

# Statesman

## ICE confirms 51 arrests in Austin-area operation

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Teenagers gathered at North Lamar Boulevard and Rundberg Lane to protest against ICE on Monday.

### *Highlights*

Federal immigration agents conducted a targeted enforcement that appeared focused on Austin.

The head of the Mexican Consulate in Austin said he thinks the federal operation has concluded locally.

Interim Police Chief Brian Manley is looking into whether any Austin officers had knowledge of the operation.

Federal immigration officials on Monday opened up about an enforcement push that targeted unauthorized immigrants last week and created tension in the immigrant community that continued Monday with more protests.

# Statesman

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement confirmed that 51 people had been arrested in the Austin area during an effort labeled Operation Cross Check on Thursday and Friday. Among the arrested were 23 people with criminal convictions and some violent offenders.

Austin, Los Angeles, Chicago, Atlanta and New York were among areas targeted in a larger ICE operation that netted 680 arrests of immigrants the agency deemed threats to public safety. A Department of Homeland Security statement estimated that 75 percent had been convicted of crimes ranging from homicide to driving while intoxicated.

Carlos Gonzalez Gutiérrez, Mexico's consul general for Austin, said his office received reports that only one Mexican national was taken into custody by ICE on Monday, which suggests the operation is over, "although it is not up to us to define when ICE operations end."

The consulate is notified every time a Mexican immigrant from the Austin metro area is detained.

Meanwhile, Austin interim Police Chief Brian Manley said Monday that he is looking into whether anyone of any rank inside his department was given advance notice about the federal immigration operation. Manley also said he has contacted officials to learn how long their effort might continue.

Although they are not required to alert local police about an operation in their community, law enforcement officials say federal agents often provide limited information about a covert mission in order to maintain collaborative relationships.

Manley said he reached out Monday morning to the regional agent in charge of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement. On Friday, Manley told the media that he knew of no federal operation in the area, only to be corrected a few hours later by U.S. Rep. Joaquin Castro, D-San Antonio, who confirmed that arrests in Austin were part of Operation Cross Check.

"As the Austin police chief, I want to know what's going on in my community," Manley said. "This is having a profound impact, and I want to understand current and future operations."

Manley and Austin Mayor Steve Adler reiterated Monday that local police have not been working in concert with federal immigration agents.

"I do not believe there is any coordination going on between ICE and our Police Department," Adler said.

While there has been some disagreement as to whether the recent sweep was routine or a reflection of things to come, the operation continued to have a palpable effect in Austin on Monday.

[Protests ignited again in North Austin](#), and the Austin teachers labor union received [reports of immigrant parents holding their children out of school](#) for fear of being swept up in a mass deportation operation.

# Statesman

Dozens held up signs at the intersection of North Lamar Boulevard and Rundberg Lane. The area has become a focal point of protests after a video of ICE agents arresting a man there went viral on Friday. Many of the protesters were high school students from the Pflugerville area.

Jose Diaz, a 14-year-old freshman at Lanier High School in Austin, held up a sign that said, "Leave Families Alone!"

"It's sad how all families are getting broken up. They live in fear to come outside," said Diaz, who said that he was born in the U.S. but that his parents are unauthorized immigrants. "I know our community is going to fight for us and stay on our side and defend us. We all have a voice, and we need to speak up for our rights."

Representatives with labor group Education Austin said they received word from campus educators that some parents fear they'll run into immigration enforcement officials walking their children to school, so they opted to keep them home.

"People are just really scared," said Montserrat Garibay, the vice president of Education Austin.

This weekend, Education Austin provided training on immigration law and rights to 250 educators and other school officials during two "Know Your Rights" sessions. The turnout was so much higher than expected that the group ran out of the materials.

Additional material from staff writers Katie Hall and Ryan Autullo.