



The Cost of the Occupation in DC,

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The estimated cost of Trump's deployment of the National Guard that began on August 11 is [\\$1 million a day](#), coming at the expense of federal programs (e.g., public housing) whose cuts directly impact our most vulnerable communities including DC youth, immigrants, Black residents, and unhoused folks on **top** of the increased threats faced by the current federal occupation.

Sophia, our lead organizer at FBC and resident of Southwest DC, a historically Black neighborhood [impacted by](#) gentrification and displacement, is navigating the impacts of the occupation among her neighbors – namely, increased violence at the hands of local police such as the Metropolitan Police Department (MPD), Transit Police, and Park Police who have been emboldened by the federal occupation, and fear of federal forces causing harm to a predominantly Black community.

Sophia also manages data collection from our annual People's [Budget Forum](#). Focusing on local budget issues and providing a space for our communities to shape agenda and priorities for our annual budget fight, this year's conversations centered largely on housing, schools, and community safety. An undercurrent of the event, however, was the federal occupation; we heard conversations about feelings of deep unsafety, especially among our most vulnerable community members, like Black youth and the unhoused.

“The community spoke passionately about federal military occupation, and also about over-policing, and violence at the hands of MPD and DC's over-investment in MPD. As some attendees pointed out (to enthusiastic applause), the safest neighborhoods in our District are not the most policed ones. They are the ones where residents have the most economic security and community opportunities.”

- Sophia Bos-Shadi, Lead Organizer, FBC
[2025 PBF Read out for Policymakers](#)

This unsafety is not only a result of federal policing and ICE kidnappings, but also of increased violence at the hands of our local law enforcement.

On August 15, FBC staff member Afeni Evans was [brutally assaulted, pepper sprayed, and arrested](#) by the Metro Transit Police (MTP) in Navy Yard DC during a police stop of Black youth over metro fare that should have simply resulted in a \$60 citation. This happened while she was



protecting the youth during a 3-day youth curfew, filming the police and ensuring the children knew there was community nearby.

On Halloween night, [video footage depicted](#) the U.S. National Guard chasing Black youth around Navy Yard – surrounding them and shoving them out of a public space. That same night, a local activist noticed that MPD was allowing white and non-Black youth through while [stopping Black youth](#) at the same station, and was thrown out by officers for questioning why.

The overpolicing of our youth is not something new, but many young residents have expressed deepened fear and concern over seeing unfamiliar federal troops in their neighborhoods and at their stations, and feeling profiled and harassed while trying to simply be outside with friends. Our youth are being actively criminalized, causing mental terror and internalization of intimidation and criminalization.

Even private transportation has become less safe under the federal occupation: in Ward 7, another historically Black DC neighborhood, councilmember Wendell Felder raised concerns about [two separate incidents](#) where Homeland Security (HSI) officers shot at DC residents as they fled traffic stops. Just yesterday, a Black man was [shot and killed](#) by someone out of a group of MPD officers and the [D.C. Safe and Beautiful Task Force](#) patrolling near the Deanwood metro station in Ward 7.

For many, the fear of gun violence or kidnapping has become too much, and have changed the way they live their lives and travel around the District.

Many of our immigrant and undocumented community members either stay at home or find themselves taking roundabout routes to avoid traffic stops where community members are being kidnapped and routes where workers are being [snatched off their mopeds](#); all amidst growing evidence that ICE is turning their network of traffic stops into a [“deportation pipeline”](#).

From early August until mid-September, [ICE made around 1,200 arrests](#) in DC, in close partnership with both MPD and the U.S. Park Police. In an eight-day period, the Migrant Solidarity Mutual Aid Network’s ICE hotline reported [nearly 500 calls](#) from family and community witnessing the kidnapping of their loved ones.

More recently, ICE agents raided a building in Georgetown and racially profiled its Latine residents, many of whom now [face eviction following the raid](#), leaving the surrounding community shocked and uncertain of how to protect their neighbors moving forward.



With immigrants comprising [18 percent](#) of the city's workforce – particularly in industries including construction, childcare, restaurants, and healthcare – our local economy is feeling the impact of lost labor while their families and dependents feel the direct impact of lost wages.

According to a local teacher, depending on the immigrant population, some DC schools faced a pretty immediate threat from ICE and increased federal presence. Some schools were able to mobilize volunteers and parents to respond because many teachers are oftentimes held to 'business as usual' making it hard for teachers to find the time to step up to new threats, or for school administration to be able to communicate with the school clearly. Since the occupation began, and especially in the spring, this teacher had other teachers texting them to request a call to the hotline shared earlier, because they literally couldn't leave their class to make the call.

For a lot of these educators, the strain of "normal" workloads is already a lot, and to try to pretend that things are normal while also acting as de facto community safety officers comes with a greater emotional load as well.

As forcible removal of encampments swept the District, hundreds of unhoused folks had to flee. For many, this meant leaving behind valuables, including legal documents, and disconnecting from stable resources. The increased criminalization of homelessness happening nationally also contributed to multiple arrests, traumatizing both the person being arrested and their community. These sudden and cruel removals have made the work of service providers – and their capacity to connect with unhoused folks – much more difficult.

Without the protection of Statehood, DC has essentially been a federally occupied territory for decades: under the [Police Coordination Act](#) of 1997, MPD proactively cooperates with 32 federal agencies who have been authorized to, in some capacity, assist in policing DC residents. In fact, it has been reported that DC is one of the [most policed "cities"](#) per capita in the United States. And the same folks who are feeling the increased impacts of state violence under federal occupation were the ones feeling the brunt of those issues before August 11.

For many other residents, however, this is the first time they're seeing specific federal troops in their communities and interacting with them. Additionally, many residents are unaware of which troop is which, as well as what they are legally authorized to do, leaving them with little recourse for cop accountability.

As long as federal troops are deployed in our communities without strong forms of accountability, and as long as DC keeps overinvesting in a local police force emboldened by their federal counterparts, our communities will continue to feel the impacts of the occupation.