



GOVERNOR GREG ABBOTT

April 16, 2026

The Honorable Kirk Watson
Mayor
City of Austin
P.O. Box 1088
Austin, TX 78767

Dear Mayor Watson:

The Public Safety Office of the Office of the Governor ("PSO") has become aware that, on March 4, 2026, the Austin Police Department ("APD") revised its General Orders. The revised General Orders direct that APD officers may refuse to cooperate with U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement ("ICE"), a component of DHS, in certain respects. Among other offending provisions, General Order 319.2.2 (as further incorporated into General Orders 318.3.4 and 330.9) states that members of APD are not authorized to detain illegal aliens pursuant to an ICE administrative warrant and may even choose not to notify ICE at all about a match with such a warrant.

On February 11, 2025, the Austin City Manager executed a certification on behalf of the City of Austin ("the City") as a condition for receiving any grants from PSO. He certified that the City and APD would "participate fully . . . in all aspects of the programs and procedures utilized by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security . . . to (1) notify DHS of all information requested by DHS related to illegal aliens in [APD's] custody; and (2) detain such illegal aliens in accordance with requests by DHS." He also certified that the City and APD "do not have, and will continue not to have any policy, procedure, or agreement that in any way limits or impedes" APD's receipt or DHS's issuance of detainer requests, or in any way limits or restricts the City's or APD's "full participation in all aspects of the programs and procedures utilized by DHS to: (1) notify DHS of all information requested by DHS related to illegal aliens in [APD's] custody; and (2) detain such illegal aliens in accordance with requests by DHS."

The City Manager further acknowledged that if the City failed to comply with these certifications at any time during the certification period: PSO could terminate "any grant made by [the Office of the Governor] to" the City; the City must "return all funds received from" PSO that relate to the certifications; and the City would become ineligible for new PSO grant funding until the City demonstrates compliance with his certification for at least one year. The General Orders at issue authorize members of APD to not notify ICE about a match with an administrative warrant issued by ICE that directs the detention of an alien. The General Orders also provide that members of APD are not authorized to detain illegal aliens pursuant to such a warrant. Both policies impede or restrict the notification of DHS regarding aliens in APD's custody, and neither policy reflects full participation with DHS requests.

This letter serves to notify you that revised General Order 319.2.2 (as further incorporated into General Orders 318.3.4 and 330.9) contradicts the City Manager's February 11, 2025, certification. Accordingly, the City may be in breach with respect to all grant agreements between the City and PSO for Fiscal Year 2026. Please respond by April 23, 2026, to confirm that the City will not enforce, and will act to repeal, the March 4, 2026, amendments to General Order 319.2.2. Failure to do so may result in PSO exercising its sole discretion to terminate all such grants.

Our records indicate that the City was awarded roughly \$2.5 million in PSO grants in Fiscal Year 2026. If PSO elects to terminate those grants, the City will be required to repay PSO, on or before the 30th day after PSO terminates, the entire amount of grant funds the City has received. Please send any correspondence to andrew.friedrichs@gov.texas.gov.

Sincerely,

Andrew Friedrichs

Andrew Friedrichs
Public Safety Office
Executive Director