

SURPRISE GOVERNMENT INSPECTIONS & AUDITS

OSHA INSPECTIONS

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) conducts workplace inspections to evaluate the health and safety conditions of employers' workplaces. Most of these inspections occur without advance notice to the employer to ensure that employers are always in compliance with health and safety standards. While employers may have some trepidation when an OSHA inspector arrives unexpectedly, there are things that employers can do to prevent and prepare for inspections.

WHY DO OSHA INSPECTIONS HAPPEN?

OSHA can conduct a surprise workplace inspection for several reasons, but some kinds of employers and worksites are more likely to be targeted than others. The main reasons, in priority order, that OSHA may target a workplace for an inspection are:

- **Imminent danger**—High priority inspections that are triggered when an employee detects or suspects an imminently dangerous situation in the workplace. The employer may see the complaint but will not be privy to the employee that filed it.
- **Fatality/catastrophe**—A work incident results in an employee death or the hospitalization of at least three employees.
- **Unprogrammed inspections**—Initiated by an employee complaint about a suspected OSHA violation. The inspection is limited to the violation in the complaint.
- **Referral or tip inspections**—Initiated by a referral or tip from another agency.
- **Programmed inspections**—A scheduled, comprehensive inspection implemented under OSHA's standardized plan and typically targets high-hazard industries.



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HOW SHOULD EMPLOYERS PREPARE FOR INSPECTIONS?

Employers typically do not receive advance notice of an OSHA inspection. Thus, preparation for an unexpected audit requires the maintenance of health and safety standards and sound business practices. Employers can take the following steps now to be prepared if OSHA comes knocking:

1. **Have health and safety policies:** Prepare written safety policies and procedures including a program for employees to report their safety concerns. Set up a safety committee with both management and employee members to evaluate health and safety procedures, audit the workplace, and review safety incidents. You should keep records on OSHA 300 logs, safety data sheets, and safety training sign-in sheets. Many states require employers in various industries to set up safety committees and hold safety meetings:
 - **Washington:** Employers must have safety meetings and/or a safety committee with differing requirements depending on the employer's size and industry. WAC 296-800-130 applies to employers under general industry requirements, WAC 296-155-110 (5)(a) applies to construction employers, and WAC 296-307-033 applies to agricultural employers.
 - **Oregon:** Employers must have safety committees and/or hold safety meetings unless they are composed of a sole owner who is the only employee. General industry and construction employers must follow OAR 437-001-0765, agricultural employers must follow OAR 437-004-0251, forest activity employers must follow OAR 437-007-0130(4).
 - **California:** While safety committees are not specifically required in California, employers must establish a written Injury and Illness Prevention Program (IIPP) which includes establishing a system to identify workplace hazards and to communicate with employees on health and safety matters.
2. **Conduct internal audits:** Either the safety committee or a third-party auditor should be scheduled for periodic health and safety audits. Include legal counsel in these internal audits to give privilege protections and compare audits to track if issue items are being addressed.
3. **Staff training on OSHA inspections:** Staff should be trained on the employer's health and safety policies and procedures in the case a surprise OSHA inspection occurs. Regular trainings should also cover OSHA standards and the employer's health and safety policies and procedures for their workplace and occupation, including:
 - Any special safety procedures needed for the occupation, i.e. fall protection guidelines,
 - Identifying and reporting hazards,
 - What personal protective equipment (PPE) should be worn and how to wear and maintain PPE,
 - Proper tools and PPE storage,
 - Basic first aid and fire safety, and
 - What to do in the case of an incident.

