CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE

TRUST POLICY MEMORANDUM

DATE: October 19, 2026

TO: Honorable Members of City Council
RJ Warren, Chief of Staff, Richmond City Council
Julie Caldwell, Deputy Chief of Staff, Richmond City Council

FROM: Amy Popovich, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer for Human Services

CC: Danny Avula, Mayor of Richmond
Odie Donald II, Chief Administrative Officer
Lawson Wijesooriya, Chief of Staff

SUBJECT: Trust Policy Launch

I. Purpose

This memorandum serves to present to Council the City's Trust Policy statement and to launch the beginning of the implementation plan. Developed in partnership between City Council, especially Councilwoman Nicole Jones, the Avula Administration, the Inclusive Communities Work Group, and our community, this policy establishes the creation of meaningful and actionable steps to support and protect Richmond's immigrant communities.

II. Background

Pillar Five of the Mayoral Action Plan (MAP)—"Thriving and Inclusive Communities"—outlines the administration's commitment to working with stakeholders so every resident, especially those in our immigrant communities, feels safe and welcomed and their rights are protected.

In January, Mayor Avula created the Inclusive Communities Work Group, charging it with identifying concrete steps toward addressing the values listed in the Thriving and Inclusive Communities Pillar.

The Work Group identified development of a Trust Policy as a foundational step in protecting residents, strengthening trust, and ensuring Richmond is prepared to respond to challenges faced by our immigrant neighbors. Several Councilmembers also affirmed this direction and had conversations with community and the administration about its development.

In July, Councilmember Jones introduced Resolution No. 2026-R033, and on September 28, Council unanimously approved it. This resolution directs the Mayor and City Administration to operationalize a Trust Policy and ensure that the City of Richmond, through its 4,000 employees,

keeps its immigrant residents safe and do not use resources to support or aid civil federal immigration enforcement.

The policy represents months of collaboration to develop an approach that not only reflects our values but is also practical, compliant, and coordinated across departments.

III. The Trust Policy

The policy establishes clear expectations for how City employees and departments interact with residents, protect personal information, and use City resources regarding the disclosure of information concerning the citizenship or immigration status of person. City employees are prohibited from using City-owned resources for purposes of civil federal immigration enforcement. This policy also defines what residents can expect from City staff in those situations.

The policy will apply to City staff that report through administrative offices. The policy does not apply to constitutional offices.

IV. Further Action

To ensure this policy is effectively implemented, the City of Richmond will be taking several steps.

First, we will develop additional guidance, resources, and expectations for all City employees in the coming months. This will include employee training, development of FAQs, creation of additional standard operating procedures or administrative regulations, and scenario-specific guidance to support staff in responding to situations they may encounter.

Additionally, to further our commitment to accessibility, the policy is being translated into seven languages: Spanish, French, Arabic, Chinese, Korean, Vietnamese, and Brazilian Portuguese. A two-page policy overview and other important updates will be available on the Policy's dedicated website: go.rva.gov/trust

Last, but certainly not least, community engagement will continue to be central to this work. Residents and community organizations will remain at the center of our focus on implementation, resource needs, and maintaining trust. A community engagement session will be held directly after the press conference this afternoon with representatives from organizations to continue the conversation on Trust Policy implementation, and additional engagement sessions on the Trust Policy and its implementation will be held in the coming months with residents.

While work is ongoing, today we acknowledge and celebrate this strong foundation built on months of coordination, research, and engagement. We look forward to sharing more as the process continues and we will have more implementation details before January 1st.

Our responsibility now is to translate this policy into clear, consistent practices across City departments so the commitment we affirm today is reflected in the way we serve Richmond residents every day.



Amy Popovich, RN MSN
Deputy Chief Administrative Officer for Human Services
City of Richmond