



U.S. Immigration
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4 additional Idaho counties to benefit from ICE program to enhance identification and removal of aliens convicted of a crime

Idaho Falls, Idaho — Four Idaho counties, including Bonneville County, have become the latest jurisdictions in the country to begin using a federal information sharing capability as part of the Secure Communities program that helps U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) identify criminal aliens in state prisons and local jails by running their fingerprints against federal immigration databases when they are booked into the system.

In addition to Bonneville County, the other Idaho jurisdictions activated Tuesday are Bannock, Bonner and Twin Falls counties. With the expansion of the use of biometric information sharing to these jurisdictions, ICE is now using this capability in seven jurisdictions statewide. The three Idaho jurisdictions that came on line previously are Ada, Canyon and Kootenai counties.

“Secure Communities enhances public safety by enabling ICE to identify and remove criminal aliens more efficiently and effectively from the United States,” said Secure Communities Acting Assistant Director Marc Rapp. “As we expand ICE’s use of biometric information sharing nationwide, we are helping to keep communities safe and ensuring the integrity of our immigration system.”

Nationwide, ICE is using this capability in 1,265 jurisdictions in 42 states. As a result of ICE’s use of this enhanced information-sharing capability, which began in October 2008, ICE has removed more than 72,000 criminal aliens from the United States. Of those, more than 26,000 were convicted of felonies such as murder, rape, kidnapping and the sexual abuse of children. ICE continues to work with its law enforcement partners across the country to responsibly and effectively implement this federal information sharing capability and plans to reach complete nationwide deployment by 2013.

“Thanks to this new program we will be able to identify criminals in custody that won't be released back into our communities. This will not be at any additional cost to local law enforcement. By sharing information in a timely and consistent manner with ICE our capability to track, identify and deport undocumented criminals in our custody will be significantly enhanced.” Sheriff Paul Wilde Bonneville County Sheriff’s Office.

Prior to the implementation of Secure Communities, fingerprints taken of individuals charged with a crime and booked into state or local custody were checked for criminal history information against the Department of Justice’s (DOJ) criminal history records. Once it is activated in a jurisdiction, the fingerprints that jurisdiction submits to DOJ’s biometric system to check for criminal history records

are also automatically sent to DHS' biometric system to check against its immigration law enforcement records.

When a match is discovered, ICE evaluates the specific case to determine the individual's immigration status and takes appropriate enforcement action. ICE prioritizes removing criminal aliens convicted of the most serious crimes such as major drug offenses, murder, rape and kidnapping. ICE also gives high priority to other threats to public safety, such as aliens with known gang affiliations, drunk driving arrests, or fugitives, or those who frequently try to game the immigration system.

The biometric systems are maintained by DHS's US-VISIT program and the FBI's Criminal Justice Information Services (CJIS).

"US-VISIT is proud to support ICE by providing comprehensive, reliable information to assist in the smart and effective enforcement of our immigration laws," said US-VISIT Director Robert Mocny. "By enhancing the interoperability of DHS's and the FBI's biometric systems, we are helping federal, state and local government better protect our communities and our nation."

"Under this federal information-sharing initiative, ICE will be utilizing FBI system enhancements that allow improved information sharing at the state and local law enforcement level based on positive identification of incarcerated criminal aliens," said Daniel D. Roberts, assistant director of the FBI's Criminal Justice Information Services Division. "Additionally, ICE and the FBI are working together to take advantage of the strong relationships already forged between the FBI and state and local law enforcement necessary to assist ICE in achieving its goals."

For more information about Secure Communities, visit www.ice.gov/secure_communities.

ICE

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) is the largest investigative arm of the Department of Homeland Security. ICE is a 21st century law enforcement agency with broad responsibilities for a number of key homeland security priorities. For more information, visit: www.ICE.gov. To report suspicious activity, call 1-866-347-2423.