

Reaffirmation of the Santa Barbara Police Department and Chief Kelly Gordon's Commitment to Safety and Respect

Every person who lives, works, visits, learns, or raises a family in Santa Barbara deserves to be treated with dignity and care. Recent immigration enforcement actions in Santa Barbara and other parts of the country have created fear, confusion, and a sense of vulnerability. We want to reassure our community that our mission remains unchanged: community safety and well-being. We are focused on listening, engaging, and maintaining trust with the community. The broader climate also affects the men and women of the Santa Barbara Police Department not only as public servants, but as neighbors, family members, and community members themselves.

The Santa Barbara Police Department does not engage in immigration enforcement. When federal immigration actions occur in our city, our role is guided by our commitment to safety and respect for all. Our officers are trained to respond with restraint, empathy, and a commitment to keeping the peace. We understand these situations can be tense and emotional, and we know how we conduct ourselves matters. Every interaction is an opportunity to build trust and demonstrate that we are here to protect and serve every member of our community.

We fully support the peaceful exercise of First Amendment rights, including lawful assembly and free speech, and have worked diligently to provide spaces in Santa Barbara to exercise these rights in a safe and peaceful manner. These rights are fundamental to a healthy democracy. We remain dedicated to de-escalation, professionalism, and collaboration so our community can express its views safely and respectfully.

We also want victims and witnesses of crime to feel safe coming forward regardless of immigration status. Protecting our community means ensuring no one is afraid to seek help. The Santa Barbara Police Department continues to partner with local advocacy groups, support multilingual services, and expand reporting options so that everyone can access the assistance they need.

If you have questions or concerns, please reach out to us. We will continue to focus on what we can control: protecting public safety, rejecting fear as a governing force, and standing firm in our values. Together, we will continue to build a community rooted in trust, safety, and respect for all.

In service,

Chief Kelly Gordon