



Research Brief

Most Chicago residents oppose Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) operations in the city, with a majority saying these actions have harmed community safety and weakened the local economy.

Chicago residents are widely against Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) operations aimed at arresting undocumented individuals across the city, according to the latest ChicagoSpeaks survey conducted by NORC at the University of Chicago. However, views are largely influenced by partisanship, with Republicans more likely than either independents or Democrats to support ICE activity.

Most Chicago residents cite serious negative consequences from ICE's presence. More than 8 in 10 say immigrant families' sense of safety has been harmed, while 7 in 10 cite damage to the local economy and a decline in trust in law enforcement.

A majority of residents support actions to push back against ICE operations, such as documenting ICE activity in their neighborhoods, sharing related information, community groups providing aid to immigrants, city officials speaking out against ICE, and local police refusing to cooperate with the agency. However, partisan divides persist with Democrats more likely to support resistance efforts, while Republicans tend to favor measures that assist ICE.

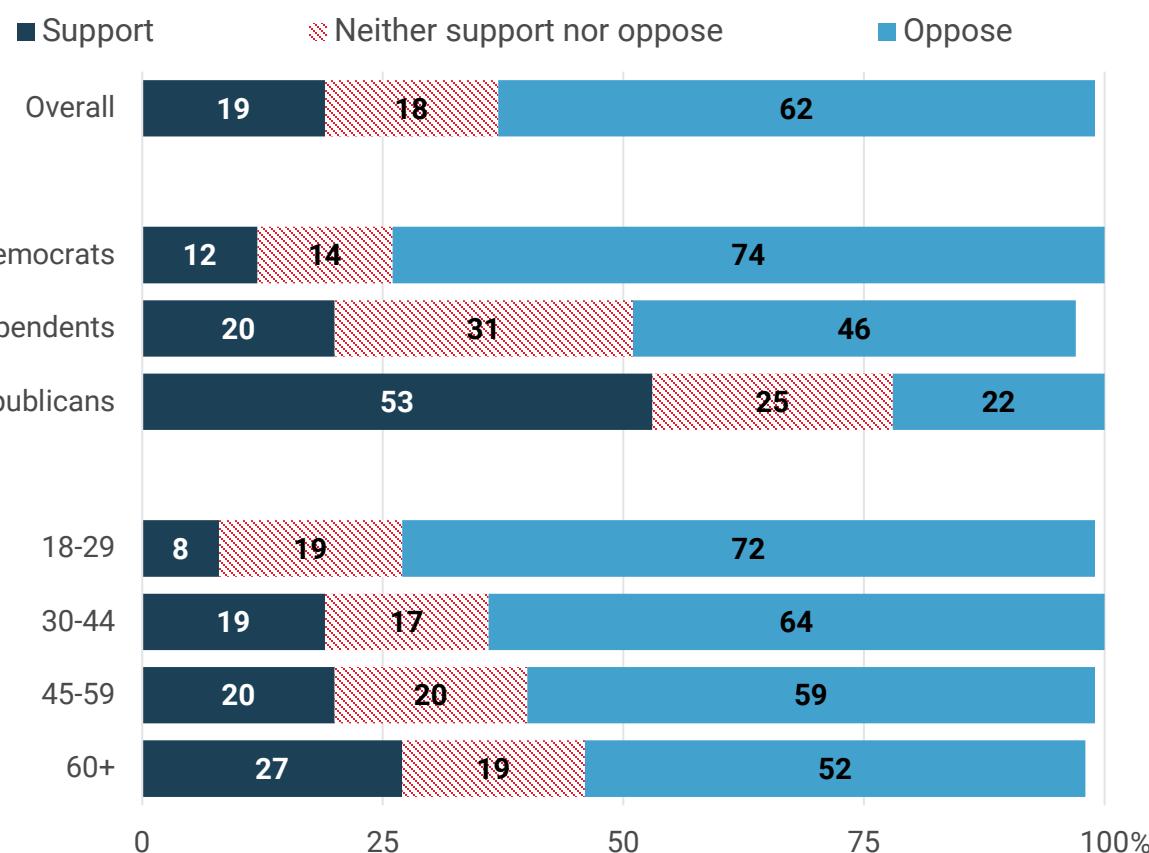
Most Chicago residents oppose ICE officers using physical force when residents block or disrupt their operations. Yet partisan divides are clear with 46% of Republicans in support of the use of force compared to 12% of Democrats and 15% of independents.

