

Q&A for Listening Session for Federal Law Enforcement Concerns 1/27/2026

Q: More information about the basics of what to do when / when local police can intervene to help someone when federal law enforcement is involved.

A: If excessive force is being used, other law enforcement on scene has a duty to intervene (however this might not apply to federal law enforcement). Local police cannot interfere with a federal law enforcement operation.

Q: What can be done if you see a federal agent pulling someone from a vehicle.

A: Referenced *Noem v. Vasquez Perdomo*. Discussed the balance of local police escalating vs. deescalating. Cautioned that further escalation could lead to bigger issues and we do not want the insurrection act to be implemented.

Q: Requested information about flock cameras, what are they used for and how is the data shared. Concerns that helpers are being tracked.

A: IT Director and PD met with a concerned citizen this afternoon to discuss this topic. This technology is used for identifying cars involved in crimes, and there are great benefits to resolving cases. The concern is valid; local pd does not share this information with federal agencies and there is no access to other outside parties. Information is only searched for a 50-mile radius. There is a required yearly audit, that is completed by an outside agency and shared with the council as a consent agenda item. CHPD tries to utilize this technology as ethically as possible.

Q: Will citizens continue to have access to the Anoka County scanner information.

A: Radio encryption is federally mandated, and all cities and counties are moving towards encryption.

Q: What protection do we as citizens have against the federal government. Feels that she is being followed while driving, shopping, taking children to school. No one should be traumatized in this manner. Why are the police not at bus stops, at schools.

A: MCPA (Minnesota Chief of Police Association) has been working on all of these issues. Local and State law enforcement are working to make sure these constitutional rights violations are documented.

Q: Asked for clarification that these ICE / DHS officers are not law enforcement; can they enforce only immigration.

A: Federal law enforcement is very different from local and state law enforcement. CHPD can only enforce state and city law. We would like more information from the federal government about what is going on in our community.

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Q/S: Very proud of the community. She wants to share that she has seen a federal agent with a Stingray device at a local grocery store. She knows she is being followed. She knows the federal government is tracking and see everything that the residents are doing.

A: Clarified that State and Federal Legislature needs to act related to these concerns and to take action to prevent this technology being used to target residents.

Q: What is the PD / Mayor doing about the fraud and the illegal immigrants.

A: Fraud that is reported is investigated.

Q: Looking for clarity related to what local citizens can do to help protect neighbors. She has been offering to help drive other kids to school and help with the community's needs.

A: You can refuse to let federal agents interact with you and children. If you encounter an issue, you can call local dispatch and ask for help.

Q/S: How do we get the federal government to stop breaking the law.

A: We need the courts to address the constitutional violations. This is no different than when local law enforcement needed to change. The things the community is doing are impactful.

Q/S: Concerned about not interfering with federal law enforcement and discussed about how to document constitutional concerns.

A:

Q/S: Concerns related to the bus stop on 40th and Central. There is still no heat or wind protection. Proud of the city staff and how the police department have responded to these concerns in the City, and our PD should teach other departments.

A: Glad to create a respectful work environment. Will follow up again with Metro Transit as this is on the list to be completely redone when construction occurs on Central.

Q: Questions about legal observers and the policy for local PD in handling situations with legal observers. Should legal observers expect that they should be able to chat with law enforcement.

A: There is peaceful protesting information that was posted to the City website. If anyone calls 911 local police will respond. Please do not make a report that is not factual, don't report an issue as an elevated crime to get a quicker response. Officers will share information as they are able to and will make reports of concerns.

Q: If driving and pulled over by masked men do you need to stop.

A: Call dispatch and tell them that you need help and are waiting for an officer to respond. You can also drive to the police department if you are being followed.

Q: What is the city doing if there are situations with ICE loitering and watching house. Calls have been made and the Anoka County dispatcher told people “do not call about ICE”.

A: Call 911 and report the issues. This helps the City to document these concerns. Ask for a supervisor to elevate the concerns if you call dispatch and do not feel that they are taking the concern seriously. County Commissioner Miesner clarified that residents should be calling 911 when there is suspicious behavior. She feels strongly that follow through is needed and she would like to know this information directly to better track it.

Q: Inquired about the plain clothed federal agents and unmarked cars, how does the PD intervene to help neighbors by asking for badge and warrant. Asked for follow up re contacting PD.

A: MCPA (Minnesota Chief of Police Association) has reached out to the republican law makers about these concerns to relay the information to them. The gray area related to administrative warrants need to be addressed. A lot of things are done electronically, so some warrants may look different.

Q/S: The community is coming together to help keep businesses going, keep children fed and people safe. She is concerned with using Signal and the federal government’s level of surveillance. She feels like we are not getting anywhere. At what point does the government take over the care of others.

A: The Metro Mayors organization has been meeting to get more information for the community. There is strategy that needs to be developed, as there has not been a time when the federal government has actively tried to take away our constitutional rights. At every level the City staff and elected officials have tried to organize to meet residents’ needs. We need to get the word out to everyone about what is occurring. It cannot be just one person, one city, one state that is taking action. We need support outside of Minnesota.

Q/S: Asked for local government to speak with their words and their actions. Gave statement regarding abduction of Liam, and that there are no words to describe what it would be like if that was her brother or cousin. She is concerned about the experiences of young children in the community and that they should be able to attend school and learn without fear.

A:

Q/S: Concerned that the police are outnumbered and residents are risking their lives to protect the community. What can we expect from the City if a community member is persecuted / prosecuted because they are helping their neighbors. She hoped that civilian volunteers are protected.

A: Understood concern, and that local government is doing everything in its power to support residents.

