AP investigation that found problems in the backgrounds of some new ICE officers” (previously cited).

¹⁰⁵¹ Associated Press, “ICE went on a hiring spree. Sterling credentials were not required, AP investigation finds” (previously cited); Associated Press, “Takeaways from AP investigation that found problems in the backgrounds of some new ICE officers” (previously cited).

¹⁰⁵² Ohio Immigrant Alliance, *The Worst of the Worst: 152 Sexually and Physically Abusive ICE and Border Agents – Implications for U.S. Communities and Actions Needed from Congress*, 18 August 2026, https://static1.squarespace.com/static/68460a37f903140728c2ab29/t/6a849ded4d8d3725c3778514/1787076086492/AUG+18+Worst+of+the+Worst+Report+FINAL.pdf?utm_source=substack&utm_medium=email, p. 2.

¹⁰⁵³ Forbes Breaking News, “FULL HEARING: ICE Whistleblower Testifies Before Congressional Dems About ‘Defective’ Training”, 23 February 2026, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o_o4mOs-WUU; American Oversight, “ICE Records Obtained by American Oversight Corroborate Whistleblower Testimony on Training for Entering Homes Without Warrants”, 26 February 2026, <https://americanoversight.org/ice-records-obtained-by-american-oversight-corroborate-whistleblower-testimony-on-training-for-entering-homes-without-warrants/>; The New York Times, “Training for New ICE Agents Is ‘Deficient’ and ‘Broken,’ Whistle-Blower Says”, 23 February 2026, <https://www.nytimes.com/2026/02/23/us/politics/ice-training-whistle-blower.html>; CNN, “ICE officers receive less training than almost any other federal agents, CNN analysis finds”, 27 February 2026, <https://edition.cnn.com/2026/02/27/us/ice-deportation-officers-training-agents-invs>; CBS News, “ICE whistleblower warns new recruits are receiving ‘defective’ training”, 23 February 2026, <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/ice-whistleblower-new-recruits-receiving-defective-training/>.

¹⁰⁵⁴ The New York Times, “Under Trump, a Shift Toward ‘Absolute Immunity’ for ICE”, 15 January 2026, <https://www.nytimes.com/2026/01/15/us/politics/trump-ice-immunity.html>.

¹⁰⁵⁵ Brookings, “ICE expansion has outpaced accountability. What are the remedies?” (previously cited); DW, “How are ICE agents recruited, and who are they?”, 17 January 2026, <https://www.dw.com/en/how-are-ice-agents-recruited-and-who-are-they/a-75506003>.

¹⁰⁵⁶ Brookings, “ICE expansion has outpaced accountability. What are the remedies?” (previously cited).

overseeing ICE officers and ensuring accountability for use-of-force incidents.”¹⁰⁵⁷ California State Representative Scott Peters stated, “Under President Trump and Secretary Noem, ICE’s budget has exploded, making it the highest-funded law enforcement agency in the federal government ... the agency is obsessed with arrest quotas, chasing an arbitrary goal of 3,000 arrests a day, and sweeping up everyone in their path, including children and U.S. citizens ... And despite all the funding, ICE officers are not trained to observe the basic standards and procedures followed by our local police and sheriffs.”¹⁰⁵⁸

Consequently, ICE has rapidly deployed thousands of new agents while simultaneously weakening safeguards relating to recruitment, vetting and training. Amnesty International finds that the Trump administration has dramatically expanded ICE’s capacity at the same time that it has dismantled safeguards that were intended to ensure that the agency comprises a suitable, professional, well-trained and law-abiding work force, as well as full accountability for any misconduct.

5.5.4 ICE’s central role in the mass detention and deportation system

ICE occupies a central institutional role in the Trump administration’s mass detention and deportation system. ICE is the federal agency responsible for immigration enforcement in the interior of the United States and manages all aspects of the immigration enforcement process, including the identification and arrest of individuals, their detention and ultimately their removal from the country.¹⁰⁵⁹ ICE’s Office of the Principal Legal Advisor (OPLA) also represents the federal government in immigration removal proceedings. Consequently, ICE plays a central role at every stage of the system through which individuals are identified, arrested, detained and ultimately removed from the United States.

ICE played a central role in the four immigration enforcement operations documented in this report. Border Patrol agents were also deployed to support several of the operations and played a prominent role in their implementation, focusing primarily on arrests. However, unlike Border Patrol, whose principal responsibility is enforcement at and near the United States’ border, ICE maintains a permanent presence throughout the country and is the federal agency responsible for immigration enforcement in the interior of the United States. ICE therefore continues to carry out immigration enforcement operations across the country beyond the four enforcement operations examined in this report. As indicated above, since 2025, the administration has pursued increasingly high quotas for the number of individuals that ICE agents should arrest for immigration-related reasons each day.¹⁰⁶⁰ Moreover, the Vera Institute of Justice’s analysis of ICE statistics demonstrates that the vast majority of people were arrested by ICE and not CBP indicating an increase in interior or community immigration enforcement under the second Trump administration as opposed to immigration enforcement at the border.¹⁰⁶¹

Moreover, ICE’s institutional role extends beyond the actions of its own agents. Through programmes such as 287(g), ICE delegates certain immigration enforcement functions to participating local and state law enforcement agencies, further expanding the reach of the federal immigration enforcement system beyond ICE’s own workforce. State and local law enforcement agencies that sign 287(g) contracts with ICE also have a history of replicating the agency’s unaccountable, racist and xenophobic behaviour. For example, in 2012, Alamance County in North Carolina entered into a consent decree with the DOJ and was forced to end its 287(g) contract as a result of racially discriminatory policing against Latinx individuals in the county, with their Sheriff telling their 287(g) officers to “bring me some Mexicans” and “go out there and get me some of those taco eaters,” which resulted in Latinx people being 10 times more likely to be stopped than non-

¹⁰⁵⁷ United States Senate, Committee on the Judiciary, Letter to Secretary Noem, 21 October 2025, <https://www.judiciary.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/2025-10-21%20Letter%20to%20DHS%20re%20ICE%20Hiring.pdf>.

¹⁰⁵⁸ Scott Peters, “Peters To Vote Against Funding For ICE”, 22 January 2026, <https://scottpeters.house.gov/press-releases/peters-to-vote-against-funding-for-ice>.

¹⁰⁵⁹ ICE, “U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement”, <https://www.ice.gov/about-ice>.

¹⁰⁶⁰ United States District Court for the Northern District of Illinois Eastern Division, *Moreno Gonzalez v. Noem*, Complaint (previously cited), para. 36; The Guardian, “Trump administration sets quota to arrest 3,000 people a day in anti-immigration agenda” (previously cited); Reuters, “ICE’s tactics draw criticism as it triples daily arrest targets” (previously cited).

¹⁰⁶¹ ICE, “FY 2026 ICE Statistics” (previously cited); Vera Institute of Justice, “ICE Fiscal Year-to-Date (FYTD) Detention Statistics” (previously cited).

Latinx people.¹⁰⁶² In 2019, the same Sheriff signed another 287(g) agreement which remains in place today.¹⁰⁶³

ICE therefore functions not merely as one of several agencies participating in the operations documented in this report, but as the central institution responsible for carrying out interior immigration enforcement and administering the detention and deportation system through which the Trump administration's mass detention and deportation policy is being implemented.

5.5.5 Structural failures of ICE and the inadequacy of reform

Based on the foregoing, Amnesty International finds that the human rights violations documented in this report cannot be attributed solely to individual ICE agent misconduct, inadequate training or isolated failures of oversight. ICE agents operated within an institutional environment – openly supported and expanded by the Trump administration – in which violent and racially discriminatory immigration enforcement practices were encouraged by senior government officials, including President Trump, agents frequently operated without identification, safeguards intended to prevent and address misconduct were weakened or dismantled, and human rights violations were rarely followed by meaningful investigation or accountability. At the same time, the Trump administration dramatically and rapidly expanded ICE's workforce, resources and operational reach while publicly defending agents accused of human rights violations and, on multiple occasions, shifting blame onto the victims of those violations and labelling them "domestic terrorists". Importantly, these abuses and the institutional environment of impunity are not new to the Trump administration. Rather, they have been consistent since the agency's inception, and across presidential administrations regardless of political party.

Within this institutional environment, the racial discrimination, arbitrary and discriminatory arrests and detentions, harassment, intimidation, unlawful use of force, including lethal force – which in some cases may amount to extrajudicial executions –, repression of peaceful protests, unlawful use of less lethal force, unlawful surveillance, cruel, inhumane and degrading detention conditions that may violate the prohibition on torture, and unlawful incommunicado detention and possible acts of enforced disappearance, as well as many other serious human rights violations documented throughout this report were not isolated incidents, but formed part of the deliberate manner in which the Trump administration's mass detention and deportation policy was intended to be, and is being, implemented.

Amnesty International concludes that the scale, persistence and structural nature of these institutional failures cannot be adequately addressed through discrete reforms, such as additional training, revised operational guidance, vetting of or disciplinary measures against individual agents. The failures documented in this report extend across ICE's leadership, recruitment and training, operational practices, oversight and accountability mechanisms. These failures have plagued the agency for years and created the institutional environment that allowed the agency to play the primary institutional role in implementing the Trump administration's mass detention and deportation policy. Amnesty International therefore concludes that fundamental institutional dismantling, rather than piecemeal reform, is a necessary step to bring the United States' immigration system into compliance with its international human rights obligations, and calls for ICE to be abolished.

6. Community-wide impacts

"ICE continues unabated and what's more terrifying is that they're doing it in a strategic unrolling of evil. It's done so quickly and without any due process. It takes three seconds to shove someone into a car, and then they're gone and their life explodes. Their car is left there, their purse or wallet is left there, and their family is left to pick up the

¹⁰⁶² ACLU of North Carolina, "Alamance County sheriff should not regain immigration enforcement powers", 14 November 2017, <https://www.acluofnorthcarolina.org/news/alamance-county-sheriff-should-not-regain-immigration-enforcement-powers/>.

¹⁰⁶³ ACLU, "ICE Partners Again With a Sheriff It Once Severed Ties With Because of Racial Profiling", 1 February 2019, <https://www.aclu.org/news/immigrants-rights/ice-partners-again-sheriff-it-once-severed-ties>.

pieces, all their economic resources have gone down the drain, and their family's connections to survival may have disappeared along with that person.”¹⁰⁶⁴

Across Chicago, Minneapolis-St. Paul, New Orleans and surrounding areas, and the Washington DC metropolitan area, Amnesty International found that immigration enforcement operations fundamentally altered daily life for entire communities. Rather than affecting only those who were directly stopped or detained, the operations created a pervasive climate of fear that extended throughout migrant communities and beyond. Across all four locations, migrants, refugees, asylum seekers and other racialized people, described remaining inside their homes for weeks or months because they feared that leaving to work, attend school, seek medical care, worship, or carry out ordinary daily activities could result in detention.¹⁰⁶⁵ This seriously impacted a range of their rights, particularly their economic, social and cultural rights, including the rights to work, education, and health.¹⁰⁶⁶ The United States has signed but not ratified the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR). Nevertheless, as a signatory, the United States should take treaty commitments seriously and avoid acts that would defeat the object and purpose of a treaty, in this case, acts that would violate the rights protected in the ICESCR.¹⁰⁶⁷ Moreover, in accordance with its obligations under ICERD, the United States must “guarantee the right of everyone, without distinction as to race, colour, or national or ethnic origin, to equality before the law, notably in the enjoyment of ... economic, social and cultural rights.”¹⁰⁶⁸ While this report documents significant impacts on the enjoyment of economic, social and cultural rights, it does not undertake a full analysis of potential violations of the United States’ international human rights obligations in relation to these rights.

“People’s lives can be so big, but they became so small, not letting anyone into their homes, drawing blinds, getting food passed through windows and doors. It was almost like solitary confinement, but only for migrant families.”¹⁰⁶⁹

Interviewees consistently described neighbourhoods becoming unusually quiet as people withdrew from public life and sheltered inside their homes. Many compared the experience to the COVID-19 pandemic or to “sheltering in place” during hurricanes in Louisiana.¹⁰⁷⁰ While some people gradually resumed leaving their homes as the intensity of the operations decreased, many interviewees reported that fear persisted for months, with some individuals continuing to avoid public spaces despite having regular immigration status. Dieu Do, an immigrant rights organizer and rapid responder in Minneapolis-St. Paul said, “So many people were afraid of going to work, school, to run errands, just leaving their homes. When you have to make the decision to feed your family or risk never seeing them again by just going to the store, that’s a jarring decision to make and a jarring reality to live in. We saw people not feeling safe enough to work, shop – to just live.”¹⁰⁷¹ ICDI told Amnesty International that, “People were afraid to go outside even if they had documents. One of our clients didn’t go outside for three to four months. Another client who had lived in the United States for 30 years didn’t leave home for three months.”¹⁰⁷²

“People were telling us that they had nothing to eat but that they couldn’t go outside. People were even afraid to open their doors to receive Uber deliveries.”¹⁰⁷³

¹⁰⁶⁴ Online interview with a DC-based organization, Washington, DC, USA, 18 June 2026.

¹⁰⁶⁵ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026; United States District Court for the District of Minnesota, *Hussen v. Noem*, Class Action Complaint for Declaratory and Injunctive Relief (previously cited), paras. 143-148.

¹⁰⁶⁶ ICESCR, Art. 12; CESCR, General Comment No. 14 (2000): The right to the highest attainable standard of health (article 12 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights), E/C.12/2000/4, 11 August 2000; CESCR, General Comment No. 13: The right to education (article 13), E/C.12/1999/10, 8 December 1999; CESCR, General Comment No. 18: The right to work (article 6), E/C.12/GC/18, 6 February 2006; CESCR, General Comment No. 20: Non-discrimination in economic, social and cultural rights (art. 2, para. 2 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights), E/C.12/GC/20, 2 July 2009.

¹⁰⁶⁷ Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties, Article 18; The US has signed but not ratified the Vienna Convention - United Nations Treaty Collective, “Status of Treaties: Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties”,

https://treaties.un.org/pages/ViewDetailsIII.aspx?src=TREATY&mtdsg_no=XXIII-1&chapter=23&Temp=mtdsg3&clang=en.

¹⁰⁶⁸ ICERD, Art. 5(e).

