

Eugene has had its fair share of state repression over the past few years. From the April 15th, 2024 mass arrest of nearly 60 protesters against the genocide in Gaza, to the 8 arrests and citations across multiple mayday marches on May 2nd, 2025, protesters in Eugene have faced opposition from the Eugene Police Department, and from county and state law enforcement agencies. But as local activist communities have turned their focus towards abductions and deportations made by ICE, they have come into contact with federal law enforcement, and the patterns of these arrests differ from those we are used to from the Eugene Police Department (EPD). Since May of 2025, at least 27 people have been arrested at and around the federal building in Eugene for protesting ICE, including 4 arrests made by EPD and at least 23 from federal agencies, including the Federal Protective Service. Videos have circulated across social media of protesters being violently tackled and grabbed, before being dragged into the Federal building.

In order to spread information about what happens after arrests are made and help our community make informed risk assessments, Eugene Jail Support is sharing our knowledge of the arrest process here. It should be noted that we are not lawyers. Any recommendations we make or advice we give regarding the legal system are based on our own knowledge and experience resisting political repression, and should not be considered official legal advice.

We interviewed several comrades who were arrested at the federal building, but for their protection, we are removing all identifying information from this article, and nothing has been shared without their consent. Arrests are scary. This is a system designed to make you feel hopeless, confused, and intimidated, so take breaks from reading if you need to, and try to digest this information. We hope by sharing this, we can demystify federal building arrests, and empower you to take confident action for a better world.

The Eugene Federal Building has become a central strategic point in the struggle against ICE in Eugene, with many protesters demanding the abolition of ICE and the closing of Eugene's ICE field office. The federal building is an imposing structure, made of concrete and lined with security cameras. Here, Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents stage and plan targeted raids on immigrant communities throughout the Willamette Valley, and conduct immigration check-in appointments, at which they routinely detain and arrest people coming in for their appointments, before shoving them in the backs of cars and transporting them to the ICE facility in Portland, and eventually to the notorious Northwest Detention Center in Tacoma. Because of this, protesters in Eugene have worked to maintain a presence outside the building, with their monitoring of ICE movements making it difficult for ICE to kidnap our neighbors without public resistance. This has been met with consistent violent escalation from federal law enforcement, including tear gas, flashbangs, and an SUV attempting to run over protesters back in July, and of course, the arrests we are examining in this article.

Often, when making an arrest, the feds single out the individual they are going to try to grab, and send several officers to arrest them. They may visibly point towards the person they are after, but they may not. The size of this group varies, depending on how difficult they believe their target will be to subdue. Features like size, gender, and race are likely factors here. In one video on social media, they sent nearly a dozen FPS officers to arrest one individual. As of April, local activists have reported fewer officers in the building than in February and March, when an estimated 30 additional DHS officers stationed in Eugene. The extra officers appear to no longer be present, the number of officers arresting an individual protestor will hopefully be smaller than that, but in all documented cases, the feds have used multiple officers to arrest protestors when trying to take them into the building. There have been cases where they

have simply handed citations to people rather than taking them inside, but many arrests have been violent, with reports of bruises, abrasions, and dislocations from arrestees. It is also important to note that if you are arrested, you will be searched, and items such as respirators and goggles may not be returned to you. If you believe you are about to be arrested, passing your belongings to a trusted person nearby in the crowd may prevent this. We strongly caution against bringing your phone to the building.

Protesters have been taken to the building through multiple entrances. Depending on where the arrest happened, this has been on either the ground floor or through the parking bay into the basement. When entering through the ground floor, they have typically conducted an initial search in the hallway left of the main entrance through the plaza on 7th and pearl. When entering through the parking bay on the north side of the building, this will likely be in the evidence room, which is the first room after entering the building from the bay. During this search, they are reported to shout many orders at arrestees, and to become more aggressive if these orders are not perfectly complied with. These orders may be to sit or stand in a specific spot, move hands into specific positions, etc. Arrestees report disorganization from the feds, with officers forgetting where they put confiscated items, though bags and other objects have usually stayed in view of the arrestee. At this point, agents have not usually said what the charges are, nor have they have read out the Miranda Rights.

If you are apprehended, we recommend immediately invoking your right to remain silent and your right to an attorney, and stating that you do not consent to searches. After doing this, do not say anything. Any attempt to make conversation with you is an attempt to trick you into giving them more evidence with which to levy charges at you.

Following the initial search, the feds usually lead arrestees along winding, indirect paths in order to confuse them as to

the layout of the building, but these take them to the north wing of the building, where the ICE offices are located. On the ground floor, arrestees are eventually led through a waiting room, where immigrants would wait for their appointment, followed by a room full of cubicles where ICE agents work. They have decorated this room with Anti-ICE signs they have taken from protesters as a sort of bizarre trophy, and a picture of Renee Goode with a red circle around her face. Past the cubicles, there are two holding cells on the ground floor, and more in the basement. At the cells, they have removed handcuffs, and conducted a second, more thorough search. Arrestees report disparities in treatment here, with women, especially trans women, being more likely to experience invasive searches, and people of color experiencing more violence. They also usually collect mug shots here. They may photograph visible tattoos and collect fingerprints. They may try to make small talk, or ask you personal questions. We recommend retaining your right to remain silent.

