



VOICE

VICTIMS OF IMMIGRATION
CRIME ENGAGEMENT



Quarterly Report

Q2 FY 2018

January 1, 2018 – March 31, 2018



U.S. Immigration
and Customs
Enforcement

OVERVIEW

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) protects America from the cross-border crime and illegal immigration that threaten national security and public safety. To carry out that mission, ICE focuses on smart immigration enforcement, preventing terrorism, and combating transnational criminal threats. The agency has an annual budget of approximately \$6 billion, primarily devoted to three operational directorates—Enforcement and Removal Operations (ERO), Homeland Security Investigations (HSI), and the Office of the Principal Legal Advisor (OPLA). A fourth directorate—Management and Administration (M&A)—supports the three operational branches to advance the ICE mission.

- ICE ERO upholds U.S. immigration law at, within, and beyond our borders. ICE ERO's work is critical to the enforcement of immigration law against those who present a danger to our national security, are a threat to public safety, or who otherwise undermine the integrity of our immigration system.
- ICE HSI is the principal investigative component within the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), which conducts transnational criminal investigations that protect the United States against threats to national security and brings to justice those seeking to exploit U.S. customs and immigration laws worldwide.
- ICE OPLA is the largest legal program in DHS and serves as the exclusive representative of DHS in immigration removal proceedings before the Executive Office for Immigration Review, litigating all removal cases including those against criminal aliens, terrorists, and human rights abusers.

Why was the VOICE Office established?

Executive Order 13768 titled *Enhancing Public Safety in the Interior of the United States* directed ICE to establish the Victims Of Immigration Crime Engagement (VOICE) Office to acknowledge and serve the needs of crime victims and their families who have been impacted by crimes committed by removable criminal aliens. With the creation of the office, victims of crimes committed by individuals with a nexus to immigration now have a government resource that can provide timely information on their cases. The VOICE Office works to ensure victims and their families have access to immigration-related information regarding their offender as releasable by law and policy. The VOICE Office may be reached via a toll-free hotline (1-855-48-VOICE or 1-855-488-6423) staffed with operators who triage calls to ensure victims receive the support they need.

VINE: A Custody Status Resource

The Victim Information and Notification Everyday (VINE) is a state-level system that automatically notifies registrants about custodial changes in a criminal inmate's case. VINE has been providing victims and concerned citizens with the power of information for decades, allowing these individuals to have a sense of security.

The DHS Victim Information and Notification Exchange (DHS-VINE) system allows registrants to receive immigration-related custodial status notifications. It transfers eligible registrant data from state VINE databases to ensure those individuals who registered with state VINE continue to receive custody status updates once a criminal alien is transferred from state custody to ICE

custody. While the state-level system’s name is slightly different than DHS’s, it works to serve a similar purpose. To that end, individuals eligible to receive custody status notifications are victims and witnesses associated with criminal aliens charged or convicted of a crime, victim advocates, individuals with a legal responsibility to act on behalf of a victim or witness (e.g., attorneys, parents, legal guardians), and individuals acting at the request of a victim or witness.

Establishment of Quarterly Reports

The Executive Order entitled *Enhancing Public Safety in the Interior of the United States* directed ICE’s VOICE Office to create quarterly reports studying the effects of the victimization by criminal aliens present in the United States. The quarterly report for Quarter 2 Fiscal Year (FY) 2018: January 1, 2018 – March 31, 2018 provides information on the VOICE Office’s key objectives, victim assistance offered, metrics used to study the impact the VOICE Office is having on victims’ needs, and anonymized case studies to depict the types of victims assisted by the VOICE Office.

Key Objectives

- Use of a victim-centered approach to acknowledge and support victims and their families;
- Promote awareness of available services to crime victims; and
- Build collaborative partnerships with community stakeholders assisting victims.

