

North Carolina ICE Enforcement: What the Newest Federal Data Shows

Original analysis by Siembra NC of raw ICE records released August 21, 2026. Data current through August 5, 2026. Every figure below was computed directly from the individual-level federal data, not summarized from prior news coverage.

Source for citation: Government data provided by ICE in response to a FOIA request, processed by the Deportation Data Project (UC Berkeley and UCLA), and analyzed by Siembra NC.

9,987ARRESTS SINCE JAN. 20,
2025**5,008**

ARRESTS SO FAR IN 2026

66.8%HAD NO CRIMINAL
CONVICTION**98%**DETAINED OUTSIDE NC
LONGEST

01 Nearly 10,000 arrests since January 2025

Public reporting on North Carolina still cites 6,374 arrests — a figure that stops at March 10, 2026. The federal data now runs through August 5, 2026.

Applying the same method to the current data, ICE has made **9,987 arrests** in North Carolina since January 20, 2025. That is nearly ten thousand people.

Roughly **3,551** of those arrests happened after the last reported cutoff and have not appeared in any published count. For comparison, ICE made **1,612** arrests in North Carolina in all of 2024.

02 This year: 5,008

From January 1 through August 5, 2026, ICE made **5,008 arrests** in North Carolina — already close to the full 2025 total, with four months of the year still to come. Arrests never returned to their earlier levels after the November 2025 Charlotte operation. March 2026 recorded 833 arrests and July recorded 793, among the highest monthly totals on record.

03 Who is being detained

North Carolina, 2026 arrests:

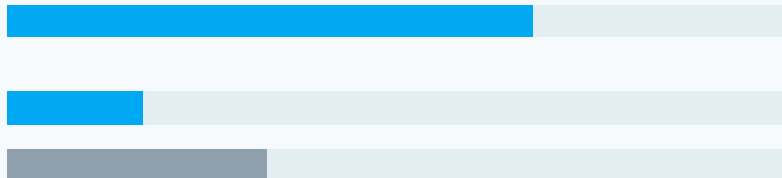
No criminal conviction

Pending charges or a civil immigration
violation only

No criminal charge of any kind

Beyond being present

Convicted of a crime

**66.8%****17.5%****33.2%**

Two out of every three people ICE arrested in North Carolina this year had never been convicted of a crime. Roughly one in five had never been charged with anything at all. Over the full period since January 2025, the no-conviction share is **62 percent**.

04 How the arrests happen

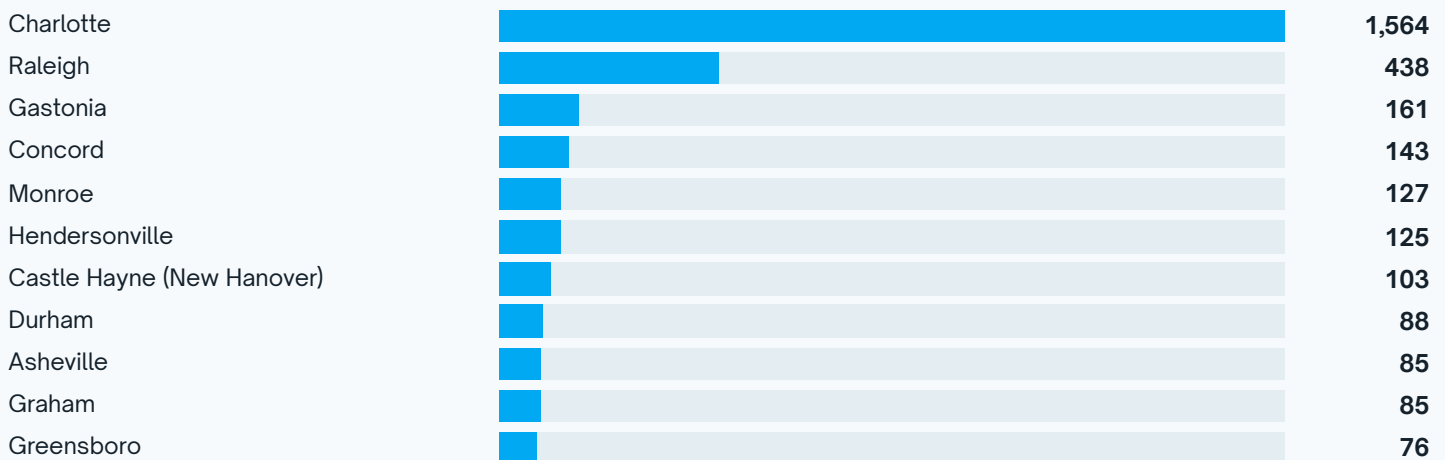
In 2026, **73.8 percent** of North Carolina arrests came through custody rather than community or street arrests. This is the pathway state law opens: a person is booked into a local jail, held, and transferred to ICE. It combines custodial book-ins with the 287(g) jail program.

NOTE ON THE DATA

In this release ICE folded its previously detailed jail categories (such as local jail incarceration and probation and parole) into a single custodial classification. The 73.8 percent figure therefore uses the broad custodial-plus-287(g) grouping. The granular local-jail line is not broken out for 2026.

05 Where the arrests happen (2026)

Charlotte accounts for the largest share by far, followed by Raleigh and a spread of Piedmont and mountain communities.



06 What happens after arrest: people are sent out of state

Of the North Carolina people arrested in 2026 who were placed in ICE detention, **98 percent** were held longest outside North Carolina.

The great majority — **4,556 people** — were taken to Georgia, to private detention facilities including Stewart Detention Center, the Folkston processing centers, and Irwin County Detention Center. North Carolina has no dedicated long-term ICE detention facility in the data, so people are moved hundreds of miles from their families, their lawyers, and their communities. The Charlotte and Raleigh holding rooms function only as short processing stops on the way out of state.

This is the practical stakes of the proposed detention center at the former Rivers Correctional Institution in Winton. It would create in-state capacity to detain far more people — closer to the arrests, but no closer to justice.

07 Method and cautions

- Records are individual-level ICE arrest and detention data obtained by the Deportation Data Project through FOIA litigation and released August 21, 2026, covering enforcement actions through August 5, 2026.
- North Carolina arrests are identified using the Deportation Data Project's processed state field. A meaningful share of national arrests lack complete location detail, so these counts should be read as floors, not ceilings — the true numbers are likely higher.
- Likely duplicate records flagged by the Deportation Data Project were removed before counting.
- "No conviction" means pending charges or a civil immigration violation only. It is not the same as "no record," which is a looser claim and easier to dispute. Use "no conviction" or "never convicted."
- Detention destination is measured by the facility where each person spent the longest time.
- August 2026 is a partial month and is excluded from monthly trend conclusions.