

MN DOC launches web page refuting DHS misinformation about lack of ICE cooperation



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ST. PAUL — The Minnesota Department of Corrections has launched a dedicated web page to provide accurate, verified information regarding the state's cooperation with Immigration and Customs Enforcement.

The launch comes in the wake of the deadly shooting of Minnesotan Alex Pretti by U.S. Customs and Border Patrol on Saturday, Jan. 24, in Minneapolis.

"The loss of life is tragic, and Minnesotans deserve transparency, accountability, and facts," the DOC stated in a news release. "... This resource was created in response to repeated false or misleading claims by DHS about DOC custody, detainers, and cooperation."

In the hours following the Pretti shooting, U.S. Border Patrol Chief Gregory Bovino held a press conference asserting that the operation was targeting an individual named Jose Huerta-Chuma and characterized him as having a significant criminal history.

The DOC stated that because federal statements have repeatedly included inaccurate information about Minnesota custody and criminal records, the agency reviewed available records to determine whether the individual referenced had any connection to Minnesota state prison custody.

Based on DOC records and publicly available Minnesota court data:

- The individual identified by federal officials has never been in Minnesota DOC custody.
- DOC and court records show no felony commitments associated with this
- Public Minnesota court records reflect only misdemeanor-level traffic offenses from more than a decade ago.
- The individual is not currently under DOC supervision.

"DOC records further indicate that an individual by this name was previously held in federal immigration custody in a local Minnesota jail in 2018, during President Trump's first administration. Any decisions regarding release from federal custody at that time would have been made by federal authorities. DOC has no information explaining why this individual was released," the news release stated.

U.S. Department of Homeland Security Secretary Kristi Noem publicly stated that the Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension investigators would not be allowed to investigate the shooting because the state "refuses to cooperate with ICE."

"That statement is incorrect," the news release stated. "Minnesota DOC does cooperate with ICE to facilitate custody transfers for individuals subject to federal detainees. That cooperation was publicly confirmed on January 22 by Marcos Charles, Acting Executive Associate Director of ICE, during a federal press conference, and again by Vice President J.D. Vance during his remarks the same day. The inaccurate assertions of these high-level ICE officials are untrue, reckless, and contrary to longstanding practice."

The new web page serves as a central hub for information, including facts showing a verified point-in-time count of non-citizens in state custody, press releases providing accurate information about DHS's "worst of the worst" lists, and videos — including Thursday's press conference and custody transfer footage — that refutes DHS's assertions of a lack of coordination between DOC and ICE.

"DOC will continue to review facts carefully, correct the record when necessary, and share accurate, verifiable information with the media and the public," the agency stated.

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