- 4. Create a written OSHA response plan and an OSHA team:** Designate a team responsible for directing the OSHA inspection and creating policies and procedures for surprise inspections. The team should include a management spokesperson, a walkaround escort for all shifts, and a document manager/photographer (this may be the same person as the walkaround escort). An employer may consider adding a union and/or contractor liaison to the team if they are going to act as the employee representative on the walkaround. The team should:
- Dictate a walkaround route that minimizes the “plain view” of areas not subject to inspection in place.
 - Designate who will contact management, the members of the team, the employee representative (this can be a third-party including a non-employee union representative if that is what the employees elect), and OSHA counsel when an inspection occurs.
 - Encourage employees to choose an employee representative in the case of an OSHA inspection. Both the employer and the employee are permitted a representative that escorts the OSHA inspector on the walkaround, but the inspector will choose a representative if there is no authorized representative.
 - An OSHA inspector may allow other people to join the walkaround if they will further aid the inspection.
 - The team can designate different escorts for different phases of the inspection as long as this does not interfere with the inspection.

WHAT TO DO WHEN OSHA SHOWS UP?

In the case that an OSHA inspector shows up at your workplace there are ways that you can use your company’s preparation to protect your business during the inspection. Given that OSHA inspections should proceed according to Chapter 3 of the [OSHA Field Operations Manual](#), here are the steps to take during an inspection:

- 1. Review the Certified Safety and Health Official’s (CSHO) credentials** and note their name and address.
 - Be sure to exclude any third parties from the inspection process. Only the inspector and the selected inspection team should be involved.
- 2. Determine the purpose and scope of the inspection**, including what the CSHO is there to inspect. If the inspection was triggered by a complaint, you may ask for a copy of the complaint before consenting to inspection. The employer should also determine if the CSHO has an inspection warrant.
 - OSHA may not inspect a workplace without administrative probable cause and a warrant.
 - If there is no warrant the employer may:
 - Refuse to allow the CSHO to conduct the inspection (this may risk a more lengthy or rigorous inspection in the future), or
 - Use the lack of a warrant to negotiate down the scope and length of the inspection and only permit entry on the negotiated terms.

3. **Mobilize the inspection team** and proceed according to the employer's OSHA inspection policy and procedures.
4. **Begin the opening conference procedures**, which will involve the CSHO requesting records (i.e. the injury log, the hazard communication plan, the OSHA poster, and written safety programs), involving employee or union liaisons, and laying out inspection ground rules (i.e. if photographs or videos will be permitted and who will go on the physical inspection).
5. **Conduct the walkaround** following the pre-organized route tailored to the scope and purpose of the inspection. The employer and employee representatives should accompany the inspector at all times.
 - The employer should note anything that qualifies as a trade secret so that there is limited access to the inspection records on materials containing trade secrets.
 - The employer representative should document the inspection carefully and replicate any pictures, samples, or measurements taken by the inspector.
 - Any employer representative on the walkaround or throughout the inspection should take great care when answering questions as they may be admissible in a proceeding before the Occupational Safety and Health Review Commission (OSHRC).
6. **Participate in the closing conference** following the walkaround. During the closing conference the CSHO will point out violations identified on the walkaround and gather additional information on workplace conditions. The employer may choose for the closing conference to be in private with the CSHO to discuss alleged violations.
7. **Contestation of citations and proposed penalties** must happen within 15 working days from the receipt of the citation by filing a Notice of Contest with the OSHRC.

At all times during an inspection the employer and the inspection team should be accommodating and civil to the OSHA inspector. Good faith goes a long way in OSHA's eyes, but beyond that it is essential that you don't do anything that can be viewed as an obstruction of the investigation. While you do not need to volunteer additional information, don't do anything that would prevent the inspector from doing their job; otherwise, your business could face criminal penalties.

THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR INVESTIGATIONS

The United States Department of Labor (DOL) may conduct a surprise inspection of your workplace to evaluate compliance with the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA). Federally these investigations are carried out by the Wage and Hour Division (WHD) and can be initiated due to an employee complaint or a targeted investigation initiative from WHD. Investigation initiatives often target low-wage industries and industries undergoing rapid growth or decline with the goal of improving compliance in those industries or localities.

HOW SHOULD EMPLOYERS PREPARE FOR INVESTIGATIONS?

