TEHAMA COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

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PRESS INFORMATION

****Tehama County Sheriff's Office Responds to Recent Media Coverage****

In light of recent media reporting by *anewscafe.com* titled *"In probable state law violation, Tehama County Sheriff's Office cooperates with ICE agents who deport a young Tehama County husband to Mexico"* (Dec. 6, 2025) alleging violations of state law by this office, the Tehama County Sheriff's Office (TCSO) issues this statement to correct the record, provide factual context, and reaffirm that all actions taken by TCSO personnel were lawful and compliant with California law.

The *anewscafe.com* article has raised significant community concern by characterizing the events of December 4, 2025 as an improper cooperation with U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE). TCSO welcomes accurate reporting and transparent public dialogue. However, the article's description omits critical facts about how those events unfolded and mischaracterizes the legal standards that govern interactions between local law enforcement and federal immigration authorities.

What Happened on December 4, 2025

On December 4, 2025, a male and a female individual voluntarily arrived at the Tehama County Jail to surrender for previously imposed commitments. The male subject was surrendering on a charge that may be prosecuted as a misdemeanor **OR** felony (commonly referred to as a "wobbler" offense), and the female subject had a documented prior deportation. At **no time** did either individual enter the secure custody of the Sheriff's Office. Both remained in the **publicly accessible lobby area** of the jail facility.

Prior to the date in question, deputies were aware of certain criminal history information that suggested these individuals *might* be removable under federal immigration law, based on publicly available conviction information. ICE was notified in the event federal authorities might have an independent interest in the individuals; the notification was not made for the purpose of assisting, facilitating, or participating in immigration enforcement by TCSO personnel.

When ICE agents arrived at the jail's public lobby later that morning, one TCSO correctional deputy opened a locked door to the lobby area and remained present only for **officer safety purposes**. It should be noted that these doors are typically unlocked and remained unlocked after the correctional deputy opened them. The doors would allow an individual to exit freely, even when locked on the outside. Both individuals were able to move freely or exit the lobby if they chose to do so. The deputy did not assist with, participate in, or effectuate any detention or arrest of the individuals. The exchange occurred entirely within the public space of the facility.

Why the Actions Were Lawful

Under California law, the actions of TCSO personnel were appropriate and compliant for the following reasons:

1. The California Values Act (SB 54)

The California Values Act (Gov. Code §§ 7284–7284.12), also known as SB 54, restricts use of state and local resources for *civil immigration enforcement purposes* and expressly limits assistance to

ICE when it would involve actively detaining or transferring custody of individuals for immigration reasons. However, those restrictions apply when individuals are **in local custody or control**. In this case, neither individual was ever booked into the secure jail facility, nor were they under TCSO control when federal agents made contact. As such, the custody-based restrictions of SB 54 were not triggered.

2. The TRUTH Act (Gov. Code § 7283)

The TRUTH Act requires notice and consent procedures for ICE interviews or detention requests *only once a person is in local custody*. Both individuals here were outside custody in a public area, and therefore the TRUTH Act notice/consent requirements did not apply.

3. Public Lobby Access

California law does not prohibit federal authorities from enforcing federal law in **publicly accessible locations**, and opening a door to allow ICE lawful access to such an area is not itself a use of local resources to assist immigration enforcement. A deputy standing by for safety is likewise permissible and not a substantive participation in enforcement.

Clarifying the Role of Local and Federal Authority

It is important for the public to understand that:

- **State law governs the conduct of state and local officials**, not the internal operations of federal agencies; and
- ICE agents, as federal officers, can enforce federal immigration law in public areas irrespective of local custody decisions or state sanctuary policies.

California's Values Act *prohibits* local enforcement participation in civil immigration enforcement beyond narrow, custodial exceptions. It does *not* prohibit federal immigration enforcement in public spaces, nor does it require local law enforcement to obstruct federal agents legally acting within their jurisdiction.

Commitment to Transparency and Public Safety

The Tehama County Sheriff's Office remains committed to serving and protecting all community members. We uphold state and federal law, respect constitutional safeguards, and remain transparent with our residents about how we discharge our duties.

Our community deserves fact-based information. We will continue to provide accurate updates, answer reasonable questions, and work to ensure that public understanding aligns with legal reality.