

LOCAL NEWS

Central Florida leaders condemn possible new ICE facility



Felipe Sousa-Lazaballet, Executive Director, Hope CommUnity Center and other local elected officials and community advocates decry the potential ICE processing center in Orlando at a press conference on Monday. (Orlando Sentinel/Natalia Jaramillo)



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Central Florida officials and immigrant advocates on Monday criticized a possible new ICE detention facility here as the region sees a surge in undocumented immigrants arrests.

At a press conference at Hope Community Center in Apopka, Executive Director Felipe Sousa-Lazaballet and Central Florida Congressman Maxwell Frost joined others condemning [the potential U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement facility at a warehouse in east Orlando](#).

“The people of Orange County, of Orlando and of Florida’s 10th congressional district do not want, and we reject, an ICE detention facility,” Frost said.

While there already is an ICE Field Office in Orlando, a new processing facility could further ramp up immigration detention efforts. The facility may be part of a national plan, first reported last month by The Washington Post, to detain immigrants in warehouses across the country.

“Let’s be clear about what’s going on across the nation,” Frost said. “They’re shopping around warehouses. This is one of many they’re looking at opening.”

As of Monday morning, roughly 183 people were detained in the Orange County Jail on an ICE hold without any local charges, but that number is likely higher when those held on minor criminal violations like traffic stops are accounted for, Rep. Anna Eskamani said.

“It’s very high,” Eskamani said of the number of people arrested. “When I visited the jail a few months ago it was at most 40 people under just ICE holds, so that’s substantially more.”

The surge in local arrests comes amid the possible deployment of U.S. troops to Minneapolis to quell immigration protests there after an ICE agent shot and killed a woman in a vehicle. Those at Monday’s news conference warned that Orlando could be the Trump administration’s next target in its immigration crackdown.



“We are seeing exactly what we have seen across the country,” Sousa-Lazaballet said. “We have heard from U.S. citizens that have been followed for

Sousa-Lazaballet said ICE operations have increased locally and his organization is receiving roughly 60 calls per day, up from five, from family members of those arrested.

On Friday, Hope Community Center said in a statement it confirmed about 300 people had been booked into the Orange County Jail on immigration holds in the previous 48 hours. A spokesperson for the jail told the Sentinel that a total of 831 people had been booked on such holds since Jan. 1. County Commissioner Nicole Wilson said that number was a shocking total because about 300 people had been booked in December.



The Beachline Logistics Center, a 439,945-square-foot industrial facility located at 8660 Transport Dr. in east Orange County, was toured by ICE representatives last week, local media reported. From Jan. 15, 2026. (Roger Simmons/Orlando Sentinel)

WKMG and WFTV reported that ICE representatives toured a 439,000-square-foot east Orlando warehouse on Friday. It is zoned for industrial use and may require a zoning change if it's pursued as an immigration facility. The Orlando City Council may have to approve such a change, though it's unclear if the federal government can work around city rules.

Wilson said Monday she has already submitted a memo with potential draft

"This is a logistical issue as much as it's a humanitarian issue," Wilson said. "If local government based on the Florida constitution is where we look at that permitting, we look at that use and the underlying land use, and we scrutinize this."

State Rep. LaVon Bracy Davis called everyone to peacefully protest ICE and said Martin Luther King Jr. Day is a day to remember what he stood for.

"If you are safe, you should be standing with those who are not," Bracy Davis said. "Dr. King reminded us that the arc of the moral universe bends towards justice, but it bends faster when the dissatisfied pick it up, put it to work."
