

Immigration Enforcement Affected Both Immigrant and Nonimmigrant Families Across the US in 2025

Findings from the Well-Being and Basic Needs Survey

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In this brief, we provide first-of-its-kind data on exposure to and worries about immigration enforcement for both immigrant and nonimmigrant families. In 2025, the federal government expanded immigration enforcement in unprecedented ways to meet its mass deportation goals.¹ These efforts have included removal of protections for sensitive locations like schools and child care facilities where immigration enforcement had previously been prohibited, enhanced coordination and data sharing between the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and other federal agencies, increased cooperation between immigration authorities and state and local police, and expansion of detention capacity, which have led to rapid deportations and concerns about due process (Chishti, Bush-Joseph, and Putzel-Kavanaugh 2026; Chishti and Putzel-Kavanaugh 2025; Ruiz Soto 2025). Although operations involving surges of federal agents in cities like Los Angeles, Chicago, and Minneapolis have been most visible and elicited public concern, DHS data show that immigration arrests have taken place in all states,² and increasingly include people with no criminal convictions (Blair and Hausman 2026). Emerging evidence has documented the impacts of new enforcement practices on immigrant families and communities, including negative effects on children's well-being (Gonzalez et al. 2026; Haley et al. 2026; Kocher 2025; Rogers et al. 2025; Schumacher et al. 2025). Nonimmigrant community members have also felt the effects of enforcement activities and joined in efforts to protect neighbors and protest actions (NORC 2025; RAPID Survey Project 2026).³

We use data from the Urban Institute's Well-Being and Basic Needs Survey (WBNS), a nationally representative survey of adults (box 1). We examine awareness of local immigration enforcement activity and concern about being approached by Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) or other immigration authorities for adults in immigrant families, in which one or more people living in the household were born outside the US, as well as for adults in nonimmigrant families, in which all household family members were born in the US. We assess differences by race/ethnicity, citizenship/immigration status of family members living in the household (box 2),⁴ and awareness of local ICE or other immigration enforcement activity, and compare deportation concerns for immigrant families in 2025 with earlier years. These data were collected in December 2025, almost a year into the current administration and before the high-profile campaign and fatal shootings in Minneapolis.⁵ We find that immigration enforcement efforts affected people across the country regardless of citizenship or immigration status, particularly people of color.⁶

Both Immigrant and Nonimmigrant Families Reported Immigration Enforcement Activity in Their Local Areas

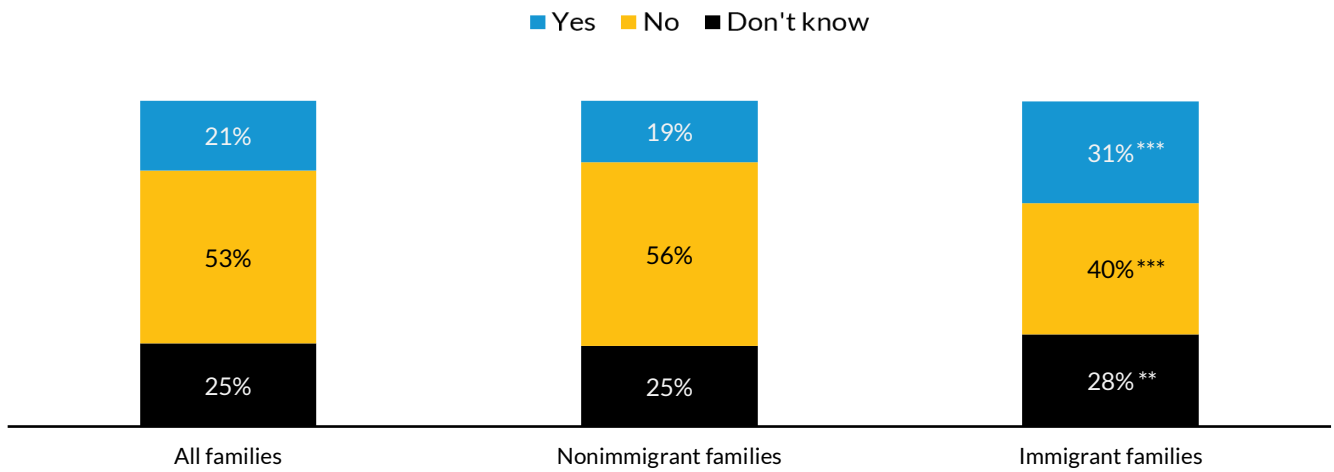
More than 1 in 5 adults in all families (21 percent) were aware of an ICE raid or other immigration enforcement activity that had taken place in 2025 in their area (i.e., where they live, work, shop, or regularly go). This was reported by nearly 1 in 5 adults in nonimmigrant families (19 percent), and nearly one-third of adults in immigrant

families (31 percent) (figure 1). Just over half of all adults (53 percent) reported no local ICE activity, and 25 percent did not know whether such activities had taken place in their communities. Although reported ICE activity was highest in the Western Census region⁷ and in urban areas, people in rural areas and all regions of the country reported immigration enforcement activity in their communities (data not shown).⁸

FIGURE 1

More than 1 in 5 Adults Reported Immigration Enforcement Activities Had Taken Place in Their Communities in 2025

As far as you know, have there been any ICE raids or other immigration enforcement activity where you live, work, go shopping, or regularly go in the past 12 months?



