



Immigration Enforcement at Oregon Farmers Markets

Guidance for Market Managers, Staff and Vendors

Introduction

Immigration enforcement has been rising across the U.S., including right here in Oregon's agricultural and food sectors. Farmers markets are places built on trust, community, and access to fresh food, and it can feel unsettling when Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) shows up. Market managers and staff don't have to face these situations alone. Being prepared with clear information helps you respond with confidence, protect your vendors and shoppers, and keep your market a safe and welcoming space for everyone.

This guide explains:

- What enforcement actions might look like
- Oregon's laws and protections
- Rights of individuals at the market
- Steps to prepare and respond calmly and lawfully

Enforcement Actions at Markets

Targeted arrests

ICE may sometimes come to a market looking for a specific individual. These are not random sweeps but planned actions focused on people already identified by ICE. Agents may carry administrative warrants (Form I-200 or I-205), but those documents do not allow them to enter private areas of the market. To make an arrest, ICE must either locate the person in a public area or obtain consent from the person in charge or a judicial warrant signed by a judge.

Public areas

Spaces open to customers such as stalls, walkways, entrances, and exits are considered public. ICE does not need a warrant to be present in these zones or to approach someone there.

Private areas

Spaces reserved for staff such as market offices, storage rooms, vendor-only areas behind stalls, staff bathrooms, or break rooms are considered private. ICE cannot enter these areas unless:

- The person in charge gives permission, or
- They present a judicial warrant signed by a judge
- Know that access may be requested to access a private area for reasons like "using the bathroom." Should you be suspicious of such requests (ie. the area is private and no judicial warrant has been presented), you have the right to inform ICE that entrance permission is not granted.

- Know your space: Does your market have any private areas? Is it entirely public areas?
- Are specific "private" areas marked with signage as private?



Administrative warrants issued by ICE (I-200 or I-205) are not enough to authorize entry into private spaces. Here is a resource with examples of what these warrants look like:

https://www.ilrc.org/sites/default/files/resources/i-200_and_i-205_sample_annotated.pdf

Booth space nuance

- **Front of the booth** (where customers stand and interact): **This is a public area.** ICE does not need a judicial warrant to approach or question someone here.
- **Behind the booth** (vendor-only prep, storage, or work space not open to customers): **This is a private area.** ICE cannot enter without consent from the vendor/market management or a judicial warrant signed by a judge.

Employment compliance

- Market management must keep I-9 forms and employment records for their own employees.
- Individual vendors are responsible for keeping I-9s and hiring records for their own booth workers. (The market is not responsible for vendor staff unless it directly employs them.)
- ICE may ask for I-9s, payroll, or hiring records to confirm work authorization. W-9s (ie. that are filled out with contractors, not employees) may come up if ICE refers information to the IRS, but they are not part of an immigration raid's standard document request.

Building a Response Plan

1. Response Coordinator
Assign one person to take charge if ICE arrives. All others refer agents to them.
2. Train Staff and Vendors
Sample scripts:
"This is a private area. Do you have a judicial warrant signed by a judge?"
"I am not authorized to speak with you. Please speak with the market manager."
3. Mark Public vs. Private Areas
Post clear signage for staff-only or restricted areas

Incorporate these signs and any additional procedures to your regular market setup
4. Partnerships
Connect with immigrant-serving groups such as Causa Oregon <https://causaoregon.org>, Innovation Law Lab <https://innovationlawlab.org>, and Immigration Counseling Service <https://www.ics-law.org>
Clarify with local police that they do not assist ICE in civil enforcement
5. Documentation Protocol
Record officer names, badge numbers, time, vehicles, and who was detained.
Photos and video are permitted in public areas if you do not interfere



6. After an Incident

Support affected families with legal and community resources

Call the Sanctuary Promise Hotline 1-844-924-2427

Debrief and update the response plan

During an Enforcement Action

The designated Response Coordinator should identify themselves to the agents as the person in charge. They may ask the agents to state their names and agency, show their badges, and explain their business at the market. This ensures they are in fact law enforcement officers operating under legal authority.

Avoid any physical interaction with the agents or with the person being questioned. This includes not handing the individual papers such as a Know Your Rights card while the action is in progress.

If an agent asks questions of farmers market personnel, you are not required to answer. You may state: "I choose to remain silent." Never provide false information, as this can be considered obstruction and may result in criminal liability.

The Response Coordinator may ask the agents if they can speak with the person being detained to assist with immediate needs, such as contacting a family member or attorney or making arrangements for personal belongings. If someone is detained, the Response Coordinator may also ask the agents where the person is being taken so their family or legal counsel can locate them.

Market participants must be aware that intervening in an enforcement action carries risks. Under federal law, obstructing an officer in the performance of their duties can result in criminal charges. Similarly, harboring or attempting to hide individuals who are the target of an enforcement action is a federal crime.