¹⁰⁶⁹ In-person interview with Sarah Quinn, Minneapolis-St. Paul, MN, USA, 18 March 2026.

¹⁰⁷⁰ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026.

¹⁰⁷¹ Online interview with Dieu Do, Minneapolis-St. Paul, MN, USA, 7 April 2026.

¹⁰⁷² In-person interview with ICDI, Chicago, IL, USA, 23 March 2026.

¹⁰⁷³ In-person interview with ICDI, Chicago, IL, USA, 23 March 2026.

6.1 Loss of employment and economic impacts

Immigration enforcement operations in the four cities had profound economic consequences. Because many people feared being stopped or detained while travelling to work or at their workplaces, they stopped working for days, weeks or, in some cases, months.¹⁰⁷⁴ Others lost their jobs after being detained or because employers reduced operations or dismissed workers in anticipation of immigration enforcement operations. Interviewees consistently described individuals facing an impossible choice between earning an income and risking detention.¹⁰⁷⁵ Even people with work authorization or other lawful immigration status reported being too afraid to commute to work because they believed they could be targeted based on their race, skin colour, national origin or ethnicity.¹⁰⁷⁶

The inability of people to work had immediate and far-reaching consequences for individuals and families. Across all four cities, interviewees described households rapidly exhausting their savings, struggling to pay rent and utilities, relying on food banks and mutual aid, and facing increased food and housing insecurity.¹⁰⁷⁷ Community organizations reported that many families required emergency financial assistance after breadwinners were detained or because they had stopped working out of fear.¹⁰⁷⁸ New Life Centers told Amnesty International, “There was a huge economic impact on individuals and families. Some people didn’t go to work, which impacted themselves and their families but also the business or place they worked.”¹⁰⁷⁹ According to VANSE, “Since the ICE surge [in Minneapolis-St. Paul], people have left the workforce; it’s been four to six months since people have worked. They can’t pay rent. They’re burning through their savings. They have to choose between food or rent. There’s been an increase in food insecurity. There are families that currently have no one working.”¹⁰⁸⁰

The immigration operations also had significant economic impacts on businesses and local economies. Interviewees across the four locations described restaurants, shops and other businesses experiencing sharp declines in customers as migrant communities withdrew from public life.¹⁰⁸¹ Businesses that depended on migrant workers and consumers, closed temporarily or permanently, employers reduced staffing, and commercial corridors that had once been vibrant became largely deserted.¹⁰⁸² Universidad Popular told Amnesty International about the economic impacts that Operation Midway Blitz had on Chicago’s Little Village neighbourhood noting that many shops permanently closed.¹⁰⁸³ In Minneapolis-St. Paul, city officials have reported tens of millions of dollars in lost wages and hundreds of millions of dollars in broader economic losses associated with Operation Metro Surge.¹⁰⁸⁴

“Families were struggling to pay rent, to pay for groceries. There were necessities that couldn’t be accessed because they were staying at home and not working. A lot of families got separated. It was a very dark time. There was a lot of fear. Even through the fear our communities organized, from digital security trainings to mutual aid food deliveries, we were there for each other.”¹⁰⁸⁵

6.2 Access to education

Across the four locations examined in this report, Amnesty International found that immigration enforcement operations significantly disrupted children’s access to education. Parents frequently kept their children home from school because they feared being stopped or detained while travelling to school, or because they

¹⁰⁷⁴ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026.

¹⁰⁷⁵ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026.

¹⁰⁷⁶ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026.

¹⁰⁷⁷ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026.

¹⁰⁷⁸ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026.

¹⁰⁷⁹ Online interview with New Life Centers, Chicago, IL, USA, 28 April 2026.

¹⁰⁸⁰ In-person interview with VANSE, Minneapolis-St. Paul, MN, USA, 19 March 2026.

¹⁰⁸¹ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026.

¹⁰⁸² In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026.

¹⁰⁸³ In-person interview with Universidad Popular, Chicago, IL, USA, 22 March 2026.

¹⁰⁸⁴ Online interview with Minneapolis Mayor Frey, Minneapolis, MN, USA, 14 April 2026.

¹⁰⁸⁵ Online interview with organizer, Eye on Surveillance, New Orleans, LA, USA, 20 May 2026.

believed immigration authorities were operating near or in schools.¹⁰⁸⁶ These fears were compounded by the rescission of DHS guidelines which previously prohibited immigration enforcement actions in “sensitive locations” including schools.¹⁰⁸⁷

“People were saying there was no way they would send their kids to school. ICE was operating in front of schools at arrival and dismissal times; a lot of people thought that schools were being targeted. This spread terror and kept a lot of people home,” said a DC-based organizer.¹⁰⁸⁸ In some cases, children stopped attending school after witnessing family members being detained or because their caregivers had themselves been arrested. Schools, educators and community organizations described sharp declines in attendance, with some schools moving temporarily to online learning or creating emergency transportation and accompaniment programmes to enable children to continue their education safely.¹⁰⁸⁹ For example, 38 of Chicago’s 77 neighbourhoods saw student attendance drop as a result of Operation Midway Blitz.¹⁰⁹⁰ In some cases, families decided to send their children to schools closer to their homes to reduce travel times and the possibility of detention. Interviewees in Washington, DC, shared that this resulted in some families changing their children to English-only schools because Spanish immersion schools were further away.¹⁰⁹¹

The impacts extended beyond school attendance. Interviewees described children experiencing fear and anxiety about being separated from their parents, educators adapting lessons to virtual formats, and schools diverting significant resources to emergency responses rather than education. Universidad Popular told Amnesty International that, “kids didn’t want to go to school because they did not want to come home to no mom. The community was traumatized.”¹⁰⁹² Community organizations, teachers and school administrators consistently emphasized that the operations disrupted not only children’s learning but also their sense of safety and stability, with many schools becoming centres of emergency support for impacted families.¹⁰⁹³

6.3 Access to healthcare

Amnesty International found that immigration enforcement operations significantly impeded access to healthcare and had implications for people’s mental health.¹⁰⁹⁴ Interviewees consistently described people delaying or foregoing medical care because they feared being stopped or detained while travelling to clinics or hospitals, or because they believed immigration authorities were operating near healthcare facilities.¹⁰⁹⁵ Healthcare providers across all four locations reported sharp increases in missed appointments, cancelled specialist referrals and patients failing to collect medications.¹⁰⁹⁶ A New Orleans clinic stated that, “Many people were not able to get their medication because they didn’t want to leave their homes. We saw a lot of patients cancelling their appointments.”¹⁰⁹⁷ Inés* shared with Amnesty International that following her husband’s detention by ICE, she stopped attending doctors’ appointments to monitor her glaucoma because

¹⁰⁸⁶ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026; Office of the Governor JB Pritzker, “Operation Midway Blitz: The Economic and Human Costs to Illinois Communities”, 11 December 2025, <https://gov-pritzker-newsroom.prezly.com/operation-midway-blitz-the-economic-and-human-costs-to-illinois-communities>.

¹⁰⁸⁷ ICE, Interim Guidance: Civil Immigration Enforcement Actions in or near Courthouses (previously cited); DHS, “Statement from a DHS Spokesperson on Directives Expanding Law Enforcement and Ending the Abuse of Humanitarian Parole” (previously cited).

¹⁰⁸⁸ In-person interview with an organizer, Washington, DC, USA, 18 May 2026.

¹⁰⁸⁹ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026.

¹⁰⁹⁰ Office of the Governor JB Pritzker, “Operation Midway Blitz: The Economic and Human Costs to Illinois Communities” (previously cited); Illinois Policy, “There are 9,081 fewer students enrolled in Chicago Public Schools, driven by declines in Black and Hispanic students. The big drop ends a blip in annual enrollment declines.”, 30 September 2025, <https://www.illinoispolicy.org/chicago-public-schools-lose-9000-students/>.

¹⁰⁹¹ In-person interview with an organizer, Washington, DC, USA, 18 May 2026.

¹⁰⁹² In-person interview with Universidad Popular, Chicago, IL, USA, 22 March 2026.

¹⁰⁹³ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026.

¹⁰⁹⁴ As a signatory to the ICESCR, the US should avoid acts which would violate the Convention, including “interfering directly or indirectly with the enjoyment of the right to health”, or “denying or limiting equal access for all persons, including prisoners or detainees, minorities, asylum seekers and illegal immigrants, to preventive, curative and palliative health services. CESCR, General Comment No. 14 (2000): The right to the highest attainable standard of health (article 12 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights), E/C.12/2000/4, 11 August 2000, paras. 33-34.

¹⁰⁹⁵ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026; United States District Court for the District of Minnesota, *Hussen v. Noem*, Class Action Complaint for Declaratory and Injunctive Relief (previously cited), para. 151.

¹⁰⁹⁶ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026.

¹⁰⁹⁷ Online interview with a New Orleans clinic, New Orleans, LA, USA, 7 May 2026.

she was afraid to leave her home. “I don’t go to my health appointments anymore. Nothing feels safe,” she said.¹⁰⁹⁸

Ama Frimpong at We are CASA shared the story of one of their members who had had open heart surgery and needed dialysis three times a week. He was on his way to a dialysis appointment when he was stopped and detained by ICE. He was released from detention that same night because having missed the dialysis appointment caused him to become severely ill. He passed away three months later because of medical complications. “I cannot talk about it without crying,” said Frimpong.¹⁰⁹⁹

Interviewees consistently emphasized the serious health consequences of delaying medical care.¹¹⁰⁰ A healthcare clinic in Washington, DC, emphasized that, “Delaying primary healthcare is a ticking bomb. Sometimes it can end up being too late.”¹¹⁰¹ Healthcare providers described patients presenting with advanced medical conditions after postponing treatment, chronic illnesses becoming uncontrolled because people stopped attending appointments or collecting medication, and pregnant women delaying prenatal care.¹¹⁰² In several cases documented by Amnesty International, fear of immigration enforcement contributed to medical emergencies that interviewees believed could have been avoided had people felt safe accessing healthcare. Universidad Popular told Amnesty International about one of their students, a 60-year-old woman with hypertension who stopped going to regular healthcare check-ups because of Operation Midway Blitz. She passed away from a heart attack.¹¹⁰³

Amnesty International also documented that hospitals and healthcare clinics increasingly became associated with immigration enforcement. Interviewees described ICE and Border Patrol agents accompanying detained patients to hospitals, maintaining a presence in hospital rooms, and, in some cases, refusing to leave patients’ rooms while they received treatment. A doctor at a community health centre stated, “The goal was to make typical safe places unsafe. ICE didn’t need to come into clinics.”¹¹⁰⁴ Healthcare providers explained that these practices undermined patient trust, created fear among staff and patients, and complicated the provision of medical care.¹¹⁰⁵

6.4 Access to worship and religious services

Immigration enforcement operations also significantly interfered with people’s ability to practice their religion and access places of worship. Across the four locations examined in this report, interviewees described people avoiding churches, mosques and other places of worship because they feared being stopped or detained while travelling to or attending religious services.¹¹⁰⁶ **Carlos and Inés*** shared that, even prior to Carlos’ detention, the family stopped going to church and instead began streaming their Sunday mass service online since immigration enforcement activity in Washington, DC, was already high.¹¹⁰⁷

Interviewees shared that, in Minneapolis-St. Paul and the DMV, ICE, Border Patrol and other federal agents used the parking lots of places of worship for staging.¹¹⁰⁸ While Amnesty International was not told of any enforcement operations happening inside any places of worship in the four locations, the large and frequent presence of agents outside of them caused people to not attend services. “There is a real chilling effect,” said Ama Frimpong at We are CASA.¹¹⁰⁹

People’s fears of being detained on their way to places of worship was compounded by the administration’s decision to rescind protections for sensitive locations, including places of worship, meaning that not only

¹⁰⁹⁸ Online interview with Carlos & Inés*, Washington, DC, USA, 16 May 2026.

¹⁰⁹⁹ Online interview with Ama Frimpong, We are CASA, DMV, USA, 15 May 2026; United States District Court for the District of Columbia, *Escobar Molina v. DHS*, Decision of Preliminary Injunction (previously cited), p. 21.

¹¹⁰⁰ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026.

¹¹⁰¹ In-person interview with healthcare clinic, Washington, DC, USA, 18 May 2026.

¹¹⁰² In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026.

¹¹⁰³ In-person interview with Universidad Popular, Chicago, IL, USA, 22 March 2026.

¹¹⁰⁴ Online interview with community health centre doctor, Minneapolis-St. Paul, MN, USA, 28 April 2026.

¹¹⁰⁵ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026.

¹¹⁰⁶ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026.

¹¹⁰⁷ Online interview with Carlos & Inés*, Washington, DC, USA, 16 May 2026.

¹¹⁰⁸ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026.

¹¹⁰⁹ Online interview with Ama Frimpong, We are CASA, DMV, USA, 15 May 2026.

did people not feel safe to leave their homes to attend religious services but they also did not feel safe at their places of worship.¹¹¹⁰ Reverend Susie Hayward told Amnesty International, “We’re experiencing a lot of vulnerability because houses of worship are no longer sensitive locations. People feel like they can’t go to church. It was a time of deep spiritual anguish and people were locked in their homes and didn’t have access to spiritual ritual, community and care.”¹¹¹¹ A pastor at New Life Centers noted that the impacts on access to worship and religious services was very noticeable. “At one of our churches, we have a Guatemalan congregation that averages around 200 people a week attending services and this dropped to around 20 people,” he said, adding that, as of April 2026, numbers had not returned to what they were prior to Operation Midway Blitz.¹¹¹² Following his unlawful detention by ICE in Minneapolis, Mubashir Hussen’s family made the decision to break their fast for Ramadan inside their home instead of with other families because they were afraid that they could be detained by federal agents if they left their home after what happened to Hussen.¹¹¹³

The rescission of protections for places of worship fundamentally altered the role that these places play within communities. Rather than serving as places of refuge, spiritual support and community gathering, they became places where migrant community members no longer felt safe. Faith leaders told Amnesty International about measures they took to not only protect their congregations, but to also ensure that those who were afraid to leave their homes were still able to access religious services in some way.¹¹¹⁴ Some religious communities shifted services online, while others organized alternative ways of providing pastoral care to people who remained confined to their homes.

