

Los Angeles City Sanctuary Motion

Fact Sheet

Summary

On March 7, 2023, Los Angeles City Councilmembers Hernandez, Raman, and Soto-Martinez introduced a “Sanctuary” City motion. The motion directs the City Attorney to draft an ordinance that prohibits, to the extent permissible by law, City resources, property, or personnel from being used for federal immigration enforcement.

Background

Immigrants are an integral part of our Los Angeles communities. Immigrant workers subsidize every major industry in our state, and immigrants’ contributions are an essential part of our city’s rich cultural tapestry. Sanctuary policies deliver on our collective responsibility to our immigrant communities by creating a more inclusive and multi-racial city that is rooted in values of compassion, equality, and common humanity.

Los Angeles has affirmed its support of immigrant communities over the past several years. For example, Mayor Garcetti’s Executive Directive 20 limited the City’s entanglement with federal immigration authorities. The City also passed a “City of Sanctuary” resolution (C.F. 17-1040), invested in the Los Angeles Justice Fund to provide representation for Angelenos facing deportation, and provided emergency assistance to families in need during the pandemic, regardless of immigration status.

The City’s existing policies limiting cooperation with federal immigration enforcement, including Executive Directive 20 and LAPD’s Special Order 40, have never been enacted into local municipal law. In addition, even with existing policies, ICE officers are still able to access City jails to interrogate individuals in LAPD custody. Further, in certain situations, LAPD officers are permitted to transfer individuals to ICE custody even without a judicial warrant. As a result, even minor violations have led to individuals with prior convictions being transferred to ICE custody. Moreover, the City lacks robust policies to limit data and resource sharing with federal authorities.

Los Angeles County has already led the way by ending ICE transfers without a judicial finding of probable cause. Compared to the 1,500 people transferred to ICE by the L.A. Sheriff’s Department in 2019 and 2019, LASD transferred zero Angelenos in 2021 and 2022. The City of Los Angeles should similarly act to save lives and keep families together.

It is long overdue for Los Angeles to enact a local law that prohibits the use of City resources to assist in the deportation of members of our vital immigrant community.

The Solution

Per the motion, the ordinance drafted by the City Attorney must prohibit the use of City resources, property or personnel, to the extent permissible by law, for the following activities:

- Inquiries into an individual's immigration status or place of birth unless doing so is part of a City service related to assisting them with their immigration status, or as required for employment purposes.
- Investigating, interrogating, detaining, arresting, transferring, or refusing to release individuals for immigration enforcement purposes.
- Responding to a civil immigration warrant or request to detain, transfer, or notify federal authorities about the release of any individual for immigration purposes.
- Providing immigration authorities access to non-public areas, including jails, without a valid search or arrest warrant issued by a federal district judge or magistrate.
- Making individuals in City custody available to federal immigration authorities for interviews for immigration enforcement purposes.
- Participating in any immigration enforcement operation.
- Providing access to City databases or to any individual's personal information to immigration enforcement authorities.

Support

The sanctuary motion has the strong support of organizations across Los Angeles, including: California Immigrant Policy Center (CIPC), UCLA Labor Center, Coalition for Humane Immigrants' Rights (CHIRLA), Central American Resource Center - Los Angeles (CARECEN), ACLU of Southern California, UCLA Center for Immigration Law and Policy, National Day Labor Organizing Network (NDLON), Public Counsel, and more.

Contact

Shiu-Ming Cheer • smcheer@caimmigrant.org

Deputy Director of Programs & Campaigns, California Immigrant Policy Center