OFFICE OF THE HENNEPIN COUNTY ATTORNEY
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Minnesota Truth Council
130 State Capitol
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Saint Paul, MN 55155

Re: Public Safety Impacts of Operation Metro Surge and Recent Immigration Enforcement Actions

This submission by the Hennepin County Attorney's Office explains how Operation Metro Surge and recent immigration enforcement actions disrupted the county's public safety system and made Hennepin County residents less safe. It also documents some of our office's efforts before, during, and after Operation Metro Surge, to enhance public safety, advocate for victims, and seek accountability when federal agents harmed our community.

I. Before Operation Metro Surge, the Hennepin County Attorney's Office built trust with immigrant communities and opposed legislation that threatened that trust

A. Victims and witnesses fear that local police are collaborating with ICE

The Hennepin County Attorney's Office (HCAO) recognizes that it is in the interest of public safety for immigrants, regardless of their legal status, to feel comfortable coming forward and cooperating with law enforcement when they witness a crime or are themselves victimized. Conversely, community safety suffers when vital information never reaches police because witnesses and victims are afraid that coming forward could result in them getting swept up in unrelated immigration enforcement. Unfortunately, those concerns have too often been well founded, especially where local police actively collaborate with immigration authorities. Further, immigration enforcement agents have been observed around the country employing deceptive tactics to make it difficult to distinguish them from local police.[1]

[1] "Immigration Deportation Ruses," *Los Angeles Times* (Feb. 19, 2017).

Over the past year, the number of formal partnerships between local law enforcement agencies and Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) has grown dramatically. In January 2025, ICE had formal partnerships, known as 287(g) agreements, with 133 state and local law enforcement agencies.[2] As of October 2026, that number has grown to over 2,600.[3] By January of this year, it was already the case that nearly one in three Americans lived in a county with a local enforcement agency that has a formal partnership with ICE.[4]

Minnesota has not been immune from these trends. According to the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS), statewide, four sheriff's offices[5] and two city police departments[6] have active partnerships with ICE.[7] Hennepin County, along with other counties in the Twin Cities metro area, have resisted these trends, rightly maintaining the focus on how to keep our communities safe. Three sheriff's offices[8] paused their formal partnerships with ICE after the Minnesota Attorney General's Office issued an opinion concluding that county sheriffs may not enter into such agreements without approval from their respective county boards.[9]

[2] Amnesty Int'l, "We Had Whistles, They Had Guns: Human Rights Violations in U.S. Immigration Enforcement Operations and the Case to Abolish ICE" 29 (Sep. 24, 2026).

[3] U.S. Immigr. & Cust. Enf't, "Delegation of Immigration Authority Section 287(g) Immigration and Nationality Act."

[4] ACLU, *Deputized for Disaster – How President Trump's Supersized 287(g) Deportation Force is a Powder Keg for Law Enforcement, Our Communities, and Our Democracy* 39 n.4 (Feb. 26, 2026).

[5] The sheriff's offices of Crow Wing County, Freeborn County, Kandiyohi County, and Mille Lacs County have active partnerships with ICE.

[6] The city police departments of International Falls and Isle have active partnerships with ICE.

[7] ICE, *Delegation of Immigration Authority – Section 287(g) Immigration and Nationality Act*, U.S. Immigration & Customs Enforcement (Mar. 24, 2020).

[8] The sheriff's offices of Cass County, Itasca County, and Sherburne County have paused their formal partnerships with ICE.

[9] Minn. Att'y Gen., *Formal Legal Opinion on County Sheriff 287(g) Agreements* (Dec. 12, 2025).

B. The HCAO implemented policies to build trust with immigrant communities

To encourage victims to report crimes, Congress created two forms of immigration relief for crime victims and their families: U visas and T visas.[10] This legislation requires that a victim obtain a certification from a law enforcement agency confirming that the victim was, is, or will be helpful in an investigation or prosecution, and that the victim suffered a qualifying crime.

A signature policy of the HCAO is our U Visa and T Visa Certification Policy, which the National Immigrant Women's Advocacy Project described as "a model for the country" when we implemented it on January 8, 2024.[11] The new policy eliminated previous HCAO practices that had left many eligible crime victims without a certification.

Since January 2024, our Immigration Policy Unit has issued 1,000 U visa or T visa certifications, more than twice the number issued in the previous 16 years combined.

