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MID-YEAR REPORT: U.S. ATTORNEY'S OFFICE IN CHICAGO DRAMATICALLY INCREASES FEDERAL VIOLENT CRIME AND OTHER PROSECUTIONS WHILE IMPLEMENTING NUMEROUS SIGNIFICANT POLICY INITIATIVES AND REFORMS

CHICAGO — The United States Attorney's Office in Chicago continues to increase its federal caseload to tackle violent crime, national security threats, narcoterrorism, child exploitation, fraud, corruption, cybercrime, and other serious federal criminal offenses, while implementing numerous first-of-their-kind policy initiatives that have unified the District's federal law enforcement apparatus to better serve the people, Andrew S. Boutros, United States Attorney for the Northern District of Illinois, said today as part of the Office's first-ever "Mid-Year Report." The Northern District of Illinois is the third largest federal judicial district in the country, encompassing a population of approximately 9.3 million people across 18 counties.

"Since becoming the United States Attorney on April 7, 2025, I have made the federal fight against violence my marquee priority. In doing so, my team and I have worked tirelessly and relentlessly to keep the citizens of the Northern District of Illinois safe," said U.S. Attorney Boutros. "I have also reimagined how the federal government can play a larger and more impactful role in tackling the persistent scourge of violence in Chicago. That has required me to think outside the box to propose novel strategies that offer pioneering federal solutions to Chicago's intractable violence problem. In doing so, the goal has been singular: to use a whole-of-federal-government approach to attack violent crime at the speed of violence. By moving with speed, purpose, impact, effectiveness, and accuracy, the Northern District of Illinois's federal anti-violence apparatus is delivering relief to the people, who have suffered for too long because of Chicagoland's difficult relationship with violence."

"As we look back on the first half of 2026, I can report that the Chicago U.S. Attorney's Office continues to significantly increase its violent crime prosecutions across the board, while vigorously enforcing all other federal priorities," U.S. Attorney Boutros added. "To be sure, a lot more work still needs to be done, but it is clear that our bold strategies and policies are delivering exactly what the public wants and deserves: real, measurable reductions in violent crime and a renewed focus on holding lawbreakers accountable across the entire portfolio of criminal cases we prosecute. Although we are immensely proud of what we have achieved in 2026, our work is far from done, and we are already busy planning our next initiatives and operations to close out the second half of the year."

Significant Surge in Office Productivity and Other Key Statistical Measures. In the first six months of 2026, federal criminal indictments across all program areas in the Northern District of Illinois were up 82% compared to the same period in 2024—the baseline timeframe immediately preceding U.S. Attorney Boutros being sworn into office. The number of defendants charged overall in the first six months of 2026 increased 81% compared to the same period in 2024. Notably, these marked improvements were achieved with substantially fewer federal prosecutors on staff than in 2024, demonstrating a profound increase in productivity and operational efficiency.

The statistics are particularly notable when comparing year-to-date figures from 2024 to 2026 in specific anti-violence program areas, including a 154% increase in firearms charges, a 78% increase in Project Safe Neighborhood gun cases, a 50% increase in sex crime prosecutions, a 24% increase in narcotics cases, and an almost 300% surge in criminal immigration cases, such as illegal re-entry into the United States. In addition, the Office is on track to achieve a projected 433% increase in firearms charges originating from ATF Chicago's Crime Gun Intelligence Center (CGIC) for full-year 2026 compared to 2024, if the current year-to-date pace holds. Furthermore, in the white-collar portfolio, U.S. Attorney Boutros has overseen the charging of approximately $2.135 billion in alleged healthcare fraud losses in the District since taking office.

"Operation New Dawn" Delivers Extraordinary Results. The sharp increase in violent crime prosecutions in the first half of 2026 was perhaps best exemplified in the tremendous success of Operation New Dawn, U.S. Attorney Boutros's anti-violence initiative that began in the spring and concluded on July 1, 2026. Launched in special recognition of our nation's 250th anniversary, this historic, multi-agency initiative marked the first "badgeless" operation in the District. Operation New Dawn resulted in 484 total arrests, including 179 newly charged defendants across 140 newly filed cases, the apprehension of 305 violent fugitives, and the recovery of 24 children, many of whom had been abducted. Operation New Dawn was described as "badgeless" because multiple federal agencies came together and integrated under the banner of the United States flag as opposed to the shield of any one agency.

U.S. Attorney Boutros constructed Operation New Dawn using an innovative federal law enforcement approach to fighting violent crime that represented a first for the Northern District of Illinois: eleven federal agencies worked arm-in-arm as one cohesive, unified partnership to arrest dangerous criminals responsible for serious offenses, including armed robbery, kidnapping, kidnapping resulting in death, firearms trafficking, firearm offenses, drug trafficking, immigration violations, child exploitation, and various other federal violent crimes. During Operation New Dawn, federal law enforcement engaged in rapid, targeted, and responsive interventions that interrupted violence in real time.

"It is my view that to combat violence, federal law enforcement must move at the speed of violence," said U.S. Attorney Boutros. "The remarkable results of Operation New Dawn resoundingly proved that point. Recognizing that crime doesn't stop or operate at business hours, federal prosecutors, agents, Office and agency leaders, and others, worked many long days, nights, weekends, and holidays to make New Dawn a success. I couldn't be prouder of the work of our Assistant U.S. Attorneys—many of whom joined our ranks within the past year-plus—and our law enforcement partners, some of whom literally endured violent attacks and attempted robberies by criminals who apparently didn't get the message that we are in a new era of federal crime fighting in Chicago. Combatting violent crime remains among the federal government's highest priorities both for this Office and our law enforcement partners across Chicagoland."

