

FACT SHEET: ICE Detainers in Minnesota

Minnesota Department of Corrections, St. Paul, MN
News Conference – January 22, 2026, 10:30 a.m.

Why We're Here

The United States Department of Homeland Security (DHS) continues to release false numbers about ICE detainers in Minnesota. The Minnesota Department of Corrections (DOC) has provided verified data and requested clarification. DHS has not responded.

Jurisdiction Basics

The Minnesota Department of Corrections operates state prisons only.

- DOC does not operate county jails or ICE detention facilities.
- DOC does not decide who receives an ICE detainer.
- ICE alone determines detainers and custody transfers.

The Numbers

DHS claim: 1,360 individuals with ICE detainers in Minnesota custody.
Verified Minnesota data:

- **County jails:** approximately 94 individuals
- **State prisons:** 207 individuals
- **Total:** approximately 301 individuals
- **Discrepancy:** about 1,000 people

DHS has provided no source, no methodology, no explanation.

Key Facts

DOC honors every ICE detainer, even beyond state law requirements.
DOC coordinates every custody transfer with ICE. No exceptions.

DHS examples reviewed:

- Many individuals were never in DOC custody
- Some have no Minnesota court records
- Many were released to ICE years or decades ago
- Some were transferred to ICE custody, and now ICE claims they were picked up on the streets of Minneapolis

DHS claims do not match Minnesota records or jurisdictional reality.

Minnesota's Position

If DHS believes Minnesota failed to honor a detainee, identify the case and we will address it. Continuing to release unsupported numbers is reckless and irresponsible. Minnesota is ready to work with DHS to align facts and operational reality.

Quote from Commissioner Paul Schnell

"Minnesotans deserve facts, not fear. We honor every ICE detainee and work closely with federal officials every day to ensure safe custody transfers. The numbers DHS is putting out are simply wrong, and we will continue to correct the record for as long as misinformation persists."

Bottom Line

Facts matter. Minnesota will continue to correct the record for as long as DHS distributes false information.

DOC Press Releases (mn.gov/doc/about/news/news-releases)

DOC Pushes Back Against Continued False Department of Homeland Security Claims, Jan 21, 2026

Minnesota Department of Corrections Addresses False Claims by the Department of Homeland Security, Jan 15, 2026

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