Some law enforcement agencies in Minnesota decline to certify U visa and T visa forms for crime victims, claiming that doing so would involve their agency in the immigration system. In reality, signing these forms simply allows crime victims and their families to apply for immigration relief. It does not require participation in immigration enforcement activities. Without our U Visa and T Visa Certification Policy, which encouraged crime victims to participate in criminal investigation and prosecutions, our county may have been even less safe during Operation Metro Surge.

Community members may request a U visa or T visa certification from the HCAO by emailing visa@hennepin.us.

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[10] Immigration and Nationality Act (INA) 101(a)(15)(U)(iii) (8 U.S. Code (U.S.C.) 1101(a)(15)(U)(iii)); INA § 101(a)(15)(T) (8 U.S.C. § 1101(a)(15)(T))*; see also* U.S. Citizenship & Immigration Services, *U Visa Law Enforcement Resource Guide* (Aug. 1, 2019); U.S. Citizenship & Immigration Services, T Visa Law Enforcement Resource Guide.

[11] HCAO, *Policy to Support Noncitizen Victims of Crime, Increase Crime Reporting within Noncitizen Communities, and Improve Prosecutions* (Mar. 6, 2024).

C. The HCAO opposed the passage of laws that threatened crime victims and deteriorated community trust

Historically, noncitizens have faced significant collateral immigration consequences after being found guilty and convicted of certain offenses. Last year, the passage of Public Law 119-1 (commonly referred to as the Laken Riley Act) required DHS to also detain noncitizens merely *suspected* of certain offenses, including youth involved in minor property crimes, *before* any criminal charge or determination of guilt. The HCAO,[12] as well as a coalition of national and local victims' rights organizations,[13] publicly opposed the passage of this law because it would endanger crime victims and witnesses who fear that the suspects they report could retaliate by merely accusing them of these minor offenses. The law was subject to immediate legal challenges, which are ongoing. Last year, a federal judge held that a noncitizen's detention under Public Law 119-1 was unconstitutional.[14]

Under the Tenth Amendment, the federal government may not commandeer local law enforcement resources to carry out immigration enforcement. Nevertheless, last year, a Minnesota lawmaker introduced HF16, a bill designed to circumvent that limitation. On behalf of the HCAO, a prosecutor testified against HF16, which would require Minnesota's county attorneys to report certain arrested individuals to immigration authorities before any criminal charges are filed and before any determination of guilt. As that prosecutor explained, "HF16 would give violent and dangerous offenders a menu of false accusations to lodge against crime victims and witnesses to silence them or even disappear them out of the country."[15] HF16 was defeated in the House.[16]

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[12] HCAO, *Hennepin County Attorney Mary Moriarty, Victim and Advocacy Organizations, Urge U.S. Senate to Vote Against the Laken Riley Act* (Jan. 14, 2025).

[13] The National Network to End Domestic Violence, the Battered Women's Justice Project, the Alliance for Immigrant Survivors, and the Tahirih Justice Center, which supports immigrant survivors of gender-based violence, were among the victims' rights organization that opposed the bill. *See* Testimony by Casey Carter Swegman, Senate Briefing Testimony – Laken-Riley Act (Jan. 7, 2025).

[14] *Federal Court Declares Noncitizen's Detention Under Laken Riley Act Unconstitutional*, American Civil Liberties Union (Sep. 5, 2025).

[15] Minnesota House of Representatives, *Session Daily: Lawmakers consider bill to mandate reporting of undocumented immigrants* (Mar. 12, 2025).

[16] H.F. 16, 94th Leg., 1st Spec. Sess. (Minn. 2025).

II. During Operation Metro Surge, crime victims and witnesses were afraid to travel to court to testify in trials

Operation Metro Surge flooded the Twin Cities with an unprecedented number of immigration agents, many of whom engaged in highly aggressive, racially discriminatory, and unlawful enforcement activity.[17] This operation resulted in well-documented tragedies and had the foreseeable effect of discouraging immigrants' participation in legal proceedings, thus harming public safety.

