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WGN-TV producer detained during ICE enforcement action in Lincoln Square



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In an image taken from video, federal immigration agents detain two people Friday morning on the 2400 block of West Foster Avenue, including a Spanish-speaking man and Debbie Brockman, who has worked as a producer for WGN since 2011, according to her LinkedIn profile. (Josh Thomas)

A WGN-TV video editor and producer was roughly detained by two Border Patrol agents on Friday morning during a highly visible rush hour enforcement action in Lincoln Square.

Debbie Brockman, who has worked as a producer for WGN since 2011, according to her LinkedIn profile, was taken to the ground face down on Foster Avenue and handcuffed while stopped cars honked and onlookers

The woman identified herself as working at WGN and [asked an onlooker taking a video to "let them know"](#) before she was hauled off by the [agents](#) in an unmarked silver van with New Jersey plates.

On Friday evening, WGN issued a statement that its employee had been released from ICE detention.

"Earlier today, a WGN-TV creative services employee was detained by ICE," the station said. "She has since been released, and no charges were filed against her. Out of respect for her privacy, we will have no further statements about this incident."

The incident occurred at about 8:30 a.m. near the intersection of Foster and Lincoln avenues, according to Josh Thomas, a neighbor who videotaped the detention of Brockman and an unidentified Latino male, who was already in the van when Thomas came down from his apartment.

Nearly two dozen pedestrians gathered and shouted objections at the agents while cars stopped and honked as the scene unfolded, Thomas said.

"I walk out the front door of the condo, she's laying on the ground in the street and they're wrestling with her, trying to get her hands behind her back," said Thomas, 36, who works at a law firm in Chicago. "They said they were detaining her for obstruction. She said, 'I didn't obstruct.'"



A woman looks on as a vehicle is towed away following an accident reportedly involving federal agents detaining two people near intersection of Foster and Lincoln avenues in Chicago on Oct. 10, 2025. (Antonio Perez/Chicago Tribune)

The man who was already detained in the van did not identify himself, Thomas said.

Once Brockman was handcuffed and placed in the van, the agents pulled out, clipping the rear bumper off of a stopped car partially blocking their path and speeding away past an approaching elongated CTA bus and through the busy intersection.

Tricia McLaughlin, Homeland Security assistant secretary, said in a statement Friday that U.S. Border Patrol was conducting immigration enforcement operations when “several violent agitators used their vehicles to block in agents,” impeding the officers.

“In fear of public safety and of law enforcement, officers used their service vehicle to strike a suspect’s vehicle and create an opening,” McLaughlin said in the statement. “As agents were driving, Deborah Brockman, a U.S. citizen, threw objects at Border Patrol’s car and she was placed under arrest for assault on a federal law enforcement officer.”

Immigration and Customs Enforcement launched Operation Midway Blitz on Sept. 8 with the stated mission of targeting “criminal illegal aliens” in Chicago

It is not clear how many people have been detained and released during Operation Midway Blitz.

On Thursday, ICE was dealt at least a temporary setback when a Chicago federal judge blocked the Trump administration's deployment of National Guard troops in Illinois to support the immigration enforcement efforts.

The ICE enforcement activity Friday on Chicago's North Side had area schools, students and parents on high alert. From Ravenswood Elementary in Lakeview to Amundsen High School in Lincoln Square, principals sent parents emails during the day with tips from Chicago Public Schools on staying safe, including information on constitutional rights and immigration-related resources.

The letters all emphasized that CPS "WILL NOT allow ICE agents or any other federal representatives" access to schools without a criminal judicial warrant signed by a federal judge.

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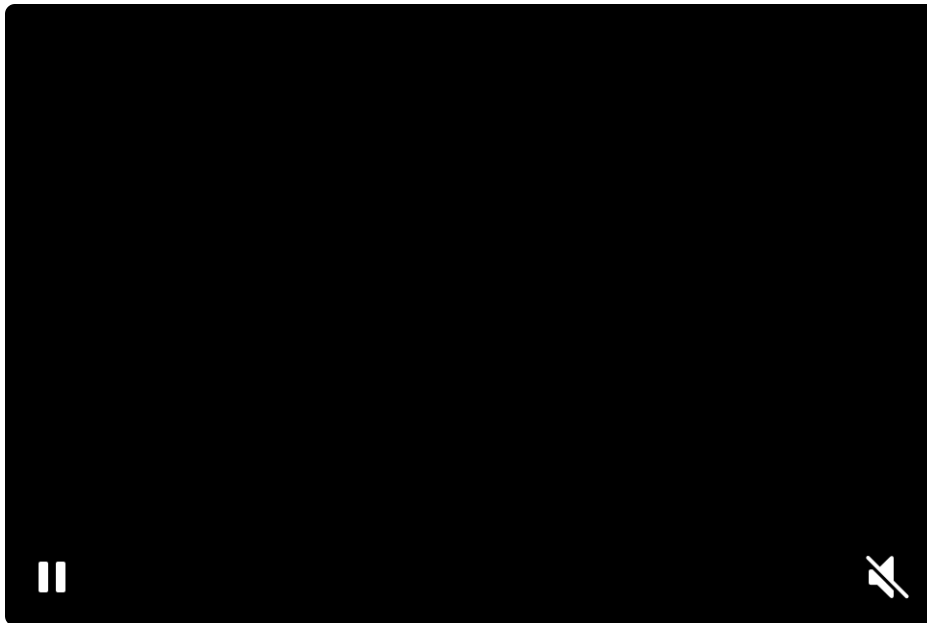
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