Like OSHA inspections employers are not typically given advance notice of WHD investigations, as such preparation requires a maintenance of standards and sound business practices. Employers can take the following steps now to be prepared if WHD comes knocking:

1. **Conduct self-audits** on a semi-regular basis to correct any compliance gaps and identify wage and hour issues happening throughout the company. The self-audits should cover employee classifications, independent contractor classifications, internship information, wage payments, hours worked records, off-the-clock work, safe harbor policies, break time for nursing mothers, child labor, recordkeeping, posters and notice requirements, and any state, local, or industry-specific requirements.
2. **Develop investigation protocols** including assembling a team of employees that will be in charge of facilitating WHD investigations and for creating, updating, and auditing (see point one) the employer's wage and hour policies.
 - The WHD Investigation Response Team should be comprised of senior management, field supervisors, and wage and hour counsel, and should have a designated leader, opening and closing conference participants, on-site representatives, a document production manager, contractor and union liaisons, and an interview representative.
 - WHD inspection protocols should cover getting the inspector's credentials, the decision to cooperate or demand a subpoena, a notification plan to the investigation response team, the location for opening/closing conferences, and how the investigation will be handled.
 - The employer should ensure that employees are trained on wage and hour compliance and on what to do in the case of an on-site inspection from initial contact to employer and employee rights.
3. **Know your rights as an employer.** As an employer, you must allow a WHD investigator to conduct an inspection and interviews, and to inspect payroll and tax records along with other key evidence. But you have rights in the process, including the right to:
 - Refuse to allow the WHD on-site without a search warrant,
 - **Request a period of 72 hours** to comply with any investigative demand,
 - Request that the interviews and on-site inspection take place at reasonable times,
 - Participate in the DOL's opening conference,
 - Escort the WHI through inspections of the workplace,
 - Participate in management interviews,
 - Protect trade secrets and confidential business information,
 - Participate in the DOL's closing conference, and
 - Contest alleged violations.

WHAT DOES A WHD INSPECTION LOOK LIKE?

According to the [DOL](#) an investigation consists of the following steps:

1. **Examination of records** to determine which laws or exemptions apply. These records include, for example, those showing the employer's annual dollar volume of business transactions, involvement in interstate commerce, and work on government contracts. Information from an employer's records will not be revealed to unauthorized persons.
2. **Examination of payroll and time records**, and taking notes or making transcriptions or photocopies essential to the investigation.
3. **Interviews with certain employees in private.** The purpose of these interviews is to verify the employer's payroll and time records, to identify workers' particular duties in sufficient detail to decide which exemptions apply, if any, and to confirm that minors are legally employed. Interviews are normally conducted on the employer's premises. In some instances, present and former employees may be interviewed at their homes or by mail or telephone.
4. **A meeting with the employer.** When all the fact-finding steps have been completed, the investigator will ask to meet with the employer and/or a representative of the firm who has authority to reach decisions and commit the employer to corrective actions if violations have occurred. The employer will be told whether violations have occurred and, if so, what they are and how to correct them. If back wages are owed to employees because of minimum wage or overtime violations, the investigator will request payment of back wages and may ask the employer to compute the amounts due.

WHAT TO DO DURING WHD INVESTIGATIONS?

In the case that a WHD investigator shows up at your workplace, there are ways that you can use your company's preparation to protect your business during the inspection. Critically, if WHD shows up at an inopportune time or when the on-site representative is not present, you may request to schedule for a different time within a 72-hour window to comply with the investigative demand. Some steps you should take in the investigation process are:

1. **Verify the investigator's credentials and purpose.** Note the name and address of the investigator and get the purpose and scope of the inspection. In this phase, an employer should ask for a warrant or a subpoena and may choose if they would like to refuse access without a warrant or use it as an opportunity to negotiate the scope.
 - You may want to consent if:
 - The scope is reasonable,
 - The WHD investigator is willing to return on another day, or
 - The employer has had sufficient time to comply and does not wish to risk a more rigorous inspection later.

