



VOICE

VICTIMS OF IMMIGRATION
CRIME ENGAGEMENT



Quarterly Report

Q4 FY 2018

July 1, 2018 – September 30, 2018



U.S. Immigration
and Customs
Enforcement

OVERVIEW

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) protects America from cross-border crime and illegal immigration that threaten national security and public safety. To carry out this mission, ICE focuses on smart immigration enforcement, preventing terrorism, and combating transnational criminal threats. ICE has an annual budget of approximately \$7.5 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 Department of Justice 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 (EO) 13768, *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 VOICE 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), which is 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

EO 13768 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 4 Fiscal Year (FY) 2018: July 1, 2018 – September 30, 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.

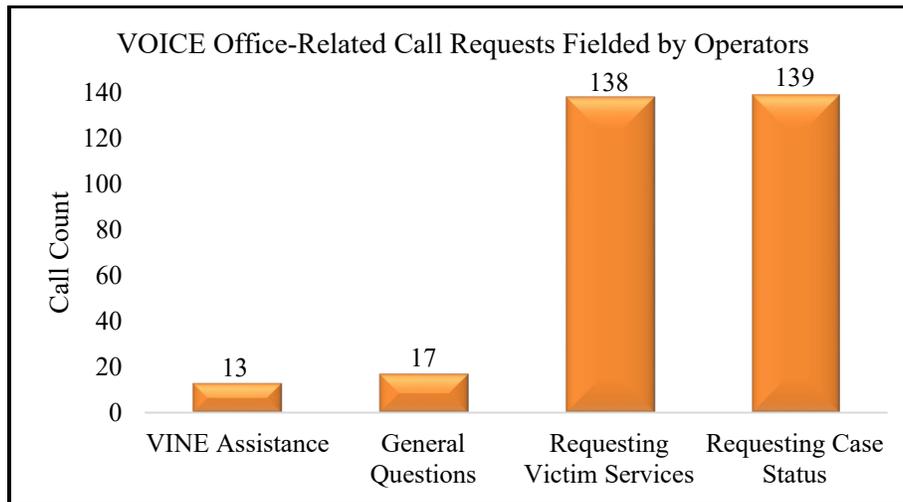
Types of Assistance Offered

- 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 945 calls from July 1 to September 30, 2018. Of all fielded calls, 307 calls pertained to services offered by the VOICE Office and 304 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 307 callers who were 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 July 1, 2018 to September 30, 2018



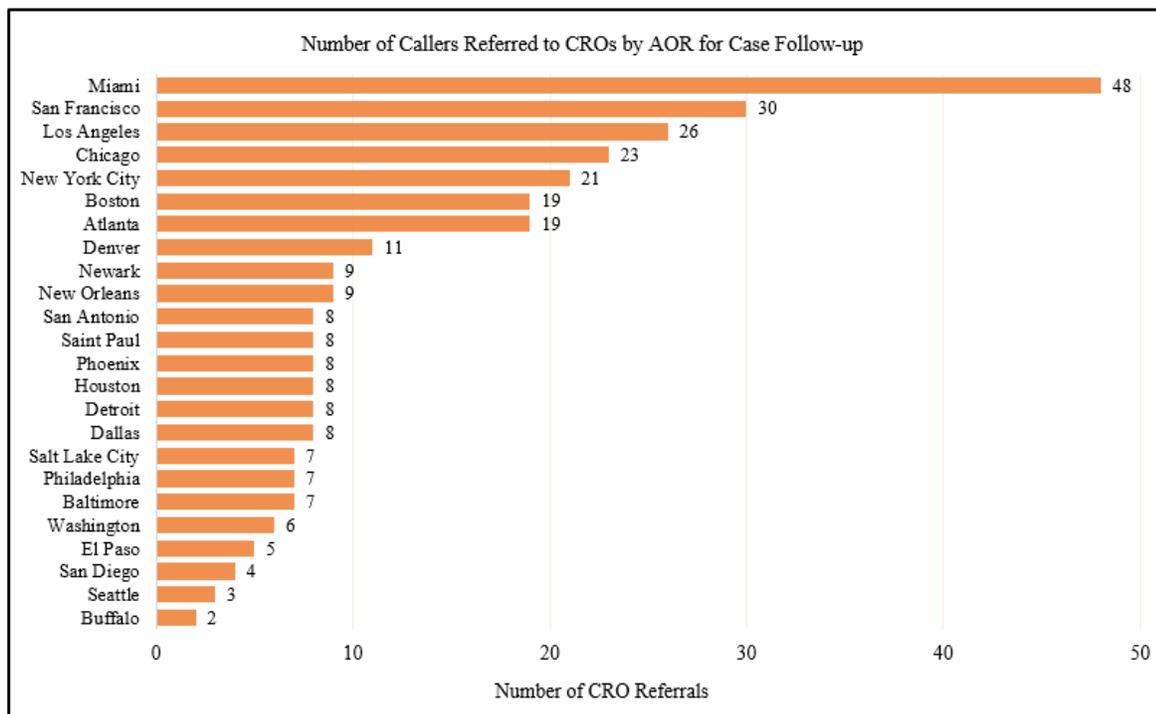
Although Figure 1 suggests 138 individuals requested victim services during the intake call, subsequent contact revealed that 146 individuals requested victim services; however, only 16 victims requested social services and were referred to ICE HSI Victim Assistance Specialists (VASs).