“The community hid, is in hiding still or moved. People stopped sending their kids to school, stopped going to work, stopped going to their place of worship. The isolation factor was significant. Ironically, people who came here seeking refuge feel like they can’t leave their homes and refuse to do certain things because it requires travel.”¹¹¹⁵

6.5 Access to immigration appointments and hearings

Amnesty International found that immigration enforcement operations also had a significant chilling effect on people’s willingness to attend immigration appointments, court hearings and other legal proceedings.¹¹¹⁶ Across the four locations examined in this report, migrants, refugees and asylum seekers feared being stopped or detained while travelling to immigration offices or courthouses, or arrested during, at or immediately after scheduled appointments. Legal services providers and community organizations reported that many people missed immigration appointments and hearings, as well as hearings for other matters because they believed that attending could place them at risk of being detained.¹¹¹⁷ The fears of individuals to attend immigration appointments and hearings, along with other court hearings, were compounded by the rescission of protections at courthouses. A Chicago-based immigration attorney said, “My clients were terrified to leave their homes for legal appointments, court appointments, USCIS appointments.”¹¹¹⁸ Unstoppable Kenner noted that people were missing court dates even for matters such as parking tickets and that some people were afraid to go to the courthouse to get birth certificates for their children.¹¹¹⁹

Interviewees emphasized that the decision not to attend immigration appointments and hearings, and other types of hearings, could have negative consequences. For example, they explained that people who failed to attend appointments and hearings risked receiving removal orders in absentia, abandoning pending immigration processes or losing opportunities to regularize their status. According to ICDI, “During Operation Midway Blitz people were not going to their court dates and now they’re receiving deportation orders. We’re seeing more deportation orders now.”¹¹²⁰ Enrique Espinoza, an immigration attorney, shared that, “People

¹¹¹⁰ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026.

¹¹¹¹ In-person interview with Rev. Susie Hayward, Minneapolis-St. Paul, MN, USA, 18 March 2026.

¹¹¹² Online interview with New Life Centers, Chicago, IL, USA, 28 April 2026.

¹¹¹³ United States District Court for the District of Minnesota, *Hussen v. Noem*, Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law (previously cited), para. 30.

¹¹¹⁴ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026.

¹¹¹⁵ In-person interview with Here is Home NOLA, New Orleans, LA, USA, 8 May 2026.

¹¹¹⁶ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026.

¹¹¹⁷ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026.

¹¹¹⁸ In-person interview with immigration attorney, Chicago, IL, USA, 24 March 2026.

¹¹¹⁹ In-person interview with Unstoppable Kenner, Metairie, LA, USA, 11 May 2026.

¹¹²⁰ In-person interview with ICDI, Chicago, IL, USA, 23 March 2026.

stopped going to court for their cases, which in many cases created an in absentia order meaning their cases ended because they didn't show up. This was because of the fear. People are still afraid to go to the courts and continue with legal processes that this country set up for them."¹¹²¹

"Fear was at large. People weren't leaving their houses. People weren't going to biometrics appointments. Missing these appointments could result in a deportation order, but many people were willing to take this risk."¹¹²²

6.6 Impacts on children and families

Amnesty International found that children were among those most profoundly impacted by the immigration enforcement operations in the four cities. They experienced the consequences of the operations in numerous ways including being approached by federal agents and asked to identify people, being used as bait, witnessing the arrests of parents and caregivers, being separated from family members, being left in the backseats of cars when their parents were detained, being forced to assume new caregiving responsibilities, being displaced from their homes, and living with the constant fear that their loved ones would be detained.¹¹²³ Jessie and Dan L., rapid responders in Minneapolis-St. Paul, told Amnesty International that ICE agents were frequently going to school bus stops asking children waiting for the bus who lived in specific houses. "I saw a five or six year old running for their lives," said Dan. "ICE agents were stalking the school bus stops, taking kids to their homes to get their parents. On the east side of St. Paul there was a concerted effort to use children to get to adults. I would show up at the bus stops and agents would be questioning kids, asking them 'Who lives there?'"¹¹²⁴ KT, a rapid responder in Washington, DC, tabled daily outside of the Fort Totten metro station. They told Amnesty International that there was an elementary school aged child who used to stop by the table every day to eat snacks who told KT that she knew eight people who had been detained by ICE.¹¹²⁵

LORI stated that, "Kids' fear about their parents being taken is real. Children are traumatized and scared."¹¹²⁶ The Executive Director of LORI shared that one day he was driving with his daughter. He was going 35 miles per hour (approx. 55 kilometres per hour) and they drove past a sign that said 20 miles per hour (approx. 30 kilometres per hour). His daughter yelled at him to slow down, saying "I don't want ICE or the police to stop and take you."¹¹²⁷ PASO shared that children were saying things like, "I'm not going to the park today, I need to be with my mom because what happens if I go to the park and come back and she's been taken."¹¹²⁸

"It was MLK weekend and we went to the park recreation centre with the kids. There was a big event there and they were giving out whistles. In the park, one of the girls got a whistle and she went to blow on it, and my kid yelled, 'NO, that's only when ICE comes!' I had to tell my kids what whistles were and who ICE is."¹¹²⁹

Amnesty International was told that children changed their behaviours, avoided school and outdoor activities, developed persistent fears about immigration authorities and struggled to understand why family members had disappeared. A refugee settlement agency stated, "Young kids still don't understand why their parent was gone for a month, why they have days they can't go outside, why whistles are blowing outside their school. A lot of kids know scary stuff is happening but they don't understand it."¹¹³⁰ Ama Frimpong at We are CASA said, "Little children are crying every night because they want their father to come home."¹¹³¹ Columbia Heights Public Schools staff shared that children at the school began asking teachers, "Why do they hate us? Why do they hate me? Am I going to be snatched? Am I going to be taken when I get home? Will my mommy be gone? Will my dad be gone?"¹¹³² They indicated that "every single child in our district

¹¹²¹ Online interview with Enrique Espinoza, Chicago, IL, USA, 10 April 2026.

¹¹²² Online interview with VANSE, Minneapolis-St. Paul, MN, USA, 9 April 2026.

¹¹²³ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026.

¹¹²⁴ In-person interview with Jessie & Dan L., Minneapolis-St. Paul, MN, USA, 20 March 2026.

¹¹²⁵ In-person interview with KT, Washington, DC, USA, 17 May 2026.

¹¹²⁶ In-person interview with LORI, Baton Rouge, LA, USA, 8 May 2026.

¹¹²⁷ In-person interview with LORI, Baton Rouge, LA, USA, 8 May 2026.

¹¹²⁸ Online interview with Marién Casillas Pabellon, PASO, Chicago, IL, USA, 23 April 2026.

¹¹²⁹ In-person interview with Liliana Z., Minneapolis-St. Paul, MN, USA, 19 March 2026.

¹¹³⁰ Online interview with a refugee resettlement agency, Chicago, IL, USA, 21 April 2026.

¹¹³¹ Online interview with Ama Frimpong, We are CASA, DMV, USA, 15 May 2026.

¹¹³² In-person interview with Columbia Heights Public Schools, Columbia Heights, MN, USA, 19 March 2026.

has been impacted”, stating that the seven children from the district who were detained are showing signs of trauma, while children who were staying at home with their families and have now returned to school “are silent, some are uncontrollably crying, some are showing signs of separation anxiety and panic. Many are too afraid to move between classes.”¹¹³³

“Kids are saying, ‘I wish my skin was lighter because then I would be safer and I could keep my family safe’. No kid should ever have been in an environment which makes them think or say something like that, it’s heartbreaking.”¹¹³⁴

Across the four cities, the immigration enforcement operations resulted in the separation of families. In March 2026, ProPublica reported that the Trump administration had detained the parents of more than 11,000 US citizen children.¹¹³⁵ Sofia* told Amnesty International that when she was detained by ICE she pleaded with agents to let her call a family member because her 6-month-old baby and 11-year-old daughter were home alone but agents did not let her contact anyone. Her daughter had to stop going to school to take care of the baby while Sofia was in detention.¹¹³⁶ A Louisiana-based organization told Amnesty International that they began seeing many children being left with just their mother or with neighbours, sharing the story of a one-and-a-half-year-old who was left with neighbours when their mother was detained.¹¹³⁷

As set out above, the Federal Takeover in Washington, DC, particularly impacted Black and Brown US citizen children and youth in the DMV.¹¹³⁸ Federal agents, including the National Guard, began aggressively enforcing the juvenile curfew, targeting Black and Brown youth in particular. Interviewees told Amnesty International about multiple incidents of National Guard members and MPD officers grabbing youth who were enjoying themselves in public spaces, as well as targeting youth on buses and the metro for fare evasion.¹¹³⁹

“A teacher was holding one of the kid’s hands walking outside and there was a distant siren, like a fire truck or something, and the child went into a full panic mode and was like ‘immigration, immigration!’. The kids are dysregulated, they’re crying, they’re fearful, they’re showing all of those signs. The operation has impacted everyone in the community and will continue to do so for generations.”¹¹⁴⁰

6.7 Collective trauma and mental health impacts

“Collective trauma will impact everyone for years.”¹¹⁴¹

Across the four locations examined in this report, Amnesty International found that immigration enforcement operations have had profound and long-lasting psychological impacts on migrants, refugees, asylum seekers, their families, other racialized people and the wider community. Interviewees consistently described widespread fear, anxiety, depression, grief and hypervigilance.¹¹⁴² Many interviewees emphasized that these impacts extended far beyond those who were directly detained, affecting entire communities that lived under the constant threat of immigration enforcement.¹¹⁴³ A healthcare clinic in Washington, DC, said, “We’ve seen an increase in symptoms related to depression, anxiety and PTSD ... Almost everyone coming into the clinic is showing depression or anxiety.”¹¹⁴⁴

Interviewees consistently described the operations as creating a pervasive sense that nowhere was safe. Ordinary activities such as leaving home, hearing helicopters overhead, seeing unfamiliar vehicles, answering the front door or travelling through one’s neighbourhood became sources of fear.¹¹⁴⁵ Many people described

¹¹³³ In-person interview with Columbia Heights Public Schools, Columbia Heights, MN, USA, 19 March 2026.

¹¹³⁴ Online interview, Minnesota, USA, 9 April 2026.

¹¹³⁵ ProPublica, “Trump Has Detained the Parents of More Than 11,000 U.S. Citizen Kids”, 23 March 2026, <https://www.propublica.org/article/trump-family-deportations-ice-citizen-kids>.

¹¹³⁶ In-person interview with Sofia*, Minneapolis-St. Paul, MN, USA, 18 March 2026.

¹¹³⁷ In-person interview with organization, New Orleans, LA, USA, 12 May 2026.

¹¹³⁸ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026.

¹¹³⁹ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026.

¹¹⁴⁰ In-person interview with Columbia Heights Public Schools, Columbia Heights, MN, USA, 19 March 2026.

¹¹⁴¹ In-person interview with Victor Molina, NAMI Minnesota, Minneapolis-St. Paul, MN, USA, 19 March 2026.

¹¹⁴² In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026; United States District Court for the District of Minnesota, *Hussen v. Noem*, Class Action Complaint for Declaratory and Injunctive Relief (previously cited), para 149.

¹¹⁴³ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026.

¹¹⁴⁴ In-person interview with healthcare clinic, Washington, DC, USA, 18 May 2026.

¹¹⁴⁵ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026.

remaining in a prolonged state of hypervigilance, constantly monitoring social media, rapid response networks and neighbourhood alerts, while others explained that even after the operations subsided they continued experiencing anxiety, nightmares, sleep disturbances and an enduring fear of immigration authorities.¹¹⁴⁶ Many people interviewed by Amnesty International emphasized that these psychological impacts would continue long after the operations themselves had ended.¹¹⁴⁷ The Director of Here is Home NOLA, a Latina woman, shared, “There has been a lot of fear and trauma. I’m scared of driving and having pickup trucks or the police drive behind me. I’m constantly wondering what’s going to happen. I had to make a contingency plan with my family and within our organization for if I was detained.”¹¹⁴⁸

“There are so many impacts that it’s hard to even encapsulate how this changed people’s lives. We’re trying to go back to our daily lives. My mom and I would go to the Asian market every week – it was a celebratory thing to do. The person at the market was detained and deported; there are people who no longer go to the market. Even if we’re going back to our old routine, it’ll never feel the same. What was once a fun and celebratory thing to do every week is now so sombre. Everywhere I go reminds me of the people who were taken.”¹¹⁴⁹

“You couldn’t see the sky, it was completely covered, all you could hear were people screaming, agents yelling; so many kids play in that park, it’s a place for families. ICE agents weren’t looking for anyone, they didn’t arrest anyone, they just tear-gassed the entire street. Snow started falling and it turned a green-brown colour. ICE was there for 10 minutes and then they were gone. That’s something that feels representative of that time for me, like this is happening in that neighbourhood. I had my first breakup in that neighbourhood. It was happening everywhere. It changed the landscape of our city.”¹¹⁵⁰

“The enforcement operation created a profound feeling of distrust amongst migrants. People have come here and they’re yearning to feel trust and safety; that’s often a journey some folks will find, but I think this has brought a lot of distrust, a lot less hope, it can really impact how people see their own self-concept. It’s made people question their self-worth, it’s made them question if they’re ever going to belong anywhere, it’s created a feeling like they can’t go back, but they also can’t stay here.”¹¹⁵¹

“A lot needs to be said about trauma. No one can gauge the fear that comes with being in hiding for months.”¹¹⁵²

Many interviewees described experiencing fear and hypervigilance months after the most intensive phases of the operations had ended.¹¹⁵³ Healthcare professionals explained that prolonged exposure to these conditions fundamentally altered people’s sense of safety and security, with many remaining in a sustained “fight or flight” state long after the immediate threat had passed.¹¹⁵⁴

“I can’t sleep. I keep dreaming that ICE is in my house.”¹¹⁵⁵

“Cars scare me. I think they’re ICE.”¹¹⁵⁶

“People are coming back to the clinic and are saying, ‘I’m still scared’.”¹¹⁵⁷

“There were helicopters and drones all the time ... sometimes I think I hear them, but they aren’t there. It’s just PTSD.”¹¹⁵⁸

Across the four cities examined in this report, Amnesty International found that the impacts of immigration enforcement operations extended far beyond the individuals who were directly stopped, detained or deported. Through widespread fear, racialized targeting, militarized tactics and family separation, the operations disrupted nearly every aspect of daily life within affected communities. Schools, healthcare facilities, places of worship, workplaces and neighbourhoods ceased to function as places of safety, while community

¹¹⁴⁶ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026.