Most Chicagoans oppose ICE operations within the city, though support is notably higher among Republicans and older adults.

Six in 10 Chicagoans oppose “Operation Midway Blitz,” an ICE initiative announced by the Department of Homeland Security in September to arrest and deport individuals living in the U.S. without legal documentation, including 49% who strongly oppose. However, about half of Republicans support the operation, compared to just 1 in 10 Democrats and 2 in 10 independents. Age differences also emerge, with adults over 30 more likely to support the operation than those ages 18 to 29.

A majority of Chicagoans oppose ICE operations in the city, but Republicans and older adults are more likely to be supportive.

Percent of Chicagoans



Question: In September this year, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security announced “Operation Midwest Blitz,” an Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) operation to arrest and deport individuals who are in the country without legal documentation. Do you support, oppose, or neither support nor oppose Operation Midwest Blitz?

Source: ChicagoSpeaks Poll conducted November 24-December 8, 2025 with 1,230 adult Chicago residents.

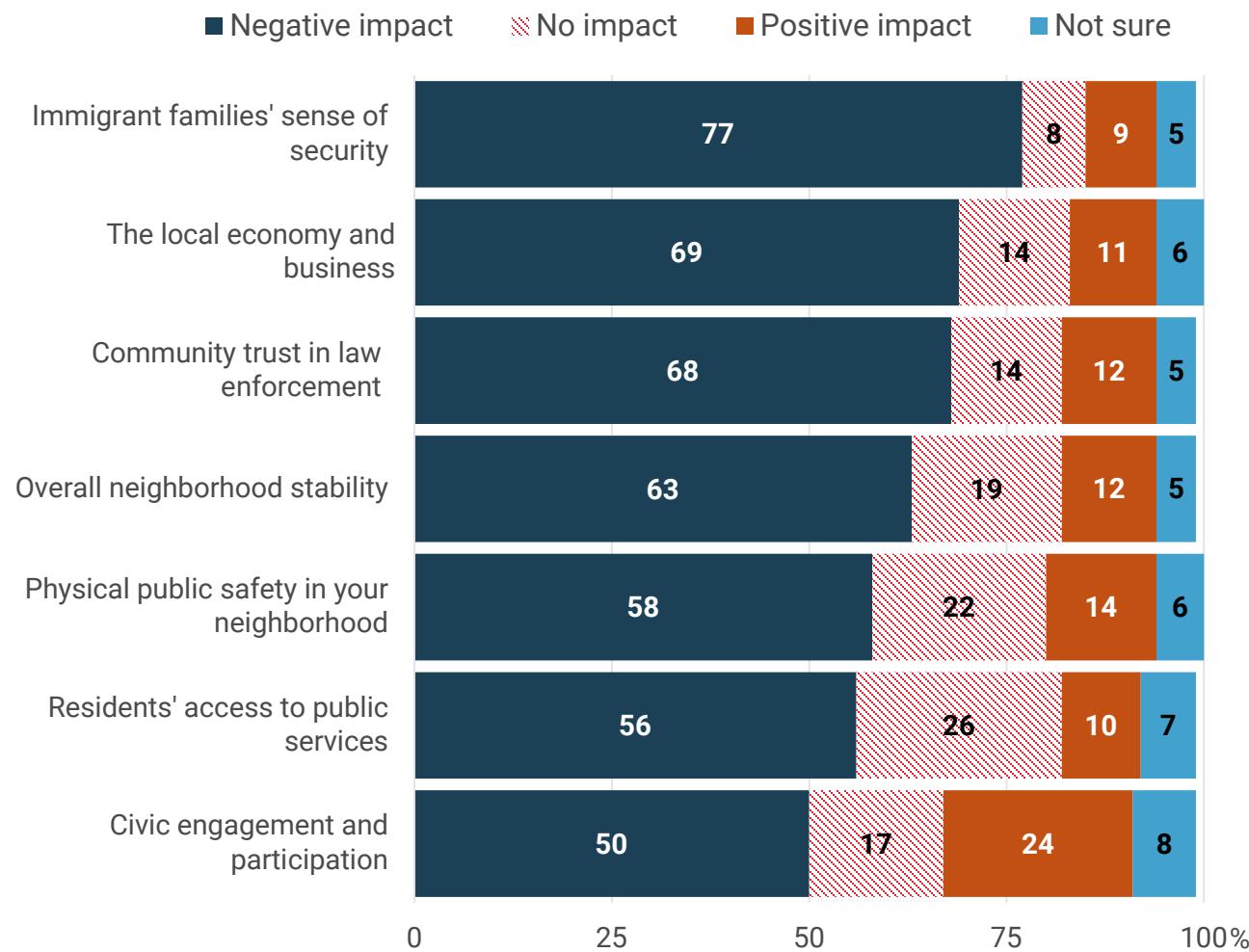


Chicago residents say immigration enforcement actions have caused widespread harm in their communities.

