

Chicago police reminded they can't cooperate with deportations



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CHICAGO — NewsNation affiliate WGN has learned Chicago Police officers are being reminded about what they “can” and “can’t” do if President [Donald Trump’s promised immigration raids](#) happen.

The directives went into effect in 2021 but have renewed importance this week.

It’s not just Chicago police policy but also state law that prohibits officers in Illinois from coordinating with immigration agents or even inquiring about a person’s immigration status.

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On the eve of potential mass deportations, Chicago officers are being reminded they cannot:

- Assist with enforcing immigration law.
- Stop, arrest or detain someone based solely on immigration status.
- Coordinate with the turnover of someone in custody to ICE agents.

This weekend, immigrant advocates reminded those fearful of mass deportation operations of steps they can take.

“You have the right to remain silent. You have the right to not open your door. You have the right to speak to an attorney,” Erendira Rendon with The Resurrection Project said.

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The Illinois law that prohibits local police from detaining a person because of their immigration status was actually signed by former Republican governor Bruce Rauner during the first Trump

“I asked leaders in law enforcement, ‘Should I veto the bill or sign this bill?’” Rauner said in 2017. “They all said to me, ‘Governor, this is a reasonable compromise and it will help us do our jobs better.’”

Democrat JB Pritzker strengthened the law in 2021. He’s said he’ll fight to protect immigrants regardless of their status; but more recently added, “Let me be clear up front: violent criminals who are undocumented and convicted of violent crime should be deported.”

[In December](#), Kankakee County Sheriff Mike Downey, who years before rented a portion of his jail for use as an immigration detention center, said he is hoping for changes.

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"I just don't believe that Illinois will ever be a safe state until our governor decides to effect policy change and I don't see him doing that," he said.

Downey points to a police pursuit this fall that he says illustrated how Illinois law enforcement is handcuffed. Police say two men had three kilos of fentanyl in the car. Arrest reports say the men denied knowing about the drugs and claimed "they fled in fear of being deported." A judge ordered one man detained because of his criminal record; but released the other.

"I can't call ICE and say, 'This individual is getting released tomorrow, or in three hours.' I can't. So he walks out the door," he said.

Pritzker has shown no signs of a willingness to tweak the law to allow for more coordination with ICE and his statement about deporting violent criminals had the caveat that they are "convicted" of the crime.

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The full statement from CPD sent to WGN on Monday follows:

In accordance with the City of Chicago's Municipal Code, which includes the Welcoming City Ordinance, the Chicago Police Department does not assist federal immigration authorities with enforcement action solely based on immigration status. Additionally, CPD does not document immigration status and does not share such information with federal authorities.

CPD is prohibited by the Welcoming City Ordinance from participating in civil immigration enforcement operations or assist in the civil enforcement of federal immigration law. CPD's Responding to Incidents Involving Citizenship Status policy also states that if the Department receives a request from an immigration agency to provide assistance with a civil immigration enforcement operation, a supervisor will respond to the scene. If the request is to assist in the

higher rank (a Watch Operations Lieutenant or Street Deputy) respond to the scenes of these requests, in addition to the previously required supervisor from the district of occurrence.

To be clear, the Chicago Police Department will not assist or intervene in civil immigration enforcement in accordance with the City of Chicago Municipal Code. As always, we will continue to enforce the law if a crime occurs, regardless of the citizenship status of those involved.

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