¹¹⁴⁷ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026.

¹¹⁴⁸ In-person interview with Here is Home NOLA, New Orleans, LA, USA, 8 May 2026.

¹¹⁴⁹ Online interview with Dieu Do, Minneapolis-St. Paul, MN, USA, 7 April 2026.

¹¹⁵⁰ Online interview with a Twin Cities resident, Minneapolis-St. Paul, MN, USA, 31 March 2026.

¹¹⁵¹ Online interview with a refugee resettlement agency, Chicago, IL, USA, 21 April 2026.

¹¹⁵² Online interview with Shubhanjana Das, Minneapolis-St. Paul, MN, USA, 14 April 2026.

¹¹⁵³ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026.

¹¹⁵⁴ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026.

¹¹⁵⁵ In-person interview with Mónica*, Minneapolis-St. Paul, MN, USA, 18 March 2026.

¹¹⁵⁶ Online interview with Carlos & Inés*, Washington, DC, USA, 16 May 2026.

¹¹⁵⁷ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026.

¹¹⁵⁸ In-person interview with Victor Molina, NAMI Minnesota, Minneapolis-St. Paul, MN, USA, 19 March 2026.

organizations were forced to assume responsibilities ordinarily fulfilled by public institutions. The cumulative effect was not only the deprivation of individual rights, but the profound disruption of community life itself.

7. Community resistance: rapid response and mutual aid networks

“Operation Metro Surge was disgusting and inhumane. If it wasn’t for the resilience of our immigrant neighbours, Bovino would not have left our state. Folks were putting their bodies on the line ...”¹¹⁵⁹

Across the four cities examined in this report, Amnesty International found a wide range of patterns illustrating community resistance and power in the wake of widespread fear, racially discriminatory immigration enforcement, militarized tactics and family separation caused by the various federal immigration enforcement operations. Communities in and around Washington, DC, Minneapolis-St. Paul, Chicago and New Orleans mobilized grassroots mutual aid and rapid response networks to remedy the numerous human rights violations and assume the responsibilities ordinarily fulfilled by local, state and federal governments.

Individuals and community organizations established and spearheaded ICE hotlines, rapid response networks to monitor and document ICE activity, “Know Your Rights” (KYR) and constitutional observer trainings, food and essential items delivery networks, school safety patrols, rideshare systems, healing spaces, at-home medical visits, and pro bono legal aid collectives, among others.

The unprecedented nature and scale of the immigration enforcement operations led to innovative strategies to effectively train individuals on how to engage in constitutionally protected activity, navigate security risks and physical threats to their lives and disseminate crucial KYR materials during a time of “crisis”. Community resistance efforts also aimed to cultivate “joy” during crisis, as seen in “singing resistance” groups that sang songs for communities forced into isolation and efforts to honour those killed by ICE and Border Patrol agents, through memorial sites and vigils.¹¹⁶⁰

“We Keep Us Safe” was a sentiment widely shared by those interviewed by Amnesty International.¹¹⁶¹ Residents who lived in cities “under siege” understood that their safety and material needs were not going to be met or supported by either their state government or the federal government – instead, they relied on their neighbours and mutual aid networks. “Because community and nonprofits did so much, it took the burden off the city and the parish to step up, when they should have [stepped up]”, shared the ACLU of Louisiana.¹¹⁶² Grassroots networks of resistance and power were activated.¹¹⁶³

“Throughout Chicago we saw the activation of coalitions and networks that realized ‘we really need each other’... people assumed that institutions would always exist, and that democracy would always exist.”¹¹⁶⁴

Across all four cities, community members and organizers described networks that were established during other watershed moments, such as the killing of George Floyd or COVID-19 that mirrored the operations in various ways, that, like “muscle memory” were activated once their cities came under “occupation” by the Trump administration.¹¹⁶⁵ Numerous individuals and organizations described the organic nature in which people took on specific or niche roles in response to their community’s needs.¹¹⁶⁶ Participation was broad and included individuals with and without previous community organizing experience. For some, the operations forced them to plug-in and take action for the first time.¹¹⁶⁷

“Mayor Frey, early on said, ‘we are outnumbered’, ‘they have bigger guns’, and ‘we can’t protect you’. We knew we had to protect ourselves. We protect us ... We had to mobilize quickly, mapping communities and local businesses ... who is most vulnerable? When do businesses need help for their workers?”¹¹⁶⁸

¹¹⁵⁹ Online interview with a Minneapolis City Councilmember, Minneapolis-St. Paul, MN, USA, 25 March 2026.

¹¹⁶⁰ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026.

¹¹⁶¹ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026.

¹¹⁶² Online interview with ACLU of Louisiana, New Orleans, LA, USA, 22 May 2026.

¹¹⁶³ Online interview with ACLU of Louisiana, New Orleans, LA, USA, 22 May 2026.

¹¹⁶⁴ In-person interview with Rev. David Black, Chicago, IL, USA, 24 March 2026.

¹¹⁶⁵ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026.

¹¹⁶⁶ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026.

¹¹⁶⁷ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026.

¹¹⁶⁸ In-person interview with Rev. Susie Hayward, Minneapolis, MN, USA, 18 March 2026.

Amnesty International was told that the work was constant, both physically and emotionally, for those who led and participated in resistance efforts.¹¹⁶⁹ “From when I went to bed at 2:00 am and woke up at 6:00 am, you could be dealing with ICE stuff 24/7”, shared Minnesota State Representative Liish Kozlowski.¹¹⁷⁰

7.1 Lead-up: cross-pollination

Many people understood what a second Trump administration might entail for migrant, asylum seeker and refugee communities, thus, many began organizing mutual aid, establishing ICE hotlines and KYR and constitutional observer trainings prior to or immediately after President Trump’s inauguration on 20 January 2025.

“We were prepared before the operation began. Lots of know your rights trainings were being done. Rapid response teams were planned and put in place. We were letting the public know what was coming. Training was done for local folks and impacted folks.”¹¹⁷¹

Once the federal immigration enforcement operations were underway, attorneys, organizers and advocates across the US began to reach out to one another, to learn best practices and prepare as best they could for a large-scale militarized occupation. For example, a community organizer based in Louisiana shared, “We followed the blueprints that Chicago and Los Angeles had, such as the ‘SALUTE method’ for documenting ICE and detentions.”¹¹⁷² Individuals and community members from all four cities credit their success to the cross-pollination of tactics and strategies shared among other major US cities that experienced similar operations.¹¹⁷³

[INSERT COMMUNITY FLYER(S) OF SALUTE METHOD: S) Size, A) Activity, L) Location, U) Uniform, T) Time and Date, E) Equipment (weapons)]

In addition, other US cities that experienced immigration enforcement surges, such as New York City, New York and Charlotte, North Carolina, adopted tactics, including the use of whistles, and contributed to the cross-pollination among US cities navigating the increased federal immigration enforcement.¹¹⁷⁴

“In prep time, I noticed advocacy community organizations reach out to Charlotte and Chicago to see what worked and what didn’t work – huge mobilization efforts to prepare.”¹¹⁷⁵

7.2 Rapid response: hotlines and ICE and Border Patrol monitoring

“I went out patrolling for the first time on the day that Renee Good got murdered. I thought, ‘we have to go, even if we’re scared and intimidated’. We have to redouble our efforts if that’s the extent people are going to go to, if they’re going to use deadly force against observers. We were determined not to let the DHS’s intimidation campaign be successful while their people continued to disregard the law and constitution with immunity.”¹¹⁷⁶

Rapid response networks in the four cities covered in this report were volunteer-led, non-hierarchical, decentralized and highly efficient. Educators, faith leaders, medical professionals, attorneys, local elected officials, data scientists, among others, all supported rapid response efforts. From operating ICE hotlines and conducting patrols and dispatching to managing data and leading trainings to document ICE activity, people ensured that their community members, if arrested or detained, would be accounted for.¹¹⁷⁷ Minneapolis-St. Paul and Chicago particularly saw their local elected officials involved in rapid response efforts. “Different alderpeople (city elected official) were going out there when there was ICE activity in their

¹¹⁶⁹ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026.

¹¹⁷⁰ Online interview with Minnesota State Representative Liish Kozlowski, Minneapolis-St. Paul, MN, USA, 24 March 2026.

¹¹⁷¹ In-person interview with ICDI, Chicago, IL, USA, 23 March 2026.

¹¹⁷² Online interview with community organizer, New Orleans, LA, USA, 7 May 2026.

¹¹⁷³ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026.

¹¹⁷⁴ The Guardian, “‘You don’t have to do it alone’: how US cities are helping each other resist ICE”, 16 December 2025, <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2025/dec/16/ice-immigration-raids-cities>.

¹¹⁷⁵ In-person interview with a journalist, New Orleans, LA, USA, 11 May 2026.

¹¹⁷⁶ Online interview with T.F., Minneapolis-St. Paul, MN, USA, 10 April 2026.

¹¹⁷⁷ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026.

neighbourhoods. The alderpeople were trying to ensure that everyone felt safe and they were confronting ICE. Alders were out there ensuring their residents feel safe.”¹¹⁷⁸

“Something that was really critical at the time was Illinois’ robust rapid response network, including community navigators engaging in Know Your Rights education. Those groups were really active and critical in helping educate community members about their rights and responding to enforcement actions by supporting individuals and families.

Thanks to rapid responders, when people did get picked up, we were able to make legal referrals quickly... rapid responders were also able to document the abuses that were happening.”¹¹⁷⁹

7.2.1 ICE emergency hotlines

ICE emergency hotlines, which were established pre-, during and post- operations by mutual aid networks and migrant rights advocacy organizations, allowed individuals to report immigration enforcement activity, arrests and detentions, and obtain KYR information and legal referrals. While managing ICE emergency hotlines and mutual aid networks, migrant-led organizations continued to provide general legal support, direct assistance and other services to those impacted.¹¹⁸⁰

“During Midway Blitz, from September to November 2025, there was a wait time to get a live person on the hotline.

We were averaging hundreds of calls a day, even on the weekends. The most calls that we received in one day was 2,000. If we received tips about ICE activity, we would deploy rapid response teams. There are 36 rapid response teams, mainly in Chicago, but some in other parts of Illinois. The teams have hundreds of members. The teams can get to locations in a couple of minutes, and they capture ICE incidents as they’re happening. Rapid responders talk to witnesses; they canvass the neighbourhood to find out what happened. It’s a super robust operation.”¹¹⁸¹

ICE emergency hotlines proved to be a crucial resource for communities flooded by federal agents and at the centre of immigration enforcement raids and sweeps. ICIRR established its ICE hotline in 2011 that “ebbed and flowed” over time, which experienced an uptick in calls after the 2024 US presidential elections.¹¹⁸² Since then and throughout Midway Blitz, the Chicago based hotline has been able to field calls and reports that it uses to send out its “Eyes on ICE” text alerts of verified ICE activity.¹¹⁸³

“People called the hotline while witnessing when their loved ones being detained. We were getting statewide calls. It was one centralized hotline set up to respond to federal agents coming to New Orleans – no organization owned it but many organizations, even those outside of immigrant justice spaces in our city, collaborated on various aspects of responding to this threat – every neighbourhood had its own group chat and would either report activity to the hotline or the hotline would report to them.”¹¹⁸⁴

“MSMA was key in getting people to us. I do not know what would happen if MSMA/Free DC did not exist to train people and set-up hotline.”¹¹⁸⁵

The Migrant Solidarity Mutual Aid (MSMA) network, that serves the DMV region, established an ICE hotline during the first Trump administration that was re-launched after Trump was inaugurated for a second term. MSMA organizers shared that the hotline experienced a “sevenfold increase of calls” during the Federal Takeover. Given the nature of the Takeover that saw an “alphabet soup” of federal agencies flood the District, it was crucial to track and monitor activity through bystander footage.¹¹⁸⁶

ICE emergency hotlines enabled community members to connect within the broader network of support and were critical during immigration enforcement operations.

¹¹⁷⁸ Online interview with Diana Perez, staff of the City of Chicago Committee on Immigrant and Refugee Rights Chaired by Alderperson Andre Vasquez (40th Ward), Chicago, IL, USA, 29 April 2026.

¹¹⁷⁹ Online interview with TRP, Chicago, IL, USA, 23 April 2026.

¹¹⁸⁰ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026.

¹¹⁸¹ In-person interview with ICIRR, Chicago, IL, USA, 26 March 2026.

¹¹⁸² In-person interview with ICIRR, Chicago, IL, USA, 26 March 2026.

¹¹⁸³ In-person interview with ICIRR, Chicago, IL, USA, 26 March 2026.

¹¹⁸⁴ In-person interview with Home is Here NOLA, New Orleans, LA, 8 May 2026.

¹¹⁸⁵ In-person interview with organization, Washington, DC, USA, 15 May 2026.

¹¹⁸⁶ In-person interview with MSMA, Washington, DC, USA, 18 May 2026.