A. Federal agents shot three Hennepin County residents, killing two

Between January 7 and January 24, 2026, federal agents shot three Hennepin County residents, killing two of them. When the federal government initially refused to cooperate with the Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension and the Hennepin County Attorney's Office on investigations into these shootings, the HCAO and the Minnesota Attorney General's Office launched online evidence-submission portals that would be used to collect evidence from the public.[18]

B. During Operation Metro Surge, federal agents raided Hennepin County courthouses

Before last year, it was the policy of the U.S. government to exercise caution when engaging in immigration enforcement in certain sensitive locations, including courthouses. Specifically, on April 27, 2021, DHS restricted immigration enforcement at courthouses to only four limited circumstances:

1. National security threat,
2. Imminent risk of death,
3. Hot pursuit of a public safety threat, or
4. Imminent risk of destruction of evidence material to a criminal case.[19]

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[17] On January 20, 2026, DHS celebrated one year since Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) had been "unleashed" on communities nationwide. U.S. Dep't of Homeland Sec., (Sep. 24, 2026), https://www.dhs.gov/news/2026/09/24/dhs-calls-sanctuary-politicians-stop-violent-rhetoric-against-ice-assaults-increase.

[18] HCAO & Minnesota Attorney General's Office, *Evidence Submission Portal: HCAO and MNAGO Announce Joint Effort to Collect and Preserve Evidence* (Jan. 9, 2026).

[19] U.S. Dep't of Homeland Sec., Directive 11072.2: Civil Immigration Enforcement Actions in or near Courthouses (Tae Johnson & Troy Miller, Apr. 27, 2021), at 2.

The second Trump administration changed that policy. On January 21, 2025, ICE issued a new policy permitting agents to freely carry out immigration enforcement inside courthouses, including the arrest of individuals who are not the intended targets, such as crime victims and witnesses appearing for trial.[20] One week later, there was reporting that ICE was arresting people in Hennepin County courthouses.[21]

On Monday, December 29, 2025, about two dozen federal agents raided the Minnetonka Ridgedale Service Center courthouse, which handles traffic and misdemeanor criminal cases. Those two dozen agents arrested two men: one with no apparent criminal history and the other with "a couple of traffic misdemeanor convictions."[22]

Screenshot of the video of the December 29 raid[23]

[20] U.S. Immigr. & Customs Enf't, *Interim Guidance: Civil Immigration Enforcement Actions in or Near Courthouses*, Policy No. 11072.3, at 2 (Jan. 2025).

[21] Sahan Journal, *ICE arrests target immigrants at Hennepin County courthouse* (Jan. 28, 2025).

[22] Lydia Morrell, KARE 11 (Jan. 1, 2026), https://www.kare11.com/article/news/local/ice-announces-names-of-people-arrested-outside-courtrooms-at-ridgedale-service-center/89-9440cf5d-da4f-490e-ab26-7404bea3b320.

[23] Bring Me The News, *2 Arrested During ICE Operation at Hennepin County Building in Minnetonka* (Dec. 30, 2025).

On February 5, 2026, federal agents arrested two people at the Hennepin County Government Center in Minneapolis. A witness to the arrest described a woman being "drag[ged]," in front of the elevators while screaming and crying.[24]

The next day, the Chief Justice of the Minnesota Supreme Court and the Chief Judge of Hennepin County's judicial district met with Border Czar Tom Homan and ICE's St. Paul Field Office Director Sam Olson. During that meeting the Chief Justice "agreed to allow [federal] agents in the [court] buildings," according to the Chief Justice's interview with The Minnesota Star Tribune.[25]

Four days after that meeting, on February 10, federal agents chased, tackled, and arrested a teenager at the Government Center.[26]

Photograph of the February 10 arrest, taken by *The Minnesota Star Tribune*[27]

[24] Laura Oakes, *Hennepin County sheriff's deputies reportedly drag woman off Government Center elevator, hand her over to ICE agents*, MSN (Feb. 5, 2026).
[25] Rochelle Olson, *Inside Chief Justice Hudson's Secretive Meeting with Border Czar Homan during Metro Surge*, *Star Tribune* (Sep. 24, 2026).
[26] Mike Manzoni, *ICE Agents Tackle, Arrest Man After He Leaves Court in Minneapolis*, FOX 9 Minneapolis–St. Paul (Feb. 10, 2026).
[27] Jeff Day, *Federal Agents Make a Chaotic Arrest at Downtown Minneapolis Courthouse Amid Swarm of Lawyers, Observers*, Star Tribune (Feb. 11, 2026).