U.S. Attorney and ATF Special Agent in Charge Pen Op-Ed Offering New Model to Disrupt Violence in Chicago. U.S. Attorney Boutros outlined his anti-violence framework for

Operation New Dawn in an April full-page Chicago Tribune Op-Ed he co-authored with ATF Chicago Special Agent in Charge Christopher Amon. In the Op-Ed, U.S. Attorney Boutros and Special Agent in Charge Amon discussed violence in Chicago and how they intended to use federal tools to disrupt it. The Op-Ed stated, "What is needed is clear deterrence and accountability through immediate arrest, detention and prosecution of worthy targets. Arresting and federally charging a dangerous felon in possession of a firearm before he shoots someone are far more effective—and decent—actions than prosecuting that defendant for murder after he has already killed somebody."

U.S. Attorney Innovates Across Federal Program Areas and Responds to Challenges. Operation New Dawn was just one of many successful initiatives, strategies, and responses launched by U.S. Attorney Boutros in the first six months of this year. Some of the others include:

- Individual Self-Disclosure Program. In May, U.S. Attorney Boutros announced the formation of a first-of-its kind Program that both encourages and incentivizes individuals to voluntarily report and/or self-report criminal wrongdoing for non-violent offenses and fully cooperate with the government in its investigation and any subsequent prosecution of other offenders. Under the Program, those who fully and voluntarily self-report criminal wrongdoing that is previously unknown to the government will have the opportunity to secure one of three tiers of potential benefits: (1) letter immunity; (2) a deferred or non-prosecution agreement; or (3) criminal prosecution with substantial sentencing relief. Drawing upon more than 25 years' experience in the criminal law field, including nearly ten years as a practice leader in private white-collar defense, nearly eight years as a federal prosecutor in Chicago handling sophisticated white-collar prosecutions, and 16 years of teaching criminal law at the University of Chicago Law School, U.S. Attorney Boutros created this ground-breaking Program to provide greater certainty and transparent, equal-access to individuals and their counsel as to what they can expect in exchange for their full, truthful, and complete reporting of criminal wrongdoing and subsequent cooperation.

- "Davos in Chicago." In May, U.S. Attorney Boutros assembled the highest law enforcement leadership from the entire federal apparatus in the Chicago region for the Chicago-Area Federal Agency Leadership Summit, a first-of-its-kind conference to discuss collaborative efforts to oversee important federal enforcement priorities and execute systemic solutions. The most senior leaders from more than 40 federal agencies operating in the Chicagoland region participated in the summit, as did nine U.S. Attorneys from the Seventh Circuit (Illinois, Indiana, and Wisconsin) and other federal districts, alongside the Head of the Department of Justice's Trade Fraud Task Force. The day-long summit was informally dubbed "Davos in Chicago" because it drew comparisons to the World Economic Forum's Annual Meeting, which brings together world leaders and top businesspersons for a renowned conference each January in Davos, Switzerland. Davos in Chicago laid the foundation for the extraordinary success of Operation New Dawn and continues to lay the groundwork for additional initiatives and operations that are in the pipeline.

- Grand Jury Reforms and Phase I and II Remediation Plans. In May, after learning of grand jury irregularities in one of the Office's cases, U.S. Attorney Boutros promptly conducted a root-cause review of those and related issues. Thereafter, he formulated and implemented comprehensive and sweeping reforms and process improvements to the Office's grand jury policies and practices as well as to the treatment of grand jury materials for discovery purposes. This initiative, designated as the **Phase I Remediation Plan**, went into effect immediately and is a best-in-class program to ensure the integrity of our criminal prosecutions. In addition to requiring extensive Criminal Division-wide training by Department of Justice experts from outside the District, these systemic reforms and process improvements were designed to address root-cause issues, create bright-line rules that remove discretion and judgment calls from Assistant U.S. Attorneys, and streamline and simplify the decision-making and disclosure processes for grand jury materials. The instituted changes were created with the purpose of being deeply curative and to put to rest once and for all any divergent practices that may have existed across the U.S. Attorney's Office, including from one Assistant U.S. Attorney to another as well as from one generation to the next. Furthermore, in June 2026, U.S. Attorney Boutros sought and obtained court permission to issue a rare Special Report Regarding Federal Grand Jury Appearances that brought unprecedented clarity and transparency regarding his role as the District's Chief Legal Advisor to all federal grand juries, especially during the tumultuous time of Operation Midway Blitz, the largest ever enforcement surge in the history of the Northern District of Illinois.

