

# Mexican immigrant killed by ICE agent during raid in Chicago suburb

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Silverio Villegas González, a 42-year-old Mexican immigrant and father of three, was shot and killed by an ICE officer in Franklin Park, Illinois, late on Wednesday afternoon.

According to authorities, González was initially stopped by ICE agents who claimed that his vehicle matched the description of one purportedly involved in a prior immigration-related investigation.

Friends and family contested this account, emphasizing that González's only offense was a minor traffic infraction—an expired license plate sticker—in the quiet suburb just west of Chicago.

The shooting of González took place within days of President Trump's immigration crackdown campaign launched in the Chicago area. Although Cook County officials did not identify him, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and Mexican consulate in Chicago identified the ICE victim as Silverio Villegas González.

Eyewitness accounts taken down and reported by WBEZ Chicago said events escalated rapidly after ICE agents approached González, whose fear and panic were clearly visible to everyone nearby.

The WBEZ quoted several people who were on the scene. Maria Martinez, a neighbor, told reporters, "He was just sitting in his car when two men came up out of nowhere, shouting at him in English. Silverio looked scared—he didn't understand everything they were saying. We heard them yelling, then, all of a sudden, I heard gunshots."

Another onlooker, Samuel Ramos, recalled: "After the first shot, Silverio tried to get out of the car, but he stumbled into the street. The officers kept shouting at him—telling him to 'stay put'—but he was holding his hands up, trying to talk. People started gathering, screaming for help, but we were pushed back by the

officers."

The WBEZ account describes confusion and fear among local residents, many of whom did not realize the men in plain clothes were federal agents until after the incident. María Santiago, who resides across the street, said: "Nobody knew they were ICE. They didn't identify themselves clearly. It looked like a robbery at first, but then they started dragging Silverio away and blocking anyone from getting close."

As in every act of police brutality that workers are all too familiar with in American cities, ICE released a statement Thursday morning, claiming González "failed to comply with lawful orders" and "acted in a manner that posed a threat to officers."

The agency also said the use of deadly force was justified, stating: "The incident is under review by ICE's Office of Professional Responsibility. We regret any loss of life, but our officers were confronting an individual believed to be involved with recent fraudulent document activity and suspected of prior immigration violations."

The Department of Homeland Security claimed that Silverio Villegas González was an undocumented immigrant. Official statements say he entered the country at an unknown date and was the subject of a targeted ICE enforcement operation in Franklin Park, Illinois. Immigration authorities also stated that Silverio Villegas González had no criminal convictions or violent offenses. The only record with law enforcement against him was a minor traffic violation.

Meanwhile, residents contradicted the ICE narrative of what happened on Wednesday, saying Silverio was not physically threatening anyone. "He wouldn't hurt anybody," said Rosa Villegas, his mother. "Silverio was afraid. He was just trying to go home to his kids. I watched his last moments from across the street. There

were no weapons, no threats—just confusion and panic. They shot him because they could, not because they had to.”

A next-door neighbor, Jorge Hernández, described Silverio as “a quiet man, a hard worker. He didn’t know what to do when those agents came for him. He was scared for his life, and now he’s gone.”

People close to González spoke of a loving father who had never had trouble with the law. His eldest son, Marco, told reporters: “He worked two jobs, would do anything for us. When those men came for him, he panicked—that’s not a crime. My dad always said he was worried ICE would come someday. He was terrified of being taken away, but he never imagined they would kill him.”

Friends described how González had grown increasingly anxious since the launch of Trump’s immigration sweeps in recent months and took careful steps to avoid trouble. “He stopped going out after dark, just in case,” said family friend Nancy Ríos. “He was just living his life, scared every day.”

Democratic Party Illinois Governor JD Pritzker issued a statement Thursday afternoon, saying “Our state will not allow the unchecked use of deadly force against residents by federal agents,” and “Illinois remains committed to protecting immigrant communities and ensuring accountability for the loss of life.”

Pritzker called for a suspension of ICE raids pending an independent review, but there is no indication that the White House or Department of Homeland Security is going to halt any of the police-state measures being meted out in Chicago and surrounding suburbs.

The Resurrection Project, a Chicago-based immigrant advocacy group, released a statement Thursday evening that read: “Silverio Villegas González is yet another victim of Operation Midway Blitz, a campaign that has placed immigrant families in constant fear and exposed them to violence at the hands of federal agents. ... This killing must not go unanswered.”

The shooting comes amid the Trump administration’s escalating immigration enforcement strategies, particularly “Operation Midway Blitz,” a policy announced last year deploying both federal police and National Guard troops in Chicago, Detroit, Philadelphia, and other major cities.

The operation, justified by the White House as a

measure to crack down on violent crime, is part of the war on immigrants and in neighborhoods across the US with aggressive tactics by federal agents against all residents including US citizens, green card holders and others with legal status to live and work in the US. These tactics have led to repeated confrontations including fatalities like the death of Silverio Villegas González in Franklin Park, Illinois.

The deployment of federal troops in Chicago has sparked protests throughout the last year, with comparisons to the “shock-and-awe” methods used during the illegal wars of conquest carried out by US imperialism over the past three decades.

According to statistics compiled by the American Immigration Council and the Chicago Tribune, shooting deaths of immigrants by ICE officers have been on the rise since 2018. Over the past five years, according to cases that have been identified by advocacy groups, ICE officers have shot and killed at least 14 unarmed individuals nationwide, with four fatal shootings in Illinois since 2021.

Meanwhile, as of September 2025, at least 14 immigrants have died while in ICE custody this year. This is on track to be one of the deadliest in ICE’s history. By comparison, police killings in the US remain at staggering levels, with over 1,100 deaths per year reported by the Mapping Police Violence project, the majority of whom are working-class, poor and people of color.



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