The most cited impact is on immigrant families' sense of security, with 77% reporting it has been negatively affected. Nearly 7 in 10 cite damage to the local economy and to trust in law enforcement. Six in 10 report declines in neighborhood stability, public safety, and access to public services, while about half say civic engagement and participation have also suffered.

A majority of Chicagoans see immigration enforcement actions as having a negative impact on a range of aspects of community life.

Percent of Chicagoans



Question: Overall, would you say that immigration enforcement actions by Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) have had a positive impact, negative impact, or no impact on each of the following in Chicago?

Source: ChicagoSpeaks Poll conducted November 24-December 8, 2025 with 1,230 adult Chicago residents.



Democrats are most likely to view immigration enforcement actions as harmful, followed by independents, with Republicans least likely to perceive negative impacts. The partisan gap is especially stark regarding the negative impact on overall stability of their neighborhood (73% vs. 50% vs. 23%), physical public safety in their neighborhood (68% vs. 47% vs. 19%), immigrant families' sense of security (85% vs. 64% vs. 56%), and the local economy and business (78% vs. 56% vs. 38%).

A majority of Chicagoans support actions that document or challenge ICE enforcement.

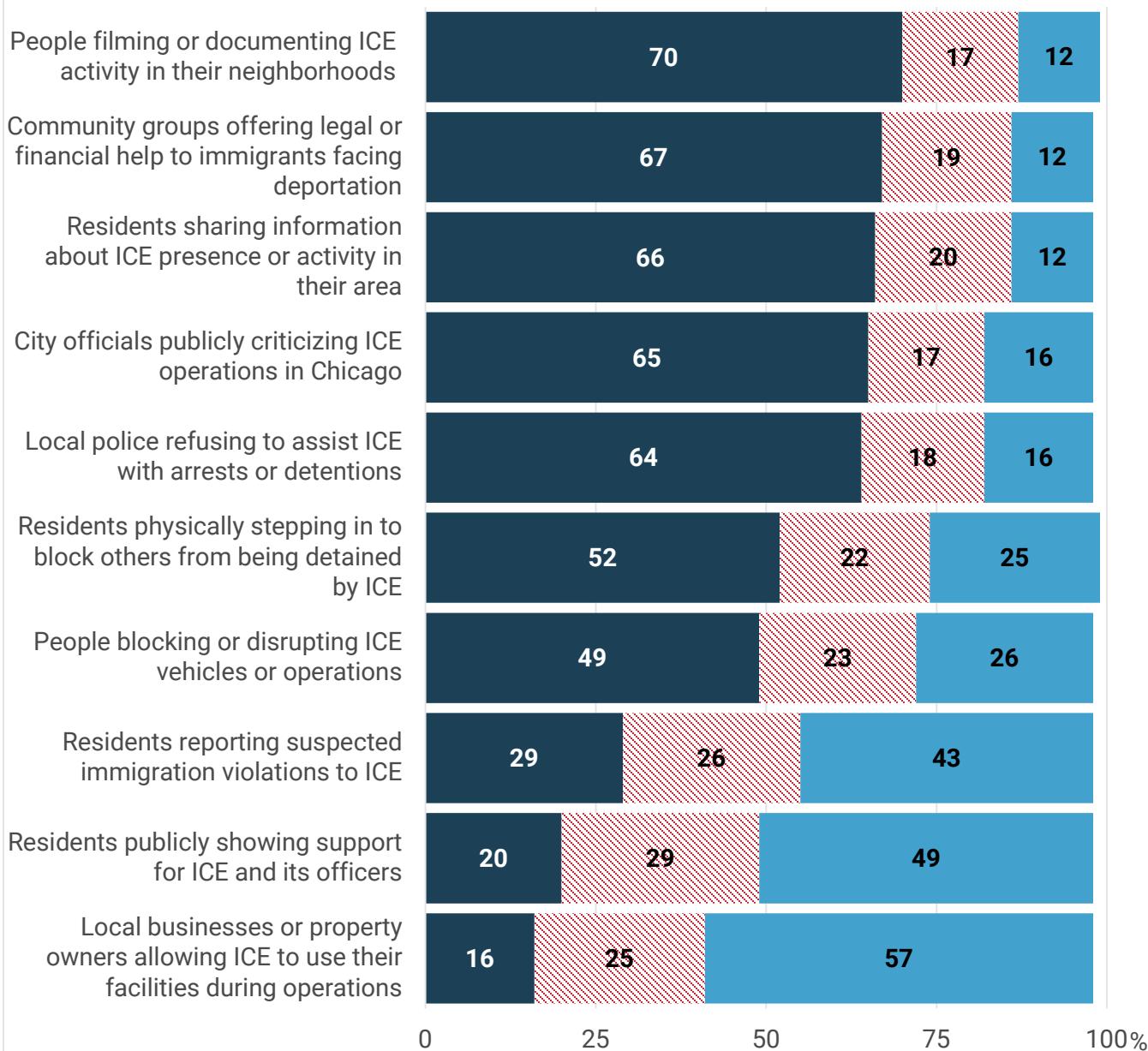
About two-thirds favor efforts such as filming ICE activity, community groups providing legal and financial aid, sharing information about ICE presence, city officials publicly criticizing ICE, and local police refusing to assist with arrests or detentions. Support drops for more direct interference, though about half still back actions like blocking ICE vehicles or physically preventing detentions.

