



City of Somerville, Massachusetts

Mayor Jake Wilson

EXECUTIVE ORDER 2026-01

February 6, 2026

Upholding the rights and safety of Somerville residents amid unconstitutional federal actions

WHEREAS: The City of Somerville established itself as Welcoming Community for all—enacted in 2019 and reaffirmed in 2024—since declaring itself a Sanctuary City in 1987; and

WHEREAS: The City of Somerville is committed to protecting everyone’s dignity and humanity and being a city where all feel welcome and safe, regardless of their race, religion, immigration status, or national origin; and

WHEREAS: The City’s Welcoming Community Ordinance makes clear that the City’s finite resources are to be used to provide municipal services to the Somerville community, and not for the purpose of enforcing civil immigration laws; and

WHEREAS: Local governments are responsible for ensuring the public safety and wellbeing of all their residents through police powers afforded by the U.S. Constitution; and

WHEREAS: The commitment to public safety requires the pursuit of justice regardless of the identity of the victim or the perpetrator, and includes holding all perpetrators of crimes against its people accountable; and

WHEREAS: The Tenth Amendment enshrines this reality, establishing that state and local governments hold the authority to enact public safety policies, and prohibiting the federal government from commandeering state and local resources; and

WHEREAS: Courts across the country have held that the federal government cannot compel the use of local resources for federal immigration enforcement; and

WHEREAS: The City of Somerville’s Welcoming Community Ordinance reflects the City of Somerville’s commitment to dedicating resources to criminal law enforcement, not civil immigration enforcement, consistent with the Constitution, state law, and the City’s dedication to the community policing that keeps its neighborhoods safe; and

WHEREAS: The federal government has recklessly deployed immigration enforcement agents to American cities, including Chicago, Illinois, Minneapolis, Minnesota, Saint Paul, Minnesota, and Portland, Maine, and in these deployments, federal agents have fomented chaos, violated residents’ constitutional rights, and perpetrated egregious acts of violence, including the fatal shootings of Renee Good and Alex Pretti; and

WHEREAS: The deployment of federal officials to Minneapolis and Saint Paul constitutes an unlawful occupation of those cities, violating the constitution and subverting the Supreme Court’s prohibition on the deployment of National Guard troops to achieve the same coercive goals; and

WHEREAS: The official response from senior federal officials to the death and violence caused by ICE operations demonstrates a callous disregard for human life and a willingness to sanction violent attacks on innocent people, perpetrated without accountability to law, which causes fear and unrest in Somerville and communities across this country; and

WHEREAS: In this moment of national crisis, the City of Somerville shall continue to prioritize public safety, including protecting residents from violence and ensuring accountability for all who perpetrate it; and

WHEREAS: The City of Somerville has long stood in opposition to tyranny and follows the principle that the United States is a nation of laws, and that governments—federal, state, and local—must respect the law to protect the fundamentally American values of democratic accountability and respect for the dignity of all people;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDERED:

Pursuant to the authority vested in me as the chief executive officer of the City of Somerville I, Jake Wilson, Mayor of Somerville, hereby order and direct as follows:

Section 1: De-escalation of Federal Provocations and Provision of First Aid

The City of Somerville, through its public safety agencies, recommits to its long-standing practice, that established protocols are used to protect peaceful protestors and prioritize public safety across the City.

In the event that any person is injured in the course of immigration enforcement actions or related protests at which City officials are present, City officials shall immediately summon emergency medical services. Medical service providers shall make all reasonable efforts to render aid according to long-standing protocols established by the Somerville Police Department, the Somerville Fire Department, the Office of Emergency Management, and Somerville Board of Health.

Section 2: Transparency in Federal Conduct

The City of Somerville's Records Access Officer shall work with the Somerville Police Department to publicly release video footage of violence or property damage by federal officials captured by City-controlled surveillance cameras, provided that such release does not unduly interfere with an active criminal investigation, as determined by state and local law enforcement agencies. Such release may be subject to a determination that the release of such information or footage will not prejudice the possibility of effective law enforcement and that such disclosure is in the public interest, pursuant to G.L. c. 4, § 7(26)(f) or that the disclosure of records may constitute an unwarranted invasion of personal privacy; provided it shall not apply to records related to a law enforcement misconduct investigation pursuant to G.L. c. 4, § 7(26)(c) .

Section 3: Investigation of Criminal Conduct by Federal Officials

The City of Somerville's Office of Immigrant Affairs shall issue guidance to all relevant City departments to provide for communications to residents, through all available channels, that consistent with its statutory authority and longstanding practice, the Somerville Police Department shall investigate all violence, property damage, and allegations of criminal conduct, including by federal officials; and such investigations shall be independent of parallel federal investigations, if any; and the Somerville Police Department shall, whenever appropriate, work in collaboration with and make referrals to the Middlesex County District Attorney or the Massachusetts Attorney General.