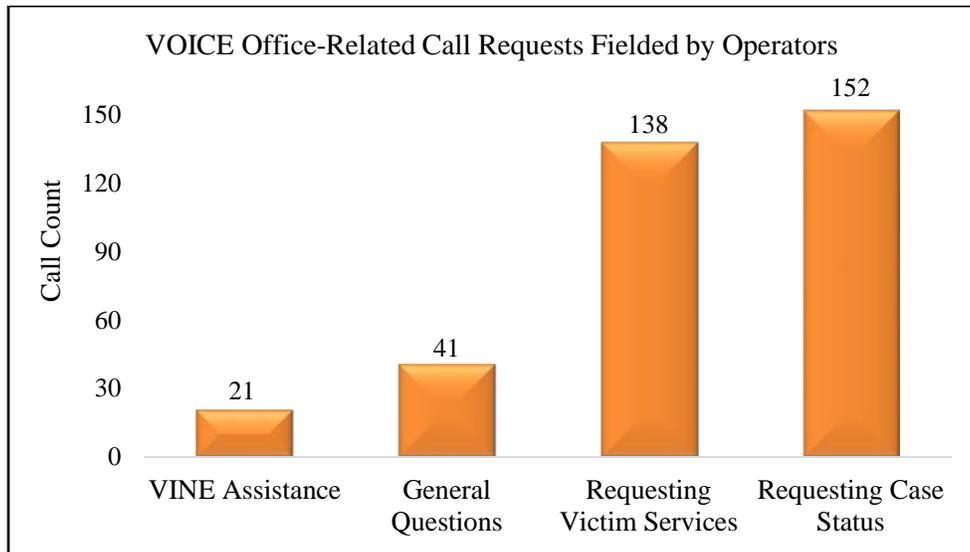
Types of Assistance Offered

- Establish local contacts to help with unique victim requests;
- Link victims with ICE representatives to help victims understand the immigration enforcement and removal process;
- Provide access to social service professionals who are able to refer victims to local resources and direct service providers;
- Assist individuals in signing up to receive automated custody status information through federal and local VINE services; and
- To the extent permitted by law or policy, provide information about the offender, including the offender’s immigration status and custody status, and answer questions and concerns regarding immigration enforcement.

FINDINGS

The VOICE Office’s hotline received a total of 1,266 calls from January 1, 2018 to March 31, 2018. Of all fielded calls, 362 calls pertained to services offered by the VOICE Office and 311 calls were subsequently referred to Community Relations Officers (CROs) in ICE’s Areas of Responsibility (AORs) across the United States to engage with victims and ensure they had access to information and resources. This report provides information on the 362 callers who have been assisted as a direct result of their call to the VOICE Office. Figure 1 displays per category, the number of VOICE Office-related service requests fielded by VOICE Office operators. Table 1 provides a description of the categories.

Figure 1: Number of VOICE Office Hotline Calls per Category from January 1, 2018 to March 31, 2018



Note: Due to repeat callers, 10 of 362 callers’ requests were not counted.

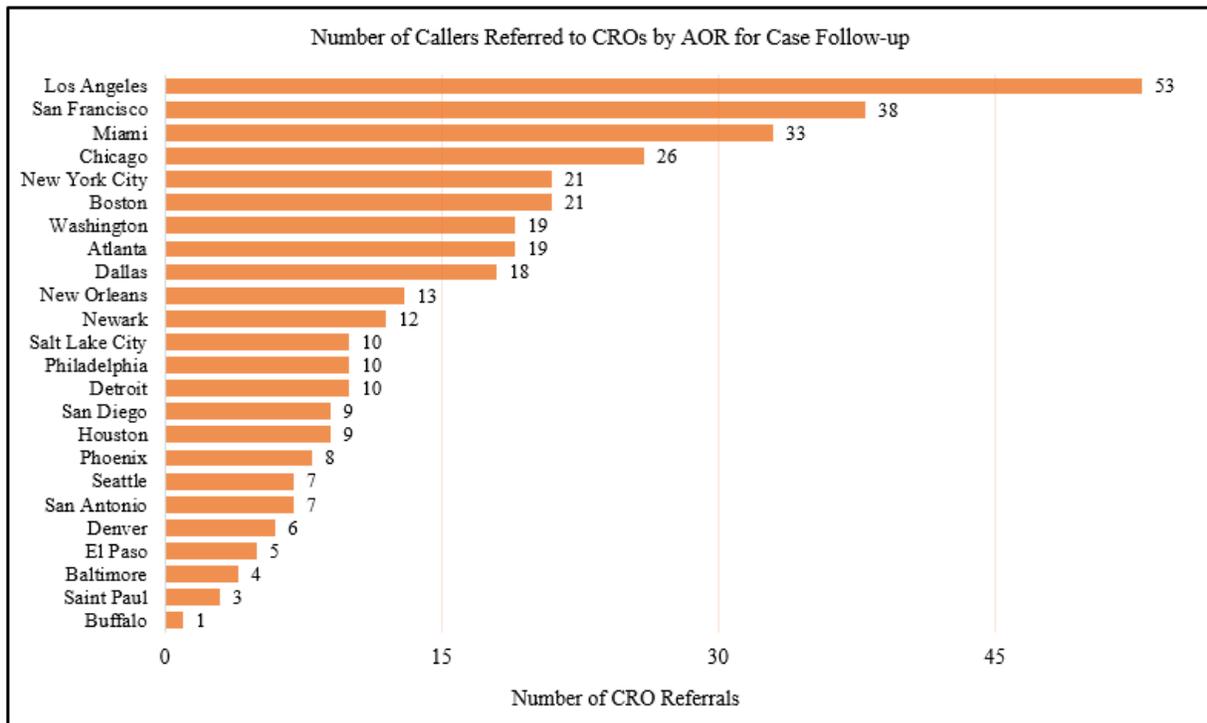
Although Figure 1 suggests 138 individuals requested victim services during the intake call, subsequent contact revealed that only 19 victims requested social services and were referred to Victim Assistance Specialists (VASs).