For more information:

- Understanding the Legal Implications of Interfering with Immigration Enforcement
<https://www.nilc.org/issues/immigration-enforcement>
- Harboring: Overview of the Law
<https://www.americanimmigrationcouncil.org/research/overview-criminal-provisions-immigration-law>

Even though you cannot stop the enforcement action, you can help protect community members by carefully documenting what happens. Record as many details as possible, including officer names, badge numbers, and agency affiliation, the name of the person detained if known, time and location of the action, patrol car number or license plate of vehicles used, statements made by officers, and names and contact information of witnesses.

Market personnel and members of the public may record video or take photos in public areas, as long as they are not interfering with the action.



After agents leave, market staff should provide a safe space for affected individuals, family members, and vendors to recover, connect them with legal advice and immigrant-support organizations, contact family members of detained individuals if possible, arrange for the return of belongings left behind, and debrief staff and volunteers and update the market's response plan.

Rights to Remember

Vendors, staff, and shoppers:

- Right to remain silent
- No obligation to show ID or discuss immigration status
- Can refuse searches of private areas without a judge-signed warrant

Market staff:

- It is illegal to give false or misleading information
- Do not hide, relocate, or interfere with targeted individuals
- Do not consent to entry into private space without reviewing a valid judicial warrant
- Violations of these rules may result in disciplinary action or legal consequences
- We know that during these times balancing laws with morals is difficult. We also know that ICE may not be following laws. Our suggestions here are best practices based on currently known information. However, the honest truth is that you may face a mental quagmire when a particular enforcement situation ensues.

Oregon's Sanctuary Laws

- Review Sanctuary laws with key staff
- ORS 181A.820: State and local police cannot use resources for federal immigration enforcement unless there is a judge-issued criminal warrant
https://oregon.public.law/statutes/ors_181a.820
- Sanctuary Promise Act (2021): Extends protections to all state and local public bodies
<https://www.doj.state.or.us/oregon-department-of-justice/civil-rights/sanctuary-promise/>
- Hotline to report violations: Oregon DOJ Sanctuary Promise Hotline 1-844-924-2427

Stay Current: Policies are Changing Quickly

This information reflects Oregon law and federal enforcement practices as of August 2025. Immigration enforcement policies are changing rapidly, sometimes week by week depending on federal priorities and court rulings.

Farmers market managers should:

- Regularly check for updates from immigrant-serving organizations (see resources below)
- Review and update market response plans frequently
- Remember this guide provides current best practices but not guarantees for future enforcement scenarios



Resources

Oregon-specific

- Portland Immigrants Rights Coalition: 1-888-622-1510
- Oregon For All <https://www.oregonforall.us/>
- Innovation Law Lab <https://innovationlawlab.org>
- Immigration Counseling Service <https://www.ics-law.org>
- Oregon Justice Resource Center <https://www.ojrc.info/kyr>
- ACLU of Oregon Know Your Rights <https://www.aclu-or.org/en/know-your-rights-immigrants-rights>
- USCIS I-9 Central <https://www.uscis.gov/i-9-central>

Information for Employers

- USCIS Handbook for Employers (M-274) <https://www.uscis.gov/i-9-central/form-i-9-resources/handbook-for-employers-m-274>
- USCIS I-9 Central page <https://www.uscis.gov/i-9-central>
- An Employer's Guide to Immigration Enforcement <https://www.ilrc.org/employer-guides>
- A Guide for Employers – What to do if Immigration Comes to Your Workplace <https://www.nilc.org/issues/immigration-enforcement/employer-guidance/>
- What You Need to Know to Prepare for an ICE Raid or Audit <https://www.nilc.org/issues/immigration-enforcement/employer-prep/>

Know Your Rights

- ACLU National: Immigrants' Rights <https://www.aclu.org/issues/immigrants-rights>
- CLINIC Know Your Rights flyers <https://cliniclegal.org/resources/know-your-rights>
- ACLU: What to Do if ICE Agents Arrive at Your Work or Home <https://www.aclu.org/know-your-rights/immigrants-rights/>
- Downloadable Red Cards, or Link to Order them <https://www.ilrc.org/red-cards>

Key Takeaways

- Historically, ICE has tended to target specific individuals rather than random groups. However, groups working directly with people affected are now reporting a shift: in recent cases, ICE has been detaining bystanders alongside their intended targets.
- Farmers markets are public spaces so ICE may enter without a warrant
- ICE cannot enter private areas without a judicial warrant signed by a judge. Clearly mark places that are private, "private." However, know that ICE is currently entering private areas by requesting to "Use the bathroom" or not following the private/public rule book.
- Oregon sanctuary laws prohibit local police from helping ICE in civil immigration enforcement
- Interfering with an arrest or hiding people may lead to criminal charges
- A clear and practiced response plan helps protect safety, rights, and market integrity

Disclaimer



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