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Source: Well-Being and Basic Needs Survey, December 2025.

Notes: ICE = Immigration and Customs Enforcement. The sample for this figure is adults ages 18 and older. Estimates may not sum to 100 due to rounding and omission of the 0.5 percent of adults who did not respond to the question about awareness of local enforcement activities.

*/**/*** Estimate differs significantly from adults in nonimmigrant families at the 0.10/0.05/0.01 level, using two-tailed tests. The measure of local ICE activity is self-reported and reflects respondents' awareness of any type of local immigration enforcement activities.

The measure of local ICE activity is self-reported and reflects a respondent's awareness of local enforcement activities, which may or may not be visible to or perceived by respondents.⁹ Awareness of enforcement activity does not necessarily mean that their locality has been targeted for a high-profile operation and could include a variety of activities such as traffic stops, arrests at homes, or raids at worksites or other community spaces.

BOX 1

2025 WELL-BEING AND BASIC NEEDS SURVEY

The WBNS is a nationally representative, annual survey of adults that monitors individual and family well-being in the context of a changing safety net. Launched by the Urban Institute in December 2017, the WBNS provides timely information on the challenges that households face in meeting basic needs such as food, housing, and health care.

More than 10,000 adults ages 18 and older participated in the December 2025 round of the survey, which they could complete online in English or Spanish. Participants were sampled from the KnowledgePanel, a probability-based internet panel maintained by Ipsos that includes households with and without internet access. To assess experiences of adults in immigrant families, we oversampled noncitizens and constructed survey weights to produce nationally representative estimates for adults who were born outside the US or lived with a relative who was born

outside the US. For this analysis, we examined the experiences of the 2,234 adults in immigrant families and the 8,748 adults who were not in immigrant families.

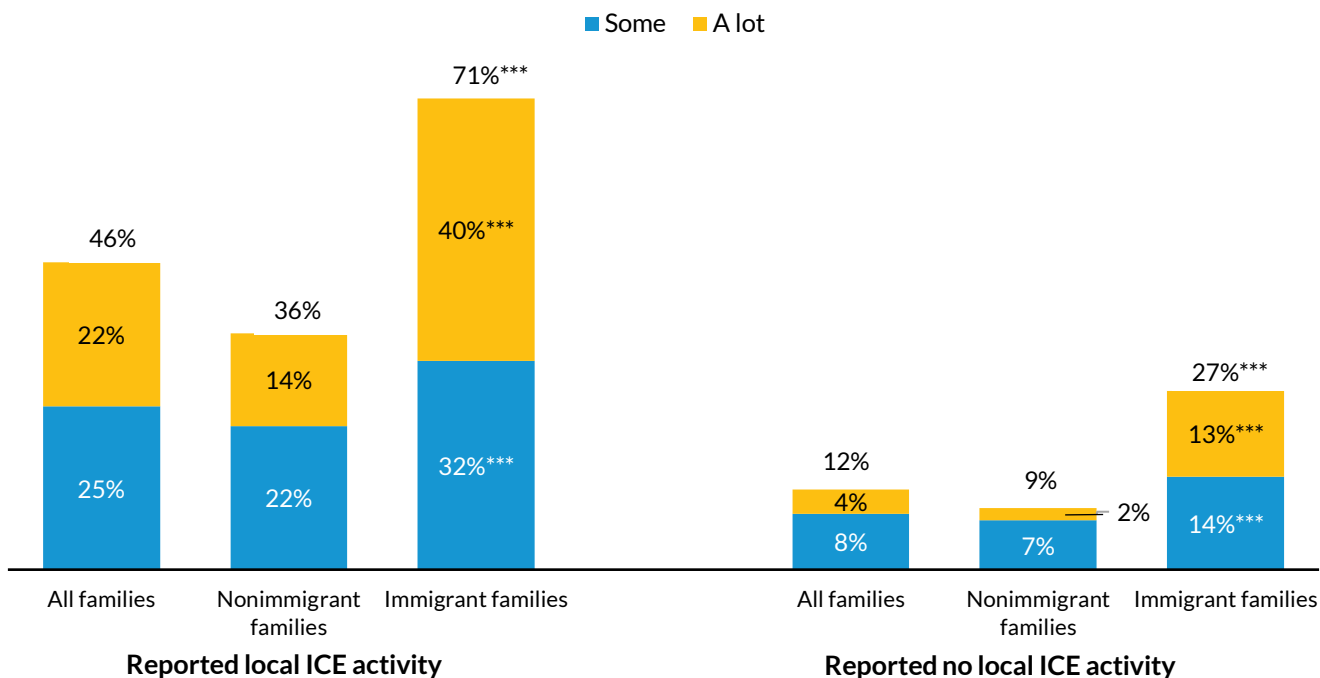
Both Immigrant and Nonimmigrant Families Were Worried About ICE Approaching Them

Among adults who reported enforcement activities taking place in their communities in 2025, large shares reported being worried “a lot” or “some” about being approached by ICE or other immigration authorities. Nearly half of all adults who reported local ICE activity (46 percent) were worried they or a family member would be approached by ICE or other immigration authorities. Among nonimmigrant families, this was over one-third (36 percent), with 14 percent who worried a lot. In immigrant families, nearly three-quarters (71 percent) worried about being approached, with 40 percent who worried a lot (figure 2).