7.2.2 Filming federal agent activity

The power of observer footage under the second Trump administration cannot be overstated, given rampant misinformation and disinformation from DHS and other Trump administration officials over federal immigration enforcement activity, tactics and unlawful killings. Organizations understood the power of grounding community networks in their constitutional right to film or photograph law and immigration enforcement activity and protect civil rights.¹¹⁸⁷

“Bystanders and rapid responders who are filming and chanting are being labelled ‘domestic terrorists’ because they have the audacity to document what they’re seeing or provide support. The government alleges that they’re ‘impeding’ federal agents.”¹¹⁸⁸

For instance, local DC organizations launched the “Film the Police DC” (FTP) initiative that served as a reporting hub during the Federal Takeover to report arrests, detentions and active checkpoints.¹¹⁸⁹ FTP aimed to empower and inform DC residents to exercise their right to record immigration and law enforcement.¹¹⁹⁰ Despite the constitutional right to film, bystanders and rapid responders faced threats and harassment for filming agents.¹¹⁹¹ A DC-based organizer stated, “ICE agents would yell at us (rapid responders) while we were filming them. They took photos of us on their phones”, which became commonplace for observers and bystanders.¹¹⁹² As set out above, Amnesty International found that ICE and Border Patrol agents also routinely used tactics to intimidate individuals who were protesting or attempting to document agents’ activities.¹¹⁹³

7.2.3 Patrolling and dispatching

“Rapid responders play a big role in protecting our communities ... I think every single community was organized. They all had rapid responders patrolling neighbourhoods.”¹¹⁹⁴

Central to rapid response work was patrolling and dispatch work that many volunteers, across all ages, races, backgrounds, immigration status and occupations supported. Patrolling involved driving, biking, and walking patrols, that would travel to sites where incidents were reported to verify and obtain information, whereas stationary patrols remained at fixed areas that were being targeted by ICE and Border Patrol agents, such as public and school bus stops, metro stations, schools, and churches.¹¹⁹⁵ Dispatching involved logistics coordination and information sharing to patrollers and data groups.¹¹⁹⁶ Above all, dispatchers provided emotional support to those patrolling, who navigated dangerous and risky situations. “I did dispatch work, I helped people navigate difficult situations ... and to be a calm voice walking people through really horrific things”, shared a Minnesota community organizer.¹¹⁹⁷

“Dispatches would coordinate and share trends: Like all of the plates for ICE at some point were from Texas. They [ICE] started using Priuses to confuse people about their cars. ... Very organized and adaptive. Had weekly meetings - What’s working? What’s not? How is ICE adapting? What are the ICE vehicles?”¹¹⁹⁸

The increase in violence by ICE and Border Patrol, including unlawful use of lethal force, forced many individuals to patrol in pairs and consider other security and safety risks. A New Orleans community leader from El Pueblo NOLA shared, “After Renee Good was killed, my mother told me, ‘That could’ve been you’ and I felt like I had to keep fighting harder We started patrolling in pairs, with allies.”¹¹⁹⁹ Then, as waves

¹¹⁸⁷ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026.

¹¹⁸⁸ In-person interview with ICIRR, Chicago, IL, USA, 26 March 2026.

¹¹⁸⁹ In-person and online interviews, May-June 2026; Film the Police DC, <https://www.filmthepolicedc.org/>.

¹¹⁹⁰ Film the Police DC, <https://www.filmthepolicedc.org/>; ACLU, “Recording and Documenting Police and Federal Agents”, 8 June 2026, <https://www.aclu.org/know-your-rights/recording-and-documenting-police-and-federal-agents>.

¹¹⁹¹ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026.

¹¹⁹² In-person interview with KT, Washington, DC, USA, 17 May 2026.

¹¹⁹³ Illinois Accountability Commission, *Final Report – April 2026*, <https://ilac.illinois.gov/content/dam/soi/en/web/ilac/documents/final-report/IAC-Final-Report-April-2026.pdf>, p. 123.

¹¹⁹⁴ Online interview with Diana Perez, staff of the City of Chicago Committee on Immigrant and Refugee Rights Chaired by Alderperson Andre Vasquez (40th Ward), Chicago, IL, USA, 29 April 2026.

¹¹⁹⁵ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026.

¹¹⁹⁶ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026.

¹¹⁹⁷ In-person interview with Jessie & Dan L., Minneapolis, MN, USA, 19 March 2026.

¹¹⁹⁸ In-person interview with Jessie & Dan L., Minneapolis, MN, USA, 19 March 2026.

¹¹⁹⁹ In-person interview with El Pueblo NOLA, New Orleans, LA, USA, 9 May 2026.

of deployments increased in Chicago and Minneapolis-St. Paul, communities and their rapid response networks became overwhelmed. “People would call the MONARCA hotline but it wasn’t fast enough. They would text MONARCA, MONARCA would activate their folks, and then ICE got really fast and hit multiple areas at the same time. So, it was hard for people to respond”, shared Twin Cities rapid responders.¹²⁰⁰ Despite this, rapid responders and community members continued to evolve their tactics to protect each other and their neighbours.

“I was doing rapid response. When things got really hot in December [2025], the decision was made that people shouldn’t be patrolling on their own. People were getting taken out of their cars. At that time the group started creating dispatchers, so I decided this was a better thing for me to do. I just had a dispatch shift yesterday. I’m still trying to pull 2-3 shifts a week in my neighbourhood. ... I’m keeping track of any suspicious vehicles, checking license plates, looking at [the] Whipple [Building]. I would share information with neighbouring communities that something is coming their way ...”¹²⁰¹

ICE Flight Tracking at the Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport

“We were the only real time transparent numerical data available during Operation Metro Surge.”¹²⁰²

N, along with a team of ICE flight trackers, has worked to document deportation flights, deportation flight paths and the number of individuals shackled and boarded on deportation flights at the Minneapolis-Saint Paul International Airport. N shared with Amnesty International that ICE has reduced transparency around deportation flight information – a trend since the Biden administration – forcing him to set up his telephoto lens and camera near the Minneapolis-Saint Paul airport to observe and log the information himself.¹²⁰³

“Charter flights, folks always shackled, hands handcuffed together. If there is an emergency, they would not be able to access or grab oxygen masks.”¹²⁰⁴

N shared how “the [US] government moved to operate under ... the LADD list.”¹²⁰⁵ The Limiting Aircraft Data Displayed (LADD) list is a federal program that blocks flight details from public flight-trackers, that is usually reserved for high-profile individuals for safety and privacy concerns. And yet, DHS has taken advantage of the LADD list to fly “ICE ghost flights”, secretive and unlisted deportation flights through private charter airlines.

According to Human Rights First, the second Trump administration has dramatically expanded both deportation and domestic transfer flights.¹²⁰⁶ During Operations Metro Surge and PARRIS, ICE flights through Minneapolis, Minnesota dramatically increased, as migrants, asylum seekers and refugees were arbitrarily detained and transferred to detention centres across the United States, particularly Texas.¹²⁰⁷

As a result, N and others continue to diligently track and log ICE flights on community-led dashboard for immigrant advocacy groups.¹²⁰⁸

7.3 Whistles: ICE alert system and nationwide distribution

“The whistles were a unique phenomenon that saved a lot of people. It was a powerful and low-tech tool that shows how communities shifted their tactics to warn and deter, and likely resulted in less violence. It was really impressive.”¹²⁰⁹

¹²⁰⁰ In-person interview with Jessie & Dan L., Minneapolis, MN, USA, 19 March 2026.

¹²⁰¹ Online interview with C.H., Minneapolis-St. Paul, MN, USA, 6 April 2026.

¹²⁰² Online interview with N., Minneapolis-St. Paul, MN, USA, 25 March 2026.

¹²⁰³ Online interview with N., Minneapolis-St. Paul, MN, USA, 25 March 2026.

¹²⁰⁴ Online interview with N., Minneapolis-St. Paul, MN, USA, 25 March 2026.

¹²⁰⁵ Online interview with N., Minneapolis-St. Paul, MN, USA, 25 March 2026.

¹²⁰⁶ Human Rights First, “ICE Air Expands Deportation and Domestic Transfer Flights to Record Levels in First Year of Second Trump Administration”, 19 February 2026, <https://www.humanrightsfirst.org/library/ice-air-expands-deportation-and-domestic-transfer-flights-to-record-levels-in-first-year-of-second-trump-administration>.

¹²⁰⁷ Human Rights First, “ICE Air Expands Deportation and Domestic Transfer Flights to Record Levels in First Year of Second Trump Administration” (previously cited).

¹²⁰⁸ “ICE Flights MSP”, <https://ottergoose.net/ice-flights-msp/>.

¹²⁰⁹ Online interview with Ahmed Baset, Lead Commission Counsel, Illinois Accountability Commission, Chicago, IL, USA, 11 May 2026.

A tool and symbol of resistance, whistles became a widely distributed tool to alert people of federal immigration enforcement activity. Rapid responders, legal observers and individuals going about their daily lives all carried whistles with them during these operations, notably in Chicago, Minneapolis-St. Paul and New Orleans. Community advocates and volunteers distributed 3-D printed or plastic whistles in “whistle kits” that included KYR materials.

After the National Guard deployment and federal immigration enforcement in Los Angeles, the Little Village Community Council leaders learned from activists about stingray technology used to monitor cellphones and collect personal information.¹²¹⁰ In anticipation of similar attacks and increased surveillance, they championed the use of whistles to alert and mobilize community members, comparing the whistle alerts to hurricane/severe weather sirens. “We did not know it would spread like wildfire”, shared Little Village Community Council.¹²¹¹

“The [Little Village] community began patrolling at 5:00 am, when vendors and labourers began work in the early morning. Then, members of the Little Village Community Council started blowing whistles yelling, ‘LA MIGRA!’ [immigration enforcement agents] then businesses locked their doors and the [ICE] agents realized that the whistles did work.”¹²¹²

The practice soon spread throughout the US, as other cities faced similar attacks and found the whistles to be cost-efficient, light weight and a reliable means to alert community members of ICE activity. Community groups organized zine folding parties and workshops where volunteers assembled packets containing whistles, KYR material and instructions on when to use the whistles – distribution was local and nationwide, cost-free.¹²¹³ For example, Chicago-based organizations distributed 150,000 whistles across the US, to New York City, New York, Baltimore, Maryland and New Orleans, Louisiana, in addition to towns in the states of Washington, Colorado, Nevada, Missouri, Ohio, Texas and Maine.¹²¹⁴ According to another whistle distribution collective, the group shipped over 1.5 million whistles across the US, cost-free.¹²¹⁵

“I could hear whistles, honking constantly, from December [2025] to January [2026]. I was recovering from surgery at home in early December and could hear it. Similarly, after Renee Good, friends asked me to try to stay calm and stay home, but I could still hear whistles and sometimes helicopters overhead. I could not turn it off – if it’s a long whistle I knew someone was being abducted.”¹²¹⁶

“Problem is, 4,000 people were detained, and we were successful. ... When protest actions occur, there are violence disruptors, medics, and observers. So many people are trained. When they hear whistles, people come out. People are actively patrolling. It was more reactive and all required advanced planning.”¹²¹⁷

“Participants were blocking ICE from entering the building and everyone was blowing their whistles. In the end, ICE retreated. It was a moment that demonstrated that we are not going moving, we are not going anywhere. It was very powerful.”¹²¹⁸

C, a software engineer looking to resist and respond to Operation Catahoula Crunch, learned about whistle initiatives on online forums, that prompted him to use his 3-D printer to supply his neighbourhood libraries with whistles. Roux soon found himself connected to mutual aid and immigrant advocacy organizations in Louisiana, that would then connect him to groups across the US. “I was on the whistle printing group, but we also had a whistle distribution group. The ‘runners’ would pick them up from me. I felt like I can actually do something with these whistles”, shared Roux.¹²¹⁹

“We had around a dozen people printing whistles, along with printing zines too. I printed 150 kilos of whistles, around 75,000. I went from having one printer to three. I got connected with a group – led by romance writers – to send

¹²¹⁰ In-person interview with the Little Village Community Council, Chicago, IL, USA, 27 March 2026.

¹²¹¹ In-person interview with the Little Village Community Council, Chicago, IL, USA, 27 March 2026.

¹²¹² In-person interview with the Little Village Community Council, Chicago, IL, USA, 27 March 2026.

¹²¹³ PBS, “Chicago artists channel creativity into protesting the immigration crackdown”, 17 March 2026, <https://www.pbs.org/newshour/show/chicago-artists-channel-creativity-into-protesting-the-immigration-crackdown>; LAist, “Activists are using a tiny tool to keep the community safe during ICE raids: Whistles”, 17 January 2026, <https://laist.com/news/los-angeles-activities/whistle-workshop-ice-raids>.

¹²¹⁴ Chicago Sun-Times, “Chicagoans send 150,000 whistles to cities besieged by federal immigration agents”, 21 January 2026, <https://chicago.suntimes.com/immigration/2026/01/21/chicagoans-send-whistles-ice-immigration>.

¹²¹⁵ 3D Printed Whistles, <https://linktr.ee/3dwhistles>.

¹²¹⁶ In-person interview with Liliana Z., Minneapolis, MN, USA, 19 March 2026.

¹²¹⁷ In-person interview with UMN Law, Human Rights Center, Minneapolis, MN, USA, 17 March 2026.

¹²¹⁸ In-person interview with Universidad Popular, Chicago, IL, USA, 22 March 2026.

¹²¹⁹ Online interview with C., New Orleans, LA, USA, 24 March 2026.

whistles across the country ... People were donating filament via my 'Wishlist' whereas before, I was spending \$500 [USD]. I sent whistles as far as California. I've probably used over \$300 [USD] in postage."¹²²⁰

7.4 Civil initiatives: "Know-Your-Rights" (KYR) and constitutional observer trainings

"We created a rapid response network through the trainings. That was a good foundation to build on for Operation Metro Surge. Response came from neighbourhoods and grassroots. Direct action was a big cornerstone. A lot of education and KYR. Preparing immigrant families and individuals on how to protect themselves: Two-pronged approach – training for observers and KYR."¹²²¹

Mutual aid networks and immigrant advocacy organizations led wide-scale trainings and workshops – both online and in-person – that prepared and empowered volunteers to monitor and document federal agents' activity and de-escalate and mitigate violence during the immigration enforcement operations. Trainings and workshops began ahead of the operations and expanded after the violence and force of the operations escalated. After the killing of Renee Good, "You would think they [ICE and Border Patrol] would show some sort of remorse, but they showed none. There was such an intense level of hate and violence. I was in shock from the level of violence", shared COPAL.¹²²²

Multiple individuals Amnesty International interviewed shared that killings and other violent incidents by federal immigration agents forced individuals to create "preparedness plans" as the level of insecurity heightened.¹²²³ The day after the killing of Good, the Immigrant Defense Network (IDN) held a constitutional observer training that had over 600 people in attendance. In total, IDN trained around 33,000 people as constitutional observers and trained 300 people to lead the trainings.¹²²⁴ These training models and widespread participation was seen across the four cities examined in this report.

"At this stage over 6,000 people were signing up for trainings per week and we organized each ward into teams and had rapid response capability during the surge we had a huge influx of people who wanted to plug in."¹²²⁵

Ahead of the Federal Takeover, more than 100 DC-area businesses were targeted for I-9 audits, a federal review of a business's employees' work authorization.¹²²⁶ Local mutual aid and migrant advocacy organizations led I-9 KYR education and trainings to affected businesses, such as restaurants and bars in the DMV region.

