

City of Detroit Ordinance: Sanctuary City

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AN ORDINANCE to protect and defend the civil rights and liberties of all residents of Detroit by becoming a sanctuary city and prohibiting the use of city resources, personnel, or property for the purposes of immigration enforcement or cooperation with federal immigration agents.

WHEREAS, Detroit is home to hundreds of thousands of people from all walks of life, of different races, religions, sexual orientations, and national and ethnic origins. The city values and celebrates this diversity, which makes our community and our economy strong and vibrant;

WHEREAS, a relationship of trust between the city and all residents, regardless of race, religion, sexual orientation, national origin, ethnicity, or immigration status, is essential for accomplishing core city functions, including protecting the safety and civil and human rights of all residents;

WHEREAS, the involvement of local government in federal immigration enforcement erodes trust between immigrant communities and local authorities. This trust is threatened when the city is cooperating with federal immigration enforcement programs, with the result that immigrant community members fear approaching police when they are victims of, and witnesses to, crimes; seeking basic services, and attending school, to the detriment of the public safety and well-being of all city residents.

WHEREAS Detroit's designation as a "Welcoming City" only serves to mislead, as we currently do not welcome, support, nor defend all peoples of Detroit. In this case, the distinction of "Welcoming" over "Sanctuary" communicates a discriminatory message. As it stands, our city has failed to protect innocent civilians against federal violence based on immigration status, as seen by our city's cooperation in cruel deportations of valued community members, including minors.

WHEREAS, the City of Detroit values the dignity, safety, and constitutional rights of all individuals regardless of immigration status;

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WHEREAS, the City of Detroit is committed to ensuring that no person is deterred from seeking emergency assistance, education, or other city services based on their immigration status;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE PEOPLE OF THE CITY OF DETROIT:

Section 1. Title

This Ordinance shall be known and cited as the **Detroit Sanctuary City Ordinance**.

Section 2. Definitions

For the purpose of this Ordinance:

- **"Federal immigration enforcement"** means activities conducted by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP), or any other federal agency enforcing immigration laws.
 - **"City personnel"** includes all employees, officers, and agents of the City of Detroit or any of its departments or agencies.
 - **"City resources"** includes but is not limited to funds, equipment, facilities, property, or information systems.
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Section 3. Prohibited Use of City Resources and Cooperation

(a) No city department, agency, officer, or employee shall:

1. Use city funds, resources, personnel, information, databases, facilities, or property to assist in the enforcement of federal immigration law.

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2. Permit federal immigration authorities access to city facilities, databases, or individuals in custody without a judicial warrant
3. Honor immigration detainer requests or administrative warrants issued by ICE, CBP, and/or any other federal agency that are not accompanied by a judicial warrant.
4. Make individuals in city custody available to federal immigration authorities for interviews for immigration purposes.
5. Provide non-publicly available personal information about any individual, including, but not limited to, information about the person's release date, home address, or work address, for immigration purposes, including by providing access to city databases.
6. Identify, investigate, arrest, detain, or assist in the identification, investigation, arrest, or detention of any person who is in violation or suspected of violating immigration law.
7. Respond to any civil immigration warrant or request to detain, transfer, or notify federal authorities about the release of any individual for immigration purposes;

(b) City departments shall not:

1. Inquire about or record an individual's immigration status unless mandated by judicial warrant.
2. Enter into agreements under Section 287(g) of the Immigration and Nationality Act or similar programs that delegate federal immigration enforcement authority to local governments.

Section 4. Enforcement

This ordinance shall be enforced by the city government and personnel in coordination with the Office of Immigrant Affairs. Violations may result in disciplinary action in accordance with the city personnel rules. No individual shall have a private right of action under this ordinance.

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Section 5. Severability

If any provision of this ordinance is found to be unconstitutional, the remainder shall not be affected and shall continue in full force and effect.

Section 6. Effective Date

This ordinance shall become effective immediately upon its passage and publication according to law.

Section 7: Defense of Sanctuary Designation:

The City will resist any effort by the federal government to withhold or withdraw federal funding as a result of the city's policies to protect and defend its residents, including immigrants and members of religious communities.

Adopted by the City Council of Detroit on this [Day] of [Month], 2025.