FIGURE 2

Nearly Half of Adults Who Reported Local Immigration Enforcement Activity in 2025 Worried About Being Approached by ICE

Regardless of your own immigration or citizenship status, how much, if at all, do you worry that you or a family member will be approached by ICE or other immigration authorities?



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Source: Well-Being and Basic Needs Survey, December 2025.

Notes: ICE = Immigration and Customs Enforcement. The sample for this figure is adults ages 18 and older. The measure of local ICE activity is self-reported and reflects respondents’ awareness of any type of local immigration enforcement activities. Estimates are not shown for the 25 percent of adults who responded “don’t know” to the question about awareness of local enforcement activities. Estimates may not sum to totals due to rounding.

*/**/** Estimate differs significantly from adults in nonimmigrant families at the 0.10/0.05/0.01 level, using two-tailed tests.

Even adults who were not aware of any local ICE activity in 2025 were worried about being approached by ICE. Although worries were lower for adults who reported no local ICE activity, 12 percent of such adults were worried about being approached by immigration authorities. Worries about being approached by ICE among those who reported no local ICE activity were about three times higher in immigrant families (27 percent) than in nonimmigrant families (9 percent).¹⁰

BOX 2

FAMILY CITIZENSHIP AND IMMIGRATION STATUS

Survey respondents reported immigration and citizenship status for themselves, spouses/partners, children under 19, and other relatives living with them. We classify survey respondents into the following household categories:

- **All-citizen immigrant families.** Households in which all family members are naturalized or US-born citizens
- **Green card and citizen families.** Households in which at least one family member is a permanent resident (i.e., a green card holder) and all other members are either naturalized or US-born citizens or permanent residents
- **Mixed-status families.**^a Households in which one or more family members are undocumented and all other family members either are naturalized or US-born citizens, are permanent residents, or have another lawful immigration status

^aOur definition of adults in mixed-status families excludes (1) adults living in households in which all family members who are noncitizens without a green card are living in the US with other lawful temporary immigration status and (2) adults in households in which everyone is undocumented. We include these two groups when providing estimates for all adults in immigrant families. We do not disaggregate data for these two groups because of small sample sizes.

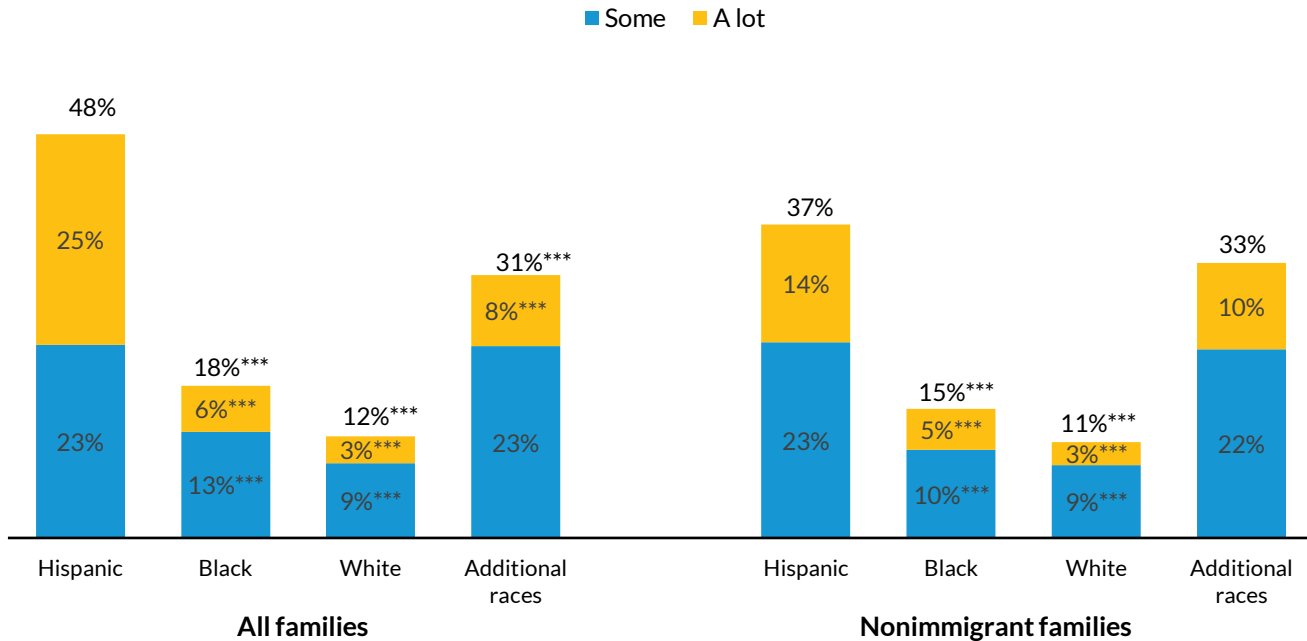
People of Color Were Most Likely to be Worried About Being Approached by ICE