- You may want to demand a subpoena if:
 - The investigator will not permit you to get an extension,
 - The investigation would interfere with normal business operations,
 - The interviews or inspection are not at reasonable times,
 - There is no opening/closing conference, or
 - You feel you cannot properly protect trade secrets, accompany the investigator, or manage information flow during the investigation.
- 2. Notify the investigation team.** The investigation team should be present throughout the entire inspection and the opening and closing conferences. Union and contract liaisons should also be notified of the investigation.
- 3. Escort the investigator** throughout the entire process and document the inspection including mimicking photographs or samples that the inspector takes. You should also flag any trade secrets or confidential information for the investigator to ensure higher confidentiality of investigation documents.
- 4. If you are permitted an extension or advance notice of an investigation, you should **prepare documents that may be produced and employees that may be interviewed.**
 - You should label all documents with identifying numbers and the words “Confidential and Proprietary.” This will help keep the documents organized for possible settlement negotiations or litigation. An employer should keep a copy of every document that it produces during the investigation.
 - For the employee interviews, you should prepare employees for what to expect in an interview, including:
 - Possible interview questions,
 - The applicable policies and procedures that may come up,
 - Reminders that the interviews are voluntary. They may request a representative in the meeting and refuse recording of the meeting,
 - Remind employees that they may examine any documents that come up in interview questions.
- 5. Respond to an adverse finding.** An employer that receives an adverse finding and back wages owed from a WHD investigation has several options. The employer may:
 - Accept the findings and pay the back wages,
 - Resolve disputed findings and negotiate reduced amounts at an informal settlement conference with the investigator,
 - Contest the findings and negotiate a formal settlement with the DOL’s counsel, or
 - Contest the findings, prepare a defense, and proceed to trial in court.

FEDERAL IMMIGRATION SURPRISE INSPECTIONS AND SANCTUARY CITIES

The new Trump Administration is heavily focused on immigration enforcement and increased detention and deportation of non-citizens. This increase in enforcement primarily relies on the Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agency, with assistance from other federal enforcement resources as well as state and local law enforcement when permitted by the state. ICE has also increased the frequency and breadth of industries for surprise inspections causing many employers to seek resources for them and their employees on what to do in the case of an inspection.

ICE's current policy is to seek "all aliens who violate U.S. Immigration law" in their raids "regardless of their criminal histories." See [ICE FAQs](#).

EMPLOYER CONSIDERATIONS

ICE most frequently interacts with employers in two ways: workplace raids and I-9 audits. I-9 audits require a Notice of Inspection from ICE, and give the employer three days' notice to prepare for the inspection. Workplace raids or investigations give the employer no advanced notice of the inspection. While an employer can voluntarily allow ICE officials to enter the workplace, ICE cannot forcibly enter without **a judicial search warrant signed by a judge or magistrate**. The warrant must describe the areas to be searched and the items to be seized.

To prepare for a surprise ICE inspection or raid, employers should:

- **Create a written response plan:** The plan should designate whose role and responsibility it is to handle ICE and what other employees should do throughout the inspection.
 - When ICE arrives at your worksite you should call your lawyer immediately and tell ICE that you are doing so.
 - Get the name of the officers and verify their credentials.
 - Review the warrant ICE provides and ensure that it is signed by a judge or magistrate and that the inspection stays within the scope of the warrant. If they do not have a warrant, then you do not need to permit them to carry out the inspection.
 - Determine company policy on recording or taking notes during the inspection. You are allowed to record the inspection.
 - Designate someone to contact the families of any employees that are detained during an inspection.
 - Notify union representatives about the enforcement action if any union members are detained in the inspection.

- **Instruct employees on how to interact with ICE** officers and of the employees' rights, including that employees:
 - should NOT run away; this could give grounds for an arrest,
 - should remain calm and professional throughout the inspection,
 - have the right to remain silent and the right to an attorney,
 - do not have to answer questions pertaining to their immigration status, show identification documents, or stand in groups according to their immigration status.
- **Maintain updated and accurate I-9 documentation** for all employees.
- **Establish private or non-public areas** within your worksite. Unless clearly stated on the warrant, employers do not need to allow ICE officers into clearly non-public areas.
 - Post "Private" or "Employees Only" signs on non-public spaces and keep the doors to those areas shut and locked when possible.
 - Create a policy designating those areas as closed to the public and train employees on the policy.

