

# ICE arrests over 100 immigrants in New York in 11 days

Isaac Finn  
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US Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) officers arrested 114 undocumented immigrants in New York City and the surrounding counties as part of an 11-day police operation that ended Saturday, July 22.

The ICE operation—as well as a subsequent speech on Friday by US President Donald Trump on Long Island, near New York City—is an attempt to intimidate immigrant communities, particularly in sanctuary cities, where local police departments are subject to limited restrictions on aiding the deportation of undocumented immigrants. The New York City Council first passed legislation to limit cooperation with ICE in 2014.

As in previous raids around the country under the Trump administration ICE portrayed the arrest of the 114 immigrants as a crackdown against violent criminals.

In the news release announcing the arrests, Thomas Decker, field office director for ICE Enforcement and Removal Operations, stated, “Of those arrested during this operation, nine were released from New York custody with an active detainer, which poses an increased risk to the officers and the community. Regardless of politics, ICE will be diligent in its responsibility to find those who come to the United States to prey upon our communities and ultimately return them to their home countries.”

The criminal charges against the immigrants ranged widely from white-collar crimes such as fraud and forgery to violent crimes such as sexual assault and manslaughter. The most common crime was driving under the influence, of which, according to an ICE news release, 17 of the undocumented immigrants had been convicted.

Thirty-two of those detained in the roundup had no criminal record.

Eleven immigrants will face federal prosecution for re-

entry after deportation, and could face up to 20 years in prison.

The statement from ICE gives no indication regarding when many of the detainees committed these crimes, how long the detainees had lived in the US or which of the detainees had been released from custody. Previous ICE raids have picked up immigrants who have lived in the United States for decades using the pretext of crimes they committed while children.

Many of the immigrants now facing deportation emigrated from countries in Central America suffering from extreme gang violence, and one detainee is from Afghanistan, where the United States has been at war for more than 15 years. Immigrants targeted in the operation were of 35 different nationalities.

Anu Joshi, director of immigration policy at the New York Immigration Coalition, told the *Gothamist*: “From the beginning, this administration has purposefully attempted to make immigrant communities feel afraid. Sensationalizing [the recent] operation [in New York], or pushing a narrative about these communities, is just another way for them to do that.”

She added, “These are still immigrants and families who are being arrested, so whether that happens in 11 days or over the course of a month, I don’t think that really matters.”

Trump’s remarks yesterday on Long Island to a mixture of Federal, state, and local police were scheduled under the pretext of discussing MS-13, a street gang based in El Salvador that has recently gained media attention in the US.

However, the president used the opportunity to pander to his audience and further embolden police and ICE agents to crack down on immigrants. He advised the assembled law enforcement agents to be “rough” when putting detainees into the backs of their vehicles.

He described his administration as allowing officers to “start nipping” the issue of immigrants “in the bud,” and hailed the police for using military equipment. He also claimed that MS-13 had “exploited weak borders and lax immigration enforcement” as part of their criminal operation.

Trump also made an indirect attack on New York Democratic Mayor Bill de Blasio inferring that he is a “weak mayor that doesn’t know what is going on.” De Blasio early on in his administration drew denunciation from members of the New York Police Department (NYPD) for limited criticisms of police brutality. By 2015 he supported the hiring of 1,000 additional cops and the establishment of a counter-terrorism unit.

In his remarks Friday Trump called on Congress to help fund the hiring of 10,000 ICE officers as well as hundreds of immigration judges and prosecutors to help speed up deportations.

Trump’s xenophobic statements serve to whip up the most right-wing and fascistic elements in the United States. The escalation of the crackdown on immigrants paves the way for a police-state regime and attacks on workers more broadly.



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