Adults of all races and ethnicities reported worry about being approached by ICE or other immigration authorities, but worry was highest among people of color in both immigrant and nonimmigrant families. Among all adults, regardless of whether they reported local ICE activity, nearly half of Hispanic adults (48 percent) expressed worry that they or a family member would be approached by ICE or other immigration authorities, with 25 percent worried a lot; almost 1 in 5 non-Hispanic Black adults (18 percent) expressed worry; and nearly one-third of non-Hispanic adults of additional races (31 percent) expressed worry—the majority of this group were Asian and about 10 percent were American Indian/Alaska Native.¹¹ A smaller share of non-Hispanic white adults (12 percent) reported this worry (figure 3).

FIGURE 3

Nearly Half of All Hispanic Adults Worried About Being Approached by ICE in 2025, with Elevated Concern Among Other People of Color

Regardless of your own immigration or citizenship status, how much, if at all, do you worry that you or a family member will be approached by ICE or other immigration authorities?



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Source: Well-Being and Basic Needs Survey, December 2025.

Notes: ICE = Immigration and Customs Enforcement. The sample for this figure is adults ages 18 and older. Adults who are Black, white, or additional races are not Hispanic. Additional races include people who are Asian, American Indian or Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander, some other race, or more than one race, including white or Black and another race. Estimates may not sum to totals due to rounding.

*/**/** Estimate differs significantly from Hispanic adults at the 0.10/0.05/0.01 level, using two-tailed tests. All families includes adults in immigrant and nonimmigrant families.

Concerns about being approached by ICE were not limited to immigrant families.¹² Among adults in nonimmigrant families, over 1 in 3 Hispanic adults (37 percent), nearly 1 in 6 non-Hispanic Black adults (15 percent), 1 in 3 non-Hispanic adults of additional races (33 percent), and 11 percent of non-Hispanic white adults were worried that they or a family member would be approached by ICE.

Adults in all geographic regions of the US expressed concern about being approached by ICE, with at least 17 percent of all adults worried in each region (data not shown).¹³

Immigrant Families with and Without Undocumented Members Worried About Being Approached by ICE

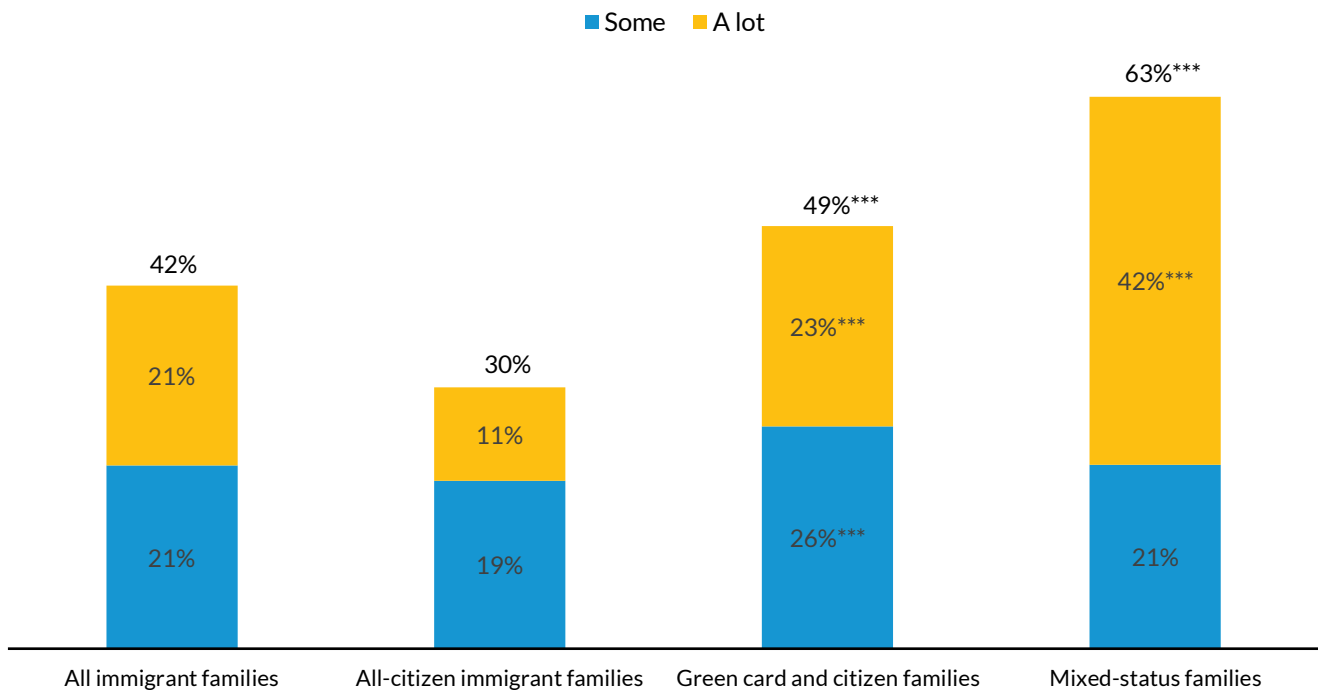
Worries about being approached by ICE varied across different types of immigrant families. Adults in mixed-status families (families that include both undocumented immigrants and lawfully present immigrants and/or US citizens) were most likely to worry that they or a family member would be approached by ICE, with about two-thirds (63

