



Monmouth/Winthrop Police Department

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April 11, 2025

To the Communities of Monmouth and Winthrop, it is apparent that there is a lot of concern among the public about the application I filed with ICE, (Immigration and Customs Enforcement), 2 weeks ago. I would like to take the opportunity to explain the reasoning for doing so, but first a little history on our involvement with aliens in our communities. In the past two years the Monmouth and Winthrop Police Departments have had several contacts with aliens in our communities. Our patrol force has little experience dealing with these types of events and has relied on ICE to assist us in dealing with these individuals. I will say that none of the people we have come in contact with have been from our communities and few were even from the State of Maine.

We have had to rely on the information that was given to us from ICE Officials to determine what our next legal course of action should be during these situations.

The outcome has been for us to detain the individuals until a representative from Border Patrol arrived on scene to take custody of the individuals. Border Patrol would then take them back to their home base to process them and determine whether or not they were going to hold them or release them. In most cases our Officers were held up for several hours while waiting for Border Patrol Agents to arrive on scene, this pulls our Officers away from our primary responsibilities to our communities.

The individuals we have transferred to ICE Officials have come as the result of traffic violations or suspicious activity complaints. Where we were required to deal with the issues presented to us during this contact. The suspicious activity complaint came in from a local business in Monmouth where it was reported that there were several people behind a business during the night hours that did not belong there. During the course of our investigation, we were able to identify 6 individuals who were all determined to be undocumented/without status, and we were told to detain them until Border Patrol arrived to take responsibility for them. This event tied up several officers for several hours. We were unable to determine as to why these individuals were behind this business at this time of the night.



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My goal in applying to ICE was to better train our officers in dealing with these types of situations as well as attempting to reduce the on-scene times for these officers. We are dealing with aliens in the course of our normal patrol functions and our officers are unsure of their authority and responsibilities when dealing with them. I do not want my officers to be under trained in any situation, especially when it concerns individual's constitutional rights.

This ICE contract requires that all officers must undergo 40 hours of training to assist ICE in any functions. Currently we cannot arrest, transport, or even question individuals who are aliens. After training this would allow the officers to transport aliens to holding facilities, to hasten our down time, if we determined that this would expedite the matter at hand. Without this training we can do none of the above.

The Towns of Monmouth and Winthrop would receive no benefits from ICE in the way of payments for services rendered. The only payments allowed under this contract would be for travel expenses to the Law Enforcement Agency if the trained officers needed to attend in-person training. As I understand all training will be done by online courses.

The Officers of the Monmouth and Winthrop Police Departments will not be going out to pursue any aliens or knocking on anyone's doors looking for violations, we are however forced to deal with the situations we are dealt and we will abide by the laws of this Country and the State of Maine in order to fulfil our obligations to the Oaths we took as Police Officer's, I know that most would expect nothing less.

Those of you who know me and the Officers of the Monmouth and Winthrop Police Departments understand that we have the utmost respect for our citizens and our communities and are doing all we can to protect, serve and keep our communities safe. Thank you all for your support to our Officers and Departments.

Signed,

Paul A. Ferland
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