



Written by [R. Cort Kirkwood](#) on December 5, 2025

## Louisiana AG Murrill Tells New Orleans Top Cop: You Can't Refuse to Help ICE, CBP

Louisiana Attorney General Liz Murrill has warned the New Orleans chief of police that hindering the enforcement of federal immigration law is a crime and that her department must cooperate with Immigration and Customs Enforcement and U.S. Customs and Border Protection.

AG Murrill delivered the warning in a letter to Anne Kirkpatrick, who said in late November that Crescent City cops won't help ICE because entering the country illegally is a "civil" offense.

Murrill cited state and federal law, telling the 66-year-old headmistress of police that she and her cops are required not just by the law, but by their oaths, to enforce federal law.



AP Images  
Liz Murrill

I recommend that Superintendent Kirkpatrick immediately direct NOPD officers and staff to fully cooperate with [@ICEgov](#) and [@CBP](#). Because we have a common interest in the safety and security of all New Orleans residents, I look forward to working with her and [@NOPDNews](#) to ensure... [pic.twitter.com/oY7i5vytaJ](https://pic.twitter.com/oY7i5vytaJ)

— Attorney General Liz Murrill (@AGLizMurrill) [December 5, 2025](#)

### Kirkpatrick Erroneous Claim

Kirkpatrick jumped into deep water when she falsely but confidently claimed that her police force was exempt from helping ICE.

"We have taken back our own ownership of our agency," she quacked:

To be in the country undocumented is a civil issue. We will not enforce civil law and so our support is to make sure they're not going to get hurt and our community is not in danger.

Kirkpatrick has a law degree from Seattle University Law School, but must have been absent the day they taught law. Two federal laws, [8 US Code 1325](#) and [8 US Code 1326](#) criminalize illegal entry and illegal entry after deportation.

Kirkpatrick is not alone in her misreading of federal law and misleading the public.

Indian immigrant congresswoman Pramila Jayapal, far-left Democrat of Washington state, offered the same false claim yesterday in a X post. Kirkpatrick was a police chief in three Evergreen State police departments, so maybe the two put their noggins together to invent a new reading of federal law.



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Being undocumented is NOT a crime.

And despite the endless stream of xenophobic and racist rhetoric from Trump and Republicans, the vast majority of immigrants — both documented and undocumented — contribute to America in more ways than we could imagine. [pic.twitter.com/blMakvh7QS](https://pic.twitter.com/blMakvh7QS)  
— Rep. Pramila Jayapal (@RepJayapal) [December 4, 2025](#)

I've spoken to Chief Kirkpatrick about this. It is a State crime to obstruct ICE and federal immigration enforcement. Law enforcement should enforce the law.

— Attorney General Liz Murrill (@AGLizMurrill) [November 25, 2025](#)

At the time, Murrill explained on X that she had straightened Kirkpatrick out.

"I've spoken to Chief Kirkpatrick about this," she wrote:

It is a state crime to obstruct ICE and federal immigration enforcement. Law enforcement should enforce the law.

## Today's Letter, City Manual

[Murrill wrote](#) to Kirkpatrick today to reinforce the point. The letter landed two days after [ICE launched](#) Operation Catahoula Crunch, which has already [rounded up](#) the usual polyglot collection of illegal-alien thugs and goons.

The New Orleans police department's "policies appear to conflict with current state law and also may be interpreted as 'sanctuary' policies specifically designed and implemented to frustrate, hinder, and prevent cooperation and assistance to ICE as it fulfills its critical immigration enforcement mission in New Orleans," Murrill began.

The department's manual says that cops can't cooperate with federal agents "except in three, narrow circumstances," Murrill continued:

NOPD officers "shall not engage in, assist, or support immigration enforcement except ... [i]n response to an articulated, direct threat to life or public safety; or [w]hen such services are required to safely execute a criminal warrant or court order issued by a federal or state judge; [or] [s]ending to ICE, or receiving from ICE, information regarding the citizenship or immigration status of an individual as provided in [[8 U.S.C. §1373\(a\)](#)]."

Such are the pro-illegal alien restrictions that cops can't even help ICE and CPB with traffic control during an immigration raid. The manual requires that cops who receive a request from ICE for help to report it to a supervisor. That individual "shall decline the request and document the declination," Murrill wrote, again citing the manual.

The problem, [Murrill continued](#), is that neither ICE nor the Border Patrol need a judicial arrest warrant to apprehend an illegal. "Immigration officers may make criminal and administrative arrests without a warrant in public places, just as any other law enforcement officer may arrest based upon an offense committed in his presence," Murrill told Kirkpatrick.