In contrast, only 29% support residents reporting suspected immigration violations to ICE, and fewer favor residents publicly showing support for ICE officers or allowing ICE to use local businesses or properties during operations.

Support is widespread for documenting ICE activity, offering help to immigrants, and refusing to cooperate with ICE.

Percent of Chicagoans

■ Support ♦ Neither support nor oppose ■ Oppose



Question: In general, do you support, oppose, or neither support nor oppose the following actions in Chicago in response to recent Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) activity?

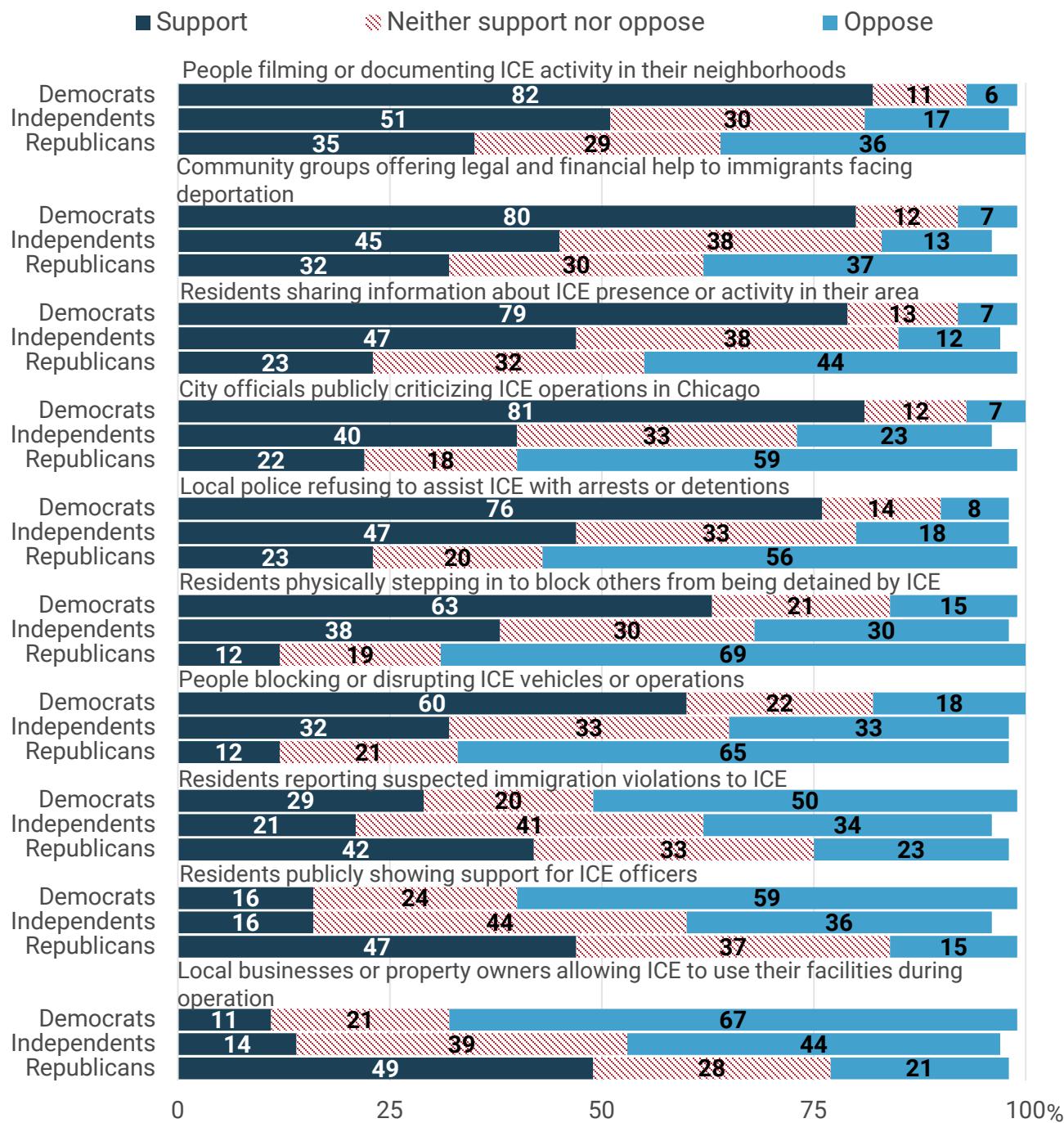
Source: ChicagoSpeaks Poll conducted November 24-December 8, 2025 with 1,230 adult Chicago residents.



