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May 2025

Transparency and Accountability



Dear Friends,

Last week, we learned – through our community, not through government channels – that multiple lawful permanent residents arriving at Seattle Tacoma International Airport (SEA) were detained by Customs and Border Protection (CBP) for several days.

The Port of Seattle does not have jurisdiction over CBP operations or access to federal detention facilities, and we cannot intervene in immigration enforcement. But we believe in accountability and transparency. We believe that the public and communities we serve must have access to information about their rights and must receive fair treatment. We are committed to creating an airport and community that is safe, welcoming, and inclusive of all.

To that end, we are taking action and pressing CBP for answers. Here is a [joint statement from the Port of Seattle Commission](#), released on Friday, May 23:

Port of Seattle Commissioners are deeply concerned by reports that individuals have been held in U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) custody at Seattle-Tacoma International Airport (SEA) for extended periods of time. Immigration enforcement is entirely within federal jurisdiction, and we are working with our congressional delegation on these matters. However, we do expect the federal agencies in our airport to provide fair and respectful treatment of detainees that follow legal and policy requirements. Prolonged detention without appropriate process not only raises serious concerns — it undermines public trust.

As commissioners, we are committed to pursuing every available action to ensure that SEA Airport remains a place that upholds dignity, justice, and transparency.

The Port of Seattle has secured a meeting with CBP's local field office

leadership where we will request information on standards for communications regarding individuals held for an extended period of time, standards of care for individuals detained for extended period of time, and strategies to communicate transparently with the Port and community members and families.

According to CBP's most recently published National Standards on Transport, Escort, Detention, and Search (TEDS), "Detainees should generally not be held for longer than 72 hours in CBP hold rooms or holding facilities. Every effort must be made to hold detainees for the least amount of time required for their processing, transfer, release, or repatriation as appropriate and as operationally feasible."

We believe in transparency, and we will continue to press for clear answers from CBP on these matters.

Recent immigration enforcement actions across the nation raise serious and legitimate questions about transparency, due process, and whether airports are truly safe, welcoming places for all travelers. We will continue to push for greater transparency and communication from CBP, and for regular briefings on how federal immigration policies are being implemented on our premises. And we will continue to advocate for the rights of all people.

Please don't hesitate to [contact our office](#) with any questions, concerns, or information.

In Unity,



Bookda Gheisar

Senior Director, Office of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

Centering Equity and Taking Action

Office of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion's Impact Report



On May 13, OEDI presented its annual report to the Port of Seattle Commission. Since OEDI was established in 2019, the Port has achieved many major milestones and made notable progress toward our goal of normalizing, organizing, and operationalizing equity both inside and outside the organization. Our accomplishments range broadly, from advancing equity within the Port to creating access to quality, family-wage careers in structurally excluded communities to positioning the Port as a leader in advancing equity, diversity, and inclusion among port authorities. Read our [Impact Report \(PDF\)](#) and watch our [short video “Equity Starts With Us”](#)!

OEDI Seeks Consultant for Second Port-wide Equity Assessment



We are undertaking our second Port-wide equity assessment in the Fall. This equity assessment will show how successful our changes and actions identified in our [first equity assessment](#) were, and this assessment will identify the Port's equity action steps for the next 4-5 years. We are seeking an experienced consultant who can support this effort in partnership with our team. [Learn more about this opportunity and apply](#) by June 27, 2025, at noon!

Meet Three Black Women Making History at the Port of Seattle

Black History Month may be over, but the Port of Seattle celebrates the accomplishments of our amazing team members all year long. African Americans have played a crucial role in shaping labor history, particularly in transportation, logistics, and infrastructure. Today, the Port honors this legacy by working to advance equity in the workplace, ensuring that all employees have access to opportunities for growth, leadership, and success in the maritime and aviation industries. [Read about the journeys of three women](#) at the Port who play essential roles in maintaining and advancing Port operations.



Port of Seattle Advances Environmental Progress and Sustainability Leadership in 2024



Building on a strong foundation of environmental leadership, the Port, in 2024, achieved several notable firsts, setting new standards nationally, such as becoming the first port to require shore power connections for cruise ships and removing PFAS foam at Seattle-Tacoma International Airport (SEA). Last year also brought new waste reduction requirements at the airport, saw the launch of a pilot program to improve sound insulation in neighboring communities, and continued progress restoring habitats along the Duwamish River. [Read more online →](#)

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Port of Seattle
Commission

Ryan Calkins
Sam Cho
Fred Felleman
Toshiko Hasegawa
Hamdi Mohamed

Port of Seattle
Executive Director

Stephen P. Metruck



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2711 Alaskan Way, Seattle, WA, 98121 US

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