



# County Response to Operation Metro Surge

February 17, 2026

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## Topics



- Situational update
- Known Impacts and Responses
  - Increased service needs
  - Public request for county ordinance
  - Staff needs
- Unknown Impacts

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## Situation: Operation Metro Surge (OMS)



- Began in Dec 2025
- 3,000 federal law enforcement at peak
- Drawdown began early Feb 2026
- 2/12 announcement of “End of Surge”

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## IMPACT: Fear and uncertainty has caused increased service needs



- Increased:
  - Contacts to all parts of the system
  - Crisis Response Unit (CRU) calls
  - Average acuity of crises at CRU
  - Client transportation needs to all types of health appointments
  - Interpreter services
  - Evictions
  - Uncertainty and instability for landlords

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## County Response to increased service needs



### *Public Assistance and Social Services*

- Extra outreach to client families and individuals
- Alternatives to in-person service when possible
- Pivot in cases as needed (e.g., transportation needs)
- Food Shelf events at Northern Service Center with partners



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## County Response to increased service needs



### *Housing Services*

- Maximizing existing housing assistance cases
- Gathering housing partners – helping people to connect to alternative resources when county is not an option
- Potential use of state funds or reallocation of existing funds
- Working on partners to help landlords

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## County Response to increased service needs



### *Library services*

- 400 books and resources shared with partner non-profits to serve families in lock down.
- Meeting spaces used by community to coordinate food drives and other support services.
- “At Home Library Resources” handout created and distributed



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## IMPACT: Constituent requests for a ban



- Some people feel that safety and uncertainty would be improved with a County ordinance to restrict federal law enforcement from county owned property.

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## Response to ICE on County property



- Background: Which County properties\* has ICE used?
  - Routine locations for normal ICE work: the jail and court areas in the JDC and service centers.
  - Known ICE parking locations: Wentworth Library parking lot (currently closed for renovations).

\*Dakota County owns 78 buildings and ~6,000 acres.

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## Response to ICE on County property



- Current practices:
  - Pivoting to remote services when possible for clients living in fear.
  - If ICE is disrupting services or causing fear by their presence on our property, staff will call 911. Local [Police Departments and/or Sheriff Office will be dispatched](#) to respond and ask ICE to move.

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## Response to ICE on County property



- County Manager did not recommend this for the following reasons:
  - **Often unenforceable.**  
(Exceptions for law enforcement activities involving courts and jail would be necessary.)
  - **Slow process.**  
(Enforcement of an ordinance would not be 'in real time'.... Enforcement involves citations and tickets after the fact, not forceable removal in the moment.)
  - **False reassurance.**  
(People may feel falsely reassured of safety from ICE on county property.)

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## Response to ICE on County property



County	Response
Anoka	No restrictions to public space.
Carver	No restrictions to public space.
Hennepin	Existing Use of Space Policy states parking lots, parking ramps, vacant lots, or garages are not authorized for use as staging areas, processing locations, or operations bases for civil immigration enforcement.
Ramsey	No restrictions to public space.
Scott	No restrictions to public space.
Washington	No restrictions to public space.

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## Response to ICE on City property



City	Response
Apple Valley	No restrictions to public space.
Burnsville	Ordinance passed banning ICE from staging on city property.
Eagan	No restrictions to public space.
Farmington	No restrictions to public space.
Hastings	No restrictions to public space.
Inver Grove Heights	No restrictions to public space.
Lakeville	No restrictions to public space.
Mendota Heights	No restrictions to public space.
Northfield	No restrictions to public space.
Rosemount	No restrictions to public space.
South St. Paul	No restrictions to public space.
West St. Paul	No restrictions to public space.

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IMPACT: Fear and uncertainty has caused staff disruption.



### Responses:

- Training and guidance
- On-going communication and information sharing
- Resources and individual care (listening sessions, access and encouragement to use EAP resources, Paid FML)

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## Attentive to Unknown Impacts



- Economic instability for some households
- Mental health
- Educational outcomes
- Small businesses
- Local law enforcement trust building with community