

ICE Out of Maine Laws

Explainer

BACKGROUND

In January 2026, the Trump administration launched "Operation Catch of the Day" in Maine. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) claimed it would target only the "worst of the worst" and keep communities safe. That was a lie. Instead, they threatened, detained, and arrested hundreds of our neighbors, coworkers, friends, and family members who had done nothing wrong. Most people were targeted for the color of their skin, ranging from local corrections officers to professional engineers.

In response to the Trump administration's lawless campaign, Maine lawmakers passed three ICE Out of Maine laws: ICE Out of Policing, ICE Out of Our Homes, and ICE Out of Schools and State Healthcare. These laws protect our communities and ensure that local officials, agencies, and resources are not used to support these reckless and chaotic federal immigration enforcement operations.

These new laws will depend on state and local officials fully implementing them. Immigrants' rights advocates will work with public officials and activate concerned Mainers to provide political backing and apply political pressure where needed.

OVERALL

Values

- Maine communities are stronger and safer without ICE.
- We should all feel safe in the essential places where our families live, learn, and heal.
- No person should ever be forced to choose between something like taking their child to school or calling for help in an emergency and facing deportation.
- Mainers looked out for each other during Operation Catch of the Day. Now Maine's ICE Out laws are drawing a clear line between our communities and rogue federal agents.

Protecting Our Communities

- Maine's ICE Out laws draw a line to protect Maine from federal overreach, build trust, and allow people to live safely and freely where we live, learn, and heal.
- Rogue federal agents harmed all people – no matter their immigration status. Students missed school, parents were unable to leave home, hospitals canceled appointments, and businesses closed.
- These laws protect our communities and ensure that local officials, agencies, and resources are not used to support reckless and chaotic federal immigration enforcement operations.

ICE OUT OF POLICING

Background

Maine police and jails have long collaborated with and supported federal immigration operations. The ACLU of Maine has obtained hundreds of public records showing cooperation throughout the state and across dozens of agencies – from traffic stops that led to deportations, to jailing people on behalf of ICE.

General

- No person should ever be forced to choose between calling for help in an emergency or facing deportation.
- ICE lied about coming to Maine to promote public safety, and it lied about only targeting "the worst of the worst." We all witnessed the reality: heavily armed, unaccountable, and masked agents terrorized communities. They targeted people simply due to the color of their skin, from corrections officers to professional engineers.
- Maine law enforcement should never be part of causing the chaos, fear, and disorder that ICE brings to our communities.
- When people do not feel safe calling for help, we are all less safe. People are less likely to report a crime, call 911 in a medical emergency, or serve as a witness in an investigation.

What does ICE Out of Policing Do?

ICE Out of Policing laws make clear that Maine law enforcement cannot be part of the president's mass deportation efforts or use local jails for immigration detention. The laws will specifically prohibit:

- Civil immigration detention in Maine jails (including honoring ICE detainers, Border Patrol holds, and ICE detention contracts)
- Jail communications with ICE about the release dates of people being detained
- Police handovers to ICE
- Using immigration enforcement officers for “interpretation” services
- 287(g) agreements, which deputize Maine police to act as federal immigration agents

Examples

- Maine law enforcement has frequently turned something simple like a traffic stop into a roadside detention center, detaining people for hours until federal agents arrive.
- In one instance, two people called 911 because their friend was having a medical emergency. South Paris Police called Border Patrol to their apartment, and they were both arrested.

ICE OUT OF OUR HOMES

Background

Landlords could deliberately share sensitive information with immigration agents to retaliate against a renter, or they could be bullied into sharing that information even when they don’t want to.

General

- Every person has the right to feel safe in their own home.
- Our homes are our sanctuaries, and we should all feel safe at home.
- Homes have always had a higher legal standard for the privacy and safety people enjoy within.
- No person should ever feel unsafe at home because their landlord may weaponize their immigration status against them.
- Property owners should feel confident that they can protect renters’ sensitive information in the face of bullying or harassment from ICE agents.
- When we share our sensitive personal information, we deserve to know it will be protected and used appropriately.

What does ICE Out of Our Homes Do?

This law will prevent property owners from sharing tenants' sensitive information with ICE unless agents present a valid judicial warrant.

The ICE Out of Our Homes law establishes clear legal standards that protect everyone by ensuring people can follow the law rather than give in to the pressure or coercion from a rogue agency like ICE.

ICE OUT OF SCHOOLS AND STATE HEALTHCARE

Background

For decades, DHS had a longstanding policy prohibiting immigration arrests at sensitive locations like schools, healthcare facilities, and libraries, given the serious public health and safety consequences of conducting operations at these places. In January of 2025, the Trump administration rescinded that policy, unleashing ICE to pursue arrests in these highly sensitive areas. Maine can reimplement these protections for public schools, state libraries, and state healthcare facilities.

General

- No parent should be forced to choose between taking their sick child to the doctor or facing deportation.
- No public employee should feel pressured, bullied, or coerced by ICE to break the law or endanger the people in their care.
- The ICE Out of Schools and State Healthcare law limits federal immigration authorities' access to sensitive locations that are essential to daily life and are at the core of strong, healthy communities.
- Employees should feel confident they can protect the people they serve from rogue agents and other threats.
- This law removes high-stakes pressure from frontline public employees by clarifying that ICE can only enter private spaces or access private records if they have a valid judicial warrant.
- ICE Out of Schools and State Healthcare will ensure staff at these essential locations deny agents access to private spaces and private information unless they provide a valid judicial warrant.

What does ICE Out of Schools and State Healthcare do?

This law requires employees in public schools, state libraries, and state healthcare facilities to deny agents access to private spaces and private information unless they present a valid judicial warrant.