

ICE Gestapo kills man during traffic stop in Houston

Trévon Austin
9 July 2026

In the latest episode of terror unleashed upon America's working class population by Trump's Gestapo-like immigration police, a U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) officer shot and killed an immigrant worker from Mexico Tuesday morning in Houston. A spokesperson with the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) claimed the man who died attempted to evade arrest, but local witnesses and civil rights organizations have already challenged ICE's version of events.

The shooting happened in Magnolia Park, a historic Mexican-American and Latino immigrant neighborhood known for its annual Día de Los Muertos celebrations and multiple community events commemorating the neighborhood's and city's multicultural heritage.

In a statement to Houston Public Media, the DHS spokesperson said agents encountered Lorenzo Salgado Araujo at around 6:50 a.m. during a "targeted enforcement operation." ICE agents said they stopped and tried to arrest him, describing Salgado Araujo as an "illegal alien" whom the agency was seeking as part of a broader operation targeting Houston's immigrant community.

"From information we are receiving, he rammed an ICE law enforcement vehicle, refused to follow multiple verbal commands, and weaponized his vehicle in an attempt to run over an ICE law enforcement officer, resulting in our officer firing his weapon in self-defense," the DHS spokesperson said.

Salgado Araujo was shot in the abdomen and transported to a local hospital, where he was later pronounced dead. ICE has not reported any injuries to federal agents involved in the operation.

Tuesday's tragedy is the first fatal shooting involving federal immigration agents since DHS thugs murdered Renée Good and Alex Pretti in separate incidents in Minneapolis in January amid Trump's escalating deployment of federal police to terrorize immigrants and intimidate citizens opposed to his assault on democratic rights.

Although both killings sparked massive backlash and a general strike movement among Minnesota workers, Tuesday's shooting makes it clear that the Trump administration has not abandoned the use of deadly force against the American population.

And it comes only two days after the killing of 20-year-old Tyrin Johnson by National Guard troops in Memphis, Tennessee, on July 5. As in the cases of killings by federal agents, the National Guard claimed the soldiers fired on Johnson in self-defense, although there is no indication that Johnson himself fired at them.

ICE told reporters the FBI will conduct a parallel investigation into the Houston shooting. A spokesperson for the FBI's Houston Field Office said the Office of Inspector General for the Department of Homeland Security will investigate the shooting itself and FBI Houston is leading an investigation into the "potential assault on a federal law enforcement officer."

As is par for the course, ICE did not provide a shred of evidence corroborating its account of events, echoing numerous fabrications put forward to justify deadly incidents involving Trump's Department of Homeland Security. In fact, the DHS account of Salgado Araujo's killing mirrors many of the statements the agency issued following multiple fatalities or injuries to undocumented immigrants and US citizens. This includes the murder of Renee Good in Minneapolis, who was also accused of trying to ram ICE agents with her vehicle, and the shooting of two Venezuelan men in Oregon earlier this year.

In both cases, as well as other shootings, the official accounts of the incidents were contradicted by video evidence and testimony from witnesses, establishing that the officers involved were not in danger and even acted as the aggressors sometimes. This includes an April incident where the federal government said a California man whom they fired upon during a traffic stop "weaponized his vehicle," though footage of the interaction proved no officers were hit by his car.

What video footage that has been made available to the public does not offer any clarity. Surveillance video from a nearby business shows a white van thought to be driven by Salgado Araujo traveling on Wayside before taking a left turn on Canal Street. Two dark, unmarked SUVs appeared behind the van. One passed the white van while the second stayed behind it. Moments later, the van can be seen making a U-turn and parking alongside a business before one of the SUVs stopped next to the van, appearing to block it from moving.

Salgado Araujo's son Ronaldo told Telemundo Houston that his father had been out that morning picking up fellow construction workers while on the way to a job. In a statement, Ronaldo Salgado said his father was a hard worker who had been going through the process to obtain his legal residency for years.

