



#### TODAY'S MARSHALS SERVICE

The U.S. Marshals Service has varied primary missions which include protection of the federal judiciary, witness security, prisoner transportation, fugitive apprehension, and asset forfeiture management.

#### INVESTIGATIVE OPERATIONS

The U.S. Marshals Service is the federal government's primary agency for conducting fugitive investigations. Through the historic use of posses, task forces have strengthened ties between federal, state, and various local jurisdictions. In 1979, a historic memorandum of understanding allowed deputies to apprehend federal fugitives.

#### PRISONER TRANSPORTATION

Originally founded under the National Transportation System in 1970, the Justice Prisoner and Alien Transportation System, or JPATS, formed after the air fleets of the U.S. Marshals Service and Immigration and Nationalization service merged in 1995. In addition to JPATS, our deputies ensure the

smooth transition of prisoner and detainee movements across the nation.

#### SEIZED ASSETS

The U.S. Marshals Service is responsible for the management and disposal of illegally obtained items. Property seized and forfeited has included boats, vehicles, operating businesses, houses, jewelry, aircraft and financial instruments. Proceeds collected from forfeited assets are deposited into the Department of Justice's Asset Forfeiture Fund (AFF), created by the 1984 Comprehensive Crime Control Act.

#### JUDICIAL SECURITY

Safeguarding the federal judiciary was among our founding responsibilities. An 1890 Supreme Court decision, *In Re Neagle*, defined the authority of U.S. Marshals and their deputies in their protective duties.

#### TACTICAL OPERATIONS

An array of crucial support services, including a modern emergency operations center, communications center, crisis service operation, and other related missions proved themselves in response to national tragedies such as the 9/11 attacks and Hurricane Katrina.

#### WITNESS SECURITY

The U.S. Marshals Service protects witnesses who testify against drug traffickers, organized crime members, and other major criminals. The Witness Security Program was authorized with the passage of the Organized Crime Control Act of 1970 and further amendments included in the Comprehensive Crime Control Act of 1984.

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From  
**PAST**  
To  
**PRESENT**



U.S. MARSHALS SERVICE  
Department of Justice

The Nation's Oldest and  
Most Versatile Federal Law  
Enforcement Agency

## ☞ Noteworthy Dates ☜

**1789** – Marshals duties defined by Judiciary Act includes descriptive term “all legal precepts”

**1790-1870** – U.S. Marshals take the Federal Census every 10 years

**1815-1861** – Marshals arrest an array of filibusters and counterfeiters

**1870s** – Marshals and their Deputies ensure full federal voting and civil rights in the Reconstruction South

**1878-1881** – Marshals take part in the Lincoln County War and aftermath

**1882** –The Earps and Doc Holliday, as Deputies, fight “the Cowboys” in Tombstone

**1889** – U.S. Marshals begin their work in Indian (now Oklahoma) Territory

**1896** – The fee system to pay U.S. Marshals is abolished, replaced with annual salary

**1906-1943** – U.S. Marshals office serves the consular courts in China

**1956** – Executive Office of U.S. Marshals created within the Department of Justice

**1957-1965** – Marshals formally enforce civil rights in numerous incidents in the American South

**1969** – A formal headquarters with oversight functions is established. The Office of Director follows shortly after

**1983** – *15 Most Wanted Fugitive* program established

**2005** – First Operation FALCON launched, banding federal, state and local authorities in nationwide sweeps

# A Distinguished History

## CHANGING WITH THE TIMES

The U.S. Marshals Service is the nation's oldest federal law enforcement agency. George Washington appointed the first 13 U.S. Marshals upon the passage of the Judiciary Act of 1789. Their initial duties were wide in scope, varying from serving process issued from federal courts, handling court moves and ensuring the presence of prisoners and jurors. The vague term “all law precepts” developed into duties such as taking the Federal Census, protecting federal polls in the South following the Civil War, and enacting a special witness protection program. Other agencies were subsequently formed for specific missions that formerly belonged to deputies. Despite their important role in our country's establishment and in federal territories in the Old West, the U.S. Marshals and their deputies merged their core missions with new domestic and international responsibilities as the nation matured. The agency's ability to adapt and thrive proved that “Success Breeds Longevity.”

## FACTS ON WESTERN LEGENDS

U.S. Marshals were associated with legendary places – Tombstone, Ariz., Territory; Fort Smith, Ark.; Lincoln County, N.M., Territory; and Johnson County, Wyo., and legendary names – Wyatt Earp, Pat Garrett, Bass Reeves, Frederick Douglass, and Bat Masterson were among those who wore the star. Deputy U.S. Marshals Heck Thomas, Bill Tilghman and Chris Madsen, known as the “Three Guardsman,” arrested or killed members of the Doolin and Dalton Gangs



in the Oklahoma Territory. Wyatt Earp was temporarily deputized for the Tombstone fight and then commissioned as a deputy a short time later. Pat Garrett was cross-deputized as a Special Deputy U.S. Marshal and a county sheriff in New Mexico Territory. Ironically, Billy the Kid also served temporarily. Bass Reeves was a deputy for 32 years, mostly during the term of Isaac “Hanging Judge” Parker, who handpicked him for the position.

## THE CIVIL RIGHTS ERA

The Civil Rights Era began for the U.S. Marshals with the 1954 Supreme Court decision *Brown v. Board of Education*. Due to their history of enforcing civil rights after the Civil War, the U.S. Marshals



enforced educational integration in many locations in the American South, including Little Rock, Ark. (1957-58); New Orleans (1960); Oxford, Miss. (1962); and Tuscaloosa, Ala. (1963). In addition, our deputies protected the Freedom Riders who protested against segregated transportation, and numerous marches, including the highly visible 1965 Selma March. The events of Sept. 30-Oct. 1, 1962, at the University of Mississippi, where deputies faced a rioting crowd of thousands, is considered one of our nation's watershed moments.