

Race, Place, and Immigration Enforcement: Do Local Police Characteristics Matter? Findings from the Secure Communities Program

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Under the Secure Communities program, state and local police are required to share information on all arrestees with Immigration and Customs Enforcement. This program has elicited concerns about racial profiling and fears that arrests will be conducted in order to check an individual's immigration status. However, any relationship between police bias and non-citizen arrests must ultimately be mediated through agency-specific characteristics, such as a lack of officer diversity or the absence of institutional policies that aim to minimize racial profiling. Using a combination of data from the Law Enforcement Management and Administrative Statistics Survey and the Department of Homeland Security, this project examines the association between immigration enforcement outcomes and local police characteristics - particularly the presence (or lack) of policies and practices that promote fair and unbiased law enforcement. With the increasing onus on local criminal justice systems to uphold immigration law, this project explores whether policing practices have implications for federal immigration outcomes.