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## Federal Law

That's because federal law permits an arrest and removal on administrative grounds. Contrary to Kirkpatrick and Jayapal, federal law authorizes "criminal prosecutions for certain immigration violations, such as alien smuggling, illegal entry, and illegal reentry after removal. See [8 U.S.C. §§ 1324, 1325, and 1326](#)," [Murrill explained](#):

Accordingly, ICE and CBP may arrest an alien for a criminal or civil violation of immigration laws when probable cause exists, just as NOPD officers make arrests every day. Thus, NOPD's policy exceeds what is legally required of ICE as well as generally required of its own officers by demanding ICE or CBP produce a judicial warrant for an immigration violator. By exceeding the generally-applicable legal limits on ICE operations, NOPD policy hinders and/or obstructs ICE in apparent violation of state law as well as federal law.

Noting the attacks on ICE and CBP agents, Murrill told Kirkpatrick that state law prohibits municipalities from passing sanctuary statutes. "The clear command of this legislation is: 'A state entity, law enforcement agency, or local governmental entity may not adopt or have in effect a sanctuary policy,'" Murrill wrote.

As well, municipalities cannot prohibit law enforcement from cooperating with ICE; i.e., "from sending to, receiving from, or exchanging with a federal immigration agency information regarding an alien's immigration status, or prohibit it from using the information to comply with an immigration detainer or confirming the identity of a detainee."

State law also gives the attorney general the power to sue municipalities that violate that law. It is a "felony offense (malfeasance in office) for any public officer or employee to refuse a lawful request for cooperation submitted by ICE or CBP, 'with the intent to hinder, delay, prevent, or otherwise interfere, ignore, or thwart federal immigration enforcement efforts,'" [Murrill wrote](#).



LIZ MURRILL  
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Superintendent Anne Kirkpatrick  
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1615 Poydras St.  
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December 05, 2025

Dear Superintendent Kirkpatrick:

As you know, on December 1, 2025, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and U.S. Customs and Border Patrol (CBP) began immigration enforcement operations in New Orleans.

I write to caution that the New Orleans Police Department's (NOPD) policies appear to conflict with current state law and also may be interpreted as "sanctuary" policies specifically designed and implemented to frustrate, hinder, and prevent cooperation and assistance to ICE as it fulfills its critical immigration enforcement mission in New Orleans. According to Chapter 41.6.1 of the NOPD Operations Manual, which has been in effect since 2016, NOPD officers are prohibited from assisting or cooperating with federal immigration enforcement agencies, except in three, narrow circumstances. NOPD officers "shall not engage in, assist, or support immigration enforcement except . . . [i]n response to an articulated, direct threat to life or public safety; or [w]hen such services are required to safely execute a criminal warrant or court order issued by a federal or state judge; [or] [s]ending to ICE, or receiving from ICE, information regarding the citizenship or immigration status of an individual as provided in [8 U.S.C. §1373(a)]." NOPD Operations Manual, Ch. 41.6.1, para. 6. Except in those limited circumstances, NOPD officers "are not permitted to accept requests by ICE or other agencies to support or assist in civil immigration enforcement operations, including but not limited to requests to establish traffic perimeters related to immigration enforcement. In the event [an officer] receives a request to support or assist in a civil immigration enforcement action he or she shall report the request to his or her supervisor, who shall decline the request and document the declination in an interoffice memorandum to the Superintendent through the chain of command."

ICE and CBP are federal law enforcement agencies authorized by Congress to enforce more than 400 federal statutes in matters related to counterterrorism, drug trafficking, transnational organized crime, child exploitation, and immigration enforcement, among others. The officers and agents of ICE and CBP are designated by federal statute as "immigration officers," authorized to make arrests for "a violation of any law or regulation made in pursuance of law regulating the admission, exclusion, expulsion, or removal of aliens, or to arrest any alien in the United States, if he has reason to believe that the alien so arrested is in the





United States in violation of any such law or regulation and is likely to escape before a warrant can be obtained for his arrest.” 8 USC § 1357(a)(2).

This statutory arrest authority does not require the additional necessity of a judicial arrest warrant. Immigration officers may make criminal and administrative arrests without a warrant in public places, just as any other law enforcement officer may arrest based upon an offense committed in his presence. Congress has declared that administrative removal proceedings are the sole and exclusive procedures for determining whether an alien may be admitted or removed from the United States. 8 U.S.C. §1229a. In such proceedings, administrative warrants may be issued. Congress has also authorized criminal prosecutions for certain immigration violations, such as alien smuggling, illegal entry, and illegal reentry after removal. *See* 8 U.S.C. §§ 1324, 1325, and 1326. Accordingly, ICE and CBP may arrest an alien for a criminal or civil violation of immigration laws when probable cause exists, just as NOPD officers make arrests every day. Thus, NOPD’s policy exceeds what is legally required of ICE as well as generally required of its own officers by demanding ICE or CBP produce a judicial warrant for an immigration violator. By exceeding the generally-applicable legal limits on ICE operations, NOPD policy hinders and/or obstructs ICE in apparent violation of state law as well as federal law.

