
Immigration

415.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The purpose of this immigration policy is to provide guidance and direction to the members of the Oakland Police Department (OPD) on Federal, State, and local immigration laws.

The responsibility for enforcement of immigration laws rests solely with the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement agency (ICE) under the direction of the United States Department of Homeland Security (DHS), and not with local or state law enforcement agencies. OPD is committed to equal enforcement of the law and equal service to the public regardless of a person's immigration status. This commitment increases our effectiveness in protecting and serving the entire community.

415.2 DUE PROCESS RIGHTS OF ALL PERSONS

OPD shall not provide federal immigration agencies access to individuals solely for the purpose of immigration enforcement.

If OPD receives a federal immigration detainer request for an individual in OPD custody, Officers shall provide the individual with a copy of the request.

Officers shall not inquire or request proof of immigration status or citizenship when providing services or benefits except where the receipt of such benefits or services is contingent upon one's immigration status, such as in the processing of a U visa or T visa.

Individuals with limited English proficiency must be given access to translation or interpretation and must receive documents in their native language if available.

415.3 FEDERAL LAW

The responsibility for enforcement of immigration laws rests solely with ICE, under the direction of DHS.

Immigration detainers or requests, sometime called "ICE holds," are not compulsory. Instead, they are merely requests enforceable at the discretion of the agency holding the arrestee. Federal regulations define immigration detainers as "requests" rather than commands.¹ Courts have also held that ICE detainers are voluntary requests that "do not and cannot compel a state or local law enforcement agency to detain suspected aliens subject to removal."² Thus, local agencies are "free to disregard [an] ICE detainer."³

¹ 8 C.F.R. § 287.7(a).

² *Galarza v. Szalczyk*, 745 F.3d 634 (3rd Cir. 2014); see also *Flores v. City of Baldwin Park*, No. CV 14-9290-MWF, 2015 WL 756877, at *4 (C.D. Cal. Feb. 23, 2015) ("federal law leaves compliance with immigration holds wholly within the discretion of states and localities").

³ *Galarza*, 745 F.3d at 645.

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The mere fact that an individual is unlawfully in the United States is not a criminal offense.⁴ Thus, unlawful presence in the United States, by itself, does not justify continued detention beyond that of an individual's normal release date. This applies even where ICE or United States Customs and Border Protection (CBP) provide an OPD officer with administrative forms that use the terms "probable cause" or "warrant." A lawful detention under the Fourth Amendment must be supported by probable cause that a person has committed a crime.⁵

415.4 CITY POLICY

Members of OPD shall not:

- Enforce or assist ICE in the enforcement of violations of civil immigration laws
- Initiate investigations or use personnel or resources where the only objective is to discover whether an individual is in violation of a civil immigration law
- Detain individuals for a violation of civil immigration law⁶

415.5 REQUESTS FOR ASSISTANCE FROM DHS OR ICE

Unless the circumstances present an imminent danger to officer or public safety, requests by DHS or ICE for any operational assistance from OPD (including but not limited to ICE detainer requests), shall immediately be directed to the watch commander on duty for approval, who in turn shall immediately notify the Chief of Police, or the Chief's designee.

In the event a determination needs to be made about whether an ICE detainer request should be fulfilled, the Chief of Police, or the Chief's designee, shall consider the merits of each request carefully. In making this determination, the Chief, or Chief's designee, shall comply with the California TRUST Act,⁷ assess whether the individual poses a risk to public or officer safety, and consider the availability of OPD personnel and resources necessary to comply with the request.

415.6 INFORMATION SHARING

OPD does not collect or maintain any information regarding a person's immigration status, unless the information is gathered specifically for the purposes of completing U visa or T visa documents.

Officers shall not share non-public information about an individual's address, upcoming court date, or release date with ICE or CBP. Officers shall respond to an ICE or CBP request for non-public information only when a judicial warrant accompanies the request.

⁴ *Arizona v. United States*, 567 U.S. 387, 132 S. Ct. 2492, 2505 (2012); *Melendres v. Arpaio*, 695 F.3d 990, 998, 1000 (9th Cir. 2012).

⁵ *Gerstein v. Pugh*, 420 U.S. 103, 120 (1975).

⁶ See November 29, 2016, Oakland City Council "Resolution Denouncing Tactics Used to Intimidate Immigrants Residing in Oakland and Re-affirming the City's Declaration as a City of Refuge" (Resolution No. 86498).

⁷ See Gov't Code, §§ 7282, 7282.5. The TRUST Act limits the discretion of law enforcement officials to detain an individual pursuant to a federal immigration detainer request, should an agency choose to do so, unless two conditions are met. First, the continued detention must "not violate any federal, state, or local law, or any local policy," and second, the detainee must have a qualifying criminal history as enumerated in Government Code section 7282.5(a) or be the subject of an outstanding federal felony arrest warrant.

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415.7 U VISA AND T VISA NONIMMIGRANT STATUS

Under certain circumstances, federal law allows temporary immigration benefits, known as a U visa, to victims and witnesses of certain qualifying crimes. Similar immigration protection, known as a T visa, is available for certain qualifying victims of human trafficking.

Any request for assistance in applying for a U visa or T visa should be forwarded in a timely manner to the Special Victims Section (SVS) Lieutenant for review and endorsement. The SVS Lieutenant may consult with the assigned investigator to confirm the applicant is cooperative with the investigation.

The SVS Lieutenant or their designee shall approve or deny the request and complete the certification or declaration, if appropriate, within the time frame required under Penal Code § 679.10(h).⁸ The instructions for completing certification and declaration forms can be found on the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) website and under Penal Code § 679.10.

The OPD website has information regarding the U visa or T visa application process as well as a non-profit organization that can assist with the application process.

⁸ "A certifying entity shall process an I-918 Supplement B certification within 90 days of request, unless the noncitizen is in removal proceedings, in which case the certification shall be processed within 14 days of request." Penal Code § 697.10(h).