Table 1. Categories of Services Offered by the VOICE Office

Service	Definition
VINE Assistance	Callers requested assistance or information on how to sign up to receive VINE’s automated immigration custodial information.
General Questions	Callers requested general information on the VOICE Office.
Requesting Victim Services	Self-identified victims who request access to social service professionals are referred to ICE HSI Victim Assistance Specialists (ICE HSI VASs). ICE HSI VASs work with individuals to determine the type(s) of social services being requested and make referrals to local service providers, as appropriate.
Requesting Case Status	Callers requested information surrounding their case and were referred to a CRO. The CROs were tasked to engage with victims and ensure they had access to information and resources.

Figure 2: Calls Referred to CROs by AOR from January 1, 2018 – March 31, 2018

The figure that follows reflects the 362 requests for services from the VOICE Office. The horizontal bar chart highlights the volume of calls per AOR.



Caller data reflects that requests for services from the VOICE Office originated from AORs across the United States. The highest volume of service requests came from ICE’s Los Angeles, San Francisco, Miami, Chicago, New York City and Boston AORs.

Table 2: DHS-VINE Metrics from January 1, 2018 – March 31, 2018

The heatmap below highlights per month, the number of DHS-VINE website visits, victims who registered for DHS-VINE, and notifications received by registrants via their preferred notification method. The color intensity, light to dark, represents the least to greatest count, respectively, of DHS-VINE events.

Event	January	February	March	Q2 Totals
DHS-VINE Searches	48,548	49,855	55,060	153,463
New Registrants	436	391	410	1,237
Notification Method				
Email	133	113	101	347
Phone	37	37	43	117
SMS	82	91	80	253
Total	252	241	224	717

Note: *DHS-VINE Searches* is the number of website visits. *New Registrants* refers to the number of persons who registered for DHS-VINE. *Notification Method* is how a registrant elected and received their alert from DHS-VINE. *SMS* (short message service) is a standard text message.

In Quarter 2, the VOICE Office saw a steady increase in the number of persons visiting the DHS-VINE website. January had the greatest number of new registrants while February had the least. DHS-VINE sent a total of 717 notifications with the most notifications sent in January (252), followed by February (241), and least amount in March (224). Email was the most popular notification method.

CASE EXAMPLES

The case examples below illustrate the VOICE Office's impact on providing proactive, timely, and professional services to victims and their families of crimes committed by individuals with a nexus to immigration. In certain cases, some details were purposely left out to ensure the privacy of the victim(s).

