

Four of the 13 states on the [DOJ's list](#), California, New York, Colorado and Illinois, have already faced lawsuits over their immigration policies. Others on the list include Delaware, Nevada, Minnesota and Washington, D.C.

The lawsuit in [Illinois](#) is the furthest along in the court process and has not played out in DOJ's favor at this stage. A federal judge tossed out the DOJ's claims, saying Illinois' state and local policies were protected by the Constitution and that the DOJ's lawsuit encroached on Illinois' sovereignty. The DOJ could still appeal the decision or amend its complaint.

But the DOJ, which has shifted heavily during the Trump administration to focusing on immigration enforcement, has also seen some success.

**Sanctuary city supporters argue that immigration enforcement is the job of the federal government.**  
(Genaro Molina/Los Angeles Times )

Its threats to Louisville, Kentucky, resulted in the mayor there modifying the city's policy to be more cooperative with the federal government. A DOJ spokesperson said the purpose of the list was to encourage other states and cities to do the same.

"This is a chance for these jurisdictions to come to the table and work with us to keep Americans safe," the spokesperson said.

Other cities on the DOJ's radar include Boston, New Orleans, Seattle and Philadelphia. Four counties were also on the list.

A common reason that cities and states become targeted for being illegal immigrant sanctuaries involves detainer policies.

**Mayor Craig Greenberg speaks at a press conference on April 11, 2023, at Metro Hall in Louisville, Kentucky. (Michael Swensen/Getty Images)**

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[Immigration and Customs Enforcement](#) (ICE) uses detainers to make federal requests to jails to hold immigrants in custody who could be living in the country illegally so that ICE can arrest them. Sanctuary jurisdictions have policies in place to ignore those notices.

In the case of Louisville, for instance, the mayor has agreed to honor the 48-hour period ICE has been requesting to hold suspects so that they are not released before federal authorities can potentially arrest them.

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