

Where do Albuquerque mayoral candidates stand on ICE raids?



Morgan Stephens | KOB

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ALBUQUERQUE, N.M. – A policy designed to let Albuquerque residents know if Immigration and Customs Enforcement, or ICE, is operating in their neighborhood is stirring up controversy.

The program involving the Albuquerque Police Department is at the center of a debate between Mayor Tim Keller and challenger Darren White in the early months of the 2025 mayoral race.

In a [recent interview](#) with Albuquerque Journal, White called the policy “dangerous” for federal law enforcement officers.

Keller didn't mince words Tuesday in responding to his opponent's latest criticism.

"He's just wrong," said Keller at a press conference. "This was arranged with our chief of police, and with, actually, Homeland Security. They were OK with transparency, and we were just a go between to identify operations. So yeah, he's just misinformed and way off base."

This feud comes as immigration policy continues to divide the nation—and now, the mayoral race in Albuquerque.

White, a former Bernalillo County Sheriff, is now calling for the U.S. Attorney for New Mexico Ryan Ellison to investigate the legality of the hotline that would identify ICE agents in the Duke City.

"I know that his post may have been his way of trying to cater to a certain segment of our community," said White in response to Keller Facebook post on Saturday. "But you don't do that at the risk of endangering federal law enforcement officers and the public. I thought that was reckless."

The role of Albuquerque police

Albuquerque Police Chief Harold Medina said it doesn't matter if the resident is a legal citizen or not. He says as long as they're breaking the law, they'll be sought out by APD.

"At the end of the day, if someone is a criminal, I don't care if they were born in Albuquerque or another country," said Medina. "Criminals, people breaking the law, endanger our citizens in Albuquerque—regardless, citizens or not—should be in jail."

APD spokesperson Gilbert Gallegos said if someone is taking a person into custody and doesn't have police markings, people can call the APD's non-emergency line at 242-COPS to ask if they are with ICE.

"But it is up to each agency to determine the markings they must have to identify themselves as police," said Gallegos.

Other candidates weigh in

Below are statements sent to KOB 4:

Daniel Chavez:

“The sweeping raids we have seen across the country are alarming for Hispanic families who are just trying to live their lives. Law enforcement transparency is necessary, and while it’s not comfortable to fully trust the APD when they say they’ve got the public’s best interest after years of failing to keep our city safe, I’m not going to agree with Darren White who resigned in disgrace after the police union gave him a vote of “no confidence.”

Louie Sanchez:

“Tim Keller continues his tenure as a failed leader, prioritizing political posturing with his sidekick, Chief Medina, over real leadership. The Albuquerque Police Department’s sole responsibility is to keep our streets safe. Grandstanding and misrepresentations about Albuquerque’s immigrant-friendly policy simply doesn’t serve the best interests of the people of this city. As mayor, I will create a safer community by working with all law enforcement partners and community members to ensure Albuquerqueans can thrive.”

Alexander Uballez:

“The people of Albuquerque deserve a better choice than the cruel and the ineffective. Workers are being tased at Walmart in our city. Farmworkers are dying. What we are facing from Trump’s attacks makes urgent action to protect our neighbors necessary. What’s been put in place before is not enough for what we are facing now. That’s why I put together 11 policies to show Albuquerque families that the city is fighting for them and to strengthen what the city can do in response to ICE’s targeting our residents.”

Mayling Armijo:

“As a Navy veteran, I know real leadership means building trust, not playing political games. Mayor Keller and Chief Medina aren’t standing up to ICE — they’re using a hotline as a political maneuver while doing nothing to make Albuquerque safer. We need to rebuild trust between law enforcement and the community, not feed fear. As mayor, I’ll bring in a new police chief, boost officer recruitment, and invest in real community policing that enforces the law fairly and focuses on criminals regardless of their immigration status.”

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