For immediate release: January 28, 2017

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**Board of County Commissioners, Presiding Judge, Sheriff’s statement**

**on ICE activities at Multnomah County Courthouses**

Like many of you, late Friday we heard reports of Immigration and Customs Enforcement officers detaining people who come to the Multnomah County Circuit Court Courthouses.

We immediately reached out to court officials. In the past two weeks, there has been an increase in reports of ICE activity around - and in some cases inside - the courthouse. We do not yet know if there has been an actual increase.

Anything that increases the fear of people accessing our courts is of grave concern. Courthouses need to be safe locations for people to access justice: whether to contest an eviction, seek a restraining order from abuse, or attend a custody hearing. Now, they may be too afraid to show up.

This is devastating for the people accessing our services, and in many cases, counterproductive to a lawful community. We encourage ICE to recognize courthouses as sensitive locations and consider these impacts. We can't have people afraid to access justice in Multnomah County.

The Multnomah County Sheriff’s Office does not give ICE officers access to areas of court facilities that are not open to the public, and does not permit ICE officers to maintain a presence in any County correctional facility. The Sheriff’s Office does not hold people in county jails on ICE detainers or conduct any immigration enforcement actions. The Board formally recognized and supported this policy [with a resolution](https://multco.us/multnomah-county/news/commissioner-smith-chair-kafoury-put-forward-sanctuary-county-resolution) on Dec. 22, 2016.

The Multnomah County District Attorney's Office does not notify or alert immigration officials or agencies regarding individuals (witnesses, victims, or defendants) with whom we come into contact. This applies to the adult and juvenile justice systems, as well as our work seeking to enforce child support obligations.

Please contact our offices with any information.  And know that we are working to support the families in our community and to provide services to all those in need.

Respectfully,

Chair Deborah Kafoury            Nan G. Waller, Presiding Judge

Vice Chair Commissioner Jessica Vega Pederson Multnomah County Circuit Court

Commissioner Loretta Smith Sheriff Mike Reese

Commissioner Sharon Meieran            District Attorney Rod Underhill

Commissioner Lori Stegmann