

## **Board Ordinance**

On April 7, 2026, the Board passed a Resolution of intent to adopt an Ordinance to uphold the Civil Rights, Dignity, Health and Safety of Our Immigrant Population and all Sonoma County Residents. Per Board direction and following public noticing requirements, this draft Ordinance will be brought back to the Board for final adoption on April 28, 2026.

The goal of this Ordinance is to confirm the County's support for the civil rights and safety of all residents, including immigrant residents, and to memorialize the steps taken by the County in support of this commitment and to operationalize the direction that the Board provided on January 20, 2025, via the Resolution discussed above.

Once formally adopted, the Ordinance will be made available here. In the meantime, you can find details about the April 7, 2026 Board item [here](#).

Below are some FAQs regarding this new Ordinance.

### **Is Sonoma County a Sanctuary County?**

No. While we deeply value and prioritize the safety and well-being of our local immigrant communities, it is important to be honest about the limits of the Board of Supervisors' authority. Even if the County were labeled a "Sanctuary Jurisdiction," that designation would not prevent federal immigration enforcement from operating locally. By sharing factual information, grounded in legal constraints, we hope that community members understand the realities at hand and have the agency to make informed decisions for themselves and their families.

### **Why adopt an ordinance to Uphold the Civil Rights, Dignity, Health and Safety of Our Immigration Population?**

Sonoma County has adopted an ordinance to demonstrate our support for immigrant communities, while remaining aligned with state and federal law. This approach acknowledges that other elected officials – the Sonoma County Sheriff, District Attorney, Auditor-Controller-Treasurer-Tax Collector, and Clerk-Recorder-Assessor – retain their independent and constitutionally and statutorily designated functions. At the same time, the ordinance clearly articulates our support for immigrant communities and our commitment to operate within our authority to ensure sustainable and realistic protections.

### **What does this ordinance do?**

On Jan. 10, 2025, the Board of Supervisors adopted a resolution affirming the County's commitment to the civil rights and health and safety of all residents, with a focus on our immigrant population. The resolution also provided clear direction to County staff under the Board's policy direction to not cooperate with ICE to the maximum extent of the law.

This new ordinance creates a single, clear reference point for staff and the public. This ordinance provides the specifics on how that direction is to be operationalized and implemented, in a single, easy to reference location, and to memorialize what has already taken place under the Board's initial January 2025 direction.

Among other key items, the ordinance reinforces that County resources, including staff and technology, cannot be used to support immigration enforcement activities, unless legally required. This includes prohibiting the use of County facilities and properties for immigration enforcement activities, such as staging. It dictates that the County will protect all clients' sensitive private information, including immigration status, and may only release such information when required by law.

In addition, the ordinance tracks the steps the County has already taken in support of immigrant communities, including clearly defining public versus nonpublic areas, providing staff training on how to respond to federal agents while conducting County business, and the creation of the [Support for Immigrant Communities](#) website.

### **Why can't the BOS direct the Sheriff?**

Sheriffs are elected and independent in California. Although the Board supervises the official conduct of all county officers, California Govt Code 25303 states this shall not be construed to affect the independent and constitutionally and statutorily designated investigative and prosecutorial functions of the sheriff.

### **What is the Sonoma County Sheriff's stance on cooperating with federal immigration enforcement agents?**

The Sonoma County Sheriff's Office has clearly stated its policy on cooperation with immigration officials, <https://www.sonomasheriff.org/immigration>

The Sheriff's Office does not:

- Participate in immigration enforcement
- Honor ICE holds or detainers
- Proactively contact ICE
- Allow ICE in the jail, except to make an arrest.

FAQs regarding the Sheriff's law enforcement and immigration enforcement can also be found on the [Support for Immigrant Communities](#) website.

**What else is the County doing in support of immigrant communities?**

While we recognize the legal limits of the Board's authority, the County is committing \$1.5 million in funding to provide direct support to those most affected by the current immigration climate. We are developing a process to distribute these funds, which will be finalized in the coming months.

Additional resources available to immigrants and all residents can be found on the [Support for Immigrant Communities](#) website.