  U.S. Attorney Boutros also has formulated a comprehensive **Phase II Remediation Plan** that is actively underway. Phase II includes the review of a large volume of grand jury minutes for pending criminal cases charged by indictment and currently at the pre-trial phase, as well as certain other grand jury minutes from adjudicated cases, including some cases going back to 2007. U.S. Attorney Boutros authorized this Phase II Remediation Plan to (i) ensure the absence of grand jury irregularities in the cases charged by indictment by the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Northern District of Illinois; (ii) to address the judiciary's, defense bar's, and public's concerns regarding the grand jury practices and proceedings of the District given the discovery of grand jury irregularities in various cases charged by indictment going back years; and (iii) ensure that Assistant U.S. Attorneys who have appeared before the grand jury in the Northern District of Illinois during the relevant time frame and/or as otherwise being defined, have acted in accordance with law and consistent with the highest ethical standards demanded of those who represent the United States and the people of this District. In the face of the substantial time, effort, and resources that have been required for these various studies, reviews, projects, and reform implementations, U.S. Attorney Boutros has been both unwavering and laser-focused on addressing these legacy institutional challenges, implementing root-cause reforms that dramatically reduce the likelihood of these same errors reoccurring, and continuing to deliver historic results in the Office's core mission work.

- Trade Fraud Task Force. In February, U.S. Attorney Boutros announced that the Department of Justice had selected the U.S. Attorney's Office in Chicago to be the lead prosecutorial partner on the Trade Fraud Task Force launched in August 2025, which brings robust enforcement against importers, purchasers, supply chain actors, and other parties who commit trade, customs, forced labor, and other adjacent federal crimes. When U.S. Attorney Boutros served as an Assistant U.S. Attorney in Chicago from 2008 to 2015, he led what still stand as the Department of Justice's largest-ever criminal trade fraud prosecutions, spanning 27 corporate and individual defendants across multiple indictments, with losses totaling approximately $260 million. Those cases provide valuable insight into how the Trade Fraud Task Force will build future criminal prosecutions.

  This month, at a press conference in Chicago attended by national leadership of the Department of Justice, Department of Homeland Security, and other law enforcement partners, the Department of Justice announced that the Trade Fraud Task Force has surpassed $1 billion in civil and criminal recoveries, penalties, forfeitures, and publicly charged losses in less than one year. The Northern District of Illinois was selected as the site of this historic press event because of the District's expansive venue and U.S. Attorney Boutros's decades of experience in handling cases in this space, and because "the key roads for trade fraud enforcement lead from, to, and through Chicago past, present, and future," as U.S. Attorney Boutros stated in his press comments.

- Resource Guide to Trade Fraud Enforcement. In July, the Department of Justice and Department of Homeland Security released a trade fraud enforcement Resource Guide (the "Guide"), which U.S. Attorney Boutros was instrumental in developing with DOJ and HSI leadership and other team members. As the first joint comprehensive framework of its kind, the Guide is a historic and seminal roadmap for cross-border compliance and enforcement priorities. The Guide provides critical information to enterprises of all sizes and addresses a wide variety of topics, including who and what is covered by customs regulations and anti-trade fraud laws and the different types of civil and criminal resolutions available in trade fraud enforcement. On these and other topics, the Guide takes a multi-faceted approach toward setting forth the statutory and regulatory requirements and providing insights into the enforcement practices of the DOJ and DHS.

U.S. Attorney Boutros Appointed to Attorney General's Advisory Committee and Thereafter Selected to Co-Chair Two AGAC Sub-Committees and to Serve on a Third Sub-Committee. In May, Acting Attorney General Todd Blanche selected U.S. Attorney Boutros to serve on the Attorney General's Advisory Committee ("AGAC"), a select and prestigious body of United States Attorneys chosen by the Acting Attorney General to advise Department of Justice leadership on national law enforcement priorities. Created in 1973, the AGAC is comprised of an exclusive group of 18 United States Attorneys and is designed to ensure broad geographic, operational, and subject-matter representation. Members work through Subcommittees and working groups on issues including violent crime, national security, fraud, narcoterrorism, and other critical priorities as set by the President of the United States. The Committee plays a central role in ensuring that the experience of federal prosecutors in the field informs national Department of Justice strategy.

Thereafter, in July, U.S. Attorney Boutros was appointed to Co-Chair two critical AGAC Subcommittees: (1) Artificial Intelligence and (2) White Collar, Cyber, and Crypto Crime, in addition to being appointed on a third Subcommittee, namely, (3) Counterespionage & Research Security (CRS). As U.S. Attorney Boutros stated when he learned of his various appointments, "I am deeply grateful to General Todd Blanche for giving me the opportunity to Co-Chair two cutting-edge AGAC Subcommittees. I am confident that the Subcommittees on Artificial Intelligence as well as White Collar, Cyber, and Crypto will have a strong, positive impact on these various areas at the local, regional, and national level. Our work will very much focus on innovation as well as ways to maximize effectiveness, accuracy, productivity, and efficiency. Just look at the Department of Justice's exceptional work on the Trade Fraud Task Force, for example; through our work on the AGAC we'll be able to bring even more awareness and support to that top enforcement priority. Similarly, artificial intelligence is a revolutionary, generational tool that dramatically impacts all performance metrics. Working through the AGAC, our Subcommittee will study and recommend ways the Department can harness the power and versatility of artificial intelligence in a responsible, thoughtful, and effective way." The CRS Subcommittee will focus on foreign bad actors who are infiltrating our research institutions, includinfg colleges, universities, and corporations, to commit espionage, steal trade secrets and proprietary data, and bypass sanctions.

