



**For Immediate Release: July 10, 2018**

**Contact:** Mia Taylor, [mtaylor@tenantsandworkers.org](mailto:mtaylor@tenantsandworkers.org), 571-269-8107  
Simon Sandoval-Moshenberg, [simon@justice4all.org](mailto:simon@justice4all.org), 703-720-5605

## **Alexandria Sheriff Moves to Reduce Collaboration with ICE, But More Is Needed** ***Immigrants' Rights Groups Demand Alexandria Jail Sever Ties With ICE***

ALEXANDRIA, VA: Alexandria Sheriff Dana Lawhorne's recent commitment to reduce collaboration with Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) is a positive step forward, but more changes are needed in order to live up to [the City's Statement on Inclusiveness](#).

Sheriff Lawhorne announced yesterday that for immigrants serving a sentence imposed by a judge, his jail will no longer honor ICE requests to hold them past their scheduled release dates. For immigrants ordered released on bond, or eligible for release after time served, the jail will only hold them for 16 hours for ICE (or up to 24 hours in extenuating circumstances), no matter what day of the week. Sheriff Lawhorne will also institute timekeeping policies and regular weekly audits to make sure no one is held beyond the time allowed under this new policy.

Previously, the jail would honor ICE requests to hold both pretrial and post-conviction immigrant detainees for up to two business days past their scheduled release dates, not including weekends and holidays. In 2017, the Alexandria City Jail turned over 105 people to ICE, up nearly double from 2016. More than half of those were merely awaiting trial and had not been convicted of a crime. Alexandria also allows ICE to use its jail as a short-term holding facility for immigrants arrested anywhere at all, a practice which will not change after yesterday's announcement.

"Thank you, Sheriff, for your willingness to engage with the community and revisit your practices. We are encouraged that you describe this as a 'first step.' And it is a step in the right direction," said Simon Sandoval-Moshenberg, legal director of the Legal Aid Justice Center's Immigrant Advocacy Program. "But 16 extra hours in jail for immigrants is still 16 hours too long. Immigrants should be treated no differently than citizens: after they post bail, they should be allowed to walk out the front door."

"There is no law that compels the jail to transfer people to ICE," said Mia Taylor, organizer with Tenants and Workers United. "Local law enforcement should not be enforcing the laws of a broken federal immigration system."

"We are hearing a tremendous outpouring of concern from our friends and neighbors in Alexandria," said Jonathan Krall from Grassroots Alexandria. "The jail is one place where we have the power to make a change."

On June 18, Alexandria's other jail, the Northern Virginia Regional Juvenile Detention Center, announced that, effective September, it will stop renting beds to the federal government to detain unaccompanied immigrant children. But with yesterday's announcement, the Alexandria Adult Detention Center will continue to act as a short-term holding facility for ICE, both for immigrants arrested by local police in Alexandria and for immigrants arrested by ICE anywhere else.

ICE has come under fire for inhumane tactics including racial profiling, warrantless entry into homes, and the breaking up of families. The time has come for Alexandria to entirely sever ties with that agency.

\* \* \*

*[Tenants and Workers United](#) builds power in low-income, immigrant communities of color to improve the quality of our lives in Northern Virginia. We organize and support people to be agents of change in their own lives by addressing the issues they care about.*

*[Legal Aid Justice Center](#) is a statewide Virginia nonprofit organization whose mission is to strengthen the voices of low-income communities and root out the inequities that keep people in poverty. We provide legal support to immigrant communities facing legal crises, and use advocacy and impact litigation to fight back against ICE enforcement and detention abuses. Our 'De-ICE Virginia' campaign seeks to sever the ties between local law enforcement and ICE.*

*[Grassroots Alexandria](#) promotes local, non-partisan, long-term conversations, community education and action towards positive solutions by those who are moved to act on their conscience.*