In response to these courthouse arrests, the HCAO, alongside a law enforcement coalition that included the Minnesota Attorney General's Office, the Ramsey County Attorney's Office, the Minneapolis City Attorney's Office, and the Saint Paul City Attorney's Office, sent two letters to the Chief Justice, urging her to establish a policy prohibiting civil enforcement actions, including immigration enforcement, in courthouses. The request mirrored policies already in place in Connecticut and Oregon.

On March 6, 2026, the Chief Justice refused to adopt our recommended courthouse safety and access policy for the second time.[28]

C. Crime victims were and are afraid to travel to court

About a month before Operation Metro Surge, the HCAO spoke out against an order by the Supreme Court of United States that permitted federal agents to profile both U.S. citizens and noncitizens, including crime victims.[29] The effects of that order were felt in our county almost immediately.

Following the Supreme Court's order, over 35 crime victims in cases prosecuted by the HCAO reported feeling unsafe traveling to county courthouses. Some victims were so fearful that they left Minnesota and, in some cases, the United States entirely.

In response, our Victim Services Division expanded its remote service options, and our Immigration Policy Unit intensified its U visa efforts. However, when a criminal case goes to trial, victims must appear in person to testify, and our prosecutors were forced to dismiss multiple criminal cases.

The HCAO's Domestic Abuse Service Center (DASC) supports domestic abuse survivors with victim services, including assistance with filing protective orders known as Orders for Protection (OFPs). Filing an OFP does not require a domestic abuse survivor to interact with police. Although many crime victims felt unsafe during Operation Metro Surge, DASC expanded its remote services and helped domestic abuse survivors file 15.2% more OFPs than the previous year.[30]

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[28] Griswold, David, *MN Supreme Court Chief Justice Denies Order to Restrict Immigration Enforcement Inside State Courthouses* (Mar. 9, 2026).

[29] Hennepin County Attorney's Office, *HCAO Statement on SCOTUS Fourth Amendment Order*, (Oct. 24, 2025).

[30] Compared to the same period the previous year.

During Operation Metro Surge, local police departments had to divert significant resources to respond to public safety incidents stemming from Operation Metro Surge. In Minneapolis, police responded to more than 50,000 calls from December through February, and nine officers were hurt.[31] At the same time, and despite the uptick in 911 calls, local law enforcement agencies submitted 5.9% fewer criminal cases to our prosecutors for charging consideration during Operation Metro Surge when compared to the same period in the prior year. The overall share of cases HCAO prosecutors had to dismiss due to witness or evidence problems increased, according to our data. None of this helped promote public safety.

D. Federal agents detained defendants, removed defendants to other states, and deported defendants before our prosecutors could secure accountability, leaving crime victims without access to justice

The dramatic increase in immigration enforcement has meant that some defendants have managed to *evade* criminal accountability because they were deported before the HCAO could achieve a conviction. This result left many victims feeling that justice had not been served.

In 2017, ICE averaged fewer than 500 arrests per day nationally.[32] Last year, DHS leaders sharply escalated their expectations for immigration arrests. In May 2025, DHS Secretary Kristi Noem and White House aide Stephen Miller directed agents to detain 3,000 people per day.[33] Since then, ICE has detained more than 30 defendants in active HCAO prosecutions. Because ICE does not notify the HCAO when it deports a defendant we are prosecuting, our office has no way to determine their whereabouts. This uncertainty is deeply concerning, for the community and for the crime victims we serve.

ICE quickly removed some defendants to other states, including two defendants who were taken out of Minnesota within hours of being detained. In response, the HCAO sought court orders requiring ICE to return these defendants to the custody of the Hennepin County Sheriff's Office to be prosecuted.

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[31] Frankie McLister, Reg Chapman & Anthony Bettin, *Here's How Operation Metro Surge Impacted Twin Cities Police Departments*, CBS Minn. (Mar. 4, 2026).

[32] Chloe N. East, Caitlin Patler, & Elizabeth Cox, *ICE Arrests Across Trump's First and Second Terms: Variation in Targeting, Method, and Geography*, NBER Working Paper No. 34794, at 2 (Feb. 2026).

