



OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY  
TWENTIETH JUDICIAL DISTRICT

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For Immediate Release  
November 1, 2021

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**Press Release**

***Civil Immigration Enforcement Actions in or Near Protected Areas***

The Department of Homeland Security has announced new guidelines regarding civil enforcement actions in or near “protected areas.” Effective immediately, immigration enforcement actions should not, with limited exceptions, take place in or near a location that would restrain people’s access to essential services or engagement in essential activities. These protected areas include schools, healthcare facilities, places of worship, religious or civil ceremonies (weddings, funerals) social services establishments, places where children gather (playgrounds, school bus stops), and public demonstrations. This new policy leaves in place a policy issued on April 27, 2021 directing that enforcement actions should not take place at or near courthouses.

These new Homeland Security policies demonstrate that individuals have equal access to justice and public safety. Additionally, these policies are consistent with what has been in place in Boulder County and within the State of Colorado. For several years, the DA’s Office has had a policy of not asking about immigration status and not reporting information on witnesses and victims to immigration officials. In 2020, Colorado passed a law prohibiting civil arrests in courthouses, which our office supported.

For many years, this District Attorney’s Office and Boulder County law enforcement has prioritized supporting our immigrant communities. Immigrants are particularly vulnerable to crimes like fraud, wage theft, and bias-motivated crimes. Unfortunately, many immigrants are less likely to report crimes when they occur, either out of fear of the criminal justice system, fear of immigration consequences, or a lack of familiarity with the reporting process. In Boulder County, all victims can safely call the police and our DA’s Office. We promise to always help victims to find justice and safety, regardless of their immigration status.

District Attorney Michael Dougherty said, “These new policies within the Department of Homeland Security are consistent with our office’s priorities on community safety, immigrant protection, and victim’s rights. Civil enforcement actions in protected areas, especially in and around courthouses, disrupt people’s lives and access to services, and can interrupt pending cases. The suspension of court cases denies the opportunity to fight for justice, the rights of victims, and the resolution of criminal cases. The DA’s Office will continue to strongly support immigrants in Boulder County because it is the right thing to do.”

The following are links to the two announcements from the federal government:

October 27, 2021 Memorandum Regarding Civil Immigration Enforcement Actions in or Near Protected Areas:

[https://www.dhs.gov/sites/default/files/publications/21\\_1027\\_opa\\_guidelines-enforcement-actions-in-near-protected-areas.pdf](https://www.dhs.gov/sites/default/files/publications/21_1027_opa_guidelines-enforcement-actions-in-near-protected-areas.pdf)

April 27, 2021 Memorandum Regarding Civil Immigration Enforcement Actions in or Near Courthouses:

<https://www.cbp.gov/sites/default/files/assets/documents/2021-Apr/Enforcement-Actions-in-Courthouses-04-26-21.pdf>