25-04 - Potential Scenarios Related to Immigration Operations

Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department

NEWSLETTER

Field Operations Support Services

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POTENTIAL SCENARIOS RELATED TO IMMIGRATION OPERATIONS

PURPOSE

This Newsletter is to remind Department personnel of existing policy regarding immigration operations and the importance of compliance under Senate Bill 54, or the California Values Act which enacted and amended Government Code sections 7282 through 7282.5, and added sections 7284 through 7284.12, along with County and Department policies. In addition, this Newsletter is aimed at providing potential scenarios that Department personnel may encounter along with potential responses, in order to provide clarity into California law.

Below are potential scenarios and discussion points followed by italicized responses which align with these mandates to ensure deputies comply with state law while maintaining public safety. This information is designed to help guide Department personnel practice real-world decision-making and give operational guidance. Supervisors are encouraged to use these scenarios with their personnel to prompt discussion and build understanding about California law and different scenarios personnel may encounter in the field.

SCENARIO #1: ICE Requests Backup for a Civil Immigration Arrest

While on patrol, deputies receive a radio call from ICE agents requesting backup at a local business where they are attempting to detain an individual for immigration violations under an administrative warrant (Form I-200).

Discussion Points / Responses

- How should deputies respond to the ICE request?

  Deputies should decline the request for backup, as assisting in a civil immigration action is prohibited under SB-54.

- What steps should deputies take to ensure they are not assisting in a civil immigration action?

  Deputies should verify the nature of the warrant. If it is an administrative warrant (Form I-200 or I-205), they must not assist with any detention or arrest.

- How should deputies document the encounter?

  Deputies should document the interaction on their Mobile Digital Computer (MDC) or an incident report if necessary.

- What should deputies do if ICE insists on assistance?

  If ICE insists on assistance, deputies should refer to County policy, and SB-54. Additionally, Deputies should notify a field supervisor.

SCENARIO #2: **Contact with an Individual Who Has an ICE Warrant**

Deputies conduct a routine traffic stop for a vehicle code violation. Upon running the driver's information, they discover an ICE administrative warrant (Form I-205) for removal proceedings.

Discussion Points / Responses

- What should the deputies do with the ICE warrant information?

  Deputies should not detain or arrest the individual solely based on the ICE administrative warrant.

- Should the deputies detain the individual based on this administrative warrant? Why or why not?

  No. Administrative warrants are not criminal judicial warrants and do not grant deputies the authority to detain.

- How should deputies ensure the stop remains compliant with SB-54?

  The stop should remain focused on the original reason (e.g., traffic violation), and deputies should not inquire about immigration status.

- If ICE contacts the deputies and requests custody of the driver, how should they respond?

  This is an administrative warrant. If ICE contacts deputies and requests custody of the driver, deputies must decline to participate and refer to SB-54 and County policy.

SCENARIO# 3: ICE Conducting an Operation Near a School

A local school principal calls 911, reporting that federal agents are near the campus conducting what appears to be an immigration enforcement operation. Parents and students are alarmed. Deputies arrive on scene and find ICE agents in unmarked vehicles.

Discussion Points / Responses

- What is the deputies' role in this situation?

  Deputies' role is to ensure public safety and not to assist in the immigration enforcement operation.

- How should deputies balance public reassurance with remaining neutral in immigration enforcement?

  Deputies should reassure the public without interfering in ICE's activities while maintaining neutrality in immigration enforcement.

- If ICE requests assistance in detaining an individual outside the school, how should deputies respond?

  If ICE requests assistance in detaining an individual, deputies should decline, citing SB-54 and Department policy. Deputies should not intervene UNLESS there is a clear and present threat to officer safety. The level of assistance should be limited to restore officer safety.

- What steps should be taken to document the encounter?

  Deputies should document the incident in a detailed log entry in their MDC and report any conflicts to a field supervisor.

SCENARIO# 4: ICE Agents at the Station Requesting Assistance

Two ICE agents arrive at the station, asking for assistance in locating a suspect with a final order of deportation. They provide deputies with an ICE detainer request and ask for recent contact information from department records.

Discussion Points / Responses

- How should deputies handle ICE's request for information?

  Deputies should not provide assistance in locating the suspect or share department records unless required by law(a federal criminal warrant signed by a judge). ICE should be directed to official communication channels for public records. (Available on Department website, Inmate Information links, etc.)

- Under what circumstances, if any, can deputies share information with ICE?