"In Ward 1, we canvassed businesses around the I-9 form compliance. We engaged in observation with copwatch and directed traffic [away from checkpoints]. We saw a guy eating crabs who was violently arrested. We saw vans pull up and kidnap people. We were receiving calls from council members asking, 'what do we do?' It was a huge operation, ... no one was sleeping throughout this. At most we were getting two hours of sleep a night."¹²²⁷

The demand for KYR education was not limited to rapid response networks and businesses, as churches, medical facilities and schools were similarly targeted by ICE and Border Patrol for immigration enforcement. "Churches and teachers reached out to learn more about their rights and how to keep ICE out", shared Immigration Services and Legal Advocacy (ISLA).¹²²⁸

"It was beautiful to see the community come together... People were canvassing different neighbourhoods and handing out know your rights cards. They were telling people that you don't have to answer any questions from ICE or other agents."¹²²⁹

Mixed-Blood Theatre, a Minneapolis based theatre that aims to "disrupt injustices, advance equity and build community", led the "Know Your Rights, Say Them Loud" program that allowed community members to

¹²²⁰ Online interview with C., New Orleans, LA, USA, 24 March 2026.

¹²²¹ Online interview with Dieu Do, Minneapolis-St. Paul, MN, USA, 7 April 2026.

¹²²² In-person interview with COPAL, Minneapolis, MN, USA, 20 March 2026.

¹²²³ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026.

¹²²⁴ In-person interview with COPAL, Minneapolis, MN, USA, 20 March 2026.

¹²²⁵ In-person interview with Free DC, Washington, DC, USA, 18 May 2026.

¹²²⁶ Washingtonian, "ICE Agents Are Targeting DC Restaurants", 6 May 2025, <https://washingtonian.com/2025/05/06/ice-agents-are-targeting-dc-restaurants/>.

¹²²⁷ In-person interview with Free DC, Washington, DC, USA, 18 May 2026.

¹²²⁸ In-person interview with ISLA, New Orleans, LA, USA, 7 May 2026.

¹²²⁹ Online interview with an organization, New Orleans, LA, USA, 26 May 2026.

exercise and practice scenarios to prepare them for rapid response work and ground themselves in asserting their human rights while living under occupation.¹²³⁰ “Not everyone learns via PowerPoint. Our ability as theatre artists is to relate material to folks in a different way and practice for real life. We were asking ourselves, ‘how do we create a role-playing scenario for folks?’”, shared a member of the theatre’s team.¹²³¹ This interactive program allowed community members in Minneapolis-St. Paul to express a range of emotions and connect with one another during Operation Metro Surge. Mixed Blood Theatre implores other theatre groups or collectives to employ similar programs. “What happened here is not that special. Everyone is capable of organizing; there is no secret sauce.”¹²³²

“Folks got the KYR training materials ahead of time and then the scenarios. People were asked to volunteer. We were so surprised that it was joyful. To practice action in community ... we would come out feeling great, laughing. It was our most in demand program. 15-20 patrollers came into practice and even stand up to agitators. 8-9 sessions, 20-30 people in each.”¹²³³

“Because everyone was so stressed in that moment my expectation was that it was going to be really heavy and hard. But I was surprised to discover that it was joyful, fun and empowering, to do something, even to practise in a space that felt safe, in community.”¹²³⁴

7.5 Food delivery, distribution and assistance networks

“After Christmas the raid began, we launched a food pantry, people stopped leaving their houses... it’s the only one that covers Baton Rouge ... During Catahoula Crunch, we immediately took action because we don’t wait for the storm to hit.”¹²³⁵

The federal immigration enforcement operations targeted migrant communities and their grocery stores, limiting their access to essential goods, including food. Mutual aid networks, places of worship, restaurants and schools worked to ensure families forced into self-isolation were fed through food delivery and distribution systems and food assistance, such as food pantries.

Similar to other features of these operations, people relied on best practices from other cities to move these operations forward. A DC-based organization stated, “We had a large Zoom meeting with an impacted city and people said the key to resistance would be having a large infrastructure for food in place. We were happy we already had an infrastructure of leaders in place.”¹²³⁶

“People had different roles. Some people were responsible for packing up the food bags. Some people were responsible for buying the food. Some people were responsible for doing food deliveries. Some people were responsible for collecting food and picking up donations. We had a schedule and we focused on food. Things are starting to pick up again. Our focus has been on feeding the community.”¹²³⁷

Operation Metro Surge resulted in over 76,000 people in Minneapolis becoming food insecure.¹²³⁸ As a result, a Minnesota food justice non-profit and a Minneapolis Spanish-speaking and migrant serving church partnered together to provide food aid and food distribution in the wake of the operation.¹²³⁹ Within 24 hours of launching their online request form, they had received requests from 20,000 families. By March 2026, the collective had delivered over 100,000 pounds of food to 30,000 immigrant families.¹²⁴⁰

¹²³⁰ Online interview with Mixed Blood Theatre, Minneapolis-St. Paul, MN, USA, 24 March 2026.

¹²³¹ Online interview with Mixed Blood Theatre, Minneapolis-St. Paul, MN, USA, 24 March 2026.

¹²³² Online interview with Mixed Blood Theatre, Minneapolis-St. Paul, MN, USA, 24 March 2026.

¹²³³ Online interview with Mixed Blood Theatre, Minneapolis-St. Paul, MN, USA, 24 March 2026.

¹²³⁴ Online interview with Mixed Blood Theatre, Minneapolis-St. Paul, MN, USA, 24 March 2026.

¹²³⁵ In-person interview with LORI, Baton Rouge, LA, USA, 8 May 2026.

¹²³⁶ Online interview with a DC-based organization, Washington, DC, USA, 18 June 2026.

¹²³⁷ In-person interview with Unstoppable Kenner, Metairie, LA, USA, 11 May 2026.

¹²³⁸ City of Minneapolis, *Preliminary Impact Assessment & Relief Needs Overview: Operation Metro Surge*, February 2026, <https://www.minneapolismn.gov/media/-www-content-assets/documents/City-of-Minneapolis-Preliminary-Impact-Assessment-and-Relief-Needs.pdf>.

¹²³⁹ The Food Group, “Fear Should Never Be A Barrier to Food: The Food Group and Partners Respond to Operation Metro Surge”, March 2026, <https://www.thefoodgroupmn.org/fear-should-never-be-a-barrier-to-food-the-food-group-and-partners-respond-to-operation-metro-surge/>.

¹²⁴⁰ The Food Group, “Fear Should Never Be A Barrier to Food: The Food Group and Partners Respond to Operation Metro Surge” (previously cited).

Allies, migrants and other racialized individuals led food delivery and distribution networks, despite the safety and security risks.¹²⁴¹ To mitigate exposing sensitive and personal information, food delivery and distribution operations adopted security protocols to protect the families they were serving.¹²⁴²

“Teachers were delivering food, doing people’s laundry, it was a lot.”¹²⁴³

Although the federal immigration enforcement operations are no longer at the height of activity or have ceased, widespread food insecurity among migrant and other racialized communities persists.¹²⁴⁴ Many food distribution groups interviewed shared how they are still distributing food and essential items months post-operation.¹²⁴⁵

7.6 Protecting the right to education: walking school buses and school patrols

“We started mutual aid program in the school – people who had the capacity to do something, did something, people really showed up, schools became one of the places that people could plug into – community patrols, mutual aid, defence work.”¹²⁴⁶

The four operations examined in this report occurred at the start of the academic school year or after holiday breaks, particularly impacting primary and secondary school age attendance. Some school districts implemented virtual learning while others did not, despite high level of student absenteeism – primarily of racialized migrant students.¹²⁴⁷ Families and communities were forced to navigate school lockdowns and the constant disruption to children’s safe access to education.¹²⁴⁸

According to a UCLA Institute for Democracy, Education and Access survey, “more than two-thirds (70.4%) of U.S. public high schools were impacted due to heightened concerns of students from immigrant families about their well-being and the well-being of their families,” and that around two-thirds (63.8%) of principals across the US reported that “students from immigrant families missed school due to policies or political rhetoric related to immigrants”.¹²⁴⁹

In all four operations, but most notably Midway Blitz and Metro Surge, ICE and Border Patrol incidents that involved clashes and the dispersal of tear gas became so routine around schools that Chicago Public Schools created a command centre to monitor ICE activity. School districts had varying degrees of guidance for how to engage immigration enforcement in-or-around schools. A majority – 77.6% – of US public high school principals reported that they “[c]reated a school plan to respond to visits from federal agents.”¹²⁵⁰

“In August of 2025 we began preparing for schools returning. We developed toolkits for schools we organize walking trains we had observers we were working with youth groups and thousands of people signed up to observe morning drop off and pick up.”¹²⁵¹

Communities across all four cities came together to ensure education access through “walking school buses” to escort children to school, school patrols monitoring school bus stops for pick-up and drop-off, and monitoring public transportation stops.¹²⁵²

¹²⁴¹ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026.

¹²⁴² In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026.

¹²⁴³ Online interview with C.H., Minneapolis-St. Paul, MN, USA, 6 April 2026.

¹²⁴⁴ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026.

¹²⁴⁵ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026.

¹²⁴⁶ Online interview with MFE, Minneapolis-St. Paul, MN, USA, 16 April 2026.

¹²⁴⁷ United States District Court for the District of Minnesota, *Hussen v. Noem*, Class Action Complaint for Declaratory and Injunctive Relief (previously cited), para. 152.

¹²⁴⁸ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026.

¹²⁴⁹ UCLA’s Institute for Democracy, Education, and Access, *The Fear is Everywhere: U.S. High School Principals Report Widespread Effects of Immigration Enforcement*, 9 December 2025, <https://idea.gseis.ucla.edu/publications/files/fear-is-everywhere-report>.

¹²⁵⁰ UCLA’s Institute for Democracy, Education, and Access, *The Fear is Everywhere: U.S. High School Principals Report Widespread Effects of Immigration Enforcement* (previously cited).

¹²⁵¹ In-person interview with Free DC, Washington, DC, USA, 18 May 2026.

¹²⁵² In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026; NPR, “‘We call it the walking bus’: How kids are getting to school amid ICE operations”, 31 March 2026, <https://www.npr.org/2026/03/19/nx-s1-5692645/ice-activity-schools-walking-bus>.

“There were walking school buses. Rapid responders and patrollers were going to homes, metros, or meeting spots and walking with kids to school. The walking school buses were great for community building. At the beginning of the school year there was a big push to do walking school buses citywide.”¹²⁵³

In Chicago, the Little Village Community Council led a walking school bus initiative called the “Magic School Bus” that served up to 65 students – the majority of elementary school age – after the local school district rejected community calls for virtual learning. The Council, which ran the program for both pick-up and drop-off for three months did so “with no money or support” but emphasized the urgency to keep children safe.¹²⁵⁴

These community efforts were crucial for education access during these operations. Without them, countless children would have had to forego their education, given their parents’ inability to safely transport them to school over fears of being detained and deported. While the longer-term impacts of these large-scale immigration enforcement operations remain uncertain, studies point to the negative impact immigration enforcement operations have on children from migrant families, including school attendance and engagement, mental health, academic performance and post-secondary educational trajectories.¹²⁵⁵

7.7 Rideshare networks

“A lot of community folks mobilized to help folks get home safely. A landscaper who got a ride with a white woman was very happy because he knew he wouldn’t be stopped with her ... spoke about awareness of what it means to be white and the protection this brings and what it meant not to be white.”¹²⁵⁶

Daily commutes and familiar routes for individuals and families across all four cities became safety risks for migrants, asylum seekers, refugees and other racialized individuals. Transportation, either by car or public transportation, including buses and trains, became a safety concern due to racial profiling, traffic checkpoints, and fixed and roving patrols at public transportation stops.¹²⁵⁷ Rideshare networks ensured that people would be safe to access work, medical appointments, essential services and aspects of daily life without fear of being racially profiled by federal agents. These networks often relied on white US citizens to drive other individuals, a reality seen throughout the operations.¹²⁵⁸

“Our church was organizing Uber rides for people. White people would go pick up construction materials for workers and bring them stuff, so they didn’t have to go out.”¹²⁵⁹

7.8 Medical and mental healthcare support

“I led a webinar on moral distress among paediatric providers who care for immigrant families. Paediatricians are watching the families we serve suffer and are feeling a lot of loss.”¹²⁶⁰

During the immigration enforcement operations, ICE, Border Patrol and other federal agents targeted healthcare facilities, such as hospitals, community clinics and urgent care centres to detain and intimidate people. From heightened presence at hospital parking lots, to entering medical examination spaces to monitor patients receiving treatment, migrants, asylum seekers, refugees and their families have been unable to access medical care and emergency treatment safely.¹²⁶¹ According to a Physicians for Human Rights study, “26% of clinicians report that immigration enforcement has directly affected patient care.”¹²⁶²

¹²⁵³ In-person interview with KT, Washington, DC, USA, 17 May 2026.

¹²⁵⁴ In-person interview with Little Village Community Council, Chicago, IL, USA, 27 March 2026.

¹²⁵⁵ Brookings, “How immigration enforcement is harming US schools and students”, 14 April 2026, <https://www.brookings.edu/articles/how-immigration-enforcement-is-harming-us-schools-and-students/>.

¹²⁵⁶ Online interview with a refugee resettlement agency, Chicago, IL, USA, 21 April 2026.

¹²⁵⁷ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026; Sahan Journal, “Metro Transit workers decry ICE activity at transit stops”, 14 January 2026, <https://sahanjournal.com/immigration/metro-transit-union-speaks-out-against-ice-surge/>.

¹²⁵⁸ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026.

¹²⁵⁹ Online interview with New Life Centers, IL, USA, 28 April 2026.

¹²⁶⁰ Online interview with an organization, Chicago, IL, USA, 15 April 2026.

¹²⁶¹ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026.

¹²⁶² Physicians for Human Rights, “ICE Tactics and Deportation Fears Limit Access to Health Care for Children of Immigrants: Survey”, 19 November 2025, <https://phr.org/news/ice-tactics-and-deportation-fears-limit-access-to-health-care-for-children-of-immigrants-survey/>.