Consistent with Massachusetts Police Office Standards and Training (POST) regulation 550 CMR 6.06 and G.L. c. 6E, if any Somerville Police Department officer observes any law enforcement official of any law enforcement agency using or attempting to use physical force, including deadly force, beyond that which is necessary or objectively reasonable based on the totality of circumstances, the Somerville Police Department officer shall intervene to prevent the observed officials' use of unnecessary or unreasonable force, regardless of the rank of the observed official or the agency for which the official works, unless intervening would result in imminent harm to the Somerville Police Department officer or another identifiable individual.

Section 4: Response to Suspected Trespassing

The City of Somerville's Office of Immigrant Affairs shall issue guidance to all relevant City departments to provide for communication to residents, through all available channels, that consistent with its statutory authority and longstanding practice, the Somerville Police Department shall respond promptly to calls for service reporting attempted intrusions onto private property by those with no legal right of entry; and that calling 9-1-1 is an appropriate response to any attempt by federal officials to enter a private residence without a judicial warrant.

If an officer of the Somerville Police Department is able to verify the individuals as federal civil immigration enforcement officials, that officer shall document the activity on scene, including any entry onto private property, forced or otherwise, and any detention of individuals. Officers of

the Somerville Police Department shall employ de-escalation tactics in response in order to protect the safety of all those present.

Section 5: Restriction on the Use of City Property

Any City department with authority over physical property, shall not authorize any City-owned or City-controlled property—including but not limited to City-owned buildings, parks, parking lots, and any interior or exterior portion thereof—to be used as a staging area, processing location, operations base, or any similar purpose in furtherance of civil immigration enforcement operations. Prohibited uses of City-owned or City-controlled property include, but are not limited to, assembling, mobilizing, or deploying personnel, vehicles, equipment, or materials for the purpose of civil immigration enforcement. City-owned and City-controlled property that is not available to the general public for similar activities; civil immigration enforcement operations is not an exception.

For purposes of this Order, “staging area” means an area that is used to assemble, mobilize, and deploy personnel, vehicles, equipment, or materials for any purpose arising out of or related to federal civil immigration enforcement operations.

The Director of Infrastructure and Asset Management shall, within 14 days of this order, consult the leadership of all relevant departments, including but not limited to the Department of Public Works, The Office of Strategic Planning and Community Development, and Traffic and Parking Departments to identify all City-owned and City-controlled property that could be used for prohibited purposes described in this Section.

The City shall, within 30 days of this order, ensure that signage is posted at all such locations indicating that the property is owned and/or controlled by the City of Somerville and may not be used for unauthorized purposes.

Section 6: Protecting Residents in City Locations

Consistent with Somerville’s Welcoming Community Ordinance, the City shall not allow civil immigration enforcement officials into nonpublic spaces without a valid judicial warrant or court order. The City reaffirms its position that City buildings are available to provide specific services to members of the public, and are to be accessed for those purposes only. In the event that City staff is approached by federal immigration agents, staff should refer to established City procedures to response to ICE in City Buildings.

The City shall, within 30 days of this order, ensure that signage is posted at all such locations demarcating nonpublic spaces and indicating that such spaces shall not be accessed without a valid judicial warrant or court order.

Section 7: Signage for Private Property

The Somerville Office of Immigrant Affairs, in consultation with the Economic Development Division, shall make template signage available to private property owners and leaseholders who seek to restrict private spaces from being used for civil immigration enforcement purposes. Property owners and leaseholders assume any legal responsibility associated therewith. The Somerville Office of Immigrant Affairs shall also make “know your rights” materials available to the public regarding rights regarding entry by immigration enforcement officials.

Section 8: Pursuit of Legal Remedies

The City of Somerville Law Department shall pursue all available legal avenues to contest federal actions that violate the rights of residents or the City.

Section 9: Officers of the Somerville Police Department

All duties and obligations imposed by this order on officers of the Somerville Police Department shall apply to the maximum extent practicable to all officers licensed by the Department. For the avoidance of doubt licensed officers shall include, without limitation, officers of the Somerville Housing Authority and Special Police Officers.

Section 10: Scope

Nothing in this order shall be construed as restricting or interfering with the execution of court orders or lawful judicial warrants, or the enforcement of criminal law, nor as limiting the rights of any person or entity under state or federal law.

Section 11: Effective Date

This Executive Order shall take effect immediately.