CAN THE STATE HELP ICE? SANCTUARY LAWS

There are many states and municipalities that have passed laws, regulations, or policies restricting their law enforcement departments from assisting or granting resources to ICE surprise inspections.

As a part of Executive Order 14287 (laying out the consequences of being labeled a sanctuary city) the Department of Justice published a list of jurisdictions that it now considers to be "Sanctuary Cities." This list includes cities and jurisdictions with formal laws and policies, but also jurisdictions that take non-cooperative actions against ICE without refusing to cooperate entirely with surprise inspections. California, Washington, and Oregon are all on this list with San Diego and San Francisco counties and the cities of Los Angeles, Berkeley, San Francisco, Portland, and Seattle all named specifically. Employers located in these cities should be aware that there has been a notable increase in workplace ICE inspections in these cities. And the Trump Administration has noted an increased targeting of these cities by ICE, including an increased amount of worksite inspections, including Los Angeles, Portland, and Seattle as high priorities.¹

California, Oregon, and Washington State are among the states that have statewide sanctuary laws restricting various officials, including law enforcement, school resource officers, and state or local agencies from assisting in federal immigration inspections. Alaska and Idaho do not have statewide laws, and Idaho has no cities or municipalities that have any limitations on assisting law enforcement in surprise immigration inspections.

¹ In August of 2025, Tom Homan, the White House Executive Associate Director of Enforcement and Removal Operations or the "Border Czar," noted that there will be a ramp up of ICE operations in New York, Los Angeles, Chicago, Portland, and Seattle. <https://www.newsweek.com/trump-admin-sanctuary-cities-ice-operations-deportations-increase-2120910>.

Washington

Washington is a sanctuary law state, therefore employers need to be aware of compliance with federal as well as state laws relating to immigration issues. Washington State's 2019 sanctuary law, called the "[Keep Washington Working Act](#) (KWWA)," is quite broad, applying to all state agencies and state resources. The law prohibits any use of state agency personnel or resources for investigating, enforcing, cooperating with, or assisting with enforcing federal immigration laws or other laws that "target" residents based on race, religion, immigration status, citizenship status, or national/ethnic origin. The same law requires state and local law enforcement agencies and public schools, courthouses, and public health facilities (including shelters) to adopt policies limiting cooperation with or providing access to federal immigration enforcement officers.

As a part of KWWA, Washington enacted RCW 10.93.160 limiting law enforcement and other like agencies which include in part:

- School resource officers—cannot inquire about immigration status or provide information to ICE.
- State and local law enforcement—cannot collect information regarding immigration status or provide information to federal immigration enforcement, give ICE access to interview those in custody unless they consent, detain individuals solely due to their immigration status.
- The Department of Corrections—may not give ICE access to interview individuals without a court order or consent.

The Washington State Attorney General provides model policies for all such state and local agencies, which are required to adopt and comply with these model policies:

[Know Your Rights: Civil Immigration Enforcement in Washington | Washington State](#).

The Attorney General also maintains a "Know Your Rights" page on the same website, relating to immigration enforcement in Washington, including advice for immigrants if an immigration enforcement officer approaches them. The same page also includes links to nonprofit organizations that assist immigrants with legal compliance issues.

The Washington State Department of Social and Health Services maintains a web page with general information on immigration laws, continuation of public benefits regardless of immigration status, and advice for immigrants on what to do if immigration officials appear at work or home: [Planning for Changes in Federal Immigration Policies and Practices | DSHS](#). This web page includes links to information on immigrant rights in six different languages.

Resources on Washington Cities

- **Seattle** City employees must refrain from inquiring about immigration status.
 - <https://www.seattle.gov/iandraffairs/issues-and-policies/seattle-immigration-policy-faq>
- **Tacoma** is not an official sanctuary city, but Tacoma passed Resolution 2017-049, which affirmed the county's commitment to providing services to all residents regardless of immigration status and stated that county resources would not be used to enforce federal immigration law.