[33] Brittany Gibson & Stef W. Kight, *Stephen Miller, Noem Demand ICE Boost Immigrant Arrests*, *Axios* (May 28, 2025).

The HCAO was able to present ICE with state court orders directing the return of 20 defendants to the custody of the Hennepin County Sheriff's Office:

- ICE refused to return 9 defendants, disregarding state court orders,
- ICE was unable to return 3 defendants, and
- Only 8 defendants were returned to be prosecuted.

During Operation Metro Surge, multiple defendants asked the trial courts for permission to appear virtually because they did not feel safe traveling to the county government center. Some defendants simply failed to appear.

When a defendant fails to appear for a hearing, the court issues a failure-to-appear warrant. During Operation Metro Surge, such warrants were issued in nearly half of the HCAO's charged cases, 10% higher than the same period the previous year.[34]

Although immigration authorities frame their enforcement actions as promoting public safety, nearly two out of three immigrants arrested by ICE during Operation Metro Surge had no prior U.S. criminal history whatsoever.[35] Indeed, dozens of the arrestees were crime victims themselves.[36]

When our prosecutors and victim services specialists informed crime victims that ICE had detained the defendant in their case, preventing us from moving forward with prosecution, crime victims expressed deep despair that the defendant would not be held accountable. They also shared fear that the defendant might return to Minnesota to harm them or harm their families in the countries to which the defendants were deported. In one case, a crime victim was threatened by the defendant from abroad after ICE deported the defendant.

By disrupting criminal prosecutions, these immigration enforcement practices deny justice to crime victims, allow defendants to evade accountability, and undermine public safety.

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[34] Despite this increase, the court quashed or recalled 10.5% fewer failure-to-appear warrants in HCAO cases compared to the same period in the previous year.

[35] Human Rights Watch, *"A Manufactured Crisis": Minnesota Communities Terrorized by the Federal Government* (June 18, 2026).

[36] Madison McVan, *During Operation Metro Surge, ICE Arrested Dozens of Immigrant Crime Victims* (Aug. 7, 2026).

III. After Border Czar Tom Homan announced that Operation Metro Surge had ended, the HCAO filed criminal charges against ICE agents and bounty hunters, launched the Transparency and Accountability Project, and obtained evidence related to the killings of two county residents

A. The HCAO filed criminal charges against two ICE agents

In the wake of Operation Metro Surge, the HCAO has worked with its law enforcement partners to investigate and, where appropriate, prosecute criminal violations committed by federal immigration officers.

First, on April 16, 2026, the HCAO charged ICE agent Gregory Donnell Morgan, Jr. with two counts of second-degree assault for pointing a weapon at two victims while driving alongside them during Operation Metro Surge.[37]

Then, on May 18, 2026, the HCAO charged ICE agent Christian Castro with four counts of second-degree assault and one count of falsely reporting a crime for discharging his weapon through the front door of the victims' home.[38] The bullet traveled through the door and struck one victim's leg, before making its final impact in the wall of a child's room.

B. The HCAO filed criminal charges against two bounty hunters

While the community was still reeling from Operation Metro Surge, two bounty hunters, who appeared to community members to be federal agents,[39] pointed weapons at civilians in front of Minneapolis City Hall. On March 31, 2026, the HCAO charged the two bounty hunters with felony threats of violence and displaying a replica of a firearm.[40]

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[37] HCAO, *Hennepin County Attorney's Office Charges ICE Agent with Two Counts of Second-Degree Assault for February Incident on Hwy 62*, Hennepin Cnty. (Apr. 16, 2026).
[38] HCAO, *Hennepin County Attorney's Office Charges ICE Agent in Shooting of Julio Sosa-Celis*, Hennepin Cnty. (May 18, 2026).
[39] Jeff Day & Louis Krauss, *As Operation Metro Surge Recedes, Concern Grows Over Tactics of Twin Cities Bounty Hunters*, Star Tribune (Mar. 7, 2026).
[40] HCAO, *County Attorney Announces Charges Against Bounty Hunters Accused of Pointing Weapons at Civilians*, KARE 11 (Minneapolis–St. Paul, MN), Mar. 31, 2026.

