

LAS VEGAS SUN

LOCALLY OWNED AND INDEPENDENT | TUESDAY, MARCH 24, 2026

NATION

ICE has arrived at airports; many lines are still long

BY JACEY FORTIN, HAMED ALEAZIZ AND GABE CASTRO-ROOT
The New York Times Company

Agents with Immigration and Customs Enforcement were deployed at airports across the nation Monday, but their exact purpose was unclear and their presence did not ease the pain of many travelers.

Between 100 and 150 ICE officers were sent to the airports to assist Transportation Security Administration agents, according to a U.S. official who spoke on the condition of anonymity because that person was not authorized to discuss the matter.

ICE agents were seen at Newark Liberty International Airport in New Jersey, Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport, O'Hare International Airport in Chicago and George Bush Intercontinental Airport in Houston. Some strode through terminal halls on regular patrols, while others were stationed at security checkpoints. Many stood and observed, chatted with colleagues or looked at their phones, instead of taking on tasks that would alleviate the burden on understaffed TSA agents, some of whom said they believed ICE was there mostly for crowd control.

The U.S. official who estimated the number of ICE agents deployed said they were not expected to make immigration arrests, though that appeared to conflict with President Donald Trump's statement Sunday about the agents.

Despite the deployment of the agents and a deadly collision and closure at LaGuardia Airport in New York overnight, flight delays and cancellations were minimal at major U.S. airports Monday, according to FlightAware, which tracks aviation data.

Still, hours of waiting at TSA checkpoints caused many travelers to miss their flights. Things were moving smoothly at some airports, including the ones in Minneapolis and Chicago. But major hubs in Atlanta and the New York City area gave up on updating their live wait-time trackers Monday morning, leaving passengers to wait and worry in lines that sometimes stretched into the airports' remotest reaches.

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JAMIE KELTER DAVIS / THE NEW YORK TIMES
A masked Immigration and Customs Enforcement agent stands Monday near an exit at Terminal 1 at O'Hare International Airport in Chicago.



IAN MAULE / ASSOCIATED PRESS

A sex worker, who goes by the name Molly Wylder, poses Feb. 12 in front of Sheri's Ranch, a brothel in Pahrump. The majority of the brothel's 74 workers filed a petition last month with the National Labor Relations Board to unionize, a historic first in the only state that permits legal sex work. Seven of the most vocal union advocates were subsequently fired, according to Scott Goodstein, a representative of the United Brothel Workers. The union filed an unfair labor practices complaint Feb. 17 alleging Wylder was terminated for discussing the union with the media. "I see so much potential for what Sheri's could be," said another of the fired workers, Genevieve Dahl.

NYE COUNTY

Pahrump brothel workers push for safety measures alongside bid to unionize

Editor's note: Este artículo está traducido al español en la página 8.

BY TYLER SCHNEIDER
A version of this story was posted on lasvegassun.com.

It's been a turbulent year for the sex workers of the Pahrump-based legal brothel Sheri's Ranch. On Feb. 6, the majority of its 74 workers filed a petition to unionize with the National Labor Relations Board as the United Brothel Workers affiliate of the Nevada-based Communications Workers of America Local 9413 — a historic first in the only state that permits legal sex work.

The movement began in December, when management asked workers to sign a revised contract giving the brothel sweeping control over workers' content, image and likeness, plus power of attorney to transfer their intellectual property without consent. After taking steps to unionize, seven of the most vocal union advocates were subsequently fired, according to UBW representative Scott Goodstein.

"They have good records, high earnings and never had disciplinary issues. The only thing that has changed is that they're now participating in union activities," Goodstein said of the terminated workers.

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Scott Goodstein, a representative of the United Brothel Workers, talking about seven terminated brothel workers

Their collective bargaining push also faces a major hurdle in the fact that Nevada's sex workers have historically been classified as independent contractors and not employees. To be officially recognized by both the NLRB and Sheri's Ranch, union members will have to convince the NLRB that their working conditions qualify them as employees under existing labor law.

In an email, Sheri's Ranch marketing and communications director Jeremy

Lemur noted that "Sheri's Ranch has operated within that same framework for more than 50 years."

"Nevada's licensed brothel industry has historically operated under a system in which the women working at licensed establishments are independent contractors rather than employees," Lemur said in a statement.

One fired worker, Genevieve Dahl, said this precedent needed to change.

"I see so much potential for what Sheri's could be. And by working with us and hearing our voices and implementing the things that we know need to change, it's going to make it such a better work environment for everyone," Dahl said.

The Nevada Department of Employment, Training and Rehabilitation presents the "ABC test" as a method of determining if someone is an independent contractor, with one requirement being that "the person has been and will continue to be free from control or direction over the performance of the services." Because Sheri's Ranch workers can reside on-site for weeks at a time and cannot work from home, the union argues they should instead be considered employees.

DETR also states that "a written contract, in itself, does not establish independent contractor status," adding that the "burden of proof rests upon the employer

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DEVELOPMENT RULES

Clark County to maintain safeguards for burrowing owls

Editor's note: Este artículo está traducido al español en la página 8.

BY GRACE DA ROCHA
A version of this story was posted on lasvegassun.com.

Walk among the dirt lots around Las Vegas and you might miss the tiny brownish-red birds with white spots peering out from small burrows in the ground.

The western burrowing owl can be found throughout states like Nevada and California, but habitat loss and other threats have driven significant population declines across the region, the National Audubon Society says.

The Clark County Commission

voted unanimously last week to maintain protections for the owl under its Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan. Under the protocols, developers must conduct preconstruction surveys and use passive relocation techniques, such as one-way doors, to move the owls away from project sites.

"(Burrowing owls are) relatively common, that's the reason for the concern having been brought up," said Kimberley Goodwin, principal environmental specialist for the Clark County Desert Conservation Program. "Every other group that was represented either expressed strong support to fairly neutral support for inclusion; nobody expressed desire to see the burrowing owl

removed ... as a proposed covered species from our application package."

Western burrowing owls are small, active-by-day birds with a rounded head and bright yellow eyes that find homes in abandoned burrows previously dug by ground squirrels, badgers, skunks, tortoises and marmots, according to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The Audubon Society notes that while various types of burrowing owls span from Florida to California and south into Mexico, their numbers have declined significantly, with recent global estimates placing the population at roughly 2 million to 3.5 million adult birds.

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STEVE MARCUS (2023)

A western burrowing owl is pictured in 2023 near the Mob Museum in downtown Las Vegas. The Clark County Commission voted unanimously last week to maintain protections for the owl under the county's Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan.