Departmental Memorandum

Volume 26-05

To: Sacramento Police Department Employees *Zachary Bales, Interim Chief of Police*
From: Lt. Justin Thompson, Professional Standards Unit

SPD Response to Federal Immigration Enforcement

10-29-2026

The purpose of this memorandum is to provide police department employees with additional guidance related to the equal enforcement of the law and equal service to all members of the public in the department's interactions with the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement Agency (ICE) officers, United States Customs and Border Protection (CBP) officers, or any other federal agent conducting immigration enforcement operations (federal agents).

1. Sacramento Police officers are not, and shall not act as, a security detail for federal agents conducting immigration enforcement operations.
2. Officers shall not be dispatched to assist federal agents solely because individuals are following their vehicles, observing their activities, recording their operations, or otherwise engaging in what could be reasonably categorized as lawful conduct.
    a. The mere presence of individuals observing federal agents, even when those agents find the attention unwelcome or uncomfortable, does not establish a public safety emergency or justify a police response.
3. Before officers are dispatched, or if an officer is approached for assistance, in response to a request for assistance from federal agents:
    a. There must be clear and articulable facts establishing a credible threat to the safety of the federal agents, members of the public, or another legitimate public safety concern requiring police intervention.
        (1) Circumstances where individuals are potentially being held against their will shall be deemed as a legitimate public safety concern.
    b. Employees shall notify the on-duty district sergeant for the area where the request is occurring. The sergeant shall evaluate the circumstances, exercise supervisory judgement, and determine an appropriate course of action. The sergeant shall forward their recommendation to the on-duty watch commander. The watch commander shall retain final decision-making authority.
4. When officers respond to a legitimate emergency involving federal agents, their involvement shall be limited to addressing a specific threat, criminal conduct, or public safety emergency.
5. Officers shall not provide escorts, protective surveillance, traffic control, crowd control, perimeter security, or other operational support for the purpose of facilitating federal immigration enforcement
6. Once the independent public safety concern has been resolved, officers shall disengage.

Examples of circumstances that may justify a response include:

1. Specific threats of violence directed at federal agents or members of the public.
2. Assaults, attempted assaults, or other criminal conduct presenting an actual threat to safety.

To: Sacramento Police Department Employees *Zachary Bales, Interim Chief of Police*
From: Lt. Justin Thompson, Professional Standards Unit

3. Individuals exhibiting threatening behavior supported by specific facts indicating an imminent risk of violence.
4. Other independently identifiable criminal activity or emergencies requiring a response under California law.
5. Simply reporting that someone is following a federal agent's vehicle, watching a federal operation, photographing federal agents, or recording their activities is not sufficient without additional facts to establish conduct outside First Amendment activity, a credible threat or an independent public safety concern.

Dispatch and Supervisory Responsibilities

1. Dispatch personnel shall obtain and document the specific facts supporting any request for assistance before assigning officers. Preliminary questions for communications personnel, or officers in the field when approached, to ask include but are not limited to:
   a. What are the circumstances?
      (1) (identify specific behavior that is concerning...standard call taking measures to be taken)
   b. Are there any weapons involved?
   c. Are there vehicles involved? If so, did you observe a specific license plate number?
   d. Are you or any other person in imminent danger?
   e. Have you been threatened? If so, what was the specific threat?
   f. Have you observed a person committing any crime? If so, what was the crime you believe was committed?
   g. Can you leave the area or get somewhere safe?
   h. Are there other people nearby who could be affected by the situation? If so, how?
2. When the circumstances are unclear, a watch commander shall review the request and determine whether a police response is appropriate based on the guidance provided above.

Nothing in this directive precludes an immediate response to a reported emergency involving a credible threat to life or serious bodily injury.

SPD shall conduct any response pursuant to this memorandum in compliance with the California Values Act (SB 54) and all relevant city policies on immigration.

The Sacramento Police Department is in the process of updating General Order 523.07 (Contacts with Foreign Nationals). The contents of this memorandum are effective immediately and shall expire upon the next publication of GO 523.07.