percent) worried and 42 percent worried a lot (figure 4). However, immigrant families that included no undocumented members also worried about being approached by immigration authorities: 3 in 10 adults in immigrant families made up entirely of citizens worried (30 percent), with 11 percent worried a lot; and about half of adults in families with a mix of green card holders and citizens (49 percent), with 23 percent worried a lot.

FIGURE 4

Three in 10 Adults in Immigrant Families Made up Entirely of Citizens Worried About Being Approached by ICE in 2025

Regardless of your own immigration or citizenship status, how much, if at all, do you worry that you or a family member will be approached by ICE or other immigration authorities?



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Source: Well-Being and Basic Needs Survey, December 2025.

Notes: ICE = Immigration and Customs Enforcement. The sample for this figure is adults ages 18 and older. Mixed-status families are families that include undocumented as well as lawfully present immigrants and/or US citizens.

*/**/** Estimate differs significantly from adults in all-citizen families at the 0.10/0.05/0.01 level, using two-tailed tests.

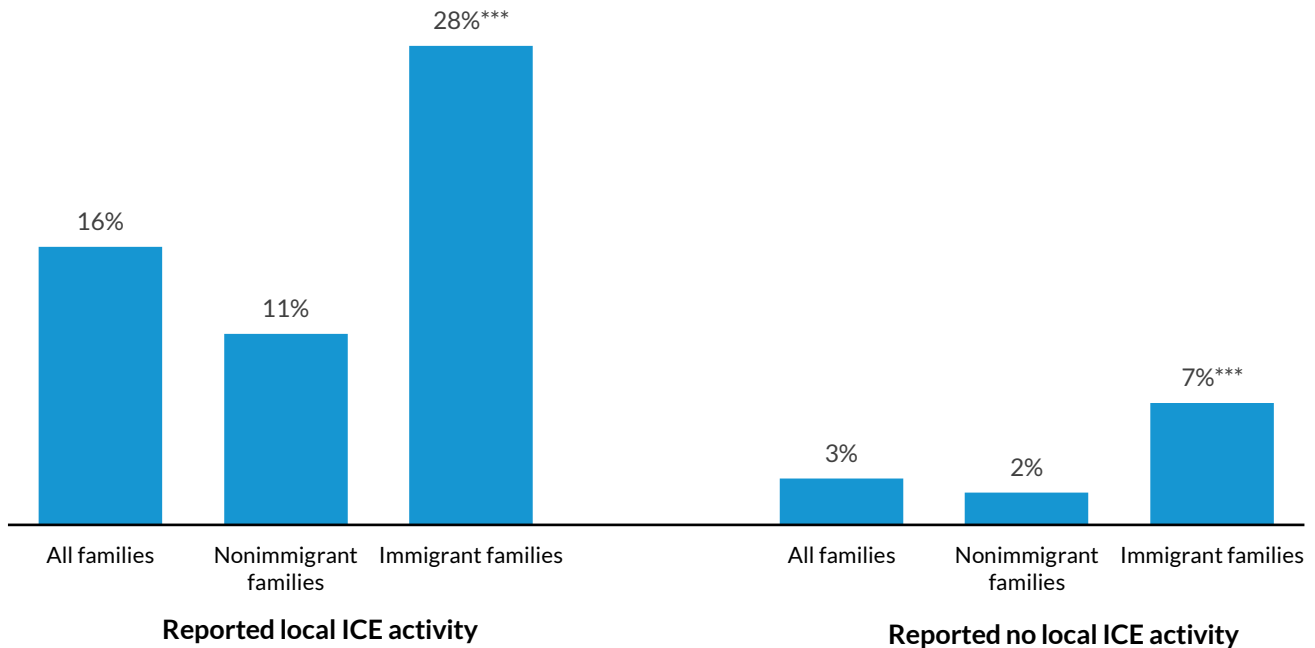
Immigrant and Nonimmigrant Families Personally Know People Who Were Taken Into ICE Custody

Among all adults who reported enforcement activities taking place in their area in 2025, about 1 in 6 (16 percent) reported that they personally know someone who was taken into custody, detained, or deported by ICE or other immigration authorities in 2025 (figure 5). This was reported by over 1 in 10 adults in nonimmigrant families (11 percent) and nearly 3 in 10 adults in immigrant families (28 percent).

FIGURE 5

About 1 in 6 Adults Who Reported Local Immigration Enforcement Activity Personally Know People Who Were Taken into ICE Custody in 2025

Do you personally know someone who was taken into custody, detained, or deported by ICE or other immigration authorities in the past 12 months?



