



# Seattle

Police Department

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**DATE:** February 27, 2026

**TO:** Councilmember Alexis Mercedes Rinck  
Chair, Select Committee on Federal Administration and Policy Changes

**FROM:** Sarah Smith, SPD Chief Operating Officer

**SUBJECT:** Federal Immigration Enforcement Policies Report (Response to SLI SPD-111S-A)

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Statement of Legislative Intent SPD-111S-A-2, adopted with the 2026 Budget, requested that the Seattle Police Department (SPD) report on the implementation plan for [Executive Order \(EO\) 2025-07 – City of Seattle Response to Potential National Guard Deployment](#), and [EO 2025-08 – Strengthening Seattle’s Response to Federal Threats to Immigration and Refugee Communities](#). This report should include:

1. A description of the process used to develop the directive to SPD officers that is mandated in EO 2025-08 (Section 3.C.), including participation by Seattle’s accountability partners;
2. Whether the practices, procedures, and policies outlined in EO 2025-08 will be incorporated into the SPD Policy Manual and reviewed by Seattle’s accountability partners;
3. An outline of how the department will ensure its officers and Patrol supervisors have the necessary training and knowledge to quickly access department policies on interactions with federal Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) officers; and
4. An explanation of whether the Executive and SPD plan to work with the City Attorney’s Office to develop a plan for defending the City against legal actions compelling the sharing of information that may assist the United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) with immigration enforcement

## Background

In October 2025, Mayor Harrell issued an Executive Order to enhance the City of Seattle’s response to federal threats to our immigrant and refugee communities and an Executive Order to protect local communities and resources in the event of a unilateral National Guard deployment. The orders called for the creation of an interdepartmental task force, proactive legal planning and coordination, legislative actions to hold federal agents accountable, training for all City employees on protocols and procedures for complying with State and local immigration enforcement laws, and directives to guide local police response and reinforce SPD’s functional independence from federal authorities. The interdepartmental task force, the Seattle Resilience Task Force, developed several key recommendations, including providing feedback to SPD on a potential directive clarification to officers.

SPD subsequently issued a department-wide directive, which clarified our current department policy to:

- Establish procedures for employees on interactions with federal agents and the National Guard during unilateral deployments, presumptively for immigration enforcement;
- Provide guidance for sworn employees and field supervisors regarding potential interactions with unidentified law enforcement personnel; and

- Preserve the autonomy and authority of SPD as the primary law enforcement agency with jurisdiction in the City.

In January 2026, Mayor Wilson built on these efforts by issuing a directive to address federal immigration enforcement activities. This directive included [Executive Order 2026-03](#), prohibiting federal immigration authorities from using City-owned and City-controlled property for civil immigration activities; and it also established the Stand Together Seattle Initiative, which encourages private property owners to post notices clarifying that their property may not be accessed by federal agents for purposes of immigration enforcement without a warrant. The directive further required SPD to investigate, verify, and document, with in-car and body-worn video, any reports of immigration enforcement activity.

In February 2026, City Council passed [Council Bill 121158](#), which amends the Seattle Municipal Code to explicitly prohibit City employees from sharing non-public information for use in the enforcement of civil immigration laws (in the absence of a judicial warrant) and strikes prior language that directed cooperation with federal immigration enforcement.

### **Development of SPD Directive on Interaction with Federal Law Enforcement**

The City of Seattle is a welcoming city, and we abide by all State laws and regulations that prohibit SPD's participation in immigration enforcement. SPD has no role in federal civil immigration enforcement, which is solely the responsibility of the federal government.

Following the establishment of the Mayor's Seattle Resilience Task Force, in December 2025, the Resilience Task Force reviewed the directive language and shared it with our accountability partners (the Community Police Commission, the Office of Police Accountability, and the Office of Inspector General).

SPD received feedback specifically on clarifying the department's [6.020 – Interaction with Foreign Nationals](#) policy through an SPD Directive. Directives are occasionally sent to address an immediate issue in law or in City policy. For instance, in 2020, a directive was issued requiring officers to turn on body-worn video in response to [Mayor Durkan's Executive Order \[2020-07\]](#). Policies and directives both carry the same disciplinary penalties for non-compliance.

### **Incorporation of EO 2025-08 Practices/ Procedures/ Policies into SPD Policy Manual**

In the event of a decision by the federal government to unilaterally deploy the National Guard or other federal agents or resources into the City of Seattle, SPD will continue to serve and protect Seattle's communities under the command of the Chief of Police, which is aligned with the Department directive and all local and state laws.

As mentioned above, it was important for the department to get the Directive out quickly to clarify SPD officers' interactions with Federal law enforcement. The directive language was shared with the Resilience Task Force team and the mayor's office in December 2025. The final Directive was formalized and transmitted to the department in January 2026.

The specific policy manual update to 6.020 is currently still in the review process with our different stakeholders and is expected to be finalized in the coming months. The department is still working through the updated language revision and review process. It is difficult to set a timeline, as each and every policy

update undergoes a very stringent process that includes reviews and consultations with our impacted labor partners, the command of chain, and our oversight committees (Office of Police Accountability, Community Police Commission, Office of the Inspector General for Public Safety).

### **Officer/Supervisor Access to SPD Policies on Interactions with ICE Officers**

SPD policies are posted to a searchable internal system (PowerDMS) which is accessible by all department employees. SPD policies are also accessible to the public. Any changes to the Policy Manual are communicated via department-wide emails, and employees are required to review and acknowledge each updated policy in PowerDMS. Links to the PowerDMS site are prominently displayed on the SPD InWeb as well as the Mobile Data Terminal home screen to allow for quick access both in the office and out in the field.

There aren't typically formalized "trainings" on directives, since they are generally very clear orders. However, updates are discussed during roll call briefings and provided by the sergeant, lieutenant, or watch commander during shifts. This enables engagement and conversation, ensuring that officers understand what the City of Seattle requires of them.

Finally, this Directive is built upon long-standing policy and training that officers receive around documentation, In-car and Body-worn Video, Duty to Intervene, and more.

### **Shared Legal Strategy Between the Executive and CAO**

The Mayor's Office, SPD, and the City Attorney's Office are actively discussing legal and tactical strategy around potential future interactions that might give rise to litigation by the City against federal officials or agencies. These conversations are active and remain privileged at this time.