U.S. Attorney's Office in Middle of Enormous Hiring Spree. Much of the success in increasing the Office's caseload and executing the Office's strategies is due to the steady hand of the more experienced federal prosecutors and freshly-installed supervisors who carry enormous responsibilities as well as the many Assistant U.S. Attorneys that U.S. Attorney Boutros has hired for the Office from federal, state, and local prosecuting offices; other federal agencies; private practice; and federal clerkships that included prior work experience. In his 15 months as United States Attorney, U.S. Attorney Boutros has hired approximately 40 Assistant U.S. Attorneys in the Criminal and Civil Divisions, both in Chicago and Rockford, many of whom many have deep experience, including trial experience, handling significant cases in federal and state courts around the country. Nine of those 40 have received offers and are in the process of joining the Office in the coming months. Federal, state, and local prosecutors have joined the Office from Main Justice as well as prosecuting offices in Arizona, California, Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Missouri, New Jersey, New York, and Washington, D.C. The newly hired Assistant U.S. Attorneys bring a depth of knowledge and a wealth of experience that has enabled them to be immediately impactful in the Northern District of Illinois. Last year, U.S. Attorney Boutros completely redesigned the Office's hiring process, which included him taking on a substantially more active role in the hiring of Assistant United States Attorneys. The result of those reforms and substantial efforts is that the U.S. Attorney's Office is now hiring more applicants with diverse backgrounds and skillsets from across the country to the great benefit of the people of the Northern District of Illinois.

U.S. Attorney Creates Important, New eLitigation Position. In close consultation with senior colleagues in the U.S. Attorney's Office who had been advocating for an eLitigation position for many years, for the first time in the Office, U.S. Attorney Boutros established an eLitigation Assistant United States Attorney position. The newly created eLitigation AUSA role is one of only a few across U.S. Attorneys' Offices community and was established to create a dedicated role for the development of the Office's eLitigation systems, controls, operations, policies, and protocols in the eLitigation space. It also will prove critical for allowing the Office to stay up to date on new emerging technologies, such as Artificial Intelligence, that when fully deployed, will revolutionize the everyday work of our Assistant United States Attorneys, including their impact and effectiveness as well as the efficiency with which they tackle our mission work.

Unified Federal Partners in the Northern District of Illinois. The U.S. Attorney's Office works closely with U.S. law enforcement agencies, including the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives (ATF), Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Homeland Security Investigations (HSI), Postal Inspection Service (USPIS), Internal Revenue Service Criminal Investigation (IRS-CI), and U.S. Marshals Service (USMS), various federal Offices of Inspector Generals, among many others, to investigate and prosecute federal crimes. State and local partners in this effort include the Chicago Police Department, Illinois State Police, Cook County State's Attorney's Office, Cook County Sheriff's Office, Rockford Police Department, and many other police departments and prosecutors' offices throughout northern Illinois.

Examples of the many significant cases prosecuted by the Chicago U.S. Attorney's Office in the first six months of 2026 are featured below:

National Security / Terrorism

Man Arrested in Connection With Planned Violent Attack at Ultimate Fighting Championship Event at White House

Alex Mercado was charged as an alleged administrator and member of Signal messaging groups that included members who appeared to communicate with others regarding the planning of a violent attack targeting the UFC event at the White House. "The investigation in this case involved serious threats to public safety, including the safety of President Donald J. Trump, the 45th and 47th President of the United States of America," said U.S. Attorney Boutros.

Man Sentenced to More Than Three Years for Threatening To Kill President Donald J. Trump

Trent Schneider was sentenced following federal charges that he posted a video of himself stating that he would kill President Donald J. Trump, the 47th and 45th President of the United States. "As I have repeatedly stated since becoming U.S. Attorney, threats against public officials are an attack on our democracy and must be met with swift and serious consequences," said U.S. Attorney Boutros.

Suburban Chicago Man Charged With Sending Threatening Letters to Two Federal Judges

James Lebuhn charged with mailing threatening letters to federal judges in Amarillo, Texas, and Fort Pierce, Fla. "The Chicago U.S. Attorney's Office is committed to holding accountable anyone who seeks to intimidate and instill fear in members of the federal government, including the esteemed public servants on the bench," said U.S. Attorney Boutros.

Man Sentenced to Five Years in Prison for Setting Fire to Two Rockford Churches

Marzavious Thomas was sentenced to five years in federal prison for setting fires at Bethesda Covenant Church and Crosspoint Church, causing a combined damage of more than $35,000.

Chicago Man Charged With Threatening To "Shoot Up" a Jewish Synagogue

Timothy Holmes was charged for transmitting a threat over interstate commerce after allegedly posting the threat on his X account. "Anti-Semitism has no place in our society," said U.S. Attorney Boutros. "The U.S. Attorney's Office in Chicago is using all available legal tools to combat criminal conduct that rears its head in hateful anti-Semitism."

Chicago Man Charged With Threatening To "Shoot Up" United States Secret Service Office

Michael Kovco allegedly transmitted threats via the official White House website targeting a Secret Service field facility. "Under my watch, political violence will be dealt with as the serious federal crime that it is," said U.S. Attorney Boutros.

Alleged Member of Criminal Cyber Hacking Group "Scattered Spider" Arrested in Finland and Extradited to United States

Peter Stokes was allegedly a member of Scattered Spider, a group of criminal cyber actors that has been involved with more than 100 network intrusions, resulting in more than approximately $100 million in ransom payments and millions of dollars in damages to the victims.