"My father has been in this country for nearly 35 years," he said, "working in construction to provide for myself, my two brothers, and my mother. ... My father did not deserve this."

Family members pointed to the fact that the ICE vehicles were unmarked, likely leading Salgado Araujo to believe he was being carjacked and faced the danger of losing his van, vital for his livelihood, and giving him a reason to flee.

Houston resident Janie Torres told Houston Public Media she lives in the neighborhood near where Salgado Araujo was killed and rushed to the scene when she saw the news on social media.

"I'm Latina, I'm Chicana, but that could easily be me, going down the street on the next block over," Torres said. "None of the Hispanic community should be having to have fear of going out, going to the store, going out for the weekend with their family. ... We shouldn't have to be doing that in fear. We shouldn't have to."

Tuesday's shooting has caused outrage in the nation's fourth largest city, whose greater metropolitan area is home to an estimated 1.7 million immigrants, with a population that is 44.5 percent Latino or Hispanic. Local elected officials and civil rights organizations, including the Texas Civil Rights Project and the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC), have issued calls for transparency and an independent investigation.

The Texas Civil Rights Project decried ICE's normalized use of force in immigration operations and questioned the agency's official account of the shooting. "We demand full transparency, an independent investigation into the shooting and any use of racial profiling that led to it, and accountability for the use of deadly force. Our neighborhoods are not battlegrounds," said president Rochelle Garza.

Congresswoman Sylvia Garcia, who has represented Texas' 29th congressional district in Houston since 2019, said that Salgado Araujo's family and Houston residents "deserve a complete and transparent accounting" of the shooting. "All available footage, communications, and other evidence should be preserved and reviewed as part of a full and impartial investigation," she said.

In a virtual press conference Tuesday evening, LULAC president Ramon Palomares called for a "full federal" and "independent" investigation and asked the Houston Police Department to conduct its own efforts.

"This is not an isolated event across the nation," Palomares said. "We have seen a pattern of ICE involvement in shootings and excessive use of force. Each time, a family is left without answers and a community is left in fear."

"What we're demanding at LULAC is to preserve and release all evidence: body cam, dash cam, bystander video, dispatch logs, everything that would be available to us and should be available to the community to conduct this investigation."

Additionally, the Hispanic civil rights organization announced a \$5,000 reward for anyone who comes forward with information about the shooting. "We can't count on the FBI," said Domingo Garcia, a former LULAC president. Garcia called ICE an "out-of-control agency that requires oversight."

According to The Trace, a nonprofit organization tracking gun violence, there have been 10 other shootings involving immigration agents in 2026. Until Tuesday, only the two Minneapolis shootings were fatal. At the current rate, this year is on track to have more shootings than last year's total of 15 shootings, including four fatalities.

The Trump administration's deployment of ICE as a paramilitary force carrying out mass roundups, renditions and even cold-blooded killings in American streets is not a departure from the normal functioning of American capitalism; it is the political expression of its deepening crisis. ICE's transformation into the "Amazon of deportations" serves to divide the working class by scapegoating immigrant workers, and it provides the legal and political framework for expanding police-state powers that will ultimately be deployed against the entire working class, regardless of immigration status.

The struggle against ICE is therefore not only the defense of one particularly exploited section of the working class, it is the central front in the defense of democratic rights for all workers. For the American working class, the defense of immigrants is inseparable from the class struggle that pits them against the capitalist oligarchy.

What is unfolding and being planned at the highest stage of the government, with the complicity of the Democratic Party and its pseudo-left satellites, is a grand conspiracy to counter the growing disillusionment with the capitalist system with the establishment of a military-police dictatorship. The independent mobilization of the working class—through independent rank-and-file committees in workplaces and neighborhoods—to utilize its massive social power is the only way forward in combating the assault being prepared.



To contact the WSW and the Socialist Equality Party visit:

[wsws.org/contact](https://www.wsws.org/contact)