Democrats are more likely than Republicans to support actions such as filming ICE activity, sharing information about ICE presence, providing legal and financial aid to immigrants, city officials criticizing ICE, local police refusing to cooperate, and physically blocking ICE operations. Republicans, by contrast, are more likely to favor reporting suspected immigration violations, publicly supporting ICE officers, or allowing ICE to use local businesses and properties during operations, though half or fewer support these actions.

Democrats are more likely to favor resistance against ICE, while Republicans are more likely to favor forms of support.

Percent of Chicagoans



Question: In general, do you support, oppose, or neither support nor oppose the following actions in Chicago in response to recent Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) activity?

Source: ChicagoSpeaks Poll conducted November 24-December 8, 2025 with 1,230 adult Chicago residents.

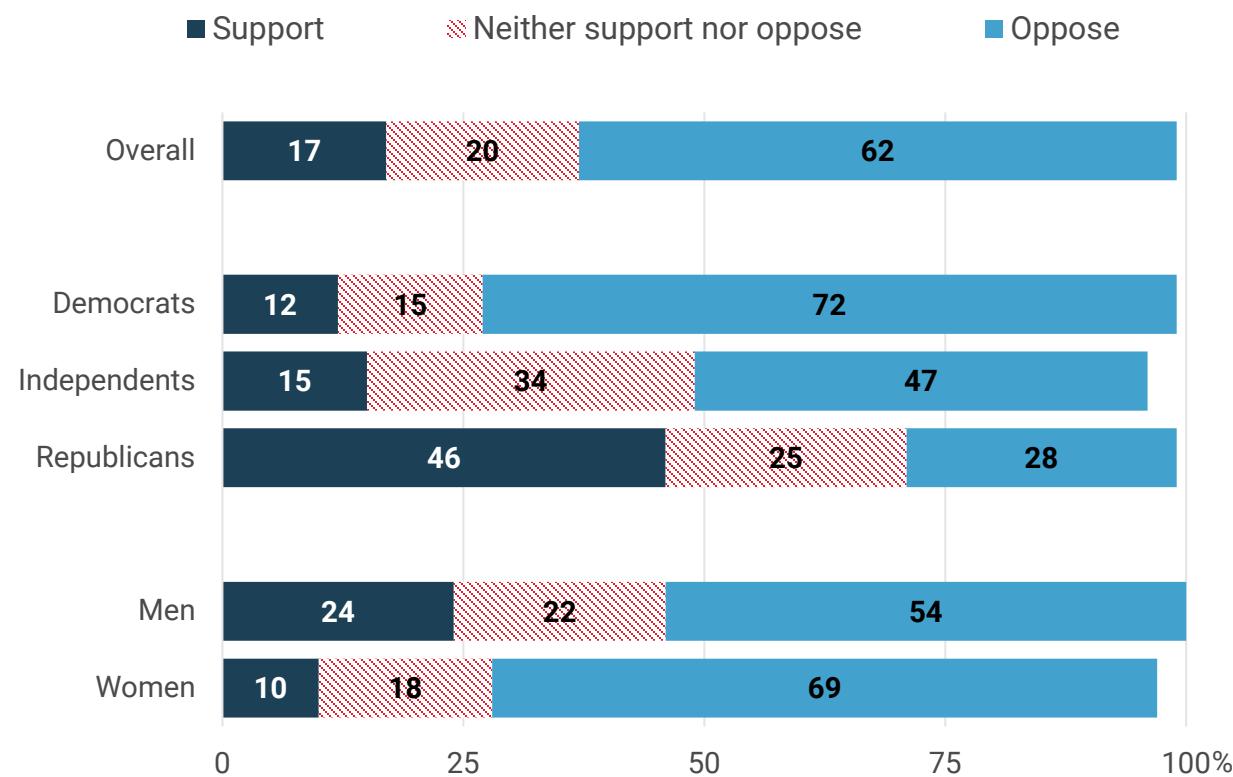


A majority of Chicagoans oppose ICE officers using physical force against residents who block or disrupt operations.

Relatedly, a majority of Chicagoans are against ICE officers using physical force in response to residents who are blocking or disrupting ICE vehicles or operations, including 50% who say they strongly oppose it. While nearly half of Republicans support ICE using physical force, less than 2 in 10 Democrats or independents agree. Although just a quarter of men are in favor of using physical force, they are more likely to be in favor than women.

Most Chicagoans oppose ICE officers using physical force though Republicans and men are more likely to be supportive.

Percent of Chicagoans



Question: In general, do you support, oppose, or neither support nor oppose Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) officers using physical force during encounters with residents who are blocking or disrupting ICE vehicles or operations?

Source: ChicagoSpeaks Poll conducted November 24-December 8, 2025 with 1,230 adult Chicago residents.



Study Methodology

Funded and operated by NORC at the University of Chicago, ChicagoSpeaks® is a probability-based panel designed to be representative of the Chicago household population. NORC conducted the ChicagoSpeaks winter 2025 survey using two sample sources: (1) NORC's AmeriSpeak® Panelists who reside in Chicago and (2) NORC's ChicagoSpeaks Panelists.