Chicago Man Sentenced to 25 Years in Prison for Conspiring to Provide Material Support to ISIS

Ashraf Al Safoo was sentenced to 25 years in federal prison for his leadership role in the Khattab Media Foundation, a sophisticated online organization that swore allegiance to ISIS and created and disseminated threats and ISIS propaganda on social media.

Chinese Telecommunications Company Fined $50 Million for Conspiring To Steal Technology From Motorola Solutions

Hytera Communications Corp. Ltd. recruited Motorola employees and directed them to take proprietary and trade secret information without authorization, including information Motorola had developed through years of research and design. Hytera pleaded guilty in the Northern District of Illinois to a federal charge of conspiracy to steal trade secrets.

Drug Trafficking / Cartels / Transnational Criminal Organizations

Eight Illegal Alien Tren De Aragua Members From Venezuela Charged With Kidnappings That Resulted in Death, Racketeering Involving Murder, and Other Violent Offenses in Texas and Illinois Following Homeland Security Task Force Investigations

Three alleged members of the Tren de Aragua (TdA) transnational criminal organization were charged in Chicago with conspiring to kidnap a man who was walking near Meyering Park on the city's South Side, an offense that allegedly resulted in the victim's murder inside an abandoned building. Five other alleged TdA members were indicted on separate offenses in the Northern District of Texas as part of a coordinated Homeland Security Task Force operation.

[Alleged Boss of Violent Sinaloa Cartel Indicted in Chicago on Drug, Firearm, and Material Support of Terrorism Charges]

Jesus Omar Ibarra Felix, also known as "El Chuta," allegedly led an armed security group known as the Las Fuerzas Especiales de Chuta (FECH), which engaged in armed conflict on behalf of the Guzman faction of the Sinaloa Cartel, a U.S. designated foreign terrorist organization previously headed by Joaquin Guzman Loera, also known as "El Chapo." Ibarra Felix's group allegedly provided armed security in support of Guzman Loera's four sons, collectively known as "the Chapitos," who took over leadership of the Sinaloa Cartel after Guzman Loera's arrest in 2016.

[Man Sentenced to More Than 26 Years in Prison for Using the Dark Web To Distribute Narcotics]

Darren Hughes operated a vendor store on the Nemesis Market, one of the world's largest dark web marketplaces. In a three-year period, Nemesis Market processed more than 400,000 orders, including more than 55,000 orders for stimulants, including meth, cocaine, crack cocaine, and other controlled substances, and 17,000 orders for opioids, including fentanyl, heroin, and oxycodone.

[Co-Creator of Dark Web Marketplace Pleads Guilty in Chicago to Drug Conspiracy Charge]

Raheim Hamilton operated Empire Market—one of the largest dark web marketplaces of its kind at the time. The online market facilitated more than four million transactions between vendors and buyers valued at more than $430 million. The illegal products and services available on the site included controlled substances, compromised or stolen account credentials, stolen personally identifying information, counterfeit currency, and computer-hacking tools.

[Chicago Man Sentenced to Nine Years in Prison for Selling Heroin and Cocaine on the Dark Web]

Tommy Spaulding sold large amounts of drugs on dark-web vendor stores known as AVALANCHE and ETHER_MART. Spaulding managed the vendor stores' finances, including distributing money to others to purchase the drugs and helping to operate the stores. Four other defendants were convicted as part of this investigation.

[Man Who Transported $9 Million in Illicit Cash Proceeds for Mexico-Based Drug Trafficking Organization Sentenced to Six Years in Federal Prison]

Ricardo Tello transported bulk cash proceeds for Mexico-based traffickers who distributed cocaine to U.S. cities. Tello also used his logistics company to support the drug traffickers by exporting nearly 50 loads of plastic sheeting that had been used to smuggle at least 450 kilograms of cocaine into the United States.

Violent Crime / Firearms

[Eight Defendants Charged as Part of Federal Investigation Into Violent Home Invasion in Winnetka, Ill.]

The eight defendants are charged with conspiracy to commit robbery and kidnapping in connection with the alleged home invasion, which occurred on the afternoon of March 8, 2026. Some of the defendants forcibly entered the home, kept an individual in the residence captive for approximately an hour, and used firearms to physically restrain the victim. All eight defendants have been ordered to remain detained in federal custody without bond.

[U.S. Attorney's Office Charges Man With Illegally Possessing Loaded Firearm in Downtown Chicago Federal Courthouse]

James Lake allegedly illegally possessed a loaded gun in the Dirksen Federal Building in Chicago. An inspector with the U.S. Marshals Service took Lake into custody and seized the gun.

[Suburban Chicago Man Charged With Robbing Undercover Federal Task Force Officer]

Marcus Lewis and a juvenile allegedly beat a federal task force officer with a firearm and robbed the officer of $10,000 in government funds that the officer planned to use to purchase cocaine from the pair. "FBI task force officers and agents are first responders in the fight against violent crime in our neighborhoods and communities," said U.S. Attorney Boutros. "The dangerous and brave work they do requires them to put their lives on the line every day. We all owe our law enforcement agents and task force officers a debt of gratitude for their dedication to the mission and their commitment to public safety."