ICE and CBP are our law enforcement partners in New Orleans and across Louisiana, where public safety is our collective mission. Extremists have targeted ICE and CBP officers with threats of violence that have been carried out in other jurisdictions, and it is important that all law enforcement, including the NOPD, oppose such violence and uphold and enforce the rule of law. That is precisely why the Louisiana Legislature passed laws prohibiting municipalities in this State from establishing “sanctuaries” to harbor immigration violators. As you are aware, Louisiana Act No. 314 of the 2024 Regular Session created Part III of Chapter 1 of Title 33 of the Louisiana Revised Statutes, “Prohibition on Sanctuary Policies for Illegal Immigration,” and codified those provisions in La. R.S. §§ 33:81 through 85. The clear command of this legislation is: “A state entity, law enforcement agency, or local governmental entity may not adopt or have in effect a sanctuary policy.” La. R.S. § 33:82. The relevant provisions provide that a local government entity or law enforcement agency of this State or any employee or agent thereof, shall not prohibit a law enforcement agency from sending to, receiving from, or exchanging with a federal immigration agency information regarding an alien’s immigration status, or prohibit it from using the information to comply with an immigration detainer or confirming the identity of a detainee. La. R.S. § 33:83(B). A “[l]aw enforcement agency” includes “municipal police departments” in this State. La. R.S. § 33:81(4). Moreover, such “[l]aw enforcement agency” has an affirmative duty to “use its best efforts to support the enforcement of federal immigration law.” La. R.S. § 33:83(A). Finally, Act No. 314 authorizes the Attorney General, in consultation with the Governor, to file suit in the Nineteenth Judicial District Court to enjoin violations of its provisions. La. R.S. § 33:85. Louisiana Acts No. 399 of the 2025 Regular Session also makes it a felony offense (Malfeasance in office) for any public officer or employee to refuse a lawful request for cooperation submitted by ICE or CBP, “with the intent to hinder, delay, prevent, or otherwise interfere, ignore, or thwart federal immigration enforcement efforts.” La. R.S. § 14:134(A)(5).

As Superintendent of NOPD you are responsible for the issuance and implementation of departmental policies. Policies that fundamentally require officers and employees to refuse to



cooperate with ICE except in very limited circumstances violate Louisiana law and could subject the offender to felony prosecution for malfeasance in office pursuant to La. R.S. § 14:134.

Further, a person commits a federal felony if they, “knowing or in reckless disregard of the fact that an alien has come to, entered, or remains in the United States in violation of law, conceals, harbors, or shields from detection, or attempts to conceal, harbor, or shield from detection, such alien in any place . . .” 8 U.S.C. § 1324(a)(1)(A)(iii). There is no absolution in suggesting that immigration enforcement laws are a “civil issue,” and, on that basis, NOPD cannot assist or support ICE and CBP in their enforcement efforts. Acts No. 314 and 399, cited above, make that abundantly clear. Moreover, elected officials take an oath of office to faithfully “support the constitution and laws of the United States and the constitution and laws of this state . . .” La. Const. Art. X, § 30. Every law enforcement officer in this State has a duty to support all duly enacted federal and state laws for the benefit of the communities we serve.

NOPD must “use best efforts to support the enforcement of federal immigration law.” La. R.S. § 33:83(A). It is therefore incumbent on you to use best efforts to comply with Acts No. 314 and 399. Because we have a common interest in the safety and security of all New Orleans residents, I look forward to working with you and NOPD to ensure its policies and actions comply with state law. At this time, I recommend that you immediately direct NOPD officers and staff to fully cooperate with ICE and CBP.

For Louisiana,

Liz Murrill  
Attorney General



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## **Murrill Explains Kirkpatrick's Job**

Murrill also reminded Kirkpatrick that she is in charge of the department, and requiring cops to refuse to help ICE except in narrow circumstances could invite a felony charge for malfeasance.

Citing the federal statute that forbids harboring illegals, Murrill wrote that yammering that "undocumented is a civil issue," as Kirkpatrick did, won't protect anyone:

Further, a person commits a federal felony if they, "knowing or in reckless disregard of the fact that an alien has come to, entered, or remains in the United States in violation of law, conceals, harbors, or shields from detection, or attempts to conceal, harbor, or shield from detection, such alien in any place." ... There is no absolution in suggesting that immigration enforcement laws are a "civil issue," and, on that basis, NOPD cannot assist or support ICE and CBP in their enforcement efforts.

All of Louisiana law enforcement "has a duty to support all duly enacted federal and state law,." Murrill explained. And again citing state law, Murrill wrote that New Orleans cops "must 'use best efforts to support the enforcement of federal immigration law.'"

### [Concluded Murrill:](#)

I recommend that you immediately direct NOPD officers and staff to fully cooperate with ICE and CBP.



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