



CITY OF SOUTH PORTLAND

ELYSE TIPTON
Mayor

SCOTT T. MORELLI
City Manager

JESSICA A. HUGHES
City Clerk

BRANDON MAZER
Corporation Counsel

District One
CARTER SCOTT

District Two
RACHAEL COLEMAN

District Three
MISHA C. PRIDE

District Four
JESSICA L. WALKER

District Five
ELYSE C. TIPTON

At Large
RICHARD T. MATTHEWS

At Large
NATALIE E. WEST

**IN CITY COUNCIL
AMENDED RESOLVE #5 -25/26**

**The City Council of the City of South Portland Resolution
Regarding Federal Immigration Enforcement Activity and
Community Safety and Well-being.**

WHEREAS, the City of South Portland is a diverse and welcoming community whose residents include immigrants, refugees, longtime residents, workers, students, families, and business owners who contribute to the social, cultural, and economic life of the city; and

WHEREAS, immigrants have long contributed to the strength and vitality of the City of South Portland and the State of Maine, supporting the workforce, economy, schools, and civic life, and continue to play an essential role in small business as well as key industries such as healthcare, education, fishing and lobstering, hospitality, construction, and services, thereby helping sustain employers, communities, and Maine's economy; and

WHEREAS, the members of the Council condemn disparaging and untrue statements about Somali-Americans whose family members not born in the United States fled civil war, political instability, and severe drought, and who across Maine have raised families, built businesses and community organizations, served in government, and strengthened multigenerational stability and prosperity; and

WHEREAS, there has been a recent verifiable, visible increase in federal immigration enforcement activity in and around South Portland, including reports of masked federal officers, unmarked vehicles, and detentions occurring in residential and commercial areas; and

WHEREAS, this activity generates fear and anxiety among residents, including families, students, workers, and business owners, and has led to observable community impacts such as decreased school attendance, disruption of daily activities and work attendance, and heightened concern for the personal safety of individuals and families, including children; and

WHEREAS, South Portland's public safety departments—including police, fire, and emergency services—do not conduct routine operations wearing masks or driving unmarked vehicles, and the contrast between recent federal activity and local public safety practices has contributed to confusion and distress within the community; and

WHEREAS, the City of South Portland recognizes and respects the role of federal authorities in enforcing federal law, but also affirms that public safety is best served through transparency, accountability, and trust between residents and those exercising law-enforcement authority; and

WHEREAS, fear, uncertainty, and the perception of unchecked or unclear federal enforcement activity can undermine public safety, discourage cooperation with public safety and emergency responders, disrupt student education, link to employee absences that harm household incomes and business services and success, deter residents from accessing critical public services, and erode trust in government institutions; and

WHEREAS, the City Council has an obligation to safeguard the health, safety, and welfare of all residents and to speak clearly when conditions arise that threaten community stability, even where our direct regulatory authority is limited;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF SOUTH PORTLAND THAT:

1. The City Council formally acknowledges the fear and disruption being experienced by residents because of increased federal immigration enforcement activity within the community and affirms its commitment to the safety and dignity of all who live and work in South Portland.
2. The City Council urges federal immigration authorities operating within South Portland to conduct any enforcement activities in a manner that prioritizes transparency, clear identification, and de-escalation, and that minimizes unnecessary fear or disruption to the public.
3. The City Council respectfully requests that federal authorities provide clear communication to local officials regarding the nature, scope, and duration of enforcement activity occurring within the City, to the extent permitted by law, so that local leaders can appropriately address community concerns and ensure public safety.

4. The City Council affirms that South Portland's municipal departments and employees will continue to operate in accordance with state and local law and will not engage in federal immigration enforcement activities except as legally required.

5. The City Council directs the city manager and staff to provide residents with public information regarding available community resources related to their rights, and appropriate points of contact for public safety concerns, in coordination with trusted local and state organizations where appropriate.

6. The City Council calls upon Maine's congressional delegation and state leadership to continue to seek greater transparency, oversight, and accountability regarding federal immigration enforcement practices impacting Maine communities.

7. The City Council directs the City Manager to communicate with Governor Janet Mills and appropriate State of Maine officials to request consideration of a temporary, statewide 60-day moratorium on residential evictions for households that have experienced substantial financial hardship associated with the recent surge in federal immigration enforcement activity.

8. This resolution is adopted as an expression of the South Portland City Council's concern for public safety and community well-being and does not purport to regulate or restrict federal authority, but rather to formally communicate the City's position and the impacts being experienced locally.

Fiscal Note: Less than \$1,000

Date: February 3, 2026