[Chicago Man Convicted of Plotting To Kill Two Witnesses in Cousin's Murder Trial]

Chris Yates sought the killings of two individuals he believed would testify against his cousin, who was set to go to trial in Cook County for allegedly fatally shooting a woman in 2020. Yates was arrested before the killings could be carried out.

[Federal Judge Sentences Man to Eight Years in Prison for Robbing U.S. Postal Service Carrier in Chicago]

The carrier was delivering mail when Henry Moorer approached on foot and demanded postal property. Moorer then pulled a semiautomatic handgun from the pocket of his sweatshirt and displayed the butt of the firearm before grabbing the property from the carrier.

[Rockford Man Sentenced to More Than Six and a Half Years in Federal Prison for Robbing a United States Post Office With a Firearm]

Anthony Johnson walked approximately one block from his residence in Rockford to the Post Office, where he reached for a firearm in his waistband and told the clerk to give him all the money in the cash register. "The U.S. Postal Service serves a critically important government function, and its employees must be allowed to perform their duties for the American people safely and securely," said U.S. Attorney Boutros. "Under my leadership, the U.S. Attorney's Office will continue to prioritize cases that involve threats, violence, and intimidation against federal officials."

[Man Sentenced to Three Years in Federal Prison for Illegally Possessing Loaded Handgun on Chicago Train and Doing So While on Court-Ordered Supervised Release]

Gerald Pittman was arrested aboard the Chicago Transit Authority's Blue Line train while possessing a loaded gun. Pittman had previously been convicted of multiple felony offenses and was legally prohibited from possessing a firearm. One of Pittman's prior felonies was a federal drug trafficking conviction, for which Pittman was on court-supervised released at the time of his arrest on the Blue Line. Shortly before Pittman's arrest and federal prosecution, U.S. Attorney Boutros [expanded] the Project Safe Neighborhoods program to include the economic centers in downtown Chicago and the entire rail system operated by the CTA, including all train lines operating in every neighborhood from every part of the city. The expansion represented the first time anywhere in the country that the PSN program was deployed on mass transit and the first time in Chicago that the city's downtown economic corridors were given the federal PSN designation.

[Man Sentenced to More Than Four Years in Prison for Illegally Possessing Firearms and Injuring Law Enforcement Agent During Arrest Attempt]

Andrew Vesely illegally possessed two guns and injured a DEA agent who was attempting to arrest him. "As I have repeatedly stated since becoming United States Attorney, criminal attacks on law enforcement constitute a direct assault on the rule of law as well as our justice system and will be met with swift, firm, and unequivocal legal consequences," said U.S. Attorney Boutros.

Federal Grand Jury in Chicago Returns Indictment Against Operation Midway Blitz Defendant for Alleged Vehicle-Ramming Attack on Federal Immigration Agent

Diego Emmanuel Reyes allegedly rammed his sport utility vehicle into the rear of a vehicle driven by the ICE agent, who was engaged in the performance of his official duties on the Southwest Side of Chicago, and upon doing so, accelerated his SUV forward pushing the agent's vehicle. "What this defendant did on October 4, 2025, in Chicago, Illinois, during Operation Midway Blitz was a dangerous and brazen act of violence against a federal agent as well as an attack on the rule of law," said U.S. Attorney Boutros. "Federal agents perform risky, essential work every single day to enforce our federal laws and keep our communities safe. The Chicago U.S. Attorney's Office will never tolerate such conduct and will continue to hold accountable those who seek to assault, impede, intimidate, or interfere with lawful federal operations."

Illegal Alien Sentenced to a Year in Prison for Feloniously Assaulting Law Enforcement Officers During Arrest

Francisco Javier Acevedo-Caldera, who had recently been bonded out of the Kane County Jail, resisted ICE officers who attempted to arrest him. Acevedo-Caldera kicked one of the officers, head-butted the other officer, and then bit a Kane County Sheriff's Deputy who offered to help, puncturing the Deputy's skin.

Illegal Alien Who Fired Shots Near Border Agents During Operation Midway Blitz in Chicago Pleads Guilty to Federal Firearm Charge

Hector Gomez fired at least two shots in proximity of Border Patrol agents on Nov. 8, 2025. Gomez had previously been convicted of a felony firearm offense in state court and was prohibited under federal law from possessing a gun.

Man Who Committed Two Chicago Carjackings Sentenced to 17 Years in Prison

Edmond Singleton and two co-defendants conspired to commit a pair of carjackings on a single night of violence.

Man Sentenced to 14 and a Half Years in Prison for Carjacking Vehicle at Gunpoint in Backyard of Chicago Residence

Damarri Conner carjacked a vehicle in the backyard of a home in Chicago's Beverly neighborhood. A woman and her daughter had just returned home in another vehicle when Conner and co-defendant Kenneth Merritt sprang from a hiding place and attacked them. Merritt is awaiting sentencing.

Suburban Chicago Man Sentenced to 16 Years in Prison for Trafficking Firearms and Drugs

Efrain Jacobo sold seven firearms in a series of transactions in Joliet, Ill. Unbeknownst to Jacobo, the buyers were undercover law enforcement officers.

Federal Law Enforcement Seizes 22 Firearms and Multiple Kilograms of Narcotics From Chicago Storage Unit; Alleged Drug Trafficker Arrested

Mario Neustadter allegedly sold fentanyl and meth to an undercover law enforcement officer. Law enforcement conducted a court-authorized search of Neustadter's storage unit on the day of his arrest and discovered 22 firearms.