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Source: Well-Being and Basic Needs Survey, December 2025.

Notes: ICE = Immigration and Customs Enforcement. The sample for this figure is adults ages 18 and older. The measure of local ICE activity is self-reported and reflects respondents' awareness of any type of local immigration enforcement activities.

*/**/** Estimate differs significantly from adults in nonimmigrant families at the 0.10/0.05/0.01 level, using two-tailed tests.

Not unexpectedly, it was much less common for adults who reported no local ICE activity to report they personally know someone who had been taken into ICE custody, though this was true for 7 percent of such adults in immigrant families, likely in reference to family, friends, or acquaintances living elsewhere in the country.

Worries About Deportations Increased Between 2024 and 2025 for Immigrant Families with No Undocumented Members

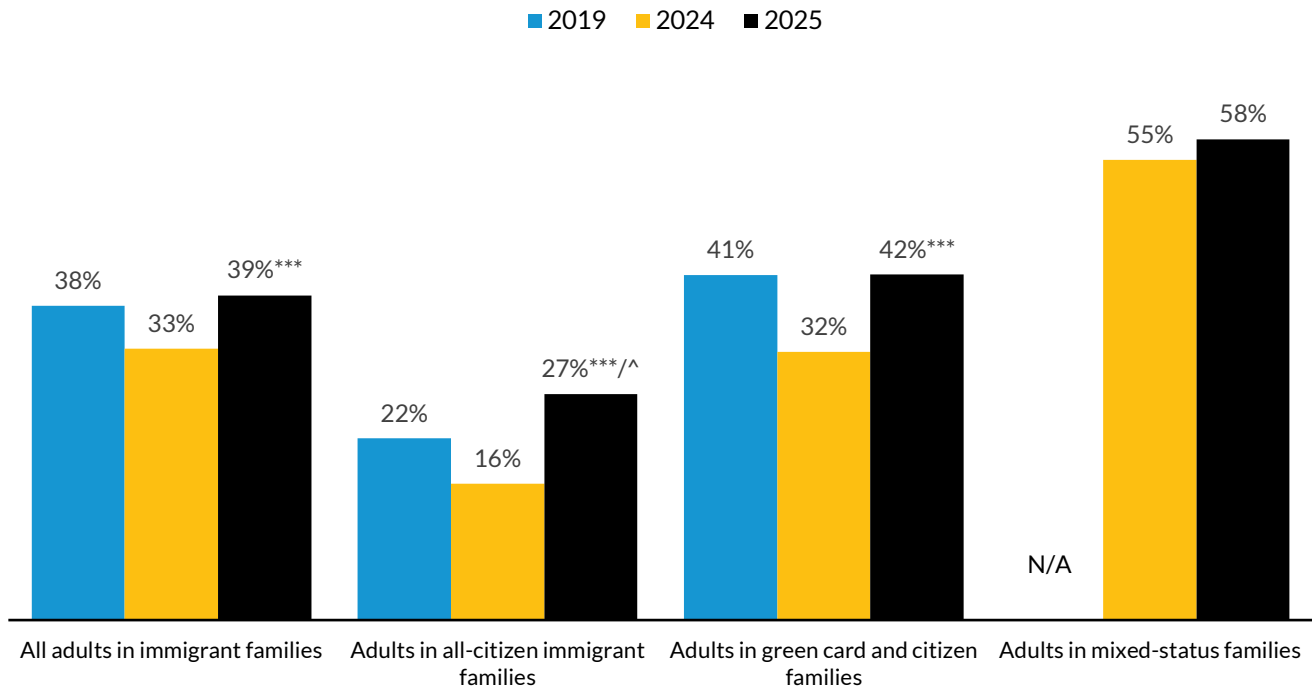
Regardless of local ICE activity awareness, in December 2025, nearly 4 in 10 nonelderly adults (i.e., ages 18 to 64) in immigrant families¹⁴ (39 percent) worried that they, a family member, or a close friend could be deported (figure 6). This rose from 1 in 3 (33 percent) in December 2024, after the election but before the current administration took office (Bernstein et al. 2025).

Worry about potential deportations was most common in mixed-status families, with nearly 6 in 10 adults (58 percent) reporting this concern in 2025; this share did not change significantly from the previous year (55 percent).

FIGURE 6

Over 1 in 4 Adults in Immigrant Families Made Up Entirely of Citizens Worried About Deportations

Regardless of your own immigration or citizenship status, how much, if at all, do you worry that you, a family member, or close friend could be deported?



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Source: Well-Being and Basic Needs Survey, December 2025.

Notes: The sample for this figure is adults ages 18 to 64. Data for mixed-status families are not available for 2019. Mixed-status families are families that include undocumented as well as lawfully present immigrants and/or US citizens.

*/**/** Dec. 2025 estimate differs significantly from Dec. 2024 at the 0.10/0.05/0.01 level, using two-tailed tests.

^ Dec. 2025 estimate differs significantly from Dec. 2019 at the 0.10 level, using two-tailed tests.