C. The HCAO launched the Transparency and Accountability Project (TAP)

During Operation Metro Surge, reports described federal agents photographing legal observers, identifying them by name and address, informing them they were being tracked in a database, and following them home after they engaged in First Amendment-protected activity.[41]

On March 2, 2026, the HCAO launched the Transparency and Accountability Project (TAP) to collect and assess evidence submitted by the public regarding potential criminal offenses committed by federal agents in Hennepin County during Operation Metro Surge.[42] TAP is staffed by prosecutors and a civilian investigator and is actively investigating more than 30 federal actions, including actions at Roosevelt High School in Minneapolis on January 7, 2026, and Greg Bovino's actions near Mueller Park in Minneapolis on January 21, 2026.

TAP has encountered obstacles in advancing its investigations, including the following:

1. Identifying federal agents is challenging without access to evidence in the federal government's possession, such as reports, statements, and body-worn camera footage. This is especially true given that the vast majority of federal agents wore face coverings to obscure their identities.
2. Community members, especially noncitizens, are often afraid to provide statements to the HCAO, fearing that they or their families could be targeted by federal authorities.
3. Victims of violent arrests have worried that coming forward may expose them to unfounded federal charges, given the federal government's aggressive tactics in pursuing charges against protestors and victims, even when those charges lack merit.[43]

Despite these challenges, TAP's investigator has conducted over 100 witness interviews and collected more than 1,100 photos and videos documenting actions of federal agents during Operation Metro Surge.

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[41] Austin Campbell, *Federal Agents Are Intimidating Legal Observers: "They Know Where You Live,"* The Intercept (Mar. 5, 2026).

[42] HCAO, Hennepin County Attorney's Office Launches Transparency and Accountability Project and Evidence Portal, Hennepin Cnty. (Mar. 2, 2026).

[43] Conor Wight, *19 Cases Against Minnesotans Accused of Assaulting Federal Officers Dismissed So Far; Many Linked to Single HSI Agent*, CBS Minnesota (Aug. 6, 2026); Matt Sepic, *Charges Dropped Against Men Accused of Attacking ICE Officer*, MPR News (Feb. 12, 2026).

Community members can share information with TAP by emailing TAP@hennepin.us.

D. After federal agents shot three Hennepin County residents, killing two, federal agencies obstructed state law enforcement from accessing evidence, requiring the HCAO and Attorney General's Office to sue the federal government twice

Before Operation Metro Surge, federal and state law enforcement in Minnesota had long conducted joint investigations into matters of shared concern, including shootings by federal agents.[44] The Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension (BCA) has historically led use-of-force investigations involving federal officers, with federal agencies providing support.[45] In a typical case, the BCA processes the scene using 3D scans, trajectory analysis, and precise measurements,[46] and strives to complete use-of-force investigations within 60 days to preserve evidence and witness memory.[47]

This cooperation extends beyond federal-agent cases. After the 2025 shootings of Minnesota state lawmakers, for example, the BCA and FBI jointly interviewed witnesses and subjects, shared physical evidence, and met regularly with both state and federal prosecutors.[48] The collaboration runs in both directions: state investigators and the Hennepin County Attorney's Office have assisted federal prosecutions, including a 2025 threat case involving a federal judge and federal racketeering prosecutions of Minneapolis gang members.[49]

During Operation Metro Surge, this framework broke down.

After a federal agent shot and killed Renee Good, the BCA and FBI initially agreed to a joint investigation.[50] Within hours, however, BCA agents who had been told they could

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[44] *See Minnesota v. U.S. Dep't. of Justice*, 26-cv-01007, Declaration of Drew Evans ¶ 6-7, at 3-4 (Oct. 13, 2026).

[45] *See* Evans Decl. ¶ 7, at 3-4.

[46] *See Minnesota v. U.S. Dep't. of Justice*, 26-cv-01007, Amended Complaint at 28-29 (June 18, 2026).

[47] *See Minnesota v. U.S. Dep't. of Justice*, 26-cv-01007, Memorandum of Points and Authorities in Support of Plaintiffs' Motion for Summary Judgment and Opposition to Defendants' Motion to Dismiss at 17 (Oct. 13, 2026).

[48] *See* Evans Decl. ¶ 6, at 3.

[49] *See* Amended Complaint at 9.