AmeriSpeak and ChicagoSpeaks are probability-based panels. The final survey estimates were calibrated to account for these different sample sources. This research was done to support a scientifically rigorous, community-driven research resource for informing policymakers and the public with accurate information about the experiences and opinions of all Chicago residents.

Interviews for this survey were conducted between November 24 and December 8, 2025 with Chicago residents aged 18 and older, the overall study target population. Overall, 1,230 Chicago residents completed the survey. AmeriSpeak panelists were invited through the password-protected AmeriSpeak Mobile App and received email reminders and SMS reminders. ChicagoSpeaks panelists received a combination of email and SMS communications. Interviews were conducted in both English and Spanish, depending on respondent preference, using an online survey. Respondents were offered a small monetary incentive for completing the survey. The overall margin of sampling error is +/- 3.9 percentage points at the 95 percent confidence level, including the design effect.

Sampling error is only one of many potential sources of error and there may be other unmeasured error in this or any other survey.

Quality assurance checks were conducted to ensure data quality. In total, 28 interviews were removed for nonresponse to at least 50% of the questions asked of them or for completing the survey in less than one-third the median interview time for the full sample. These interviews were excluded from the data file prior to weighting.

Once the sample has been selected and fielded, and all the study data have been collected and made final, a poststratification process is used to adjust for any survey nonresponse as well as any noncoverage or under and oversampling resulting from the study specific sample design.

Poststratification variables included Chicago region, age, sex, race/ethnicity, and educational attainment. The sociodemographic characteristics are weighted to benchmarks from the American Community Survey 2023 1-year estimates.

For more information, email ChicagoSpeaks-BD@norc.org or visit go.norc.org/ChicagoSpeaks.

<https://www.norc.org/research/projects/chicagospeaks.html>