“During the operation there was a medical group that was doing home visits and telehealth visits. Doctors were also afraid of government retaliation.”¹²⁶³

Additionally, clinics that serve uninsured and primarily Spanish speaking patients were forced to close during the operations due to safety concerns. A New Orleans clinic told Amnesty International that “85% of our patient population speaks Spanish and most of them are unable to access social services due to their immigration status.”¹²⁶⁴ The same clinic noted, “It was a very scary time for our patients. Catahoula Crunch was a hard time for everyone ... During Catahoula Crunch there was an increase in patients who needed prescription delivery and food delivery.”¹²⁶⁵

“Healthcare workers were doing medical care at home. In January [2026] and December [2025], a lot of babies were born at home ... we were doing pharmacy runs. People needed heart and diabetes medication.”¹²⁶⁶

Healthcare workers operated informal medical networks in order to provide care to patients who were too frightened to leave home.¹²⁶⁷ Home visits were crucial to meet the healthcare needs of migrant, asylum seeker, refugee and racialized communities. The Inspire Change Clinic in Minneapolis operated a rapid response team of 150 doctors and nurses who made over 135 home visits.¹²⁶⁸

Despite these networks, migrants, asylum seekers and refugees still faced difficulty accessing urgent healthcare. A community leader from El Pueblo NOLA rushed to aid her neighbour one morning, who was unknowingly pregnant and delivered her baby prematurely at home. The woman refused to go to the hospital, fearing detention and deportation.¹²⁶⁹

“Guatemalan couple who had a premature baby at their home, they thought it was dead. I put gloves on, ran across the street, mom is bleeding, blood was everywhere. The baby was wrapped up and cold. I unwrapped the cord from the neck and I started to massage the baby until it started crying – mind you I’m slipping in blood. Mom is begging me not to call an ambulance because she did not want to be arrested ... The baby survived and now I’m the godmother.”¹²⁷⁰

Furthermore, Amnesty International was repeatedly told how the onset of the second Trump administration and the subsequent large-scale immigration enforcement operations either led to or exacerbated existing mental health concerns.¹²⁷¹ The Coalition for Immigrant Mental Health (CIMH) shared with Amnesty International that they conducted a survey on needs for the community at the onset of Operation Midway Blitz.¹²⁷² As a result, the CIMH rolled out the “Well-Being as Practice Initiative”, a series of online monthly trainings “to help people create a strategy of accessible activities or practices impacted individuals can work into their day to help ground them and navigate stress and isolation.”¹²⁷³ CIMH also managed a clinician-led WhatsApp group, providing reminders and encouragement for self-care practices to those impacted by the operation.

“These trainings helped people understand that ‘I’m not broken,’ that there is a biological response to trauma and is why, for example, they are not sleeping.”¹²⁷⁴

When asked about offering the trainings in-person or virtually, CIMH explained that “everything was virtual ... we wanted to make sure everything was accessible and knew people didn’t feel safe gathering in person, and they preferred virtual.”¹²⁷⁵ In addition, CIMH created and distributed “wellness postcards” to “support individual and collective care during moments of uncertainty, stress and systemic harm.”¹²⁷⁶ Inspired by the

¹²⁶³ Online interview with an organization, New Orleans, LA, USA, 26 May 2026.

¹²⁶⁴ Online Interview with a New Orleans clinic, New Orleans, LA, USA, 7 May 2026.

¹²⁶⁵ Online Interview with a New Orleans clinic, New Orleans, LA, USA, 7 May 2026.

¹²⁶⁶ In-person interview, A.S., New Orleans, LA, USA, 10 May 2026.

¹²⁶⁷ KFF Health News, “As ICE Moved In, Minnesotans Set Up a Shadow Medical System. It’s a Lesson for Other Cities”, 6 March 2026, <https://kffhealthnews.org/race-and-health/minneapolis-immigration-crackdown-underground-medical-care-networks/>.

¹²⁶⁸ KFF Health News, “As ICE Moved In, Minnesotans Set Up a Shadow Medical System. It’s a Lesson for Other Cities” (previously cited); Association of Health Care Journalists, “Minneapolis clinic counters the health fallout of immigration enforcement”, 12 June 2026, <https://healthjournalism.org/blog/2026/06/minneapolis-clinic-counters-the-health-fallout-of-immigration-enforcement/>.

¹²⁶⁹ In-person interview with El Pueblo NOLA, New Orleans, LA, USA, 9 May 2026.

¹²⁷⁰ In-person interview with El Pueblo NOLA, New Orleans, LA, USA, 9 May 2026.

¹²⁷¹ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026.

¹²⁷² In-person interview with CIMH, Chicago, IL, USA, 25 March 2026.

¹²⁷³ In-person interview with CIMH, Chicago, IL, USA, 25 March 2026.

¹²⁷⁴ In-person interview with CIMH, Chicago, IL, USA, 25 March 2026.

¹²⁷⁵ In-person interview with CIMH, Chicago, IL, USA, 25 March 2026.

¹²⁷⁶ Coalition for Immigrant Mental Health, <https://www.ourcimh.org/>.

KYR materials for safety, the wellness postcards “serve as a companion resource focused on well-being, connection, and care.”¹²⁷⁷ CIMH received 40,000 requests for the wellness postcards, that are translated in 16 languages.¹²⁷⁸

“Trauma disrupts the ability to imagine an alternative future; we are helping people connect with their aliveness and sense of possibility again.”¹²⁷⁹

7.9 Rent relief and rental assistance

Mutual aid networks across the US and in the four cities featured in this report activated to crowdfund thousands of dollars to provide rent relief and assistance to countless families impacted by the federal immigration enforcement operations that caused an immense number of lost wages and business closures. Neighbours and mutual aid networks bound together to prevent a mass eviction crisis, that continues to affect families post-operations.

“On January 1 [2026], rent was due, and people needed help. We raised \$15,000 USD in five days – Five parents were doing it by themselves, and then we had to figure out the next month. Several of us were at ATMs on New Year’s Day, taking out cash, running around to families to give rental assistance. Making up a receipt system.”¹²⁸⁰

Most individuals who spoke to Amnesty International shared a strong desire for local and state governments to support eviction moratorium and rent relief funding to support communities rebuild. Minnesota State Representative Liish Kozlowski stated, “For the state, it’s unacceptable to just approve \$40 million USD in rental assistance, that’s just a drop in the bucket”, against the estimated \$350 million USD it would cost to cover rent relief for those impacted by Operation Metro Surge.¹²⁸¹

7.10 Family safety planning: Power of attorney and delegation of parental authority

“The first workshop had 78 people, then kept growing. We began doing power of attorney for the children. We have done around 3,500 Power of Attorney forms (G-28 forms) and began having folders prepared.”¹²⁸²

The large-scale immigration enforcement operations covered in this report resulted in high numbers of detentions and deportations, and often resulted in family separation and thus triggered an urgent need for family preparedness plans to ensure the safety and well-being of children and the access to and management of financial assets in the absence of their parents.

Local community organizations, the legal community and community members came together to support families fill out Power of Attorney (POA) and Delegation of Parental Authority (DOPA) paperwork.¹²⁸³ A POA document grants a designated person authority to act on behalf of the person giving the POA and to make decisions regarding finances, medical treatment and property.¹²⁸⁴ A DOPA document assigns a temporary guardian who can make decisions about a child’s care and custody, such as taking a child to the doctor and excusing the child from school.¹²⁸⁵ These legal tools protect children, finances and assets in the event of detention or deportation of their parents.

¹²⁷⁷ Coalition for Immigrant Mental Health, <https://www.ourcimh.org/>.

¹²⁷⁸ In-person interview with CIMH, Chicago, IL, USA, 25 March 2026.

¹²⁷⁹ In-person interview with CIMH, Chicago, IL, USA, 25 March 2026.

¹²⁸⁰ In-person interview with Sarah Quinn, Minneapolis, MN, USA, 19 March 2026.

¹²⁸¹ Online interview with Minnesota State Representative Liish Kozlowski, Minneapolis-St. Paul, MN, USA, 24 March 2026; Minnesota Reformer, “Minnesota Legislature passes massive cash infusion for rental, mortgage assistance”, 14 May 2026, <https://minnesotareformer.com/2026/05/14/minnesota-legislature-passes-massive-cash-infusion-for-rental-mortgage-assistance/>.

¹²⁸² In-person interview with the Little Village Community Council, Chicago, IL, USA, 27 March 2026.

¹²⁸³ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026.

¹²⁸⁴ NIJC, “Know Your Rights: Plan Ahead to Protect Your Family in the Event of Deportation”, <https://immigrantjustice.org/for-immigrants/know-your-rights/plan-ahead-protect-your-family-event-deportation/>.

¹²⁸⁵ LawHelpMN, “Delegation of Parental Authority (DOPA)”, July 2026, <https://www.lawhelpmn.org/self-help-library/fact-sheet/delegation-parental-authority-dopa>.

“We worked on family preparedness plans for the child. Now if the kid comes home and you aren't there, who will take care of your child? And what should the caregiver do? We had to identify people and encourage them to let school know. We asked parents - do you need a DOPA, do you need travel documents?”¹²⁸⁶

Some community organizations and legal providers began supporting on POA and DOPA paperwork ahead of the operations, given the Trump administration's threats to expand immigration detention and deportation. A school in Columbia Heights, Minnesota, partnered with an immigration law firm that provided KYR and family preparedness presentations and folders with DOPA paperwork, urging folks to memorize emergency contact numbers.¹²⁸⁷

7.11 Building and being in community

“A lot of crying and processing together as people came back, it transforms your relationships, people want to stay connected and support one another ... people felt supported; in this political moment of hate and racism, their neighbours showed up for them.”¹²⁸⁸

This report cannot capture the full scope of community response and resistance efforts. Community members showed up, in every possible way.

A Louisiana mutual aid organization shared that in addition to connecting community members to pro bono attorneys, they also began conducting “driving clinics and brake light clinics because ICE and CBP were doing traffic stops. Now we started to do them again because ICE is back.”¹²⁸⁹

Many individuals whom Amnesty International interviewed spoke with joy about the newfound connections from being a part of something greater than themselves and living through such a flashpoint moment in recent memory.¹²⁹⁰ “Seeing the community come out has been beautiful, I feel like we will be connected forever, beyond the operation – we’re talking about doing community gardens,” shared a Minnesota rapid responder.¹²⁹¹

“Grassroots community responded when the moment arrived, the bridge was activated, lawyers willing to pick up their phones on a Sunday, community leaders delivering groceries, school teachers telling people when kids are about to get into buses, people waiting at bus stops to receive the kids and deliver them to their parents -- you don't know this until crisis hits.”¹²⁹²

8. Conclusion and recommendations

Amnesty International has documented that, since taking office on 20 January 2025, the Trump administration has implemented a mass detention and deportation system the objective of which is to detain and deport as many racialized migrants, asylum seekers and refugees from the United States as possible. This system is implemented through a series of laws, directives and practices that have stripped individuals of regular immigration status, expanded federal agents' ability to detain people, severely curtailed due process protections, made release from immigration detention increasingly difficult, worsened conditions in immigration detention, and facilitated the removal of people from the United States, often without due process. The administration has also invoked laws in circumstances in which they do not lawfully apply and interpreted others expansively to justify these measures, many of which are subject to ongoing litigation. The system is rooted in racist, xenophobic and false narratives and white supremacist theories that blame migrants, asylum seekers and refugees for security, economic and social problems in the United States. As set out above, these narratives and theories are reflected not only in the administration's laws and policies, but also in repeated public statements made by President Trump and other senior government officials.

¹²⁸⁶ In-person interview with Sarah Quinn, Minneapolis, MN, USA, 19 March 2026.

¹²⁸⁷ In-person interview with Columbia Heights Public Schools, Columbia Heights, MN, USA, 19 March 2026.

¹²⁸⁸ Online interview with MFE, Minneapolis-St. Paul, MN, USA, 16 April 2026.

¹²⁸⁹ In-person interview with Unstoppable Kenner, Metairie, LA, USA, 11 May 2026.

¹²⁹⁰ In-person and online interviews, March-June 2026.

¹²⁹¹ Online interview with B.Y., Minneapolis-St. Paul, MN, USA, 7 April 2026.

¹²⁹² In-person interview with LORI, Baton Rouge, LA, USA, 8 May 2026.

Taken together, the Trump administration's legal framework, operational practices and public rhetoric demonstrate a coherent state policy directed at the mass detention and deportation of migrants, asylum seekers and refugees, which is being implemented in deliberately cruel and harmful ways intended to instil fear within migrant, asylum seeker and refugee communities.

As demonstrated throughout this report, one of the principal ways in which the Trump administration is implementing this state policy is through the deployment of large-scale, militarized federal immigration enforcement operations in cities across the United States. Amnesty International documented remarkably consistent patterns across the four operations examined in Chicago, Minneapolis-St. Paul, New Orleans and surrounding areas, and the Washington DC metropolitan area, despite their differing political, legal and demographic contexts. In each location, masked and heavily armed ICE, Border Patrol and other federal agents, often wearing no visible identification and travelling in unmarked vehicles, engaged in racially discriminatory immigration enforcement, targeting individuals they perceived to be migrants on the basis of race, skin colour, national origin or ethnicity, and their intersection with other characteristics such as language and accent, as well as occupations, workplaces and locations that federal agents associated with racialized migrant communities. These operations resulted in the arbitrary and discriminatory arrests and detentions of thousands of migrants, asylum seekers and refugees, as well as racialized US citizens and Indigenous Peoples.

Federal agents frequently and repeatedly used unnecessary and excessive force against individuals they targeted for immigration enforcement, rapid responders and people observing federal agent activity, community members engaged in mutual aid, and protesters. Across the four locations, federal agents also unlawfully used lethal force against seven individuals, resulting in the unlawful killings of three of them – which may amount to extrajudicial executions –, unlawfully and indiscriminately deployed less lethal weapons, including tear gas, against local communities, and unlawfully surveilled community members.

Individuals detained during the enforcement operations were held in short-term processing facilities for prolonged periods of time in unsanitary and inhumane conditions, and were unable to contact their families and legal representatives, which constitutes cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment. Situations in which detained individuals were denied access to their lawyers and families, lawyers were prevented from contacting their clients, and ICE refused to confirm whether individuals were in its custody or disclose their whereabouts constitute unlawful incommunicado detention and possible acts of enforced disappearance. The unnecessary and prolonged detention of people in inhuman conditions in facilities not even equipped for overnight detention, combined with coercion by ICE agents to accept “voluntary” departure, may amount to torture. Individuals were unlawfully removed from the United States without due process.

