



Lourdes M. Rosado
President and General Counsel

VIA CERTIFIED MAIL & EMAIL: CRCLFOIA@hq.dhs.gov, ice-foia@dhs.gov

February 21, 2025

Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) Officer
Attn: CRCL FOIA Officer
Department of Homeland Security
2707 Martin Luther King Jr. Ave SE, Stop 0190
Washington, D.C. 20528-0190

Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) Officer
U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement
500 12th St SW, Stop 5009
Washington, D.C. 20536-5009

Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) Officer
Office of the Border Czar
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, D.C. 20500

Re: Freedom of Information Act Request Regarding ICE Enforcement Actions Targeting Puerto Rican U.S. Citizens and Latino-Owned Businesses

Dear FOIA Officers,

Pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), 5 U.S.C. § 552, I hereby request access to records related to U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) enforcement actions that appear to have unlawfully targeted individuals based on their actual or perceived national origin, ethnicity, or language. This request follows our letter dated February 6, 2025, to which we have not received a response. See enclosure.

Summary of Incidents:

1. **Raid at Puerto Rican Restaurant in Philadelphia:** On January 28, 2025, ICE agents entered Boricua Restaurant in North Philadelphia without a judicial warrant, seeking to inspect the premises. The owners, both U.S. citizens of Puerto Rican descent, were approached under the presumption of being undocumented due to the nature of their establishment. See 6abc Digital Staff, *Philly restaurant owners say ICE showed up without warrant 'because it's a Puerto Rican restaurant'*, 6 ABC Action News, (January 30, 2025) at <https://6abc.com/post/owners-puerto-rican-restaurant-philadelphias-port-richmond-section-say-ice-agents-showed-warrant/15848835/>.

2. **Detention of Puerto Rican Military Veteran in Newark, New Jersey:** On January 23, 2025, ICE agents conducted a raid at Oceans Seafood Depot in Newark, detaining several individuals, including a U.S. military veteran of Puerto Rican descent. Despite presenting a valid veterans identification card, the veteran was detained without a warrant. See Candace Person, *Lawmakers respond to ICE's detention of documented individuals in Puerto Rico and a U.S.*

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Citizen Military Veteran in New Jersey without warrants, Congressional Hispanic Caucus, (January 31, 2025) at <https://chc.house.gov/media-center/press-releases/lawmakers-respond-ices-detention-documented-individuals-puerto-rico-and>.

3. Detention of Puerto Rican Family in Milwaukee: On January 24, 2025, a Puerto Rican family, including a toddler, was detained by ICE agents in Milwaukee after being overheard speaking Spanish. The family was taken to an immigration detention center despite being U.S. citizens. See Gina Lee Castro, *Milwaukee official, advocates working to verify viral report of Puerto Rican family detained by ICE*, Milwaukee Journal Sentinel, (January 30, 2025 at 6:18pm CT) at <https://www.jsonline.com/story/news/local/2025/01/30/telemundo-report-of-ice-detaining-puerto-rican-family-in-milwaukee-draws-concern/78058292007/>.

4. Raid in Barrio Obrero, San Juan, Puerto Rico: On January 26, 2025, ICE agents conducted an aggressive immigration enforcement operation in *Barrio Obrero*, San Juan. The raid, executed in collaboration with federal agencies under President Trump's executive order on immigration, disproportionately targeted Dominican migrants and Puerto Ricans residing in the community. A local human rights organization reported that many residents—regardless of their immigration status—have since been living in fear, avoiding work and public spaces. Notably, San Juan City Mayor Miguel Romero Lugo, and the Governor's Chief of Staff Francisco Domenech, affirmed that local authorities did not participate or assist in the enforcement actions. See The Star Staff, *ICE agents raid Barrio Obrero in search of undocumented migrants*, The San Juan Star, (January 27, 2025) at <https://www.sanjuandailystar.com/post/ice-agents-raid-barrio-obrero-in-search-of-undocumented-migrants>.

Requested Records:

We request the following records from January 1, 2025, to the present:

1. Policies and Guidelines: Documents detailing how ICE enforces immigration laws, particularly those addressing the identification and targeting of individuals based on national origin, ethnicity, or language.
2. Preventative Measures: Records outlining steps taken by DHS, ICE, and the Office of the Border Czar to prevent racial profiling and unlawful enforcement actions.
3. Incident Reports: All reports, memoranda, communications, and investigative documents related to the four incidents described above.
4. Training Materials: Materials used to train ICE agents on constitutional protections against discrimination based on race and national origin.
5. Compliance Audits: Documents from any audits or reviews assessing ICE's compliance with policies prohibiting racial and national origin discrimination.

