



CITY OF CAMBRIDGE

Executive Order Prohibiting the Use of City Property for Civil Immigration Enforcement Activities, and Affirming the City of Cambridge Welcoming Community Ordinance and its Commitments to Public Safety and Public Trust

WHEREAS, Cambridge is a city proud of its diversity, immigrant population, and its role as a welcoming community to people from around the world;

WHEREAS, the City Council designated Cambridge as a sanctuary city on April 8, 1985, and reaffirmed this designation in 2006, 2016 and as recently as 2024;

WHEREAS, On February 10, 2020, the City Council enacted its Welcoming Community Ordinance, and the Ordinance's stated purpose "is to establish the City of Cambridge as a Welcoming City, to declare that all are welcome here, and to increase public confidence in the City of Cambridge's government by establishing standards associated with the City's voluntary involvement in federal immigration enforcement";

WHEREAS, pursuant to the Welcoming Community Ordinance, the Cambridge Police Department shall not take part in or assist with federal immigration enforcement operations;

WHEREAS, the Cambridge Police Department has been recognized for its law enforcement accreditation by the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies, its procedural justice and its community policing. The Cambridge Police Department is further recognized for its work keeping the community safe, and earning the community's trust and respect;

WHEREAS, the United States Department of Homeland Security's federal civil immigration enforcement surge operations have caused significant harm to local governments and their residents, including impacts on public safety, local law enforcement, and communities;

WHEREAS, the United States Department of Homeland Security's Immigration and Custom's Enforcement ("ICE") is not following current law enforcement best practices, including, but not limited to, agents are not wearing identifiable uniforms, all agents are not wearing and using body-worn cameras, agents are wearing face coverings, and agents are not identifying themselves;

WHEREAS, the Department of Homeland Security's actions violated residents' constitutional rights, have violated the United States Constitution by unlawfully occupying cities, and have perpetrated chaos and egregious acts of violence;

WHEREAS, it is necessary for the City of Cambridge to take action to protect its residents and to affirm its values and commitments enshrined in the Welcoming Community Ordinance;

WHEREAS, pursuant to the authority in the Charter of the City of Cambridge as set forth in Chapter 27 of the Acts of 2025, the City Manager is the Chief Executive of the City and is responsible for the administration of all City activities and City Departments including the Cambridge Police Department, implementation of all ordinances including the Welcoming Community Ordinance, and use of all City property;

NOW THEREFORE, I, Yi-An Huang, Cambridge City Manager, hereby order as follows:

1. Restriction on the Use of City Property

A. City Property Shall Not be Used for Civil Immigration Enforcement

No City-owned or City-controlled property, including parking lots, garages, parks, open space, or buildings, including the interior or exterior areas of any parcel upon which a building is located, shall be used as a staging area, processing location, operations base, or other supporting location for federal civil immigration enforcement. 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. City-owned and City-controlled property is not available to the general public for similar activities; civil immigration enforcement operations are not an exception.

The City will identify all City-owned and City-controlled property that likely could be used for prohibited purposes described in this Section. The City will post signage on such City-owned or City-controlled property indicating that the property is owned and/or controlled by the City of Cambridge and may not be used for civil immigration enforcement purposes.

The City will make template signage available to private property owners and leaseholders who seek to restrict private spaces from being used for civil immigration enforcement purposes. Property owners and leaseholders assume any legal responsibility associated therewith.

B. Protecting Residents in City Buildings

Consistent with the Welcoming Community Ordinance (the “Ordinance”) and the City’s practices, the City shall not allow civil immigration enforcement officials into nonpublic spaces without a valid judicial warrant or court order. The City reaffirms its position that City buildings are available to provide specific services to members of the public and to conduct City operations and are to be accessed for those purposes only. In the event that City staff is approached by federal immigration agents, staff should refer to the City Procedures to Response to ICE in City Buildings.

