



For Immediate Release

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## **ICE Posing as NYPD in Recent Weeks is Continuation of Long History of Deceptive Tactics, IDP Says**

**NEW YORK-** As reports have come out of Immigration and Custom Enforcement (ICE) agents pretending to be New York City police officers in recent weeks, alarms have been raised about whether this represents a new tactic for ICE. In fact, this is a very common ICE practice that has long been a disturbing trend nationally as well as in NYC.

The Immigrant Defense Project (IDP) has been tracking ICE policing and arrests in the New York-area for the past seven years and has [verified over 1500 raids](#). In the last three-and-a-half years, IDP has seen an uptick in the reports of ICE officers pretending to be NYPD. IDP has verified reports of ICE officers pretending to be NYPD in a myriad of ways including identifying themselves as police from “warrant” or “narcotics” squad—real NYPD units—by stating that they are police from a particular precinct, which often is the neighborhood NYPD precinct, or by pretending to be police investigating a fake crime or fake suspect. In some reports, ICE officers have told community members to call the police or their local precinct with any questions.

ICE is required to have consent by an authorized individual in order to be let into a home without a judicial warrant. ICE officers are trained to mislead individuals to get into homes or to gather information about the person they are looking for by using ruses such as pretending to be police, as revealed in documents—[internal guidances, memos, and trainings](#)—received through

our [Immigrant Defense Project, et al. v. ICE, et al.](#) litigation. There are few prohibitions on the types of ruses that ICE officers are allowed to use.

Because of the prevalence of the ICE ruse of pretending to be police, IDP has developed a suite of Know Your Rights materials on this [very issue](#), including a [flyer](#), set of [infographics](#), and [primer on ICE ruses](#).

For years, given the growing number of reports, IDP has repeatedly raised concerns with NY City officials and the NYPD about the dangers of ICE's misleading practice of pretending to be police. During a City Council Hearing around ICE policing and raids from February 2020, IDP [testified](#) on this very issue, asking the NYPD to both clarify their policy on ICE pretending to be NYPD and to speak out publicly against this tactic. To date, there has been no public statement or response from NYPD as to their position on ICE officers impersonating them. NYPD's silence on this issue has a real impact on communities—ICE's ongoing use of the police ruse has created confusion and fear. Community members and advocates are unclear the extent to which NYPD collaborates with ICE.

This confusion has begun to extend further than mistrust of NYPD: just yesterday there were multiple social media reports of ICE pretending to be a U.S. Postal Service worker making an arrest in Brooklyn, when it was later confirmed to be part of an NYPD joint task force arrest with the U.S. Postal Inspectors. This type of misinformation is very much related to the common practice of ICE pretending to be police, and exacerbates panic and fear in communities.

ICE practices during the global pandemic clearly illustrates that the agency does not value human life. As New York was implementing measures to contain the virus in March, ICE was conducting raids in areas that were already designated as high risk zones. As COVID spread through ICE detention facilities, ICE responded by deporting people with COVID, effectively facilitating the global spread of the pandemic. Hundreds of thousands of New Yorkers have been impacted by COVID-19 through illness, loss of loved ones, and job loss, with over 222,000 reported deaths from COVID-19 in the U.S, almost 24,000 deaths attributed to COVID-19 in New York City alone.

All the while, the President and his administration have continued to routinely demonize and vilify immigrants as they expand an extremely punitive system that governs by fear and hate. The latest announcement from the Trump administration in their intent to conduct massive, ongoing raids in cities that have pro-immigrant policies leading up to the presidential election further shows the ICE raids are a weapon wielded for no other reason than to reinforce it's political agenda.

IDP focuses on sharing out ICE policing and arrest tactics because often it is not enough simply to know your rights. As we have seen time and time again, ICE officers routinely rely on chaos and confusion through early morning arrests and deceptive tactics, using them to trick individuals into letting them into their homes or to share information on where their loved one is without ever identifying that they are ICE officers. IDP has created ruse-specific [resources](#) laying out the ways in which we have seen ICE's police ruse vary, both in person and over the phone.

The Immigrant Defense Project's lawsuit, [Immigrant Defense Project, et al. v. ICE, et al.](#), has made internal ICE training documents and memos, including those on ruses, [publicly available](#). From the results of this Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) lawsuit, IDP produced the *Defend Against ICE Raids and Community Arrests* Toolkit, available in [English](#) and [Spanish](#).

Related IDP materials:

- [ICEwatch raids map](#) (updated October 2020)
- [IDP Know Your Rights materials](#) (available in multiple languages), includes KYR flyers, posters, infographics, as well as resources focused on ICE ruse tactics.
- [IDP Know Your Rights App](#) (in English and Spanish)
- [Defend Against ICE Raids and Community Arrests](#) Toolkit (updated March 2020, available in Spanish and English)

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*The Immigrant Defense Project (IDP) is a New York-based nonprofit that works to secure fairness and justice for immigrants in the racially-biased U.S. criminal and immigration systems.*

*IDP fights to end the current era of unprecedented mass criminalization, detention, and deportation through a multi-pronged strategy including advocacy, litigation, legal support, community partnerships, and strategic communications. Visit [www.immigrantdefenseproject.org](http://www.immigrantdefenseproject.org) and follow [@ImmDefense](https://twitter.com/ImmDefense).*