

ICE OUT!

COMMUNITY EXPLAINER

THE SAFER SANCTUARY ACT IS NOW LAW IN NEW YORK CITY!

What is the Safer Sanctuary Act?

The Safer Sanctuary Act ([Intro 1412](#), Council Member Cabán) is a new city law that keeps federal agents seeking to target our immigrant neighbors from having an office on Rikers Island or any Department of Correction property. It also updates the definitions of immigration enforcement and immigration authorities in our laws to reflect how the federal government weaponizes different arms of government to target people for deportation.

How does the law do this?

First, by **updating the definition of “immigration enforcement” and “immigration authorities”** so that city employees are restricted from participating in or colluding with federal agencies in any of the following:

- Enforcement of *any civil provisions* of the Immigration and Nationality Act that penalizes people for being found in, having failed to depart from, entry into or reentry into the United States; and
- Enforcement of any provision of federal law that penalizes conduct related to the registration, travel document or supervision requirements contained in the Immigration and Nationality Act; and
- Enforcement of any provision of federal law which the mayor has determined is being used by federal immigration authorities as a proxy for civil immigration enforcement

Second, by **prohibiting federal immigration authorities from maintaining an office on Department of Correction land for any reason**. This replaces more ambiguous language that seemingly allowed the mayor to issue an executive order to undermine our laws.

What problem does it solve?

Prior to 2014, the Department of Corrections was funneling immigrant New Yorkers on Rikers Island to ICE detention. In 2014 after a great deal of advocacy, the city council passed legislation that limited when DOC could collude with ICE and banned ICE from having an office on Rikers Island. In 2025, Mayor Adams through [Executive Order 50](#) sought to collude with the federal administration’s mass deportation agenda, seeking to return ICE once again to hold an office on Rikers Island. Thanks to the quick action of advocates and the City Council, an [order from the New York Supreme Court](#) struck down the executive order.

Moreover, since our sanctuary laws were last updated in 2018, immigration enforcement has changed. The Trump administration has sought to [use federal agencies that traditionally focused on criminal law enforcement](#) or other unrelated matters to carry out its deportation agenda. Thus, instances of local-federal coordination that are purportedly not related to immigration may in fact be aiding immigration enforcement. This reality requires that our laws properly identify and define immigration authorities and immigration enforcement.

Does this mean that the Department of Corrections will not share information about New Yorkers in their custody with ICE?

Immigrant New Yorkers and their attorneys have documented how [DOC has colluded with ICE](#) by responding to requests for notification from ICE even absent a judicial warrant – or where they have unlawfully slowed down or otherwise delayed release of a New Yorker in order to facilitate their transfer to ICE. We therefore must pass additional Council bills to ensure this no longer happens and create an accountability mechanism if it does.

When did the Safer Sanctuary Act become law?

On January 29, 2026, the City Council overrode a prior veto and the bill went into effect immediately.

*The **ICE Out! NYC** Coalition aims to stop the police-to-deportation pipeline in NYC and restrict the City from colluding with ICE to harm our immigrant neighbors. Steering Committee Members and those involved in this fact sheet include the Immigrant Defense Project, Bronx Defenders, Families for Freedom, the New York Civil Liberties Union, the New York Immigration Coalition, Make the Road NY, Asian American Federation, New York Lawyers for the Public Interest, Neighborhood Defender Service and the Legal Aid Society.*