



Fact Sheet

# U.S. Marshals Service

2026

- ▶ The U.S. Marshals Service was the first federal law enforcement agency in the United States.
- ▶ Federal marshals have served the country since 1789, often in unseen but critical ways.
- ▶ The Marshals Service occupies a uniquely central position in the federal justice system. It is the enforcement arm of the federal courts, involved in virtually every federal law enforcement initiative.
- ▶ Presidentially appointed U.S. marshals – one for each federal judicial district – direct the activities of 94 districts.
- ▶ Approximately 3,780 authorized deputy U.S. marshals and criminal investigators and 1,666 authorized administrative employees and detention enforcement officers form the backbone of the agency.
- ▶ The duties of the U.S. Marshals Service include protecting the federal judiciary, apprehending federal fugitives, managing and selling seized assets acquired by criminals through illegal activities, housing and transporting federal prisoners and operating the Witness Security Program.

## Judicial Security

- ▶ The U.S. Marshals Service is responsible for protecting the federal judicial process.
- ▶ The agency is empowered by statute to protect federal judges, other court officials, witnesses, jurors, the visiting public, prisoners and other threatened persons.
- ▶ Criminal investigators, intelligence analysts and other Marshals personnel assess, investigate and mitigate threats against the judiciary 24/7.
- ▶ The agency oversees the daily operation and management of security services performed by approximately 6,061 court security officers within the 94 U.S. District Courts and 12 circuits of the U.S. Court of Appeals. As the security front line, court security officers screen visitors at building entrances and handle other security duties.

## Fugitive Apprehension

- ▶ The U.S. Marshals Service is the federal government's primary agency for fugitive investigations.
- ▶ The Marshals have the broadest arrest authority among federal law enforcement agencies.
- ▶ The Marshals provide assistance to state and local agencies in locating and apprehending their most violent fugitives.
- ▶ The Marshals arrest on average 293 fugitives every day.
- ▶ U.S. Marshals task forces combine the efforts of federal, state and local law enforcement agencies to locate and arrest the most dangerous fugitives.
- ▶ Task force officers are state and local police officers who receive special deputations with the Marshals. While on a task force, these officers can exercise U.S. Marshals authorities, such as crossing jurisdictional lines.
- ▶ The U.S. Marshals "15 Most Wanted" fugitive program draws attention to some of the country's most dangerous and high-profile fugitives. These fugitives tend to be career criminals with histories of violence, and they pose a significant threat to public safety.
- ▶ U.S. Marshals work with the international law enforcement community to apprehend fugitives abroad as well as to seek foreign fugitives living or residing in the U.S.

## Asset Forfeiture

- ▶ The Department of Justice Asset Forfeiture Program's mission is to use asset forfeiture as a tool to deter, disrupt and dismantle criminal enterprises by depriving criminals of the instruments of illicit activity.
- ▶ The U.S. Marshals Service serves as the primary custodian of seized property for the program. The Marshals identify and evaluate assets and manage and dispose of the majority of the assets seized and forfeited through the program.
- ▶ The Marshals manage a wide array of assets, including real estate, commercial businesses, cash, financial instruments, vehicles, jewelry, art, antiques, collectibles, vessels and aircraft.
- ▶ Proceeds generated from asset sales are used to operate the program, compensate victims and support various law enforcement efforts.

## Prisoner Operations

- ▶ The U.S. Marshals Service is responsible for preserving the integrity of the federal judicial process by overseeing all detention management matters for individuals remanded to U.S. Marshals custody.
- ▶ The Marshals provide safe, secure and humane custody, housing, medical care and transportation for federal prisoners throughout the United States and its territories.
- ▶ Individuals arrested for federal offenses are brought before a U.S. magistrate or U.S. district court judge for their initial court appearances. The court determines whether prisoners are to be released on bond or remanded to the custody of the Marshals to await trial.
- ▶ The Marshals Service does not own or operate detention facilities but partners with state and local governments using intergovernmental agreements to house prisoners. Additionally, the agency houses prisoners in Federal Bureau of Prisons facilities and private detention facilities.

## Prisoner Transportation

- ▶ The Justice Prisoner and Alien Transportation System manages the coordination, scheduling and secure handling of prisoners in federal custody, transporting them to detention facilities, courts and correctional institutions across the 94 judicial districts via a network of aircraft, buses, vans and cars.
- ▶ JPATS is the largest transporter of prisoners in the United States, supporting the federal judiciary, U.S. Marshals district offices and the Federal Bureau of Prisons.
- ▶ On average, JPATS manages more than 1,275 prisoner movements a day.
- ▶ Prisoner movements take place for a variety of reasons, such as to testify at a trial, serve a sentence at a facility or transfer between institutions. Prisoners are also moved for pretrial hearings, competency examinations, medical studies and observations.

## Witness Security

- ▶ The U.S. Marshals Service operates the federal Witness Security Program, sometimes referred to as the "Witness Protection Program."
- ▶ The Witness Security Program provides for the security, safety and health of government witnesses and their authorized family members, whose lives are in danger as a result of their cooperation with the U.S. government.
- ▶ Witnesses and their families typically get new identities with documentation.
- ▶ The Witness Security Program has successfully protected almost 19,300 participants from intimidation and retribution since the program began in 1971.