The growth in concern from 2024 to 2025 came primarily from immigrant families with no undocumented members. Over 1 in 4 adults in all-citizen families (27 percent) were worried that they, a family member, or a close friend could be deported, rising significantly from 16 percent in 2024. Similarly, in immigrant families with a mix of citizens and green card holders, over 4 in 10 adults expressed concern about potential deportations in 2025 (42 percent), increasing from 32 percent in 2024.

The change for all-citizen immigrant families between 2019 and 2025 is particularly notable, with the share expressing worry about deportations rising significantly from 22 percent to 27 percent; the share expressing this worry did not rise for adults in immigrant families overall (38 percent) or for adults in green card and citizen families (41 percent).

Conclusion

These findings demonstrate the widespread impacts of increasingly aggressive immigration enforcement actions taken in 2025 and the salience of concern across the public. Impacts extended beyond undocumented immigrants

and their family members and affected both US-born and naturalized US citizens nationwide. Adults in both immigrant and nonimmigrant families reported that immigration enforcement activities had taken place in their communities, that they were worried about being approached by ICE or other immigration authorities, and that they personally knew people who had been taken into custody. People of color were the most likely to report worry about being approached by ICE, even in nonimmigrant families. Although mixed-status families were most likely to report deportation fears, immigrant families made up entirely of US citizens and/or green card holders also reported increased concern between 2024 and 2025 that they, a family member, or a close friend could be deported. Such fears were reported in every region of the country, highlighting that the impacts of enforcement policy are being felt across the country, not just in the specific cities that experienced high-profile campaigns.

Although the experiences of immigrant families have been reported, the results found here for the nonimmigrant population are notable (Schumacher et al. 2025). Nonimmigrant community members may fear disruptions to their daily life, encountering law enforcement agents, civil liberties concerns, security and public safety risks, and secondary and economic impacts as colleagues, clients, child care and other service providers, children’s schoolmates, and other community members withdraw from public life or are detained, deported, or separated from family members (Herbst and Tekin 2025; NORC 2025; RAPID Survey Project 2026; Sedgwick et al. 2026).¹⁵ Disproportionate worries among people of color may reflect concerns about racial profiling that have been the subject of debate and litigation, including a Supreme Court decision that permitted ICE to question people on suspicion of being undocumented based on factors such as race/ethnicity, language spoken, and workplace (Chishti, Bush-Joseph, and Putzel-Kavanaugh 2025).¹⁶ There have also been reports of increased ICE arrests of Native Americans,¹⁷ along with Hispanic, Asian, and other people of color (Ong and Ong 2025).¹⁸ Moreover, the concern among immigrant families with no undocumented members, i.e., families made up of US citizens and/or green card holders, aligns with reporting on detentions of US citizens and green card holders, as well as refugees and other immigrants with lawful status.¹⁹

Because these data were collected in December 2025, before the widely publicized operation in Minneapolis that included fatal shootings of protestors and the arrest of a preschooler with his father,²⁰ concerns about immigration enforcement may have risen since then. A partial government shutdown in early 2026 was driven by debate on funding for DHS and demands to reform enforcement practices. It will be important to assess near and longer-term social, psychological, and economic impacts of current immigration policies on families and all community members who live and work alongside immigrant neighbors to inform debate about immigration enforcement.²¹

Notes

¹ Josh Gerstein and Kyle Cheney, “Judges Press Trump Administration on Deportation Quotas,” *Politico*, July 28, 2025, <https://www.politico.com/news/2025/07/28/judges-trump-administration-deportation-quotas-00480899?cid=apn>.

² See Enforcement Dashboard arrest data through October 2025 at “Arrests Dashboard,” Enforcementdashboard.com, accessed March 16, 2026, <https://enforcementdashboard.com/ice-arrests>. Arrests have taken place in every state, and were highest in Texas, Florida, and California, followed by Georgia, New York, Virginia, and Arizona.

³ Bridget Bennett, “How Daily Routines in Minneapolis and St. Paul Have Changed amid 3,000 Federal Immigration Agents – In Pictures,” *The Guardian*, February 22, 2026, <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/ng-interactive/2026/feb/22/minneapolis-st-paul-daily-routines-immigration>; and Julie Bosman, “How ICE Crackdowns Set Off a Resistance in American Cities,” *New York Times*, Jan 14, 2026, <https://www.nytimes.com/2026/01/14/us/ice-protests-activism.html>.

⁴ Survey respondents reported immigration and citizenship status for themselves, spouses/partners, children younger than age 19, and other relatives living with them.

⁵ Dan Berry, “A Shocked Nation Watches Minneapolis Killings: ‘Something Needs to Change,’” *New York Times*, January 27, 2026, <https://www.nytimes.com/2026/01/27/us/alex-pretti-shooting-minneapolis-reaction.html>.

