

Eric D. Batista
City Manager



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: 2/4/2026

MEDIA CONTACT: Tom Matthews, MatthewsT@worcesterma.gov

City of Worcester Amends ICE Executive Order Policy, Prohibits Use of Municipal Property for Staging Operations

WORCESTER, Mass. – In light of national and statewide concerns around United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) activity, the City of Worcester is reaffirming its position and amending its policy related to ICE’s civil immigration operations in the city.

“The City of Worcester is watching the horrific events play out across the country as ICE continues to wreak havoc on communities with no regard for humanity, and I want to reaffirm the policy in place for how our municipality is to interact with federal agents,” said City Manager Eric D. Batista. “Today, with a heightened distress throughout the nation as federal enforcement of immigrations laws is increasing in an unchecked manner, we are building upon our policy with new amendments that further protect our residents – including the prohibition of municipal property being used by ICE agents to stage and prep civil immigration operations. No municipal resources will be used toward federal civil immigration enforcement. The tactics and operations that are being used for civil immigration enforcement right now undermine our ability to work with community. The City of Worcester celebrates and welcomes all of its residents, including our vibrant immigration population, and will stand united to ensure we remain a welcoming and inclusive city for all.”

“Worcester is stronger when we are united together,” said Mayor Joseph M. Petty. “We will not turn our backs on our residents while the federal government terrorizes and harms its people across the country. Our municipal government and the Worcester Police Department work together to protect and preserve peace in our community. This amended policy strengthens Worcester’s commitment to maintain that peace. Thank you to all the community partners and residents who continue to show up and support one another daily. United, Worcester can lead by example and show the country how to care for your neighbor.”

Office of City Manager Eric D. Batista

City Hall, 455 Main Street, Worcester, MA 01608

P | 508-799-1175 F | 508-799-1208 | citymanager@worcesterma.gov | www.worcesterma.gov

“The Worcester Police Department is focused on building credibility and trust within our community,” said Police Chief Paul B. Saucier. “You know and recognize our officers when you see them on foot beats, attending community events, and as members living in our community. We will continue to hold our officers to the highest standard and they will continue to uphold peace in our community in the utmost professional manner.”

On Friday, May 16, 2025, City Manager Eric D. Batista issued an Executive Order concerning the municipality’s response and interaction with federal immigration agencies. This Executive Order established guidelines for local response and involvement in federal enforcement of immigration laws and operations including investigations and civil detainments performed by ICE officers. Enforcement of immigration laws is within the jurisdiction of the federal government and as such, the Executive Order prohibits municipal resources from being used toward that end.

This Executive Order and its ensuing policy were issued to assure Worcester residents that the municipality and the Worcester Police Department (WPD) are committed to promoting safety in the community regardless of immigration status. WPD is trained in de-escalation and is committed to bias-free policing and will use those protocols to protect residents and ensure public safety.

The City of Worcester’s policy on municipal interactions with ICE:

- Municipal employees and WPD officers shall not inquire about immigration status nor shall immigration status impact the treatment of a resident, victim, suspect, arrestee, 911 caller, or another member of the public with whom a municipal employee has contact.
- WPD shall not initiate investigations or take law enforcement action solely on the basis of immigration status, including without limitation, the initiation of a stop, an apprehension, or arrest. No person will be arrested or held by the WPD solely on the basis of a federal civil immigration detainer, including extending the length of detention by any amount of time once an individual is released from local custody, or before being transferred to court or admitted to bail.
- WPD will not assist any agency for matters solely based on civil federal immigration enforcement.
- Municipal employees will not allow ICE agents access to records, information, or non-public areas of municipal buildings for the enforcement of federal civil immigration laws.
- Employees must report ICE agents at any municipal building.

As of Feb. 4, 2026, the municipality is amending its policy to include the following:

Office of City Manager Eric D. Batista

City Hall, 455 Main Street, Worcester, MA 01608

P | 508-799-1175 F | 508-799-1208 | citymanager@worcesterma.gov | www.worcesterma.gov

- The municipality prohibits use of its property, including open space, parking lots, garages, parks, or buildings, including the interior or exterior areas of any parcel upon which a building is located, for staging and prepping of federal civil immigration enforcement actions. Prohibited uses include but are not limited to assembling, mobilizing, or deploying vehicles, equipment, materials, or personnel for the purpose of carrying out federal civil immigration enforcement operations.
- The municipality shall not enter into any 287(g) agreements.
- When responding to calls related to ICE activity, the WPD shall take reasonable steps to verify that the individuals on scene are federal agents and gather relevant information.
- Any footage captured on WPD body-worn cameras of federal agents engaged in a civil immigration enforcement shall be made publicly available.

Link to Executive Order:

<https://opendata.worcesterma.gov/documents/e1a0a11540cd4fd0951e7e4e22369198/about>

Link to Policy:

<https://opendata.worcesterma.gov/documents/cbcb4ce2f596486e8c544cob39fbb20d/about>

###

Office of City Manager Eric D. Batista

City Hall, 455 Main Street, Worcester, MA 01608

P | 508-799-1175 **F** | 508-799-1208 | citymanager@worcesterma.gov | www.worcesterma.gov