[50] *See* Evans Decl. ¶ 11, at 5.

participate in federal agent interviews were turned away.[51] That evening, the U.S. Attorney informed the BCA Superintendent that there would be no joint investigation and no evidence sharing.[52] Federal agents took exclusive control of Ms. Good's vehicle, the shell casings, and the firearm.[53]

The shooting of Julio Cesar Sosa-Celis, a week later, followed the same trajectory. BCA and FBI agents began with joint interviews and a joint canvas, and the BCA relied on federal agents to collect critical evidence.[54] Then an FBI Assistant Special Agent in Charge abruptly ended the collaboration.[55] Although the BCA secured a search warrant, it could not access the federal agent's handgun used in the shooting or any evidence in federal custody.[56]

After federal agents shot and killed Alex Pretti, the obstruction became physical.[57] A federal incident commander said he had been ordered to bar the BCA from the scene, and that exclusion continued even after state officials obtained a judicial warrant.[58] Federal investigators excluded the BCA from all interviews and removed evidence from the scene before the BCA could document it.[59] The HCAO, BCA, and Minnesota Attorney General's Office, went to court that same day to seek, and ultimately secure, a temporary restraining order, prohibiting the federal government from altering or destroying the evidence it had collected related to the death of Mr. Pretti.[60]

On March 24, 2026, the HCAO, the State of Minnesota, and the BCA filed a second lawsuit against federal agencies seeking access to evidence related to the shootings.[61] Hennepin

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[51] *See* Evans Decl. ¶ 14, at 6.
[52] *See* Evans Decl. ¶ 15, at 6.
[53] *See* Evans Decl. ¶ 12, at 5.
[54] *See* Evans Decl. ¶ 20, at 7.
[55] *See* Evans Decl. ¶ 21, at 7-8.
[56] *See* Evans Decl. ¶ 22, at 8.
[57] *See Minnesota v. U.S. Dep't. of Justice*, 26-cv-01007, Declaration of Mary Moriarty ¶ 10, at 4 (Oct. 13, 2026).
[58] *See* Evans Decl. ¶ 26, at 8-9.
[59] *See* Evans Decl. ¶ 27-28, at 9.
[60] HCAO, *Hennepin County Attorney's Office and Bureau of Criminal Apprehension file lawsuit to prevent destruction of evidence in partnership with Minnesota Attorney General's Office* (Jan. 24, 2026).
[61] HCAO, *Hennepin County Attorney's Office, State of Minnesota, Bureau of Criminal Apprehension Sue Federal Government for Access to Evidence Related to Metro Surge Shootings* (Mar. 24, 2026).

County Attorney Mary Moriarty described the lawsuit as "unprecedented in American history." On July 13, 2026, our office announced that we had obtained evidence related to the three shootings that federal agencies had previously withheld.[62]

But soon after, the federal government halted its cooperation and evidence sharing. Because the federal government continues to obstruct our efforts in investigating the killings of Renee Good and Alex Pretti, our litigation is ongoing.

IV. Meaningful recovery from Operation Metro Surge will depend on government partners advancing reforms that move us toward lasting, transformative change

The fallout from Operation Metro Surge continues to affect public safety in Hennepin County. Obstruction by the federal government continues to delay accountability for potential criminal offenses committed by federal agents in Minnesota. Moreover, many crime victims remain afraid to attend court hearings. In one case, federal agents detained a crime victim, and the HCAO had to seek a state court order to ensure the victim could be available to testify at trial. The victim was required to endure an in-custody transport from federal detention to a county facility so they could be available for their case.

A. Priority bills for the Minnesota Legislature to enact in the 2027 session

During Minnesota's 2026 legislative session, lawmakers introduced several bills to respond to the public safety crisis created by Operation Metro Surge. The HCAO urges passage of the following public safety measures during the 2027 legislative session:

- HF 3358 / SF 3652: Requiring all law enforcement agencies to detain and transport individuals only in appropriately marked vehicles identifying the agency.

- SF 3699: Prohibiting civil arrests of individuals attending court hearings.

- HF 3413 / SF 3842: Prohibiting state, county, and local government entities from entering into certain immigration enforcement agreements and requiring the termination of specific existing agreements.

- HF 3924 / SF 4176: Limiting state and local participation in federal civil immigration enforcement and restricting locations where immigration arrests may occur.

[62] HCAO, *Hennepin County Attorney's Office Announces Two-Way Evidence Sharing Between State and Federal Agencies for Metro Surge Shootings* (July 13, 2026).