- **Spokane**—The City Council passed a symbolic resolution to commit to enforcing KWWA and restrict Spokane law enforcement from supporting the enforcement of federal immigration laws. <https://www.spokesman.com/stories/2025/feb/10/spokane-voices-support-for-washingtons-sanctuary-l/>
- However, **Spokane Valley** has declared itself to not be a sanctuary city, and is declaring that it does not agree with KWWA.
 - https://www.thecentersquare.com/washington/article_331ea233-bafb-4f58-9f3e-b80923761f42.html
- **Olympia** is a sanctuary city but does not hold any notable policies beyond the KWAA.
 - https://www.olympiawa.gov/community/sanctuary_city.php

Oregon

Oregon is a longstanding sanctuary state, with the first law passed in 1987 (HB 2314), and revised in 2021 with the name the Sanctuary Promise Act (HB 3265) ensuring that generally Oregon public bodies and law enforcement agencies cannot be involved in federal immigration enforcement efforts. Therefore, employers need to be aware of compliance with federal as well as state laws relating to immigration issues. Oregon's sanctuary law, codified under ORS 180.805, ORS 180.810, and ORS 181A.820 to 181A.829, applies only to public entities such as public schools, law enforcement, and corrections from cooperating with or providing information to federal immigration officials. All state and local officials must require a warrant before allowing federal immigration authorities from entering a non-public space or providing information to these authorities. Hospitals, healthcare facilities, [public schools](#), law enforcement, and other groups have additional requirements and restrictions on their actions with respect to federal immigration authorities: [Oregon Department of Justice Sanctuary Promise Guidance - Oregon Department of Justice](#).

Oregon Department of Justice's "[Sanctuary Promise Community Toolkit](#)" provides detailed information on employer rights/duties if ICE comes to visit the worksite.

The above "community toolkit" also contains information and links that employers can give to employees to provide information on their rights. The English version of one such resource is here (the information is also available in Spanish and other languages, see the "community toolkit" above).

Resources on Oregon Cities

- **Portland** declared itself to be a sanctuary city in 2017 and City employees will not enforce any federal immigration laws, Portland police officers will not cooperate with ICE agents except as is required by federal law, city money will not go to ICE, and city equipment cannot be used to enforce federal immigration law.
 - <https://www.portland.gov/federal/sanctuary-city>
 - <https://www.portland.gov/police/documents/immigration-faq/download>
- **Eugene** is not declared to be a sanctuary city, but it did pass an ordinance in 2017 for the Protection of all Eugene residents including immigrants.
 - <https://www.eugene-or.gov/4060/Immigrants-and-Refugees>

- **Corvallis** declared itself a sanctuary city in 2016 but does not have any additional listed policies beyond that of Oregon State.
- **Salem** is not officially a sanctuary city, but the police has recently reiterated its [non-involvement policy on immigration matters](#).

California

California is a sanctuary law state, therefore employers need to be aware of compliance with federal as well as state laws relating to immigration issues. California's SB 54 from 2017, called the "California Values Act," established legal limitations on the use of state and local government resources for federal immigration law enforcement. California law enforcement officials are prohibited from investigating, interrogating, detaining, or arresting persons for immigration enforcement purposes. Additionally, law enforcement, prison officials, and others are prohibited from honoring transfer or notification requests in most circumstances. See [California SB 54](#).

The California Attorney General maintains a resources page with information for immigrants as well as law enforcement agencies: [Resources for California's Immigrant Communities | State of California - Department of Justice - Office of the Attorney General](#). The California Civil Rights Department also maintains information and resources lists for immigrants: [Resources for Immigrants | CRD](#). Employers can also review this [California Guide](#) on ICE inspections.