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 custody status 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 VASs. 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 about 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 July 1, 2018 to September 30, 2018

The figure below reflects the 304 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 Miami, San Francisco, Los Angeles, Chicago, and New York City AORs.

Table 2: DHS-VINE Metrics from July 1 to September 30, 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	July	August	September	Q4 Totals
DHS-VINE Searches	57,781	61,347	50,685	169,813
New Registrants	301	368	329	998
Notification Method				
Email	116	127	121	364
Phone	92	96	95	283
SMS	72	77	104	253
Total	280	300	320	900

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.

The DHS-VINE website had the greatest number of searches and new registrants in August, whereas September had the least number of searches, and July had the least number of new registrants. DHS-VINE sent 900 notifications, with the most notifications sent in September (320), followed by August (300), and the least in July (280).

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 removable aliens. In certain cases, some details were purposely left out to ensure the privacy of the victim(s).

Overall results of victim engagement included:

- VOICE Office helped a domestic violence victim register for DHS-VINE and referred them for victim assistance services;
- A marriage fraud victim was referred for victim assistance services;
- The parent of a minor sexual assault victim was informed an ICE detainer was placed on an alien;
- VOICE Office helped an assault victim register for DHS-VINE;
- A sexual assault victim was informed an alien was removed from the United States;
- VOICE Office referred a victim of aggravated assault and theft for victim assistance services;
- The parent of a vehicular manslaughter victim was informed an ICE detainer was placed on an alien;
- VOICE Office informed the parent of a physical assault victim about immigration removal proceedings and helped them register them for DHS-VINE;
- VOICE Office helped a victim of abuse register for DHS-VINE as part of their family’s safety plan;
- A victim whose parent was killed by an alien received assistance registering for DHS-VINE;
- VOICE Office helped the grandparent of a minor sexual assault victim register for DHS-VINE;
- The family member of a murder victim was referred for victim assistance services;
- The parent of an adult murder victim was informed of an alien’s removal from the United States;
- A victim and their family were referred for victim assistance services and informed of an alien’s removal from the United States; and
- VOICE Office informed a murdered victim’s adult child of an alien’s removal from the United States.

Case Study #1

VOICE Office helped a domestic violence victim register for DHS-VINE and referred them for victim assistance services.

A victim advocate representing a domestic violence victim requested further explanation of an alien's case status. The VOICE Office confirmed the alien was in ICE custody awaiting removal proceedings and provided the advocate an explanation of ICE detainers and immigration removal proceedings. The victim received help registering for DHS-VINE and was referred for victim assistance services. The alien was ordered removed by an immigration judge and subsequently deported from the United States.

Case Study #2

A marriage fraud victim was referred for victim assistance services.

A marriage fraud victim requested case information on an alien who had a history of being physically violent towards the victim and their family. The victim shared that they had reported the alien to U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services for benefit fraud and feared retaliation from the alien. The VOICE Office referred the victim for victim assistance services and provided an update on the alien's immigration proceedings.

Case Study #3

The parent of a minor sexual assault victim was informed an ICE detainer was placed on an alien.

The parent of a minor sexual assault victim by an alien convicted of repeated sexual assault against the same child requested an update on an alien's case. The parent asked if the alien would be transferred into ICE custody and removed from the United States upon completion of a 10-year criminal sentence. The VOICE Office confirmed that ICE had placed a detainer on the alien who had been ordered removed by an immigration judge. The alien remains in state custody.

Case Study #4

VOICE Office helped an assault victim register for DHS-VINE.