2. Ensuring Public Safety

A. Cambridge Police Department Shall Ensure Public Safety On Scene

Pursuant to Ordinance Section 2.129.040(J), the Cambridge Police Department (“CPD”) shall not participate in federal civil immigration enforcement operations and shall ensure public safety. Community members who believe they observe ICE activity are encouraged to call 9-1-1 immediately; a prompt local police response is important assess the scene and ensure safety. CPD shall perform actions and services deemed necessary to ensure the safety of all on scene. Pursuant to the Ordinance and established CPD policies and practices, these actions and services shall include ensuring the safety of protestors and protecting individuals’ rights of assembly and free speech. CPD shall work with other City first responders, including the Cambridge Fire Department and Cambridge Community Safety Department, and shall summon emergency medical services when necessary.

B. CPD Intervention and Investigation of Criminal Conduct by Federal Officials

Consistent with Massachusetts Police Officer Standards and Training (POST) regulation 555 CMR 6.06 and CPD Policy No. 1-2, if any CPD officer observes any law enforcement official using or attempting to use physical force, including deadly force, beyond that which is necessary or objectively reasonable based on the totality of circumstances, the CPD officer shall intervene to prevent the observed official’s use of unnecessary or unreasonable force, regardless of the rank of the observed official or the agency for which the official works, unless intervening would result in imminent harm to the CPD officer or another identifiable individual.

Pursuant to state law and established CPD policies and practices, CPD shall investigate all allegations of violence, property damage, and criminal conduct, including by federal officials. Such investigations shall be independent of parallel federal investigations, if any; and CPD shall, whenever appropriate, work in collaboration with and make referrals to the Middlesex County District Attorney or the Massachusetts Attorney General.

C. CPD Response to Suspected Trespassing

The City will issue communications to residents, through all available channels, that, consistent with its statutory authority and longstanding practice, CPD shall respond promptly to calls for service reporting attempted intrusions onto private property by those with no legal right of entry; and that calling 9-1-1 is an appropriate response to any attempts by unidentifiable individuals, including those who claim to be federal officials but have not provided identification, to enter a private residence without a warrant.

If CPD is able to verify the individuals as federal civil immigration enforcement officials, CPD shall document the activity on scene, including any entry onto private property, forced or otherwise, and any detention of individuals, pursuant to Ordinance Section 2.129.040(K). CPD shall also employ de-escalation tactics in response in order to ensure safety of all those present.

3. Ensuring Public Trust

A. Documenting Federal Action and Release of Video Footage

As stated above, pursuant to the Ordinance Section 2.129.040(K), if CPD is dispatched to the scene of federal immigration enforcement action, CPD shall take reasonable steps to verify that the individuals on scene are federal agents conducting federal civil immigration enforcement. CPD shall document the activity on scene and document any identification information provided by federal officers or agents.

CPD shall work with the City Solicitor's Office to publicly release video footage of violence or property damage by federal officials captured by CPD body-worn cameras or other City-controlled surveillance cameras. Such release may be subject to a determination that the release of such information or footage will not prejudice the possibility of effective law enforcement and that such disclosure is in the public interest, pursuant to G.L. c.4, §7(26)(f).

B. Pursuit of Legal Remedies

The City Solicitor's Office shall pursue all available legal avenues to contest federal actions that violate the rights of residents or the City.

4. Scope

This Order reinforces and affirms the City's emphasis upon providing for the public safety of the City's residents and its workforce; nothing in this Order shall be interpreted to restrict or interfere with the lawful conduct of civil immigration enforcement, the enforcement of criminal law, nor as limiting the rights of any person or entity under state or federal law. Nothing in this Order shall be interpreted to instruct local law enforcement officials or other City employees to interfere or otherwise take any action that might aggravate an interaction involving federal officials and/or cause harm, nor shall it be interpreted to confer upon any local law enforcement officers or City employees the authority, obligation, or responsibility to enforce, interpret, supervise, assess compliance with, or prevent conduct governed by this Order.

This Order shall take effect immediately and remain in effect until further notice.

Dated: February 5, 2026

CITY MANAGER



Yi-An Huang