

Protect Justice and Public Safety for All. End Local Partnerships with ICE in Maryland.

Immigrants are being detained, disappeared, and torn from their loved ones — part of a growing authoritarian campaign to erode rights and silence dissent. Every day in Maryland, at least ten immigrant families are violently separated, leaving thousands of children without a parent and shredding the social fabric of our communities.

President Trump's deportation dragnet is sweeping up all immigrants, regardless of criminal record. Between September 1st and October 15th of 2025, two-thirds of those arrested by ICE in Maryland had never been charged with a crime.¹ Since Congress tripled the agency's entire budget last year, ICE's harm is expected to increase significantly.

Maryland must stop conscripting its law enforcement to aid in Trump's mass deportations.

HOW DOES 287(g) WORK IN MARYLAND?

Eight Maryland counties have a 287(g) agreement, up from just three before Trump took office. There are three models of 287(g): Jail Enforcement (JEM), Warrant Service Officer (WSO) and the Taskforce Model (TFM). In Maryland, only the jail-based versions, JEM and WSO, exist. The most aggressive model, the street-based TFM, allows local law enforcement to act like ICE agents in everyday policing. It was essentially outlawed by Maryland's 2021 Dignity Not Detention Act, but Frederick's Sheriff Jenkins who entered into a 287(g) agreement in 2008 says TFM is "not off the table." 287(g) embeds federal immigration enforcement into local policing, eroding public trust, diverting resources, and fueling racial profiling. Maryland's 287(g) programs, which operate in local jails, ensure that anyone who is arrested for any reason can be funneled to ICE on charges alone. Jail-based 287(g) utilizes three unique tools:

- 1) Screening immigration status at booking – access to ICE database, to identify those not already on ICE’s radar;
- 2) Conducting interrogations and jumpstarting processing of immigration case;
- 3) Holding those suspected of unlawful status for 48 hours after their release from jail, to give ICE time to take custody. (The Attorney General of Maryland warned of potential legal liability for holding people beyond their release).

¹ Conarck, Ben, et al. "Immigrant Arrests in Maryland Hit New High. Most Have No Criminal Record." The Baltimore Banner, 17 Dec. 2025, www.thebanner.com/politics-power/national-politics/immigration-enforcement-maryland-numbers-ice-arrests-criminal-MKPP12LGXJD3RHC2FNNR2AE/.

WHAT IS 287(g)?

287(g) is a voluntary agreement between ICE and localities to deputize local law enforcement (LEA) to act as ICE agents after minimal training. These officers enforce federal immigration laws within their jurisdiction. As opposed to other forms of local cooperation with ICE, 287(g) turns local jails and police into extensions of ICE -- all at local taxpayers' expense. Its' sole purpose is to make it easier to arrest more people who are immigrants. Added to the Immigration and Nationality Act in 1996 under the "tough on crime" agenda, 287(g) was designed to harm Black and Brown communities.



JAIL-BASED 287(g) TARGETS THE INNOCENT & LOW-LEVEL OFFENDERS

287(g) is designed to help ICE arrest people upon release from local jails. Most people released from local jails have been found not guilty, had charges dismissed, or served short sentences for minor offenses—yet under 287(g), they're treated as criminals and handed to ICE before their day in court. Nationally, in 2024 more than three-quarters of people deported through 287(g) had no criminal convictions.² In Maryland, from 2016 to 2023, 92% of the 287(g) detainees were for people with no criminal conviction or only the least serious "level 3" conviction.³ In Frederick County from 2008-2025, 80% of the 2,069 total 287(g) detainees were lodged on individuals with a misdemeanor charge.⁴

287(g) MAKES US LESS SAFE AT LOCAL TAXPAYERS EXPENSE

According to Mike Hilliard, retired major of the Baltimore Police Department, "When trust erodes, crimes go unreported, victims stay silent, and dangerous offenders remain on the streets."⁵ Additionally, a CATO Institute Study concludes that 287(g) is "not an effective anti-crime tool."⁶ Data bears this out. Montgomery County, which does not have 287(g) and is Maryland's most diverse county, saw a 7% drop in overall crime in 2024. Frederick, which has the country's longest continuous 287(g), saw only a 4% drop. Two other 287(g) counties, Cecil and Harford, saw no drop in crime at all.⁷ Additionally, 287(g) contracts in Maryland's predominately white and less populated counties free up ICE to target more Black and Brown urban areas, increasing ICE violence there.

Additionally, ICE doesn't pay for 287(g) enforcement in Maryland – counties cover all staffing costs amid ongoing shortages. In November, the Wicomico County Executive, otherwise a proponent of Trump's immigration policies, withdrew her proposal to enter 287(g) in part due to a shortage of 30 Corrections Officers in the County jail. And many 287(g) jurisdictions, including Frederick, have settled costly lawsuits over unlawful holds and due process violations.

LAWMAKERS MUST ACT NOW TO PROTECT IMMIGRANT FAMILIES & PUBLIC SAFETY

All Marylanders, regardless of immigration status, are entitled to equal protection under the law and deserve to be treated with human dignity. In the face of unprecedented attacks, immigrants are doing everything they can to protect their families and to advocate for their communities. Maryland has the power to stop enabling Trump's cruel mass deportations and be a firewall against authoritarianism. This moment calls for us to be brave. Maryland must join Delaware and the other half dozen states who have ended local ICE partnerships to protect justice and public safety for all Marylanders.

² Transactional Records Access Clearinghouse's Immigration and Customs Enforcement Detainers Tool, available at https://tracreports.org/phptools/immigration/newdetain/about_data.html.

³ Id. These numbers were obtained by filtered by State: Maryland; Apprehension Method: 287(g) Program; and Seriousness Level of MSCC (Most Serious Criminal Conviction).

⁴ "Over 100 Residents Rally before Sheriff's Annual 287(g) Presentation, Call for End to Program." Wearecasa.Org. CASA, 18 June 2025, <https://wearecasa.org/over-100-residents-rally-before-sheriffs-annual-287g-presentation-call-for-end-to-program/>

⁵ HB 1222 – Public Safety – Immigration Enforcement (Maryland Values Act). Written Testimony of Mike Hilliard. House Judiciary Committee. 447th Maryland General Assembly Session. 28 Mar. 2025. https://mgaleg.maryland.gov/cmte_testimony/2025/jpr/1SF70tfaSCU0o2NzG4iZNwhzPEn5tWXEA.pdf

⁶ Nowrasteh, Alex. "287(g) Does Not Fight Crime, But It Does Increase Assaults against Police Officers." Cato.Org , CATO Institute, 11 Apr. 2018, www.cato.org/blog/287g-does-not-fight-crime-it-does-increase-assaults-against-police-officers.

⁷ National Incident-Based Reporting System data for 2024

