

NEWS

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For Immediate Release

San Mateo County Sheriff No Longer Responding to ICE Inmate Transfer Requests

Board of Supervisors Laud Decision Following Truth Act Forum

Redwood City —San Mateo County Sheriff Carlos Bolanos announced today that, effective immediately, his office will no longer respond to any requests from U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) for notification of an inmate's release or transfer any inmate to its custody.

Bolanos said this decision helps fulfill his office's mission to protect the safety of all San Mateo County residents, and it relies on county residents' trust and willingness to cooperate with law enforcement, report crimes and testify in court.

On Wednesday, Nov. 3, Bolanos and the Board of Supervisors heard from residents at the annual TRUTH Act Forum, a special meeting required when local law enforcement has given ICE access.

"It has become apparent to me that complying with those requests regarding the pending release of undocumented individuals who have committed serious crimes is undermining the trust we need to protect the community. It simply is not worth losing the trust of many members of the public by continuing to process these requests from ICE. Our policy is now consistent with other Bay Area counties. This change is being made after we heard from hundreds of residents who shared their perspective on how we will all be safer when the entire community understands the Sheriff's Office is here to protect the public, not enforce immigration laws," Bolanos said.

Last year, the Sheriff's Office coordinated 15 transfers to ICE from the county jail. Most individuals convicted of serious felonies serve their sentences in state prison, not county jail. If ICE believes an individual poses a serious threat, it can always obtain a judicial warrant, which all law enforcement agencies in the Bay Area must honor.

“This is a momentous and compassionate decision by our sheriff to end cooperation with ICE. He listened to the community and values all our residents regardless of immigration status. This is a policy change that will keep families whole and I applaud Sheriff Bolanos for taking this action,” said Board President David J. Canepa.

Supervisors Don Horsley and Carole Groom expressed similar sentiments.

“This decision is consistent with the sheriff’s personal values and deep-rooted commitment to serve and protect all San Mateo County residents, regardless of immigration status. These values are reflected in his office’s long-standing history of support and engagement with immigrant communities,” Horsley said.

“We thank the Sheriff for working collaboratively with the Board of Supervisors and his quick implementation of this important change, which we support and believe is in the best interest of the county as a whole,” Groom said. We thank the sheriff for listening to the public and taking their comments very seriously and adopting a new policy.”

Bolanos reiterated that he remains committed to public safety.

“I will continually evaluate any effects caused by this change in policy and, if necessary, consider adjustments,” Bolanos said.

Horsley and Groom will continue supporting and working with the sheriff if future policy adjustments become necessary.

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