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Attorney General Brown Issues New Immigration Enforcement Guidance for Law Enforcement

BALTIMORE, MD (January 27, 2025) – Attorney General Anthony G. Brown today released [guidance](#) for state and local law enforcement, outlining their role in federal immigration enforcement. Today’s guidance updates 2017 guidance to address changes in Maryland law. The guidance is designed to help law enforcement agencies comply with federal and state laws while protecting individual constitutional rights and maintaining community trust.

While this guidance is for law enforcement use, Attorney General Brown wants Marylanders to have access to the document for informational purposes, in the interest of transparency and his commitment to upholding the rule of law.

The guidance applies to all state, county, and local law enforcement agencies and was shared with those agencies earlier today.

“Maryland law ensures police handle immigration enforcement in a way that builds trust with immigrant communities, helping them feel safe to report and prevent crime. The federal government cannot compel state and local law enforcement to enforce immigration laws,” **said Attorney General Brown**. “This guidance ensures that law enforcement agencies understand the scope and limitations of their authority and makes clear that the rule of law does not change depending on the federal government’s priorities.”

Key provisions of the guidance include, but are not limited to, the following. Law enforcement officers:

- Cannot inquire about immigration status during routine police work unless relevant to a criminal investigation;
- Must not extend detentions to investigate immigration status;
- May share citizenship/immigration status with federal officials but are not required to do so;
- Cannot share personal information (names, addresses) with federal immigration authorities without a judicial warrant;
- Risk civil liability if they hold individuals on immigration detainees without probable cause; and

- Are prohibited from contracting with private immigration detention facilities.

The guidance emphasizes that effective law enforcement requires community trust, particularly from immigrant populations. It notes that federal law cannot compel state and local officials to enforce immigration laws, and Maryland law specifically limits such enforcement activities.

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<https://www.marylandattorneygeneral.gov/press/2025/012725a.pdf>