Format and Delivery:

Please provide the requested records in electronic format, preferably as PDF files, via email to rcruz@latinojustice.org or on a USB drive sent to the address above.



Fee Waiver Request:

As a non-profit organization committed to protecting the civil rights of Latino communities, LatinoJustice PRLDEF requests a waiver of all fees associated with this request. Disclosure of the requested information is in the public interest and will contribute significantly to public understanding of government operations and activities.

Expedited Processing:

Under FOIA, and its related regulation at 5 CFR §1303.40, federal agencies are generally required to respond to requests within 20 business days, except for cases of high volume or complexity in which the timeframe can be extended an additional 10 business days. Failure to meet these deadlines can lead to legal challenges, administrative penalties, and harm to the public interest.

Given the serious and time-sensitive nature of these incidents, I request expedited processing of this FOIA request. The wrongful detention of U.S. citizens based on racial or ethnic profiling constitutes a matter of widespread and exceptional public interest, raising questions about the government's integrity and adherence to constitutional protections. See 5 CFR §1303.40 (e)(1)(ii).

For all the reasons stated above, and in support of our request, I certify that the declaration provided is true and correct to the best of the requester's knowledge and belief. See 5 CFR §1303.40 (e)(3).

Conclusion:

Thank you for your prompt attention to this request and await your notice of the decision to grant our request for expedited processing within 10 calendar days after the date of the request. See CFR §1303.40 (e)(4). I look forward to your response within the statutory time frame. Should you require any clarification or additional information, please contact me at 321-754-1935 or rcruz@latinojustice.org.

Sincerely,

Roberto Cruz
Managing Attorney, Southeast Regional Office
LatinoJustice PRLDEF
Florida Bar No. 18436
Puerto Rico RUA No. 12447

Encl.

[25-0012810]



ENCLOSURE

Lourdes M. Rosado
President and General Counsel

February 6, 2025

Mr. Thomas D. Homan
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, D.C. 20500

Re: Unlawful Targeting of Puerto Rican U.S. Citizens & Latino-Owned Businesses

Dear Mr. Homan,

We write to express our grave concerns over recent Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) operations that have disproportionately and unlawfully targeted Puerto Rican U.S. citizens and Latino-owned businesses under the pretense of immigration enforcement. The latest reported ICE raid [on a Puerto Rican-owned restaurant in Philadelphia](#) follows a disturbing pattern of racial profiling and biased-based policing, including the unlawful questioning, detention, and harassment of Puerto Rican individuals in multiple jurisdictions.

As you are well aware, Puerto Ricans are U.S. citizens by birth. Any ICE operation that presumes otherwise and subjects them to unwarranted scrutiny, detention, or intimidation raises serious constitutional and civil rights violations. The incidents we have documented—ranging from the unlawful questioning of a [Puerto Rican veteran in Newark, NJ](#), media outlets also reported the possible wrongful detention of a [Puerto Rican family in Milwaukee, WI](#), and recent raids disproportionately affecting Latino communities—demonstrate a clear pattern of discriminatory enforcement practices.

These actions are not only legally indefensible but also erode public trust in law enforcement institutions. We demand an immediate explanation for ICE's targeting of Puerto Rican individuals and businesses and call for a full review of agency practices to ensure compliance with constitutional protections against racial and national origin discrimination.

Additionally, we urge ICE to issue immediate guidance clarifying that Puerto Rican U.S. citizens should not be subject to immigration enforcement actions and to implement safeguards preventing further civil rights violations. Clear guidance should also prevent ICE and other federal agents enforcing immigration laws from targeting individuals based on real or perceived national origin, ethnicity, or language.

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We request a response to this letter within fifteen (15) business days, outlining what steps ICE will take to prevent future instances of racial profiling and unlawful enforcement actions. Failure to address these issues will compel us to pursue all available legal and advocacy avenues to hold ICE accountable.

Sincerely,

Roberto Cruz
Managing Attorney, Southeast Regional Office
LatinoJustice PRLDEF

cc Sec. Kristi Noem, Department of Homeland
Security

Caleb Vitello, Immigration Control and
Enforcement