Federal Indictment Charges Reputed Chicago Gang Member With Illegally Possessing Firearms

Alexander Martinez-Quiroz recorded himself firing shots into the air from a handgun. While firing the shots, Martinez-Quiroz allegedly called out that he is a member of a certain street gang.

Federal Law Enforcement Seizes Eleven Firearms, Ammunition, and Twenty Machine Gun Conversion Devices From Chicago Residence; Two Suspected Gang Members Arrested

Law enforcement conducted a court-authorized search of two alleged gang members' residence in Chicago and discovered a short-barrel rifle, ten handguns, 20 machine gun conversion devices, assorted ammunition, and firearm accessories.

Child Exploitation / Human Trafficking

Stephenson County, Ill. Man Sentenced to 150 Years in Prison for Sexually Exploiting Children

Matthew Kaufman enticed multiple children to engage in sexually explicit conduct and recorded it.

Suburban Chicago Man Sentenced to 48 Years in Prison for Sexually Exploiting a Minor

Tercalo Thomas enticed a prepubescent minor to engage in illegal sexual conduct, which he recorded. Thomas then trafficked the images as barter to amass a vast collection of images of other children's sexual abuse.

Suburban Chicago Man Sentenced to 37 Years in Prison for Sexually Exploiting Nearly 100 Children

Shaun Healy used Snapchat to contact and persuade young girls to create and send him sexually explicit images and videos of themselves. Healy often posed as a young girl himself to gain his victims' trust and induce them to produce the sexually abusive material.

Man Sentenced to More Than 33 Years in Prison for Operating Online Chat Group That Shared Child Pornography

Christopher Martin operated and led a group chat on the instant-messaging mobile application Kik. Martin moderated the chat and enforced the rules, the primary rule being that if members wanted to stay in the group, they had to constantly share photos and videos of child pornography.

Violent Sex Trafficker Sentenced to 28 Years in Federal Prison

Dennis Williams trafficked five young victims, including a 15-year-old girl. Williams also caused a 17-year-old girl, whom he also assaulted repeatedly, to assist him in trafficking the victims.

Chicago Man Sentenced to 24 Years in Prison for Producing Child Pornography

Denikos Hawkins induced two children to engage in sexual acts with him. When one of the victims stopped responding to Hawkins on Instagram, he threatened to send the videos of her to her school and to "everyone" she knew.

Man Convicted of Sex Trafficking a Minor in Chicago Suburb

Kennard Cameron recruited and enticed a 15-year-old girl to engage in commercial sex acts in a motel in Lansing, Ill.

Chicago Man Charged With Transporting Child Pornography on Flight to Mexico

Thomas Neal allegedly possessed images and videos of child pornography on his cell phone when he flew from Chicago to Mexico City. At the time of his arrest, Neal was employed as a teacher at a high school in the Northern District of Illinois.

Trade Fraud / Financial Fraud / Other Fraud

Trade Fraud Task Force Surpasses $1 Billion in Recoveries and Charged Losses in Less Than One Year

The Trade Fraud Task Force (TFTF) selected the Chicago U.S. Attorney's Office as its lead prosecutorial partner. Two Chicago cases contributed to the TFTF surpassing the $1 billion milestone in enforced trade fraud matters in less than a year. As alleged, Raj Kohli and Veena Kohli's California-based company, together with foreign manufacturers and other U.S. entities, imported and brought into the United States approximately 563 separate entries of gold jewelry that were falsely declared as having been manufactured in Singapore and in doing so avoided paying customs duties of between 5.5% and 5.8% of the declared value of the imported gold jewelry. According to court documents, the gold jewelry from the Kohlis' criminal prosecution had an estimated total value of more than approximately $693 million, thus causing the avoidance of more than approximately $38 million in United States customs duties.

Separately, Narain Gulabani, who owned a gold jewelry importer and wholesaler in Naperville, Ill., was charged with falsely declaring the country of origin for imported gold jewelry. The charges allege that Gulabani, together with foreign manufacturers and other U.S. entities, imported or caused to be imported into the United States approximately 242 separate entries of gold jewelry that were falsely declared as having been manufactured in Oman or Singapore and in doing so avoided paying customs duties of between 5.5% and 5.8% of the declared value of the imported gold jewelry. According to court documents, the gold jewelry from Gulabani's criminal prosecution had an estimated total value of more than approximately $240 million, thus causing the avoidance of more than approximately $13.6 million in United States customs duties.

Engineer for Illinois Company Sentenced to Federal Prison for Trade Fraud, Counterfeiting, and Other Fraud Schemes

Shaun Brouwer manufactured and sold counterfeit versions of his employer's products and asked a vendor in China to create fake payment documents to lower the perceived value of some of the counterfeit items to avoid attracting attention from U.S. customs officials and avoid paying additional customs duty fees. He further engaged in fraud related to the Covid-relief Paycheck Protection Program. He was sentenced to 18 months in federal prison.

Former Accountant for Middle Eastern Jewelry Exporter Sentenced to Prison for Evading More Than $1.89 Million in U.S. Customs Duties

A former accountant for a gold jewelry exporter in the United Arab Emirates, Ravi Kapadia, conspired to avoid United States Customs duties on imports from India and falsely declare that the jewelry originated in Oman and was sentenced to ten months in federal prison.