B. Recommendations to implement

On June 18, 2026, Human Rights Watch released a report on Operation Metro Surge that included a series of recommendations.[63] The HCAO wants to highlight some of the public safety recommendations from that report and offer additional recommendations of its own.

To Local Law Enforcement Agencies in Minnesota:

- The federal government made ICE the highest-funded law enforcement agency in the country.[64] Local law enforcement agencies should refrain from entering into 287(g) agreements, which waste local taxpayer-funded law enforcement resources to support immigration enforcement authorities.
- Refrain from arresting or citing any person peacefully observing, recording, or protesting. Agencies should ensure that any arrest or citation is supported by probable cause that the individual committed a criminal offense unrelated to the content or viewpoint of their expression.
- Refrain from using less lethal weapons or other force against protesters without adequate warning or justification, and ensure that any use of force is necessary and proportionate to the circumstances.
- Refrain from issuing dispersal orders to an entire assembly because some individuals are engaged in potentially unlawful conduct. Instead, identify and address the specific individuals involved while protecting the right of others to continue assembling, observing, and expressing themselves peacefully. Dispersal orders should be issued only as a last resort, when there is imminent threat of violence that targeted measures cannot address.

To the Minnesota Judicial Branch:

- Implement a policy that ensures crime victims, witnesses, and court staff can safely access courthouses, including public areas, by prohibiting civil law enforcement actions within them.

To the Minnesota Legislature and Governor:

- Ban 287(g) agreements between local law enforcement agencies and ICE.

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[63] Human Rights Watch, *A Manufactured Crisis": Minnesota Communities Terrorized by the Federal Government* (June 18, 2026).

[64] Here & Now Newsroom, *ICE Budget at Center of Debate to Fund the Government*, NPR Ill. (Jan. 21, 2026).

To Minnesota Local Prosecutors

- Refrain from arbitrarily prosecuting individuals for engaging in protected activities, including observing and protesting federal agents.
- To the extent possible under US law, continue to investigate and prosecute federal agents for violations of state criminal laws.
- Launch an investigation into allegations of unlawful surveillance by federal agents, including what tools and tactics agents have used to track and target Minnesotan residents.

To the US Congress:

- Pass the Immigrant Witness and Victim Protection Act of 2025 (H.R. 4817), which would expedite U-visa processing for crime victims by eliminating the arbitrary annual cap.
- Pass the Protecting Sensitive Locations Act (H.R. 1061 / S. 455), which would prohibit immigration enforcement at sensitive locations, including courthouses.
- Pass the No Secret Police Act of 2025 (H.R. 4176), which would require DHS officers and agents to identify themselves and restrict the use of face-concealing coverings.

To Federal Agencies:

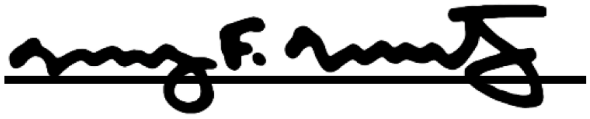
- Restore the April 27, 2021, Guidance to Limit ICE and CBP Civil Enforcement Actions In or Near Courthouses.
- Halt abusive law enforcement practices.
- In coordination with state and local authorities, launch independent and impartial federal civil rights investigations into reported incidents of excessive force and other violations by federal agents in Minnesota.
- Refrain from bringing arbitrary prosecutions against individuals for exercising their rights to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly.

V. Conclusion

Operation Metro Surge had a profound and lasting impact on Hennepin County residents. And the HCAO stands firm in its mission to be a fierce advocate for justice and equity, even when that requires challenging the federal government. We will continue advocating for policies that enhance public safety by ensuring that victims and witnesses can report crimes and participate fully in the criminal legal system without fear. We also remain committed in our efforts to investigate the conduct of federal agents and to hold accountable those whose actions have harmed our community.

Throughout Operation Metro Surge, the people of Hennepin County showed remarkable strength, compassion, and solidarity—checking in on their neighbors, supporting families

who felt unsafe, and mobilizing to meet urgent needs of community members when our public safety systems fell short. Their resilience carried our community through the dark days of Operation Metro Surge and continue to guide and inspire our office's ongoing work.



Mary Moriarty, County Attorney