



SECURE COMMUNITIES FACT SHEET

Secure Communities: Mission

Secure Communities is a comprehensive Department of Homeland Security (DHS) initiative to modernize the criminal alien enforcement process. It supports public safety by strengthening efforts to identify and remove the most dangerous criminal aliens from the United States. Congress appropriated \$1.4 billion to U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) for criminal alien enforcement efforts.

Secure Communities is built on **three pillars** that address the frequent challenges associated with accurately identifying and successfully removing criminal aliens from the United States.



IDENTIFY The Challenge:

Arrestees often use aliases and furnish other false biographic data, which can make it difficult to properly determine their immigration status. Relying on this biographic data alone slows federal officials' ability to accurately and efficiently identify the immigration history of criminals booked into local custody, and on probation and parole.

The Solution: Modernize Criminal Alien Identification Using Biometrics

New technology being deployed across the country enables the criminal alien's fingerprints to be checked against DHS's biometric database. This technology and the use of biometrics helps to more accurately and efficiently confirm a suspect's identity because, unlike a name or date of birth, biometrics are almost impossible to forge.

ICE, along with the FBI and DHS's US-VISIT Program provide the technology to help local law enforcement agencies (LEAs) complete an **integrated records check** to determine both the criminal history and immigration status of individuals in their custody.

A single submission of fingerprints as part of the normal criminal booking process automatically checks for information in both the Integrated Automated Fingerprint Identification System (IAFIS) of the FBI's Criminal Justice Information Services (CJIS) Division and the Automated Biometric Identification System (IDENT) of DHS's US-VISIT Program.

The LEA continues to be notified when there is a positive identification within IAFIS. Now, both ICE and the LEA can be notified when a match occurs in IDENT.

ICE evaluates each case to determine the individual's immigration status and communicate their findings to local law enforcement **within a few hours**.



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PRIORITIZE The Challenge:

The size, location, and characteristics of the nation's criminal alien population are based on estimates, making it difficult to strategically assess operational needs and deploy resources to identify and remove criminal aliens.

The Solution: Prioritize Enforcement Actions

Secure Communities is using a **risk-based approach** to prioritize enforcement actions involving criminal aliens. ICE is focusing efforts first and foremost on the most dangerous criminal aliens currently charged with, or previously convicted of, the most serious criminal offenses. ICE will give priority to those offenses including, crimes involving national security, homicide, kidnapping, assault, robbery, sex offenses, and narcotics violations carrying sentences of more than one year.

By prioritizing the removal of the most dangerous criminals, Secure Communities enables ICE to heighten public safety while reducing disruption to communities and law-abiding immigrant families.

Deployment Strategy:

Beginning in October 2008, ICE prioritized deployment of biometric identification capability to high-risk jurisdictions. Continued deployment plans project nationwide coverage by 2013. For more information including current status and recent successes, please visit our website at: www.ICE.gov/Secure_Communities



TRANSFORM The Challenge:

The deployment of biometric identification capability to more than 30,000 local jails and booking locations nationwide will dramatically increase the number of dangerous criminal aliens coming into ICE custody. That means ICE must boost its capabilities to arrest, process, detain, and ultimately remove aliens from the United States. Finding solutions to identify, locate, and detain criminal aliens currently considered at-large is a high priority.

The Solution: Transform ICE Business Processes and Systems

To meet these demands, ICE is working to **optimize capacity** by modernizing and expanding detention space, transportation resources, and staff. Automated systems and greater **process efficiency** will speed the removal of criminal aliens from the United States, reducing the amount of time they spend in ICE custody. Some of the modernization and process enhancements include:

- Video conferencing to conduct interviews and immigration hearings
- Computer technology to track the use of detention beds and transportation systems
- Integrated case and detainee management systems
- Working groups to address identifying, locating and detaining criminal aliens who are currently at-large

These enhancements to the processes and systems ICE uses to manage its criminal alien caseload are designed to **strengthen ICE capabilities** to:

- Assess future needs for detention beds, transportation, and staffing
- Optimize ICE's overall operating efficiency