Overall results of victim engagement included:

- The parent of a murdered victim received DHS-VINE clarification from the VOICE Office;
- VOICE Office referred a victim to direct service providers for domestic violence assistance;
- VOICE Office informed a murdered victim's sibling the alien is awaiting removal from the United States;
- VOICE Office informed a rape victim and their parent the alien has been removed from the United States;
- Victimized family shared story with the VOICE Office to ensure that the alien does not return to the United States;
- VOICE Office provided a sexual assault victim with immigration-related information regarding the alien and facilitated a victim impact statement;
- VOICE Office confirmed alien's removal to sibling whose loved one was murdered by alien; and
- VOICE Office confirmed removal of an alien convicted of DUI to impacted victim.

Case Study #1

The parent of a murdered victim receives DHS-VINE clarification from the VOICE Office.

The parent of a victim murdered by an alien who is serving a life sentence for the homicide called the VOICE Office for clarification of a state VINE notification they had received. The VOICE Office provided an explanation of the notification and informed them that if their registrant data was eligible, their state VINE registration would transfer to the DHS-VINE system once the alien was transferred into ICE custody for further ICE-related custodial updates. The parent was also provided DHS-VINE registrant information. The alien remains in state custody and has an ICE detainer for apprehension by ICE ERO when they are released from state custody.

Case Study #2

VOICE Office referred a victim to direct service providers for domestic violence assistance.

A victim of domestic violence by an alien who had allegedly been convicted of assault and served their prison sentence contacted the VOICE Office to request victim services. The VOICE Office referred the victim to local organizations that provide domestic violence services for further assistance.

Case Study #3

VOICE Office informed a murdered victim's sibling the alien is awaiting removal from the United States.

The sibling of a victim murdered by an alien contacted the VOICE Office to request a custodial status update because of a state VINE notification they received of the alien's release from state custody. The VOICE Office shared releasable information that the alien had been transferred into ICE custody and was awaiting removal. The VOICE Office registered the sibling for DHS-VINE and informed them about the ICE Online Detainee Locator System. The alien was subsequently removed from the United States.

Case Study #4

VOICE Office informed a rape victim and their parent the alien has been removed from the United States.

The parent of a rape victim by an alien convicted of criminal sexual assault called the VOICE Office to obtain information about the alien's immigration status. The parent and victim learned of the alien's pending release following completion of their 65-month state custody sentence. The VOICE Office informed them the alien had an ICE detainer and would be transferred into ICE custody upon completion of their criminal sentence. The parent and victim were later informed the alien had been ordered removed by an immigration judge and was subsequently deported from the United States.

Case Study #5

Victimized family shared story with VOICE Office to help ensure the alien does not return to the United States.

A victim troubled by domestic violence toward their adult child, as well as murder and kidnapping threats towards their family, called the VOICE Office claiming the alien has continued to harass and intimidate their family from outside of the United States. The victim stated they were terrified the alien would return to the U.S. with federal permission to re-enter or attempt to use a fraudulent identity. The VOICE Office was able to provide releasable immigration-related information to help alleviate their fears.

Case Study #6

VOICE Office provided a sexual assault victim with immigration-related information regarding the alien and facilitates victim impact statement.

A victim of sexual assault by an alien called the VOICE Office for releasable immigration-related information. The VOICE Office informed the victim the alien was in ICE custody pending a court hearing before an immigration judge. The VOICE Office facilitated their request to provide an in-person victim impact statement to the immigration judge. The alien was subsequently removed from the United States.

Case Study #7

VOICE Office confirmed alien's removal to sibling whose loved one was murdered by alien.

A victim's sibling murdered more than 40 years ago by an alien called the VOICE Office to request information on the alien's case. The sibling believed the alien was in ICE custody awaiting removal from the United States and they requested to know if the alien was going to be deported. The VOICE Office was able to inform the victim the alien had been removed from the United States.

Case Study #8

VOICE Office confirmed removal of an alien convicted of DUI to impacted victim.

A victim who sustained serious injuries caused by an alien convicted for driving under the influence requested a custody status update from the VOICE Office. The victim stated they had received a state VINE notification of the alien's release from state custody and requested to know if the alien would be apprehended by ICE. The VOICE Office explained the ICE ERO process for ICE detainees and provided releasable case information regarding the alien's custody status. The victim was later informed the alien had been removed from the United States.