

Guidance Memorandum: Coordination with Federal Law-Enforcement Agencies

To: All Sworn Personnel and Supervisors

From: Chief / Director, [Name of Municipal Police Department]

Date: [Insert Date]

Subject: Guidance on Interactions and Partnerships with Federal Law-Enforcement Agencies in Maryland

1. Purpose

This memorandum ensures alignment with the Maryland Attorney General's October 15, 2025 guidance outlining how Maryland law governs the conduct of state and local officers when cooperating with federal law-enforcement authorities. Maryland officers remain bound by Maryland law and standards, even in joint operations with federal partners, to ensure compliance, accountability, and public trust.

2. Scope

This guidance applies to all sworn officers, supervisors, and employees of [Municipal Police Department] who interact with or assist federal law-enforcement agencies, including participation in joint task forces, warrant executions, special operations, and ad-hoc collaborative activities.

3. Legal and Policy Framework Summary

Maryland officers remain subject to Maryland statutes, regulations, and departmental policy at all times. Key standards include:

- Officers must comply with Maryland's use-of-force requirements, emphasizing necessity, proportionality, and de-escalation, and must intervene to prevent excessive force. (PS § 3-524)
- During stops, officers must identify themselves by name, badge number, and agency, and state the reason for the stop, unless exigent circumstances exist; in such cases, the information must be provided once safe to do so. (CP § 2-109)
- Officers must collect and report data for traffic stops, regardless of federal participation. (Transp. § 25-113)
- Body-worn camera requirements apply to all encounters as required by Maryland law, including retention and reporting standards. (PS § 3-511)
- Warrant execution must comply with knock-and-announce provisions and limits on no-knock entries. (CP § 1-203)
- Maryland law prohibits officers from enforcing civil immigration laws or assisting in such enforcement while performing regular police duties. (CP § 5-104)
- These restrictions apply even when Maryland officers are federally cross-designated under 287(g) agreements. (CP § 5-104; OAG Memorandum, Oct. 2025)
- Officers remain subject to Maryland's civilian oversight and disciplinary processes. (PS § 3-524; PS § 3-701)

4. Must Do / May Do / Must Not Do

A. Must Do

- Identify yourself and explain the reason for a stop consistent with CP § 2-109.
- Use body-worn cameras per PS § 3-511 during searches, arrests, or warrant service.
- Follow Maryland's proportionality and duty-to-intervene standards. (PS § 3-524)
- Report all traffic-stop data as required by Transp. § 25-113.
- Ensure memoranda of understanding and joint-operation agreements are reviewed by counsel and consistent with Maryland law. (OAG Memorandum, Oct. 2025)

B. May Do

- Participate in joint operations with federal partners when all participants operate within Maryland law and the department retains supervision and authority.
- Share criminal-investigative information as authorized by law and departmental policy.
- Provide logistical or communications support, provided actions do not conflict with state law or policy. (OAG Memorandum, Oct. 2025)

C. Must Not Do

- Do not enforce or assist in civil immigration enforcement. (CP § 5-104)
- Do not ask about or investigate a person's immigration status unless directly relevant to a criminal offense. (CP § 5-104)
- Do not detain individuals beyond the time permitted under Maryland law to determine immigration status or to await federal agents. (CP § 5-104)
- Do not participate in warrantless searches or no-knock entries inconsistent with CP § 1-203.
- Do not conduct or assist in general crime-control or immigration-related checkpoints. (OAG Memorandum, Oct. 2025)
- Do not treat peaceful protestors as suspects without lawful basis; crowd management must comply with PS § 3-701 protections. (OAG Memorandum, Oct. 2025)

5. Raids, Warrants, and No-Knock Entries

Maryland officers executing warrants must comply with CP § 1-203, including knock-and-announce requirements and limitations on no-knock entries. Participation in federal operations that violate Maryland's warrant standards is prohibited. Officers must activate BWCs under PS § 3-511 during warrant service.

6. Roadblocks and Checkpoints

Maryland law prohibits participation in general crime-control or immigration checkpoints. Only narrowly tailored, public-safety-specific checkpoints (e.g., impaired-driving enforcement) are permitted, consistent with constitutional and statutory standards. (OAG Memorandum, Oct. 2025)

7. 287(g) and Cross-Designation Agreements

Under CP § 5-104, Maryland officers are barred from performing civil immigration enforcement even when cross-designated under 287(g). Departments must decline or

withdraw from any agreement that conflicts with Maryland law or departmental policy.
(OAG Memorandum, Oct. 2025)

8. Supervisory and Administrative Responsibilities

Supervisors must:

- Train all personnel on this memorandum and the Attorney General's 2025 guidance.
- Review all agreements with federal agencies for compliance with Maryland law.
- Maintain complete documentation of joint operations.
- Conduct audits to confirm compliance with Maryland statutes and policy.
- Decline or terminate participation in operations that cannot comply with state requirements.

9. Community Engagement and Transparency

Departments should communicate clearly about their limited role in federal operations, emphasizing that municipal police serve under Maryland law and do not perform civil immigration enforcement. Transparency strengthens accountability and community trust.
(OAG Memorandum, Oct. 2025)

10. Action Steps

- Brief all personnel within 30 days.
- Integrate these requirements into annual training.
- Review and update all MOUs and federal task-force agreements.
- Track all joint operations and ensure documentation.
- Consult with legal counsel before entering new cooperative arrangements.
- Communicate publicly about departmental adherence to Maryland law.

11. Questions and Further Guidance

Officers with questions about this guidance or specific joint operations should consult their supervisor or the municipal attorney before taking action.

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