  Under SB-54, deputies can only share information that is already publicly available and cannot disclose non-public information related to immigration enforcement. Non-public information includes a person's home or work address and telephone numbers, and personal identifying information such as names and physical descriptions.

- What Department policies or legal statutes should deputies' reference in responding to the request?

  Deputies should politely decline the request, citing SB-54 and County policy.

- How should deputies document this interaction?

  The interaction should be documented in the MDC if a call is generated. If ICW Agents persist, a supervisor should be notified immediately, and the Watch Commander should document the incident in the daily log.

SCENARIO# 5: ICE Arrest Attempt Escalates into a Public Disturbance

Deputies on patrol observe ICE agents attempting to arrest an individual in a public area, but a crowd begins to gather, protesting the arrest. The situation escalates, and there is potential for violence. ICE agents request assistance in securing the scene.

Discussion Points / Responses

- What should deputies do to ensure public safety while not assisting in immigration enforcement?

  Deputies should focus on crowd control and public safety, ensuring the situation does not escalate into violence.

- How should deputies de-escalate tensions between the public and ICE?

  Remain neutral. Deputies should use de-escalation techniques to prevent conflicts between ICE agents and the public.

- What actions can deputies take to maintain neutrality while keeping the peace?

  Deputies should avoid physical assistance in the immigration arrest while maintaining neutrality in the enforcement action UNLESS the situation presents a clear and present officer-safety situation for the ICE Agents.

- How should deputies document the incident, and who should be notified?

  The incident should be thoroughly documented, including any actions taken, in an MDC log entry or an incident report if necessary. Deputies should also notify a field supervisor immediately.

SCENARIO #6 ICE Responds to Station Jail to Take Custody of a Person Being Held on a Civil Immigration Detailer

Two ICE agents arrive at a station and request to take custody of an individual being held on a civil immigration detainer.

Discussion Points / Responses

- How should station personnel respond to ICE's request?

  If ICE requests assistance in taking custody of an individual being held on a civil immigration detainer, station personnel should decline, citing SB-54 and Department policy.

- What actions can station personnel take?

  SB 54 prohibits detention solely based on a civil immigration detainer.

- How should station personnel document the incident, and who should be notified?

Station personnel should notify the watch commander and document the incident in the Watch Commander's Log.

Documentation and Reporting Procedures

All encounters related to ICE operations, public disturbances, or protest activity should be thoroughly documented to ensure accountability, transparency, and compliance with SB-54 and Department policy.

Deputies should

Complete an Incident Report if damage to any property or if any criminal activity exists and complete a detailed MDC log entry. All forms of documentation by deputy personnel should contain the following:

- Detail the nature of the incident, including location, time, and actions taken.
- Specify whether ICE requested assistance and how the department responded.
- Note any crowd control or de-escalation measures used.
- Document if any arrests were made and under what legal authority.
- Include Supervisor Notification

Field Sergeant Should

Any situation involving ICE interaction, large-scale public disturbances, or media attention should be immediately reported to the watch commander. Any conflicts or unusual circumstances should be escalated though the station chain of command up to the Division Chief.

Watch Commander Should

Provide details of any significant incident related to ICE interaction to Sheriff's Information Bureau (SIB) along with the respective Field Deputy from the BOS. Significant incidents may include any incident likely to attract media attention. Incidents such as large-scale protests, potential policy violations by sheriff's personnel, or incidents where force was used should be included in the notification.

CONCLUSION: Why Is This Important?

- **Policy Compliance:** Proper documentation ensures adherence to SB-54, the County and department policy, reducing liability and risk of misconduct claims.
- **Accountability & Transparency:** Maintaining clear records supports transparency with the public, media, and oversight bodies, reinforcing community trust.
- **Operational Consistency:** Standardized reporting helps ensure deputies follow established procedures and provides leadership with accurate information for decision-making.

- **Media & Public Perception Management:** By proactively documenting and reporting incidents, the department can provide timely, factual, and coordinated responses to media inquiries, preventing misinformation or misrepresentation of department actions.

REFERENCES

The California Values Act - SB 54

BOS Supervisor Motion 07/15/2025

3-01/000.05 - Bias - Free Policing

5-09/271.00 - Immigration Inquiries and Notifications

18-06 - Immigration Policies, Protocols, and Procedures

If you require further information, contact Field Operations Support Services at (323) 890-5411 or fossunit@lasd.org.