After this search, arrestees report being left in their holding cells for a time. This may be several hours, though according to federal regulations, they cannot keep someone in these cells for more than 12 hours. Note that these cells have cameras, so everything you do in them is being recorded. If you were injured during your arrest, or if you were tear gassed, do not expect medical treatment. They may give you a bottle of water to flush out your eyes, but arrestees report having to bang on the cell and yell for awhile to get that.

There may be other protesters in the arrested at the same time. Remember that solidarity does not end in the jail cell. Advocate for each others medical needs, and make sure your comrades know how to exercise their right to remain silent, and that they are not required to provide any information other than their legal name, date of birth, and a mailing address. This system is designed to scare you and keep you isolated. Keep each other's spirits intact, but remember that

your cell is being recorded.

Eventually, a special agent may come to do an interrogation, though this doesn't happen for everyone. They usually read you your Miranda Rights and tell you what you are being charged with, and ask for your legal name, date of birth, address, social security number, and phone number. But all you are legally required to provide is your legal name and date of birth, as well as a mailing address. This does not have to be your home address. Do not give them your phone number or social security number. At this point, They may present you with a form asking you to waive your Miranda Rights. They may not explain what this form does. Do not sign it, and read anything they give you carefully. Signing this form could compromise your legal defense later on, or lead to coerced statements being admissible in court. Even if you do waive your rights, you can again invoke them again later on.

Arrestees also report having personal information being dropped as intimidation tactics. This could be past arrests, job details, family members, or even deadnames. Re-assert your right to remain silent. Assume they already have some information on you, and tell them nothing more. Sharing information at this point can only lead to negative legal repercussions for you or for other protesters. Cooperating with law enforcement hurts movements. We are all in this together. Nobody talks, everyone walks.

At some time during this process, they may ask for a DNA sample. According to a 2013 supreme court decision in *Maryland v. King*, they can only do this for a "serious offense", usually interpreted to mean a felony or violent crime. However, a sample may not legally be added to a database before an individual is arraigned, and it must be destroyed if they are not convicted. If they ask you for a DNA sample, state that you do not consent, especially if you are not being charged with a felony. In the cases we know of, this has been enough to prevent the collection of DNA samples.

So far, every person we know of who was arrested at a protest outside the federal building and was charged with a misdemeanor has been released within 12 hours. Minors should note that if you are arrested, they cannot legally release you without your guardian present. When federal law enforcement arrested a teenager in February whose parents they couldn't contact, they were forced to transfer them to a different facility rather than releasing them directly. When arrestees have been charged with felonies, the Federal Protective Service has transferred them to the Lane County Corrections facility on 5th and Olive, at which point, the process starts to more closely resemble the patterns of EPD and Lane County Sheriff's Office arrests.

When releasing arrestees, Agents have typically given citations matching the charges, a property bag, and a 24-hour ban from the property. This ban is sometimes delivered verbally in an informal manner. Arrestees are released one at a time, through whichever exit seems to have the fewest protesters outside. People we interviewed noted that they seemed to try to release whoever was the most calm, and the most knowledgeable about their legal rights first, while keeping those who were panicked or cooperating in interrogations longer.

Before you leave, double check that all of your belongings have been returned to you- things seem to "disappear" from the property bags sometimes. Tickets are sent to Texas to be processed, which takes 60-120 days. If they file the charges, you can expect mail to be sent to the address you provided within a couple months. This will likely include a court date, when you are expected to appear at the federal courthouse. Some who were arrested had their charges dropped or not filed. In both Eugene and Portland, those who had their faces covered and who dressed in unidentifiable clothing were less likely to have their charges stick.

This information is incomplete, and our understanding will

continue to evolve. Ultimately, we do not know everything that the feds have done to protesters after arresting them. During our conversations, arrestees described vastly different experiences. Some parts of the process were skipped for some people and prolonged for others. Parts of the process happened in different orders. Some had their Miranda Rights read immediately, others did not have them read at all. Trans people and people of color experienced higher amounts of violence at the hands of federal law enforcement.

However, one thing they all reported was disorganization within the enemy ranks. Officers behaved erratically, became emotionally unbalanced, and skipped parts of procedure. This, combined with the fact that the FBI, with all their probing and investigation, still has not determined what happened to the window at the federal building, shows that they are not as untouchable as they would like us to think. Many people that they have arrested have given them no information. Protesters in Eugene continue to show up at the building. Some days the crowds are small, with only a few people holding it down. Some days, they are large, crowds of dozens or hundreds. In January and February, when several militant clashes with ICE and other DHS goons took place, detentions of immigrants at the facility dropped dramatically. They desperately threw up plywood to protect their precious windows. Their offices are filled with signs that say "FUCK ICE", and "NO NAZIS IN EUGENE" and they have to read that every single day they work there. One wonders if they feel trapped in that building too. We certainly hope so.

If you, or anyone you know, is arrested at a protest, call Eugene Jail Support at (541) 515-5721. For legal questions and help navigating the court system, call the Civil Liberties Defense Center at (541) 687-9180