



DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

LAW ENFORCEMENT AWARENESS GUIDE FOR INTERACTIONS WITH CIVIL IMMIGRATION AUTHORITIES

[Sanctuary Promise Act \(ORS 180.805-810; 181A.820-828\)](#)

Oregon's Sanctuary Promise Act prohibits the use of local, county and state resources to enforce federal civil immigration law. This prohibition includes sharing information about an individual's immigration or citizenship status or country of birth whose purpose is the apprehension or identification of an individual in order to:

- (a) Subject the individual to civil immigration arrest, civil immigration detention, removal or deportation proceedings or removal or deportation from the United States; or
- (b) Criminally prosecute the individual for offenses related to federal laws regarding immigration status.

[Interaction with Immigration Authorities](#)

The sanctuary laws do not prohibit enforcement of Oregon criminal laws or responding to emergencies where federal immigration authorities are merely present or who are concurrently operating in the same space. Public bodies and law enforcement agencies do not have to "root out" every motive of immigration authorities when there is an arguable dual purpose to the use of the information or agency money, equipment or personnel. Law enforcement can take an immigration authority or other federal agency at their word that it is *not* for an immigration enforcement purpose, but if it becomes obvious that the purpose is or becomes for an immigration purpose, then the prohibition applies.

For example, a local peace officer stopping a car at the behest of civil immigration authorities who want to question its occupants would generally be prohibited; clearing a public roadway that both immigration authorities and members of the general public use would be permissible, as the purpose of that action is to make a street navigable. The fact that federal civil immigration authorities happen to benefit from that action, does not violate Oregon law.

In situations where there is a significant community safety threat or risk of serious physical injury (e.g. shots fired or an explosive device is suspected), the duty to protect life is paramount. Coordination in such situations would be justified, as the purpose is not to enforce immigration law, but instead, to protect the public's safety. Likewise, deconfliction and exchange of safety information is permissible as long as it is not done for an immigration related purpose.

[Non-Assistance v. Hinderance](#)

While Oregon peace officers cannot be compelled to assist immigration authorities, they can neither interfere nor obstruct their operations either (18 U.S.C. Chapter 73). Lying to federal agents is a crime (18 U.S.C. §1001). It is also violation of federal law to harbor, shield or hide someone from a federal agent (8 U.S.C. §1324). Be mindful of the different roles people may be performing in the same space. Remember that the role of local, county and state law enforcement is to fairly enforce Oregon laws

Takeaway

Local law enforcement should operate independently of federal immigration enforcement actions, but one should not let the presence of immigration officials stop or hinder the enforcement of state laws, or federal laws not related to the enforcement of federal immigration laws, that would normally be executed.

Disclaimer

Some local jurisdictions may have laws that are more stringent than what the State of Oregon laws entail. Legal advice should always be obtained by local counsel (city attorneys and county counsel). This guide is informational only—not legal advice—and reflects Oregon and federal law as of 2025.