STATE OF FLORIDA

JAMES UTHMEIER
ATTORNEY GENERAL

March 11, 2026

The Honorable Jane Castor
City of Tampa
306 East Jackson Street
Tampa, Florida 33602

Dear Mayor Castor:

My office recently became aware that the Tampa Police Department ("TPD") has enacted policies concerning the implementation of its 287(g) agreement with U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement ("ICE") that violate several Florida laws. We understand the policies delimit the specific information TPD may share with ICE and restrict the immigration enforcement activities in which the Department may participate. These policies violate Florida law's clear prohibition on sanctuary policies.

Section 908.103, Florida Statutes, prohibits law enforcement and local government entities from adopting or having in effect any sanctuary policy. "Sanctuary policy" means a law, policy, practice, procedure, or custom adopted or allowed by a local governmental entity that prohibits or impedes a law enforcement agency from complying with 8 U.S.C. § 1373 or that prohibits or impedes a law enforcement agency from communicating or cooperating with a federal immigration agency so as to limit such law enforcement agency in, or prohibit the agency from participating in a federal immigration operation with a federal immigration agency as permitted by federal and state law (§§ 908.102(6), 908.102(6)(h), Fla. Stat.). Not only does state law clearly ban "sanctuary policies," section 908.104(1), Florida Statutes, requires state and local jurisdictions to "use best efforts to support the enforcement of federal immigration law."

TPD's policies prohibiting its police officers from sharing certain information with federal immigration authorities and limiting the immigration enforcement activities in which it participates effectively establishes a sanctuary policy. Specifically, TPD prohibits officers from sharing information with federal immigration authorities regarding victims or witnesses of a crime, including investigating whether they have lawful status. TPD ostensibly supports these policies because they do not want illegal aliens to be concerned with immigration consequences by cooperating with law enforcement. But we want illegal aliens to fear immigration consequences to the extent they are here unlawfully. These sorts of policies that flout our Nation's immigration laws positively contribute to the mass influx of illegal aliens that Florida has experienced. Moreover, there are procedures in

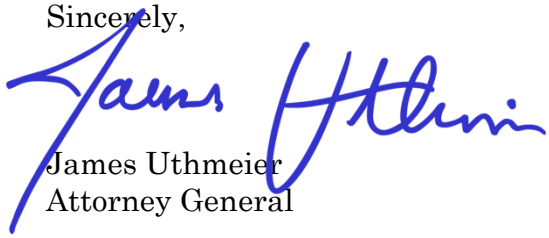
place to protect the integrity of a case when a victim or witness is here unlawfully.[1] As such, consistent with State law, federal immigration authorities *must* be alerted to individuals that are in the country illegally and perform investigations of their status irrespective of their role in a case.

Lest TPD's policies stop there, they also prohibit officers from engaging in "broad-based" immigration enforcement actions. This ambiguous restriction on immigration enforcement activities is precisely the sort of conduct that Florida law prohibits and plainly fails the "best efforts" test. You must do better.

These policies not only frustrate the laws of the State, but they also jeopardize the safety of Tampa residents. There are several examples of the serious danger illegal aliens pose to the City of Tampa and how the partnership with federal law enforcement agencies through a compliant 287(g) agreement helps minimize those risks. Just last week, a Florida Highway Patrol officer operating under the 287(g) program arrested a criminal alien in Hillsborough County with significant criminal history, including an active domestic violence protection order. Other large-scale operations have also been particularly successful. In September, as part of operations in Central Florida, ICE Miami and its 287(g) partners arrested 400 criminal aliens.[2] The criminal aliens arrested included those charged and convicted of lewd and lascivious behavior, battery, domestic violence, molestation, prostitution, and more.[3] Given the danger illegals pose to Florida, the Mayor of Tampa and TPD should prioritize Americans' safety over the comfort of illegal criminal aliens who have no right to be here in the first place.

The law in Florida is clear: sanctuary policies are prohibited, and law enforcement agencies are required to use "best efforts" in assisting federal immigration enforcement. The above discussed provisions in TPD's policies violate both laws. My office will not tolerate attempts—like this—to undermine state law. Your office must direct the immediate reversal of these unlawful policies no later than March 31, 2026. Failure to do so will risk the enforcement of all applicable civil penalties, including removal from office by the Governor pursuant to section 908.107, Florida Statutes, and the Florida Constitution.

Sincerely,



James Uthmeier
Attorney General

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[1] *See, e.g.*, *Immigration Options for Victims of Crime*, DHS, dhs.gov/immigration-options-victims-crime#:~:text=To%20petition%20for%20U%20nonimmigrant,deny%20a%20U%20visa%20petition (last visited Mar. 9, 2026).

[2] Press Release, *ICE Miami, 287(g) Partners Arrest 400 Criminal Aliens During Central Florida Operations*, (Sept. 30, 2025), ice.gov/news/releases/ice-miami-287g-partners-arrest-400-criminal-aliens-during-central-florida-operations.

[3] *Id.*