

SANCTUARY CITY

Contra Costa County Climate Leaders

A project of Generation Green - a 501(c)3 Nonprofit organization

Find Links to Other Local Government Policy Opportunities at
www.cccclimateleaders.org



WHAT?

A Sanctuary city is not a legal term, but rather a bundle of city policies that aim to protect the estimated 11.1 undocumented people living in the USⁱ. There are 2.3-2.6 million Californians who are undocumentedⁱⁱ. The concept of a sanctuary city goes back thousands of years when cities in the Old Testament agreed to be a place for those seeking safety. Local governments began designating themselves formally as “sanctuary cities”: as early as 1979 when Los Angeles, agreed "Officers shall not initiate police action with the objective of discovering the alien status of a person. Officers shall not arrest nor book persons for violation of title 8, section 1325 of the United States Immigration code (Illegal Entry)."^[1]

Since then, the term "sanctuary city" became a broad term. Over the past 3 decades, the term was most commonly used for: *a city government and its agencies (hospitals, schools, law enforcement) will not use local government resources to corroborate with ICE, or detain/monitor/track people on the basis of immigration status; ILRC recommendations*ⁱⁱⁱ The most recent interest to declare a city as a “Sanctuary City” has come about in response to a recent White House executive agenda regarding immigrants and travel bans. Sanctuary policies exist in two forms, formal and informal (de facto).

Sanctuary cities offer safe harbor for undocumented immigrants. This can be by law (de jure) or by action (de facto).

WHY?

Diversity and inclusion are foundational values of our town, city, state, and country; we are a country built by immigrants. Yet, recent direction from the White House asks federal immigration agents to target a broad group of immigrants for deportation. Previously, crime-based grounds for removal required a conviction. It is unclear how this impacts local control and local police and enforcement funding.

Many local city leaders echo the statement made by the Mayor of Providence, R.I., who is the son of immigrants. ***“The idea of local control is deeply embedded in American history, and what we have now is a very aggressive attempt by the federal government to commandeer our local police departments to become immigration agents.”***

Other common Questions:

“But my city already does that, why do we need a formal resolution?” - Many city police departments already have language that states they will not discriminate. A local sanctuary policy would formalize anti-discriminatory policies in anticipation of any actions from the federal administration.

“Isn’t a sanctuary policy dangerous for our city?” No. People who commit crimes are still met with due process of law; sanctuary policy cannot stymie federal ICE agents who have a warrant, but rather clarify that local law enforcement will not be deputized (and spend local funds) to assist in the deportation of community members.

“Aren’t Immigrants criminals?” No. Being undocumented is a civil offense, not a criminal offense.

“Will our City lose important funding?” [Supreme Court ruling](#) has found that funding can only be withheld if it is relevant “to the federal interest in the project.” Cities, counties and states with sanctuary policies get federal money from dozens of different departments, most of which are not related to immigration. The fiscal impact would be minimal or zero. [SF mayor confirms](#) this and joins other cities in staying firm on the threat to lose funding.



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WHO?

States, Counties, and Cities have taken a lead on this issue for decades. Many say the recent White House ban is unconstitutional. Many have addressed this issue in the past:

- 2004 State of [Maine](#) instituted an Executive Order that limits state employee ability to report immigrants
- 2008 San Francisco provided [San Francisco's Sanctuary City Outreach Program](#).
- 2009 San Francisco Board of Supervisors
- 2011 State of [Utah](#) allows immigrants to live and work in Utah cities

Two federal judges recently ruled against the latest White House travel ban:

A federal judge in Hawaii issued a [nationwide order](#) blocking the ban on travel from parts of the Muslim world;
A federal judge in Maryland [forbids the core provision](#) of the travel ban from going into effect.

State of California:

[SB-54](#) is currently moving through the state legislature to make California a Sanctuary State

Cities are taking a leadership role: Many, including the Bay Area's three largest cities are passing sanctuary policy or voluntary resolutions. Check out this [map](#).

HOW?

Consider these links to a variety of City policies and resolutions!

[San Francisco](#), [Oakland](#), and San Jose, and [many others](#) have spoken out against the executive order on immigration.

Other Bay Area cities with sanctuary policy or voluntary resolutions include Alameda, [Berkeley](#), [Emeryville](#), [Fremont](#),

Cities in Contra Costa include:

[Martinez](#), [San Pablo](#), [Richmond](#), [El Cerrito](#), San Leandro, Concord

Many local school districts, furthermore, have identified themselves as safe campuses: [Acalanes Union High](#), [Mt. Diablo Unified](#), [Oakley Union Elementary](#), [Walnut Creek](#), [Contra Costa Community College District](#), and [Pittsburg Unified](#).

TO LEARN MORE?

[California Sanctuary Advocates](#)

[California Sanctuary Campaign](#) We call on California's governor and legislators to honor its diversity and protect its residents from the new regime by declaring a statewide sanctuary.

<http://www.cbsnews.com/news/what-is-a-sanctuary-city-and-what-happens-now/> <https://www.gov.ca.gov/news.php?id=18910>

<http://www.apsanlaw.com/law-246.List-of-Sanctuary-cities.html>

<http://ojpac.org/sanctuary.asp>

https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/trumps-intervention-into-policing-voting-and-immigration-sets-up-showdown-with-americas-largest-cities/2017/01/25/128b40ae-e31b-11e6-a547-5fb9411d332c_story.html?utm_term=.cde6b797c708

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/graphics/national/sanctuary-cities/>

- <http://www.rollingstone.com/politics/features/how-sanctuary-cities-are-plotting-to-resist-trump-w453239>

ⁱ 2014, Pew Research Center [link]

ⁱⁱ 2014, Public Policy Institute of CA

ⁱⁱⁱ ILRC Local Options For Protecting Immigrants