Q/S: Teacher concerned with protecting children and wants to “challenge and support” by giving advise to community members about what can be done if speaking with a federal agent. Clearly stating that “I am responsible for the safety of the children in my care”, direct agents to stop questioning and instruct student/child to remain silent. Tell the students/child that they are safe and protected. She would like to see more “good trouble’ or “malicious compliance”.

A:

Q/S: Stated that there is a large population of the community not represented here today, and she wants to know what is being done for the people who are impacted most and not able to be in the room tonight. What is the city and school doing to make sure that basic needs are met. There seems to be a lot of gray area about what can and cannot be done.

A: There is important work going on in the background and behind the scenes. This information and observation does not fall on deaf ears. The police department is making reports and is able to act / respond when situations occur. Encourage attendees to get to know your neighbors by name and be a resource. Our police are doing a lot of hard work and are so compassionate. There is important work going on, and there are social workers in the police department, and they are there for the community and first responders.

Q: Are you coordinating with other surrounding cities police forces. Is there a coalition and coordination going on with the surrounding areas.

A: There is a lot of work going on with the Anoka County Chiefs, work is presently within the county because some of the surrounding cities are in Ramsey and Hennepin County. There is no coordination against federal agents however there would be coordination if there was civil unrest. The mayors do often talk and share information from their communities.

Q/S: Proud that Columbia Heights has done a good job keeping the community safe. Wants to see the continued community. Stated that we help each other and take care of each other. Concerns related to city ordinances or policies that can be enacted. Would like to know what things can be done for an eviction moratorium.

A: We have been looking at how the council can support eviction moratoriums and have also looked at closing city parking lots. There are conversations and concerns related to marginalized community members to not be a target of additional federal enforcement. Sometimes it feels like there is not a lot of activity, but there has been a lot of work going on behind the scenes for the past year and this includes balancing the needs of the people at risk.

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Q: She knows that we are in crisis and as a teacher she sees this firsthand. How do we provide care for children to support them when we have moved from this. Are we thinking with intention about how we move forward.

A: Mayor would like to see a task force put together to help develop programs for the children of the community to be able to rebound and grow.

Q/S: Stated an appreciation for the community sharing all of these experiences. He would like to see the community identify what is occurring and that it is political violence. We are playing by two different sets of rules when dealing with the federal government. Things seem ineffective, and what gives him hope is not lowering our standards to their level and following the constitution.

A:

Q: What contact has been made with state and federal officials and if there has been legal advice sought on how to proceed.

A: Upcoming meeting with Congress Woman Omar this week, she has been doing so much work for the community, and she has added additional staff. Councilmember Spriggs is the main contact for relaying information to Ilhan Omar's office. Meetings are being held with state legislative members. Federal and state representatives are not being treated with respect, and everyone is trying to figure out how to legally stop the federal government's actions.

Q/S: Deeply moved by the community response and the loss of freedom. Urges everyone to be courageous and keep showing up. Is the PD able to take additional action.

A: The police department is still also addressing other pressing needs in the community; they are trying to take all the reports they can related to federal enforcement concerns.

Q/S: She understand that the PD is limited on resources. She would like to know how we should respond to complete a paper trail.

A: PD will write a report when a citizen is threatened, please call 911. Additional resources are linked on the front page of the City website.

Q: Is there mutual aid from Anoka County. Are we concerned about voter intimidation.

A: There is no mutual aid unless it is an emergency / civil unrest.

Q: Concerns about home businesses that are listed on google in the community. Can federal agents go into these homes.

A: A warrant is needed to enter.

Q: Concerns related to fascism. She would like local government to name this out loud. Mentioned the book “On Tyranny “ and asked people to read it. She was a legal observer for two attempted abductions. She had made a call to police to see if they could come out and investigate. The PD was very helpful, however unless the vehicle is moving they cannot pull it over for license plate infractions.

A: This is one thing that is being dealt with behind the scenes. We do not want the escalation of a city police officer interacting with a federal officer.

Q: Inquired about off duty local law enforcement officers being harassed by federal government, is there any chance that the documentation can be used against them.

A: Yes

Q/S: Thanked the community for everything they are doing, she is a health care worker and thought that 2020 was the worst she has ever seen. She wants to thank everyone in the community for doing what they are doing. She feels this is worse than covid. We need to protect our neighbors.

Q: Concerned about neighbors that are terrified. What are we doing for the community that needs connections and trust reestablished. She wants to know the plan to reconnect with government.

A: Currently we are in survivor mode, we are going to get through this and then rebuild like we have in the past.

Q: Would like to see if there is a civil defense fund that could be used to create a more analog method of communicating

A: It is possible that the community is already working on this.

Q: Knowing that there is not a lot we can do as individual citizens, what actions are being taken to partner with other cities and the state.

A: Our city is working on things behind the scenes to partner with other local and state agencies.

Q/S: There are other countries where things are worse, compliance is what will kill us. Being here and showing up is what will help keep us from falling into despair and darkness. He is on the front-line making sure city staff is connecting with residents. There are good people in uniform and people who care.

Q/S: We live in the best City and the best community. She would like to know if there are statistics about the members of the community that have been taken into ICE custody.

A: We know some people have been returned. Some people are taken so quickly that there are no witnesses. There are no official numbers.

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Q/S: We need to start having conversations about what makes people illegal. She is concerned about what is going on and would like to boycott big business and support local.

Q/S: Third generation resident of the city and wanted to tell everyone how much they are appreciated. We need to take care of each other and ourselves.

Q: How do we keep kids safe for door-to-door cookie season.

A: Buddy up with people, women have always built community. We need to lean on each other to get things done.

Q/S: Change is happening. Community is greater than what is happening.