An assault victim requested updates on an alien's custodial status because of the fear they have for their own and family's safety if the alien was released from ICE custody. The victim had learned of the alien's ICE custody status from local law enforcement. For further updates, the VOICE Office helped the victim register for DHS-VINE. The alien was ordered removed and subsequently deported from the United States.

Case Study #5

A sexual assault victim was informed an alien was removed from the United States.

A sexual assault victim who had received a state VINE notification of an alien's transfer from state custody into ICE custody requested further case information. The VOICE Office confirmed the alien was in removal proceedings and advised that DHS-VINE would send further custodial updates. The alien was ordered removed and subsequently deported from the United States.

Case Study #6

VOICE Office referred a victim of aggravated assault and theft for victim assistance services.

A victim of a knife attack by an alien convicted of aggravated assault with a deadly weapon was referred for victim assistance services and provided state VINE registrant information. The alien was ordered removed by an immigration judge and subsequently deported from the United States.

Case Study #7

The parent of a vehicular manslaughter victim was informed an ICE detainer was placed on an alien.

A fatal hit and run motorcycle accident victim's parent requested an update on an alien's case status. The VOICE Office confirmed that ICE ERO had placed a detainer on the alien, who is serving a criminal sentence for a conviction of vehicular manslaughter with gross negligence.

Case Study #8

VOICE Office informed the parent of a physical assault victim about immigration removal proceedings and helped them register them for DHS-VINE.

The parent of an adult victim of physical assault by an alien requested custody status updates on the alien. The parent expressed concern for the alien's release from ICE custody because the alien had been violent and abusive toward the family. The VOICE Office explained immigration removal proceedings and helped the parent register for DHS-VINE. The alien was ordered removed and subsequently deported from the United States.

Case Study #9

VOICE Office helped a victim of abuse by an ex-spouse register for DHS-VINE as part of their family's safety plan.

A victim of abuse by an ex-spouse requested custodial updates due to the alien's pending release from state custody. The victim and family shared that they had experienced trauma and feared for their lives if they were not informed on the alien's custody status. As part of the family's safety plan, the VOICE Office helped the victim register for DHS-VINE.

Case Study #10

A victim whose parent was killed by an alien received assistance registering for DHS-VINE.

A victim whose parent was killed by an alien requested custody status updates and offered to provide a victim impact statement. The VOICE Office informed them a victim impact statement was not needed as the alien had already been ordered removed. The victim was, however, registered for DHS-VINE to receive further custodial updates.

Case Study #11

VOICE Office helped the grandparent of a minor sexual assault victim register for DHS-VINE.

The grandparent of a minor victim, who was sexually assaulted by an alien convicted of indecency with a child, requested case information after the alien was transferred from state custody into ICE custody. The grandparent also requested to provide a victim impact statement; however, they were informed it was not needed as the alien had already been ordered removed. The VOICE Office helped them register for DHS-VINE and the alien was eventually deported from the United States.

Case Study #12

The family member of a murder victim was referred for victim assistance services.

A murder victim's family member requested case information on an alien who remains in state custody awaiting criminal proceedings. The VOICE Office confirmed the alien had an ICE detainer and referred the family member for victim assistance services.

Case Study #13

The parent of an adult murder victim was informed of an alien's removal from the United States.

The parent of an adult victim killed in a DUI accident caused by an alien requested information on the alien's immigration case. The VOICE Office confirmed that the alien, who was convicted of second-degree reckless murder and several other offenses related to the DUI accident, was deported from the United States.

Case Study #14

A victim and their family were referred for victim assistance services and informed of an alien's removal from the United States.

A victim of a DUI accident requested victim assistance services. The victim shared that their family members, including a minor child, became unconscious upon impact in the accident that severely damaged their vehicle. The VOICE Office referred the victim for victim assistance services and confirmed that the alien was deported from the United States.

Case Study #15

VOICE Office informed a murdered victim's adult child of an alien's removal from the United States.

The adult child of a victim killed by an alien requested to know if the alien would be removed from the United States. The victim's child shared that the alien would be released from state custody and paroled after serving a 25-year criminal sentence for a conviction of murder in the 2nd degree. The victim's child feared the alien's release from state custody because of the proximity that would put the alien to the family's home. The VOICE Office confirmed the ICE detainer and subsequently advised that the alien was transferred into ICE custody. The VOICE Office also helped the victim's child register for DHS-VINE and eventually informed them of the alien's removal from the United States.