

# News Release

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## 15 arrested in Milwaukee during operation targeting foreign-born gang members

MILWAUKEE, Wis. — Local U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents, in close partnership with the Milwaukee Police Department (MPD), arrested 15 illegal alien gang members during the last two days. This is the latest joint local action of an ongoing national ICE effort to target foreign-born members of violent street gangs.

These arrests were made June 2-3 under an initiative by ICE's National Gang Unit dubbed "Operation Community Shield." As part of the initiative, ICE partners with federal, state and local law enforcement agencies across the country to target the significant public safety threat posed by transnational street gangs. Partnerships with local law enforcement agencies are essential to the initiative's success, and they help further ensure officer safety during the operations.



All but one of those arrested are foreign-born members and associates of the following street gangs: Brown Pride, Latin Kings, Mexican Posse and C-14. Of the 15 men arrested, all are Mexican nationals except for one individual from the former Yugoslavia.

Twelve are currently in ICE custody on administrative immigration charges pending removal proceedings, including a fugitive with an outstanding deportation order. One was previously deported to Mexico and is facing federal charges for illegally re-entering the United States after deportation. Two are in MPD custody; ICE has placed detainers, or "immigration holds," on them to ensure they will be turned over to ICE for removal proceedings when they are released from local custody.



For privacy reasons, ICE does not release the names of those arrested on administrative immigration charges.

"Street gangs pose a growing public safety threat to communities in the Milwaukee area," said Gary Hartwig, special agent in charge of the ICE Office of Investigations in Chicago. "With each gang member we arrest and remove from the United States, we're making a positive impact in our communities and improving public safety."

"The Milwaukee Police Department's partnership with ICE on this operation will remove some of the violent gang members from the streets of the south side of Milwaukee," said Milwaukee Police Chief Edward A. Flynn. "In their absence, we hope to return the public spaces to the residents who rightfully should be able to enjoy them and to live free from crime, fear and disorder."

ICE's National Gang Unit identifies violent street gangs and develops intelligence on their membership, associates, criminal activities and international movements to deter, disrupt and dismantle gang operations by tracing and seizing cash, weapons and other assets derived from criminal activities.

Through Operation Community Shield, the federal government uses its powerful immigration and customs law enforcement authorities in a coordinated, national campaign against criminal street gangs in the United States. Transnational street gangs have significant numbers of foreign-born members and are frequently involved in human and contraband smuggling, immigration violations and other crimes with a connection to the border.

Since ICE began Operation Community Shield in February 2005, more than 17,500 gang members and associates belonging to more than 900 different gangs have been arrested nationwide.

More information on the National Gang Unit at ICE is available at: [www.ice.gov](http://www.ice.gov).

The public is encouraged to report suspicious activity by calling the ICE toll-free hotline at: 1-866-347-2423. This hotline is staffed around the clock.

# ICE #

*U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement was established in March 2003 as the largest investigative arm of the Department of Homeland Security. ICE is comprised of four integrated divisions that form a 21st century law enforcement agency with broad responsibilities for a number of key homeland security priorities.*