

**IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE DISTRICT OF COLORADO**

Civil Action No. 25-cv-03183-RBJ

REFUGIO RAMIREZ OVANDO, et al.,

Plaintiffs,

v.

KRISTI NOEM, in her official capacity as Secretary of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security,
TODD LYONS, in his official capacity as Acting Director of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, and
GEORGE VALDEZ, in his official capacity as Acting Director of the Denver Field Office of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement,¹

Defendants.

**DEFENDANTS' MOTION FOR LEAVE TO ALLOW INDIVIDUAL DEPORTATION
OFFICERS TO TESTIFY UNDER PSEUDONYM**

At the upcoming evidentiary hearing on March 10, 2026, Plaintiffs intend to call several U.S. Immigration & Customs Enforcement (ICE) deportation officers as witnesses. *See* ECF No. 85.² Defendants respectfully request that the Court issue an order allowing those individual deportation officers called as witnesses to testify under pseudonym. Specifically, Defendants request that those deportation officers be referred to only by their first and last initials. As

¹ George Valdez is now Acting Field Office Director and is automatically substituted as a defendant in this matter. *See* Fed. R. Civ. P. 25(d) (providing that a public officer's "successor is automatically substituted as a party" when the officer "ceases to hold office while the action is pending").

² In their witness list, Plaintiffs accommodated Defendants' request to identify the witnesses who are deportation officers by only their initials pending the Court's ruling on this motion, which requests the same relief. *See* ECF No. 85.

explained below, a court in another district, presiding over a similar case about warrantless arrests, allowed deportation officers to testify under pseudonym. Defendants request this relief as they reasonably fear that the deportation officers could face harm and retaliation, including physical harm, doxxing, or other potential harassment, if they are identified by name. Counsel for Plaintiffs has indicated that Plaintiffs oppose the relief requested by this motion.

The Tenth Circuit has recognized that anonymity in court proceedings is justified where an individual may face a “real danger of physical harm.” *Femeder v. Haun*, 227 F.3d 1244, 1246 (10th Cir. 2000) (quoting *Doe v. Frank*, 951 F.2d 320, 324 (11th Cir. 1992)). Courts in this District have allowed individuals to proceed anonymously where those circumstances exist. *See, e.g., Doe v. Bondi*, No. 25-cv-02712-DDD-SBP, 2025 WL 3516292, at *10 (D. Colo. Nov. 4, 2025) (party facing “real potential for harm” if he proceeds under his own name could proceed anonymously); *Doe v. Heil*, No. 08-cv-02342-WYD-CBS, 2008 WL 4889550, at *3 (D. Colo. Nov. 13, 2008) (party facing potential threat of harm from other prisoners based on his criminal record could proceed anonymously); *Does v. Rodriguez*, No. 06-cv-00805-LTB, 2007 WL 684114, at *3 (D. Colo. Mar. 2, 2007) (parties were allowed to proceed anonymously given “credible evidence” of potential retaliation against them).

Deportation officers face real danger of physical harm here. Reports show that individual ICE officers have recently faced an increasing amount of hostility, including instances of violent behavior. *See, e.g., Geoff Harris, Surge in assaults on ICE officers exceeds 1000% amid escalating anti-ICE sentiment*, KFOX14 (Sept. 24, 2025), <https://kfoxtv.com/news/nation-world/surge-assaults-ice-officers-exceeds-1000-amid-escalating-anti-ice-sentiment-dallas-texas-ice-shooting-latest-nationwide-attacks-officers-facilities-targeted-congress-tom-homan-no>

[secret-police-jd-vance-government](https://perma.cc/H2HS-Y9HR) (last visited Mar. 4, 2026) [https://perma.cc/H2HS-Y9HR]; Chandelis Duster & Sergio Martínez-Beltrán, *Nationwide anti-ICE protests call for accountability after Renee Good’s death*, NPR (Jan. 11, 2026), <https://www.npr.org/2026/01/10/nx-s1-5673229/ice-protests-minneapolis-portland-renee-good> (last visited Mar. 4, 2026) [https://perma.cc/EN4H-HU78].

Reports also show that ICE deportation officers have recently faced the intentional disclosure of personal details about their lives, known as “doxxing,” due to the nature of their employment. *See, e.g.*, Joann Putman, *‘ICE List’ doxxing site alleges DHS whistleblower leaked identities of 4,500 agents*, Police1 (Jan. 14, 2026), <https://www.police1.com/officer-safety/ice-list-doxxing-site-alleges-dhs-whistleblower-leaked-identities-of-4-500-agents> (last visited Mar. 4, 2026) [https://perma.cc/WT2Z-TQAR]; PBS News, *Federal prosecutors charge 3 activists with ‘doxing’ of ICE agent in Los Angeles* (Sept. 29, 2026), <https://www.pbs.org/newshour/nation/federal-prosecutors-charge-3-activists-with-doxing-of-ice-agent-in-los-angeles> (last visited Mar. 4, 2026) [https://perma.cc/Q5QZ-XPFL].

Indeed, just this week, two individuals—including one from Colorado—were found guilty of felony stalking an ICE deportation officer from a federal building to his home while livestreaming their pursuit on social media. *See* Exhibit 1, *Riverside and Colorado Women Found Guilty of Stalking Officer Home from Work and Livestreaming the Pursuit on Social Media* (Mar. 2, 2026).

The individual ICE deportation officers called as witnesses in this case thus face potential negative consequences, including possible physical harm, if their identities are revealed through their participation in this litigation. In contrast, the public interest in the names of individual

deportation officer names is low. This case is about ICE's statewide policy regarding warrantless arrest practices in Colorado. While the public may have an interest in that policy and policymakers, the public does not have a strong interest in learning the names of individual non-supervisory deportation officers performing their daily jobs. Thus, on balance, the real danger of physical harm to these deportation officers outweighs the public interest.

In this case, the Court previously permitted certain of Plaintiffs to proceed pseudonymously. *See* ECF No. 21. Likewise, in a similar case about warrantless arrests pending in the District of Oregon, *M-J-M-A- v. Hermosillo*, No. 6:25-cv-02011-MTK, the parties agreed that ICE deportation officers could testify under pseudonym and be identified only by their initials during a November 2025 hearing. *See* Joint Witness List, *M-J-M-A- v. Hermosillo*, No. 6:25-cv-02011-MTK (Nov. 28, 2025), ECF No. 43.³ The same practice of proceeding via pseudonym should be adopted as to the individual deportation officers here.

In sum, Defendants respectfully request that the Court issue an order allowing the ICE deportation officers called as witnesses in this case to testify under pseudonym.

³ A copy of the jointly filed witness list is from *M-J-M-A-* is attached. *See* Exhibit 2.

Dated: March 6, 2026.

Respectfully submitted,

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CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I certify that, on March 6, 2026, I electronically filed the foregoing with the Clerk of Court using the CM/ECF system, which will cause notice to be delivered electronically to all counsel of record.

s/ Brad Leneis

Brad Leneis

Assistant U.S. Attorney