

NEWS & COMMENTARY

ICE is Rapidly Expanding Dangerous 287(g) Agreements with Local Police

A new ACLU report, “Deputized for Disaster,” illustrates the dangers of the Trump administration’s rapid expansion of the 287(g) program — and how communities are increasingly afraid of local law enforcement officers sworn to protect them.



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February 26, 2026

Masked, lawless federal agents have become a symbol of the Trump administration’s violent drive to deport millions of people. But across the country, thousands of state and local police are increasingly mimicking these abusive federal agents, blending into their operations and intensifying fear in their own communities.

At least 77.2 million people — 32 percent of the country — now live in a county with a local law enforcement agency that has enlisted in the 287(g) program. The program is a set of partnerships between U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and state and local agencies that effectively turns local police into ICE agents. Under Trump, the number of 287(g)-participating agencies has expanded rapidly. In September 2025, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) said it had trained, or was in the process of training, more than [10,000 officers](#) under the program’s abuse-prone, street-level enforcement model. This is all while ICE has drastically reduced training requirements for officers overall and inadequately expanded its capacity to supervise them.

The ACLU’s new report, "[Deputized for Disaster](#)," examines the 287(g) program and how the second Trump administration has used it to draw state and local police away from the needs of communities, and into a national deportation force that acts as though it answers only to the president. Here are the key takeaways from our report.

The 287(g) program draws state and local police away from the needs of communities

Prior [research](#) by the ACLU documented how the 287(g) program has fueled racial profiling, civil rights violations, and violence throughout its history. It has opened up law enforcement agencies to the risk of lawsuits that have cost [millions](#). Under the second Trump administration, the 287(g) program is only growing more dangerous each day. "Deputized for Disaster" shows how the Trump administration has used the 287(g) program to supersize its deportation force. We found that the administration is using state and local police to conduct “show me your papers” dragnet-style

enforcement, with the goals of more deportations and driving millions more to self-deport.

Countless vulnerable people have been caught in this dragnet. In Florida, local police pulled over a 22-year-old cancer patient and assisted Border Patrol in arresting her [father](#), who was driving her home from the hospital. Florida police have also reportedly invited Border Patrol to run immigration checks on [concert-goers](#), and set up immigration checkpoints on the only highway into the [Florida Keys](#), a major tourist destination, leading to more than 300 immigration arrests.



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As the administration concentrates executive power into its deportation force, it blurs the lines between federal and state and local law enforcement. This is a recipe for further civil rights violations: as local police follow the cues of federal agents, abusive tactics spread, and responsibility becomes unclear. For example, an estimated 200 law enforcement agents from federal, state, and local agencies descended on a [racetrack](#) in Idaho where families had gathered, arresting more than 100 people and zip-tying children and adults, including U.S. citizens. In the aftermath, local police denied their involvement, and those detained and separated from their children found it difficult to pinpoint exactly who was responsible.

The 287(g) program also causes officers to neglect critical public safety needs, as they redeploy their already-limited time and resources to federal immigration enforcement. And it changes the way communities live — people avoid going to work, taking children

to school, and interacting with police or the government entirely, even when they are the [victims](#) of crimes [including domestic violence, sexual assault, and human trafficking](#).

The Trump administration is concentrating its power through 287(g) agreements with more than just law enforcement

While the 287(g) program has already resulted in abuse, the administration has set in motion dangerous plans. These include the use of 287(g) agreements on [university campuses](#), which has caused some students to leave college, and the use of state National Guard for immigration enforcement. This undermines public trust in the National Guard's response to legitimate emergencies, threatens the crucial separation of military and civilian roles integral for democracy, and puts troops in legal and ethical jeopardy.

Increasingly, ICE is enlisting partners from new agencies, diverting them from their core missions and creating even greater fear among communities. The [Louisiana State Fire Marshal](#), charged with preventing and investigating fires, has joined the program, along with agencies like Louisiana Wildlife & Fisheries and the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, which regulate the environment and agriculture.

This is all part of the Trump administration's plan to concentrate government power — federal, state, and local — to fuel his deportation machine. He is sowing distrust between communities and law enforcement, threatening public safety, and driving people into hiding.

Local police should serve their communities; states and cities must say no to the 287(g) program

People should be safe to live in their communities — without fear of local police sworn to protect them, now operating as immigration agents. In 2026 and the waning months of 2025, [New Mexico](#), [Maine](#) and [Maryland](#) all enacted legislation to ban 287(g) agreements, joining six other states who have long prohibited participation in the program.

Where banning 287(g) is not possible, states and cities must limit their officers' involvement, consider the risks of participating, and strengthen oversight of the program. State and local law enforcement should not be complicit in widespread, flagrant abuse. Instead, they should stand up for their communities and refuse to take part in the Trump administration's growing deportation machine.

[Read the full report.](#)

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