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## IMMIGRATION AGENTS FOCUS ON CALIFORNIA

*ICE says it is searching for about 400 immigrants in seven counties in weeklong operation*

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Federal immigration agents arrested more than 100 people over the last few days across seven Southern California counties, the start of a promised focus on immigration enforcement in the state.

Dozens of Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents are searching for roughly 400 immigrants in the region who could face deportation, as part of a week-long ongoing operation, the agency said.

ICE said most of those being sought have serious criminal records, while others are suspected of crimes or have previously been ordered to leave the U.S.

Thomas Homan, ICE's deputy director, promised to intensify immigration enforcement efforts in California after Gov. Jerry Brown, a Democrat, signed a law limiting California law-enforcement officials' cooperation with federal immigration authorities.

"California better hold on tight – they're about to see a lot more deportation officers," Mr. Homan said in a January interview with Fox News. "If politicians don't protect their communities then ICE will."

David Marin, ICE's top deportation official in its Los Angeles office, said his officers are targeting serious criminals who pose a potential threat to public safety.

Teams of about eight agents have been knocking on apartment and house doors around the region since before dawn Sunday.

Critics of ICE's increased enforcement efforts in the interior of the country have said the agency is casting too wide a net and routinely arresting immigrants whose only offense is being in the country illegally. Under the Obama administration, ICE agents and officers were told to arrest only the most serious offenders.

In some cases, immigrants in the country illegally who weren't being targeted were also arrested, after immigration agents encountered them while searching out others.

Mr. Marin said priorities for arrests still exist, but his agents can't ignore someone they encounter who doesn't have the government's permission to be in the U.S.

"Right now we are enforcing the law and we will continue to do that until there are changes in the law," Mr. Marin said.

He said officers from ICE's fugitive-operations teams make such visits on a near-daily basis but this week's effort was larger than normal.

"Tom Homan has called out California and promised more enforcement," Mr. Marin said.  
"We have more enforcement teams out than usual."