

Tucson Police Department

Who is in charge: Roberto Villaseñor.

Where he stands: “There’s a lot of us that were imploring that this needed to be looked at the federal level, but when they upheld it and allowed that one section to stand, section 2b, I have no choice. I have to enforce it the way the law was written and that’s where it’s causing problems.”

How it’s documented: Created a form the dispatcher is supposed to fill out when an officer asks for an immigration check.

What the Star reviewed: The forms for July and August and a summary of all related calls on Aug. 31.



Roberto Villaseñor

Overview

Sworn officers: 940

Immigration-related incidents the year after S.B. 1070 took effect that the agency provided: 9,219

Share of total incidents: 2.8%

Findings

- The largest cluster of immigration inquiries in the two-month period was centered at Santa Rita Park, near South Fourth Avenue and East 22nd Street. There were 125 inquiries along the 22nd Street corridor from Interstate 10 to South Park Avenue. That includes an area three blocks north and south of 22nd Street — a vicinity that activists at nearby Southside Presbyterian Church have said police have targeted in immigration enforcement.
- The charge most cited on immigration-check forms was driving without a valid license or registration. More than 40 percent of the inquiries stemmed from a license or registration offense. The next four top charges were shoplifting, non-accident DUI, drug possession and other offenses and misdemeanors, a category that includes urinating in public.
- About 40 percent of those whose immigration status was checked had a Hispanic last name, a share in line with census figures of the city’s Hispanic population. For reference, the Star used a U.S. Census Bureau list of surnames with more than 60 percent Hispanic users.
- In nine inquiries, the officer declined to have an agent dispatched. In two, the officer called but had to release the subject because agents took too long to arrive. Border Patrol was dispatched at least 17 times. Agents declined to respond twice.
- At least 30 people were found to be citizens during the inquiries, and at least 15 were found to be in the country legally.