While many of the laws, directives and practices through which the Trump administration's mass detention and deportation state policy is implemented are on their face race-neutral, they disproportionately impact racialized individuals. As demonstrated throughout this report, the policy's implementation involves racially discriminatory immigration enforcement, with federal agents relying on race, skin colour, national origin or ethnicity to determine whom to target for immigration enforcement. While states have a legitimate interest in administering their immigration laws, Amnesty International considers that the disproportionate impact of the policy on racialized individuals cannot be justified as necessary or proportionate to this aim. This policy has been implemented in a manner that has resulted in serious human rights violations, including racially discriminatory immigration enforcement and arbitrary and discriminatory arrests and detention, which cannot be considered necessary to the legitimate administration of immigration laws, and impose severe and disproportionate harms on racialized individuals and communities. Amnesty International therefore concludes that, in its design and implementation, the Trump administration's mass detention and deportation state policy violates the international prohibition of racial discrimination.

Moreover, the immigration enforcement operations documented in this report demonstrate a significant shift in immigration enforcement tactics, one in which the deliberate use of cruelty to instil fear appears to be a central objective. The deployment of masked and heavily armed agents transformed communities into sites of fear. The resulting harm extended far beyond those directly impacted, profoundly affecting children, families, community members and entire neighbourhoods.

The recurrence of these practices across four geographically distinct operations demonstrates that the human rights violations documented in this report were neither isolated nor exceptional, but rather characteristic of the manner in which the operations were conducted. These operations, in turn, form part of a much broader pattern of immigration enforcement that the Trump administration is implementing across the United States in furtherance of its state policy of mass detention and deportation. Amnesty International finds that the human rights violations documented in this report occurred within an institutional environment – openly supported by the Trump administration – in which agents were shielded from meaningful accountability and, in some instances, publicly praised by senior government officials for the very conduct that resulted in human rights violations. These institutional failures have enabled and reinforced a culture of impunity within ICE. At the same time that ICE and Border Patrol agents continue to commit human rights violations during immigration enforcement operations across the United States, the Trump administration has systematically dismantled oversight bodies responsible for monitoring the operations of DHS, ICE and CBP, and investigating complaints of wrongdoing and abuse by agents from these agencies. Amnesty International calls for all allegations of human rights violations documented in this report to be promptly, independently, impartially and effectively investigated.

Amnesty International concludes that the scale, persistence and structural nature of ICE's institutional failures cannot be adequately addressed through discrete reforms, such as additional training, revised operational guidance or disciplinary measures against individual agents. The failures documented in this report extend across ICE's leadership, recruitment and training, operational practices, oversight and accountability mechanisms, its more than two-decade history of abuse and failed accountability, and its institutional role in implementing the Trump administration's mass detention and deportation policy. Amnesty International therefore concludes that fundamental institutional dismantling, rather than piecemeal reform, is a necessary step to bring the United States' immigration system into compliance with its international human rights obligations, and calls for ICE to be abolished.

At the same time, the four locations examined in this report demonstrate the extraordinary resistance and resilience of migrant, asylum seeker and refugee communities, and those who mobilized to defend them. Community members established intricate rapid response and mutual aid networks that played an essential role in documenting human rights violations committed by ICE, Border Patrol and other federal agents, protecting migrants, asylum seekers, refugees and other racialized individuals, and providing mutual aid support to impacted communities.

Taking into consideration Amnesty International's independent findings, the experiences and perspectives of migrants, asylum seekers and refugees, community groups and organizations, and the United States' human rights obligations under international law, Amnesty International makes the following recommendations:

Immediately end human rights violations related to immigration enforcement:

- Immediately abolish U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) as a threshold step to create an immigration system that complies with international human rights law and standards.
- Pending abolition of ICE, take immediate steps to defund ICE and Border Patrol as a critical measure to end ongoing human rights violations. Redirect funds from immigration enforcement, surveillance and detention into programs that protect communities, uphold human rights, and benefit people irrespective of their immigration status, such as healthcare, housing, education and food assistance.
- Pending abolition of ICE, immediately review and revise all training guidelines and hiring practices for ICE agents and suspend funding until such time as compliance with international human rights law and standards can be guaranteed.
- Reinstate and strengthen ICE's Guidelines for Enforcement Actions in or Near Protected Areas (October 27, 2021), ensuring that immigration enforcement activities are prohibited, except in the most exceptional circumstances, in schools, healthcare facilities, places of worship, and other protected locations.

- End all 287(g) agreements and halt collaboration between state and local enforcement agencies and federal civil immigration enforcement. Amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to remove section 287(g) and prohibit federal funding to states to perform any function of immigration enforcement.
- Review and revise the Department of Justice's guidance for federal law enforcement agencies regarding the use of race, ethnicity, gender, national origin, religion, sexual orientation or gender identity to include a comprehensive ban on racial profiling by federal and state law enforcement agencies.

Ensure accountability and justice for human rights violations committed in the context of immigration enforcement operations:

- Immediately conduct prompt, independent, impartial and effective investigations into human rights abuses, including incidents of excessive use of force in operations Catahoula Crunch, Metro Surge, Midway Blitz, PARRIS and the Federal Takeover.
- Immediately conduct prompt, independent, impartial and effective investigations into the unlawful killings of Silverio Villegas González, Renee Good and Alex Pretti as well as all other deaths that occurred and still occur in the context of immigration enforcement operations. Immediately conduct effective, impartial and prompt investigations into the unlawful use of lethal force against Marimar Martínez, Julio César Sosa-Celis, Philip Brown and Justin Bryant Nelson.
- Immediately conduct prompt, independent, impartial and effective investigation into all allegations of human rights violations by officials during public assemblies protesting ICE enforcement actions and abuses, including unlawful use of force.
- Bring all those found responsible, including commanding officers, to account through criminal or disciplinary proceedings as appropriate, and provide full redress to victims.

End human rights violations in the immigration detention and deportation system:

- Respect the principle of non-refoulement at all times and ensure that no one, regardless of status, is removed to a place where their life or safety are at risk. Ensure a thorough and objective assessment of risk prior to any removal from the United States and the right of individuals to due process, including the right to an effective remedy. Refrain from removing individuals to countries of which they are not nationals.
- Pass immigration reform to create a roadmap to citizenship for undocumented people living in the United States, decriminalize migration, eliminate expedited removal and mandatory detention, and repurpose the US immigration system into one that is truly civil and administrative.
- End the practice of mass immigration detention in the United States. Refrain from detaining asylum seekers and migrants solely for irregular entry or stay. End the criminalization of migration by ending all prosecutions under 8 USC 1325 and 1326. Amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to repeal sections 1325 and 1326 and end the criminalization of migration.
- Establish a presumption of liberty in immigration proceedings, such that immigration detention is used only in extraordinary circumstances to verify the identity of an individual or when there is individualized, clear evidence of a flight risk assessed in relation to a removal procedure that has been initiated, is in progress and has a reasonable prospect of being executed within a reasonable time frame.
- Ensure that in the extraordinary circumstances when individuals are held in facilities, that they are designed for overnight stay offering conditions and treatment complying with international human rights law and standards, including by developing new civil detention standards. Establish a compulsory fixed time limit for keeping individuals in premises that are not suitable for overnight stay, while ensuring that even in such premises people have access to minimum facilities such as toilets, resting opportunities, food and water.

- Allow for oversight of immigration detention facilities by providing Members of Congress unfettered access to conduct unannounced inspections and speak to people inside, as is required by US law.
- Ensure that all allegations of torture, ill-treatment, or deaths in ICE detention are promptly, impartially, and effectively investigated, and that perpetrators are held accountable.
- End the practice of transferring individuals between ICE facilities in ways that obstruct access to counsel or family contact.
- Establish a right to counsel for people in immigration proceedings and ensure people are guaranteed legal counsel, as well as translation services, in all immigration court proceedings. Ensure that organizations that provide legal and other services to individuals in immigration detention are adequately funded.
- Ensure that children's rights are upheld in all immigration enforcement, and adhere to and expand ICE's Parental Interest Directive to ensure that pregnant, breastfeeding, and postpartum people, primary caregivers, families and children are never detained.
- Pass the Bivens Act to allow for citizens to recover damages for constitutional violations committed against them by federal officers, including immigration enforcement officials.
- Pass the Melt ICE Act to prohibit ICE from detaining people or monitoring them using electronic surveillance and redirect ICE funding to community-based programs to provide wrap-around social services to community members.
- Pass the Dignity for Detained Immigrants Act to create a presumption of liberty in all immigration custody decisions, end mandatory detention, end the practice of family detention, end all contracts with private prison companies, prohibit the use of solitary confinement and other detention conditions, and civil performance-based accountability mechanisms.

Protect the rights of individuals observing and protesting against immigration enforcement operations:

- Federal, state and local authorities must ensure that everyone under their jurisdiction can enjoy their human rights to peaceful assembly and freedom of expression.
- All law enforcement agencies must revise their policies and practices for the policing of protests. Law enforcement agencies must comply at all times with international human rights standards, including the UN Code of Conduct for Law Enforcement Officials and the UN Basic Principles on the Use of Force and Firearms by Law Enforcement Officials which must be the guiding principles underpinning all operations before, during and after demonstrations.
- All federal and state legislatures should introduce or amend statutes that authorize the use of lethal force to ensure that they are in line with international law and standards by limiting the use of lethal force by law enforcement officials to those instances in which it is necessary and proportionate to protect against an imminent threat of death or serious injury.
- Develop national guidelines on use of tear gas to ensure that there is compliance at all times with the international human rights obligations and with international standards on policing, in particular the UN Code of Conduct for Law Enforcement Officials and the UN Basic Principles on the Use of Force and Firearms by Law Enforcement Officials. Such guidelines should restrict the use of tear gas during the policing of demonstrations to ensure it is only used in situations of generalized violence, for the purpose of dispersing a crowd when all other means have failed to contain the violence; that grenades are never fired directly at individuals; and that tear gas is not used in confined spaces, in situations in which exits and ventilation points are restricted or near high risk people, such as older people, pregnant people and children. Protesters must always be warned in advance that tear gas is going to be used and given sufficient time to voluntarily disperse. These guidelines should also include guidance on the use of tear gas in densely populated areas.
- Develop national guidelines on the use of "less lethal" single shot kinetic impact projectiles which may only be used as a last resort against violent individuals posing an imminent threat of severe

harm to persons. Single projectiles may only be used to target an individual in order to contain and stop the violence and only when less extreme means is insufficient to achieve this objective. Single projectiles may only be discharged from a safe distance, be carefully targeted and aimed only at persons directly involved in such violence. Projectiles must never be aimed at the head, upper-body or groin areas. They must not be fired from moving vehicles or by officers who are running; to minimize risks, the firer should be stationary. Each deployment must be authorized by a senior officer, recorded and evaluated for compliance with international use of force standards. Use against individuals at higher risk of more serious injury, such as pregnant people, children and older people, must be avoided, and particular care must be taken when using KIPs in the vicinity of those at elevated risk. KIPs must not be intentionally rebounded off the ground (“skip fired”) before striking the target. KIPs must never be used to control a crowd or disperse a public assembly. Nor should KIPs be fired from the air or an elevated position, due to increased risks of striking targets in the head. Extreme caution must be exercised when targeting violent individuals in the dynamic environment of a public assembly where risks of hitting bystanders are high. Unless absolutely impossible, clear warnings should be given before firing KIPs allowing sufficient time for the warning to be heeded. Medical care must be promptly made available to anyone injured by such projectiles.

- Prohibit the use of multiple kinetic impact projectiles which are inherently inaccurate, cannot be targeted only to an individual engaged in violence and will cause unwarranted injury, and therefore have no legitimate role in law enforcement.
- Prohibit the use of stun (flashbang) grenades in the policing of public assemblies due to their overly harmful and disorientating effects.
- Prohibit the production, promotion, transfer, use and provision of technical assistance/training, of all direct contact electric shock weapons and equipment used for law enforcement including, but not limited to, electric shock gloves, stun guns, electric shock batons and shields, stun gloves and body-worn electric shock devices (e.g. remotely controlled electric shock cuffs, vests and belts).
- Ensure that military forces are not deployed to conduct law enforcement duties unless under exceptional and temporary circumstances, based on a clear needs assessment as to their added value in a concrete situation. In such a case they are duty bound by the legal framework applicable to law enforcement, including international and domestic human rights law and they may only be deployed to carry out law enforcement functions if they are properly instructed, equipped and trained to carry out those functions in a lawful, human rights compliant manner. They should be subject to civilian command, control and oversight at all times.
- Ensure that all law enforcement agencies engaged in policing protests review their policies regarding the policing of protests, which should adopt an approach that focuses on facilitation, communication, de-escalation and avoidance of use of force. They should avoid unnecessary escalation through threatening appearance and/or behaviour, excessive use of force, inappropriate equipment and arbitrary detention. They should seek dialogue with protest organizers, call for calm and refrain from making public statements which label an entire group of protesters as the enemy of the state.
- Ensure that any decision to disperse an assembly is taken only as a last resort and carefully in line with the principles of necessity and proportionality; that is, only when there are no other means available to protect a legitimate aim and when the level of threat of violence outweighs the right of people to assemble. Ensure that even in situations in which a small minority tries to turn a peaceful assembly into a violent one, police take steps to enable those who are protesting peacefully to continue to do so and refrain from using the violent acts of a few as a pretext to restrict or impede the exercise of rights by the majority of protesters.
- Law enforcement officials should be identifiable during public order operations either through name or number tags. Review and revise the training provided to law enforcement officials, ensuring that it includes thorough training on the lawful use of force and firearms and the policing of protests as well as on respect for human rights.

Ensure that the right to privacy is protected and end unlawful surveillance:

- Immediately cease the deployment of facial recognition technologies for identification. End mass surveillance and discriminatory targeted surveillance.
- Ensure that any rights violations stemming from the use of unnecessary and disproportionate artificial intelligence-driven surveillance tools, such as facial recognition and automated number plate registration, are investigated and remedied effectively.
- Enact legislation to ban the use, development, production, sale and export of remote biometric recognition technology for mass surveillance as well as remote biometric or facial recognition technology used for identification purposes used within their own jurisdictions by both state agencies and private sector actors, as technologies that are fundamentally incompatible with international human rights law.