Sheriff Penzone Unwavering on Transfer of Undocumented Criminals

As immigration continues to be a complex topic locally and nationally, Sheriff Penzone’s position is unwavering and consistent. The Maricopa County Sheriff’s Office will continue to be a thoughtful partner with all local, state and federal law enforcement agencies who are acting lawfully and constitutionally.

Immigration Customs Enforcement Agents will continue to have the opportunity to interview every detainee at intake for the MCSO Jail system at the time of booking. This is both lawful and necessary in our effort to promote public safety while facilitating the mission and authority of other policing agencies. To be clear, we do not accept nor facilitate ICE administrative detention requests, also known as “courtesy holds”. At the time of lawful release, and no different than every other inmate processed through our jail system, detainees deemed by ICE to be unlawfully in the country are re-contacted by ICE personnel and are taken into their custody inside the jail and then immediately transported by ICE from our facility to their own destination.

Since January 1st, 2018 ICE Agents have flagged over 1,600 detainees from within our jail system. Every request for transfer to their custody has been facilitated safely and successfully. These detainees were initially booked in our jail for a variety of state offenses including; murder, sexual abuse, aggravated assault, drug offenses, DUI, burglary, shoplifting disorderly conduct, child molestation, kidnapping, identity theft, forgery, stolen vehicle, trafficking stolen property, dangerous drugs for sale, money laundering, reckless driving and probation violation.

Sheriff Penzone’s position is as follows; “We have and continue to abide by the federal court orders which prohibit our involvement in immigration enforcement. We remain steadfast and unwavering in our commitment to work within our authority to facilitate the mission of our law enforcement partners to include ICE and other federal agencies. Pending unforeseen changes to laws or directives from the courts our policy will remain the same. The most effective tactic to avoid these challenges is to be a law-abiding member of our community.”