Resources on California Cities

- **San Francisco** is a sanctuary city and first passed the "City and County of Refuge" Ordinance in 1989 which prohibits City funds or resources going to assisting ICE. San Francisco added to those protections in 2013 with the "Due Process for All" Ordinance that limits when City law enforcement officers may give ICE advance notice of a person's release from local jail and prohibits cooperation with ICE detainer requests. San Francisco allows people to file complaints of violations of these ordinances.
 - <https://www.sf.gov/information--sanctuary-city-ordinance>
 - <https://www.sf.gov/file-sanctuary-city-ordinance-complaint>
- **Los Angeles** is a sanctuary city and prohibits any City resources, including property or personnel, from being utilized for any immigration enforcement. Los Angeles approved an [ordinance in 2024](#) to declare its sanctuary status and policies. In July of 2025, Los Angeles Mayor, Karen Bass, reiterated L.A.'s sanctuary status in [Executive Directive No. 12](#).
- **Berkley** is a sanctuary city and has been for the purposes of immigration since 1986. The Berkely City Council reiterated this status at the beginning of 2025 in passing a new resolution reiterating the policy of no city funds or resources going to federal immigration enforcement.
 - <https://berkeleyca.gov/sites/default/files/documents/2025-01-21%20Item%2027%20Reaffirming%20Berkeley%20as%20a%20Sanctuary%20City.pdf>
- **Sacramento** is a sanctuary city and it reinforced that status with [Resolution No. 2017-0158](#) in 2017 stating among other things, that "No City official . . . shall use any City funds or resources to enforce federal civil immigration law."

- **San Diego** is a sanctuary city and recently passed an ordinance called [L-2 – Cooperation with U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement](#), which goes beyond the California Values Act in that it prohibits cooperation with federal immigration enforcement even for people convicted of serious felonies.
 - <https://www.sandiego.gov/police/immigration>
- **Oakland** is a longstanding sanctuary city with policy passed in 1986 and reaffirmed in 2007 and 2019. Signed in 2019, [Ordinance No. 13515](#) states that the Oakland Police Department cannot assist in ICE operations, including traffic support, unless public safety is threatened.

Idaho

Idaho is not a sanctuary law state, therefore employers need only be concerned with compliance with federal immigration laws. Idaho's Governor Brad Little issued [Executive Order 2025-03](#), titled "Border Security and Immigration Enforcement Act," on February 18, 2025, expressing support for the Trump Administration's efforts towards increased border security and enforcement of immigration laws. Governor Little's Executive Order requires all state departments and agencies to review all rules and practices to ensure compliance with federal immigration laws. Additionally, the Executive Order requires Idaho State Police and the Idaho Department of Correction to cooperate with federal agencies and departments for enforcement of immigration laws.

The Idaho State Bar maintains a list of public resources for immigration-related services by local nonprofit organizations: [Immigration Matters | Idaho State Bar](#).

Alaska

Alaska is not a sanctuary law state, therefore employers need only be concerned with compliance with federal immigration laws. Anchorage has been labeled a "welcoming city" but is not officially a sanctuary city. Alaska appears to be taking a moderate stance towards immigration law enforcement thus far.

Alaska's state library maintains a page for immigration and citizenship resources and topics, including links to local and national organizations available to assist with citizenship, legal status, and asylum seekers. See [Home - Immigration & Citizenship Resources - Libraries, Archives, Museums at Alaska State Library. Anchorage](#).

Montana

Montana is not a sanctuary law state. In fact, since 2021, Montana has had a state law banning cities from becoming sanctuary cities and prohibiting state agencies from restricting cooperation with federal immigration authorities. For this reason, employers in Montana should focus on compliance with federal immigration laws.

The Montana Legal Services Association maintains a web page with information on refugee and immigration rights in Montana, including local resources: [Immigration | Montana Law Help](#).

Disclaimer: This summary is not legal advice and is based upon current statutes, regulations, and related guidance that is subject to change, with or without notice. It is provided solely for informational and educational purposes and does not fully address the complexity of the issues or steps employers must take under applicable laws. For legal advice on these or related issues, please consult qualified legal counsel directly.