



Written by [David Kelly](#) on January 11, 2024

Denver Faces Budget Cuts to Cover Costs of Supporting Illegal Immigrants

The city of Denver has reached a breaking point, with illegal immigrants arriving in the sanctuary city placing a “huge strain” on city resources that could cost taxpayers an estimated \$180 million per year. Continuing to support the illegals without federal support in 2024 would cost the city roughly 10 to 15 percent of its annual general-fund budget this year.

Denver Mayor Mike Johnston shared the estimated cost during his weekly mayor-council [meeting](#), referring to the new arrivals as “newcomer migrants.”

Johnston told council members the cost “would be a very, very painful conversation about budget options,” adding that “this challenge is far larger than we’ve ever seen it before, and the scale can feel overwhelming.”

Now, according to news site [Denverite](#), Johnston is “asking agencies led by mayoral appointees to cut spending so those dollars can be reallocated to fund the city’s migrant response.” There are a reported 4,700 illegal immigrants in city-run shelters that are nearing capacity. Laura Swartz with the Department of Finance shared that the city has spent more than \$38 million in its response efforts:

“While we are advising newcomers that our migrant shelters are nearly at capacity, we are continuing to see a steady stream of new arrivals, with 200 new people who have arrived in just the past two days,” Swartz explained in an email. “If the pace of this humanitarian crisis need continues in 2024 as it has over the past few months of 2023, Denver’s migrant sheltering expenses could reach as high as \$15 million per month.”

Last week, Colorado’s Democratic U.S. senators and representatives [posted](#) that they wrote a letter urging the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to “increase its support for communities and nonprofits assisting migrants arriving in Colorado.”

The lawmakers’ [press release](#) shared that, “as of December, Denver alone spent over \$33 million to meet the humanitarian needs of more than 32,000 migrant arrivals, including sheltering 3,100 migrants.” It continued:

Colorado has experienced a significant influx of migrants in recent months, which is placing considerable strain on state and local government resources and nonprofit organizations. These partners are at the forefront of providing essential services to migrants and are in



AP Images
Mike Johnston



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dire need of additional support.... Buses bringing migrants into our state are now a daily occurrence, and we are seeing a growing trend of migrants initially arriving in Denver and then moving into other communities across Colorado... Unfortunately, to this point, the cost of temporary housing, food, transportation, and other necessities has largely fallen on Colorado taxpayers.

The press release noted that last year the “U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) [announced](#) \$8.6 million to assist Denver’s migrant support efforts” following the lawmakers’ “letter [urging](#) DHS Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas to support Colorado and Denver as they addressed the humanitarian needs of migrants.” Denverite [reported](#) that the city “has received or will receive nearly \$11 million in reimbursements from the U.S. Department of Homeland Security.”

Mayor Johnston on Fox News Sunday admitted the illegal immigration situation in Denver “[is unsustainable](#),” stating, “In the current structure, when we have 30 or 40,000 people arriving without work authorization, without federal support, it is going to be a huge strain on cities.... We have folks that arrive in Denver, and their court dates are 2029.... That’s five years out because the courts are so backlogged.”

[Denverite noted](#):

“Mayor Johnston has been relentlessly advocating for an increase in federal support as well as expansions of work authorizations for migrants,” Johnston’s spokesperson Jordan Fuja told Denverite in a statement. “However, given the recent surge, we cannot afford to wait for federal interventions, and out of an abundance of caution, he has asked city agencies to begin evaluating areas we can put measures in place to ensure we will have the funds needed to address this challenge and maintain a balanced budget.”

The site [further reported](#) that Swartz and Johnston said the city is not considering cutting salaries, freezing raises, or slashing benefits while considering spending cuts:

“It is too early right now to say what our savings targets will be,” Swartz said. “The city will use multiple strategies to fund this gap, which will likely include identifying significant savings within agencies, holding non-essential positions vacant, and carefully reviewing new or expanded contracts and programs.”

Denver is not alone in being overwhelmed with illegal immigrants, as other sanctuary cities such as [Chicago](#) and [New York City](#) are struggling with finding resources to support “newcomer migrants.”

Many of Denver’s illegal immigrants have found their way to the city from Texas. As *The New American* [reported](#), Texas Governor Greg Abbott’s [Operation Lone Star](#) program has bused illegal immigrants to sanctuary cities to help Texas “fill the dangerous gaps created by the Biden Administration’s refusal to secure the border.” Close to 100,000 illegals have been transported out of Texas since April 2022.

To learn more about America’s immigration invasion and what can be done to stop it, [click here](#).



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