

New York

🕒 This article is more than **7 months old**

New York mayor condemned over plan to deport migrants accused of crimes

Eric Adams calls for accused migrants to be deported without waiting to see if they are convicted



📷 Eric Adams in New York last week. Photograph: Edna Leshowitz/Zuma/Rex/Shutterstock

Emily Swanson in New York

Tue 3 Dec 2024 18.45 EST

New York City mayor Eric Adams has announced he wants migrants in the city who are charged with crimes to be deported from the US without waiting to see if they are convicted – signaling a move towards alignment with the incoming Trump administration’s [plans for](#) mass deportations.

Adams, a Democrat embroiled in [his own criminal corruption case](#), in a Tuesday press conference cited safety concerns for New York residents, including law-abiding migrants, while also striking a defiant tone, clearly anticipating pushback from city liberals, or what he called “cancel culture”.

The city’s rightwing tabloid the New York Post [reported last week](#), citing data from Immigration and Customs Enforcement (Ice), that there are 58,000 undocumented immigrants in the city who have either been accused or convicted of crimes.

Adams said: “Well, cancel me because I’m going to protect the people of the city. And if you come into this country, in this city, and think you’re going to harm innocent New Yorkers and innocent migrants and asylum seekers, this is not the mayor you want to be in the city under.”

Immigration advocates condemned the mayor’s comments and called for an apology. Adams is “ripping a page from [Donald] Trump’s playbook, stoking fear and spreading disinformation”, said Murad Awawdeh, president and CEO of the New York Immigration Coalition.

“We should be able to expect that the mayor of New York City has a basic understanding of the constitutional rights of the people he serves,” Awawdeh added.

The city’s public advocate, Jumaane Williams, [posted on X](#) that Adams’ comments “scapegoat migrants arriving in our city for his own failure to

support policies that benefit New Yorkers”.

“He denigrated immigrants and non-citizens as unworthy of basic rights,” Williams said.

Adams’ comments signal a shift in his stance on migrants who are accused of crimes. In April, Adams **did not publicly call** for the deportation of two migrants who allegedly injured a police officer who was arresting them on suspicion of shoplifting.

He emphasized on Tuesday that migrants who entered the country as children – commonly **known as Dreamers** – should be welcomed as long as they remain law-abiding. He also acknowledged that more workers are critically needed to fill certain jobs, such as in the food industry.

Adams said Tuesday he has already talked with Tom Homan, Trump’s newly designated “border czar”, who has vowed to carry out mass deportations throughout the country. Homan said during a recent **visit to the Texas-Mexico border** that the incoming administration is “not waiting until January to secure this nation at the highest levels this nation has ever seen”.

Awawdeh of the New York Immigration Coalition called Homan a “dangerous person”. Adams said he plans to meet in person with Homan soon.

Adams said: “I made it clear that I’m not going to be warring with this administration. I’m going to be working with this administration.” Donald Trump won the presidential election last month and will be inaugurated for a second term in January.

Adams said his “goal” is to “always” give due process to people accused of crimes – but said he was open to Homan’s ideas.

“You commit crimes in our city, I’m always going to be of the belief in a position that you don’t have the right to be in our city. And if someone committed a crime and they face jail time, I want them deported after they serve. But I’m willing to sit down and hear the plan of the border czar,” Adams said.

When a reporter pointed out that Adams himself is facing federal criminal charges of bribery and campaign finance violations, he dismissed the concern, saying that he had constitutional rights as an American citizen.

The American people voted to fix immigration, Adams said: “I’m open to anything to get criminals out of our city.”

At this dangerous moment for dissent

I hope you appreciated this article. Before you close this tab, I wanted to ask if you could support the Guardian at this crucial time for journalism in the US.

When the military is deployed to quell overwhelmingly peaceful protest, when elected officials of the opposing party are arrested or handcuffed, when student activists are jailed and deported, and when a wide range of civic institutions – non-profits, law firms, universities, news outlets, the arts, the civil service, scientists – are targeted and penalized by the federal government, it’s hard to avoid the conclusion that our core freedoms are disappearing before our eyes – and democracy itself is slipping away.

In any country on the cusp of authoritarianism, the role of the press as an engine of scrutiny, truth and accountability becomes increasingly critical. At the Guardian, we see it as our job not only to report on the suppression of dissenting voices, but to make sure those voices are heard.

Not every news organization sees its mission this way – indeed, some have been pressured by their corporate and billionaire owners to avoid antagonizing this government. I am thankful the Guardian is different.