- ⁴ We use the term "people of color" to encompass people who are Hispanic, Black, Asian, American Indian or Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander, some other race, and more than one race, including white or Black and another race. We acknowledge this term is limited, as it is defined using people's self-identified race, rather than the race others perceive them to be. As such, we likely capture people who are not racialized as people of color (e.g., white Hispanics) using this term in our analysis (Gonzalez et al. 2022).
- ⁷ The Western Census region includes thirteen states: Arizona, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Utah, and Wyoming in the Mountain Division, and Alaska, California, Hawaii, Oregon, and Washington in the Pacific Division.
- ⁸ The share of all adults who reported that there had been local ICE activity was highest in the Western Census region (30 percent) and ranged between 17 percent and 19 percent in the other three regions.
- ⁹ A lack of awareness may explain why a large share reported that they did not know whether there had been local ICE activity; around 1 in 4 adults in all families (25 percent) did not know whether there had been local immigration enforcement activities in their area in the preceding year. This was slightly higher for adults in immigrant families (28 percent) than in nonimmigrant families (25 percent).
- ¹⁰ Adults who did not know whether there had been local ICE activity also expressed worries about being approached (25 percent overall, and 28 percent and 25 percent for adults in immigrant and nonimmigrant families, respectively).
- ¹¹ "Additional races" included 71 percent who were Asian, 10 percent who were American Indian/Alaska Native, 1 percent who were Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander, and the rest indicated they were "some other race" or "more than one race."
- ¹² The sample size is not sufficient to analyze immigrant families by race/ethnicity.
- ¹³ The share of all adults who were worried about being approached by ICE or other immigration authorities was highest in the Western Census region (31 percent) and ranged between 17 and 20 percent in the other three regions.
- ¹⁴ Changes in worries about deportations over time are reported among working-age adults (ages 18 to 64) because the WBNS sample did not include adults ages 65 and older before 2025. Questions about deportation concerns among immigrant families were included in the 2019, 2024, and 2025 rounds, allowing us to examine changes in these concerns over time for nonelderly adults.
- ¹⁵ Ben Zipperer, "Trump's Deportation Plans Threaten 400,000 Direct Care Jobs." Economic Policy Institute (blog), December 15, 2025, <https://www.epi.org/blog/trumps-deportation-plans-threaten-400000-direct-care-jobs-older-adults-and-people-with-disabilities-could-lose-vital-in-home-support/>.
- ¹⁶ Louis Jacobson, "What Legal Rights Do You Have in Encounters with ICE? Legal Experts Weigh In," PBS, Jan 24, 2026, <https://www.pbs.org/newshour/nation/what-legal-rights-do-you-have-in-encounters-with-ice-legal-experts-weigh-in>; and *Kristi Noem, Secretary, Department of Homeland Security v. Pedro Vasquez Perdemo*, 606 U.S. (2025).
- ¹⁷ Philip Wang, "'A State of Panic': Native Americans Left in the Dark Weeks After ICE Arrests," *Time*, February 18, 2026, <https://time.com/7379166/ice-native-american-arrests-minneapolis-ogala-sioux-tribe/>.
- ¹⁸ Adrian Florido, "'Antagonized for Being Hispanic': Growing Claims of Racial Profiling in LA Raids," NPR, July 4, 2025, <https://www.npr.org/2025/07/04/nx-s1-5438396/antagonized-for-being-hispanic-growing-claims-of-racial-profiling-in-la-raids>; and Melissa Hellmann, "'It's like they're hunting': US Citizens and Legal Residents Report Increase in Racial Profiling by Ice," *The Guardian*, January 22, 2026, <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2026/jan/22/us-citizens-racial-profiling-ice>.
- ¹⁹ Nicole Foy, "We Found That More Than 170 U.S. Citizens Have Been Held by Immigration Agents. They've Been Kicked, Dragged and Detained for Days," *ProPublica*, October 16, 2025, <https://www.propublica.org/article/immigration-dhs-american-citizens-arrested-detained-against-will>; Anna Betts, "Mohsen Mahdawi, Palestinian Green-Card Holder and Columbia Student, Detained by Ice," *The Guardian*, April 14, 2025, <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2025/apr/14/mohsen-mahdawi-palestinian-detained-ice>; and Miriam Jordan and Hamed Aleaziz, "They 'Had Done Everything Right.' ICE Detained Them Anyway," *New York Times*, January 26, 2026, <https://www.nytimes.com/2026/01/26/us/politics/ice-minnesota-refugees.html>.
- ²⁰ Joshua Barajas, "Shooting Deaths Climb in Trump's Mass Deportation Effort," *PBS News*, January 29, 2026, <https://www.pbs.org/newshour/nation/a-look-at-shootings-by-federal-immigration-officers>; and Holly Yan and Priscilla Alvarez, "A Preschooler Was Taken Away by Ice, but Officials Say They Had No Choice. Here's What We Know," *CNN*, January 23, 2026, <https://www.cnn.com/2026/01/23/us/liam-conejo-ramos-ice-wwk>.
- ²¹ Lisa Mascaro, "Trump's ICE Force Is Sweeping America. Billions in His Tax and Spending Cuts Bill Are Paying for It," *PBS News*, January 20, 2026, <https://www.pbs.org/newshour/nation/trumps-ice-force-is-sweeping-america-billions-in-his-tax-and-spending-cuts-bill-are-paying-for-it>.

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