Texas Man Who Orchestrated $20 Million Cryptocurrency Scam Sentenced to 23 Years in Prison

Robert Dunlap orchestrated a cryptocurrency scam that bilked nearly 1,000 investors out of more than $20 million. Dunlap made numerous false and misleading statements to potential and actual investors, including claims that his so-called Meta-1 Coin was backed by as much as $1 billion in art and $44 billion in gold.

Foreign National Sentenced to More Than Six Years in Federal Prison for Conducting "Tech Support" Fraud Scheme That Victimized Senior Citizens in United States

Kartik Saini and co-schemers falsely represented to victims that their computers had been hacked and their bank accounts had been compromised. Saini or a co-schemer then convinced the victims to transfer significant funds to various bank accounts, claiming the companies would safely hold the money while the purported cyber hack was investigated by law enforcement.

Suburban Chicago Man Sentenced to Five Years in Prison for Stealing More Than $10 Million in Interstate Shipments

Aivaras Zigmantas stole more than $10 million in goods, including liquor and commercial-grade copper, from interstate shipments.

Federal Judge Sentences Man to Four Years in Prison for $2 Million COVID-Relief Fraud

James Townsend schemed to fraudulently obtain more than $2 million in small business loans under the CARES Act. Under the leadership of U.S. Attorney Boutros and consistent with the Administration's priorities to identify, investigate, and prosecute criminal fraud in the federal government entitlement and benefit programs, the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Northern District of Illinois has been taking a fresh look at Covid-19 fraud.

Illinois Investment Advisor Indicted on Fraud Charges for Allegedly Swindling Clients in Ponzi Scheme

Paaris Kopsaftis, who operated Illinois-based Blackwater Assets, Inc., allegedly used investor funds to pay his bills.

Former CEO of Chicago Charter School Network Charged With Misappropriating More Than $103,000

Timothy King allegedly embezzled $103,833 from Urban Prep Academies to pay off his personal credit card.

Two Plead Guilty to Operating Nearly $12 Million Fraudulent Loan Program Harming Dozens of Victims

Mark Carroll and Luke Curry operated a scheme that caused borrowers, lenders, and investors to turn over nearly $12 million through sham loan programs and investments.

Public Corruption

Former Suburban Chicago Police Officer Sentenced to More Than Five Years in Prison on Corruption Charges

Antoine Larry was serving as a patrol officer for the Phoenix, Ill. Police Department when he conspired with another officer to corruptly solicit cash and drugs from the occupants of vehicles during traffic stops.

Deputy District Director to United States Congressman Indicted for Fraudulently Obtaining Covid-Relief Benefits

Gerard Moorer allegedly fraudulently pocketed nearly $32,000 in benefits under the Pandemic Unemployment Assistance program.

Federal Indictment Charges Former Chicago Housing Authority Director and Construction Company Owner With Engaging in $4.8 Million Kickback Scheme

Ryan Ross, a former property director for the Chicago Housing Authority (CHA), was allegedly given more than $421,000 in kickbacks from the owner of a construction company in exchange for steering that owner more than $4.8 million in construction and renovation work at CHA properties.

Former Federal Prison Employee Convicted of Sexually Abusing Two Inmates

Danny Spyker abused two male inmates at the Federal Correctional Institute in Thomson, Ill. Spyker worked as a cook supervisor when he knowingly engaged in sexual acts with the two inmates.

Immigration

Illegal Alien Facing State Murder Charge Now Charged in Federal Court With Illegally Possessing Firearm in Chicago

An illegal alien unlawfully residing in the United States, who is charged in state court with murdering an 18-year-old Loyola University student, was charged in federal court with illegally possessing a firearm. "Given the senseless, cold-blooded nature of the murder of a young student with a bright future ahead of her, the Chicago U.S. Attorney's Office will take no chances that this illegal alien perpetrator will be released back into our community," said U.S. Attorney Boutros.

Suburban Chicago Man Sentenced to Nine Years in Prison for Immigration Fraud, Possession of Child Pornography, and Tax Offenses

Jose Gregorio Sosa Cardona fabricated foreign law enforcement reports and other documents to falsely corroborate his clients' asylum claims. A court-authorized search of Sosa Cardona's electronic devices turned up thousands of photos and videos of minors engaged in sexually explicit conduct.

Illegal Alien With Extensive Criminal Record Sentenced to 14 Months in Prison for Unlawfully Re-Entering United States After Multiple Deportations

Manuel Alberto Cortes Cuan was unlawfully present in the United States on June 17, 2025, when he was arrested in Lyons, Ill. Cortes Cuan was previously deported from the United States on five occasions. Each deportation occurred after Cortes Cuan sustained criminal convictions while unlawfully present here. The prior offenses of convictions included theft, escape, trespassing, aggravated assault, and aggravated DUI.

Illegal Alien With Violent Criminal Record Sentenced to Prison for Unlawfully Re-Entering United States After Seven Deportations

Jefry Estrada-Pastrana was unlawfully present in the United States on Jan. 20, 2026, when he was arrested in Chicago. Estrada-Pastrana was previously deported from the United States on seven occasions. During the times in which he was illegally present in the United States, Estrada-Pastrana was convicted of criminal offenses including robbery and aggravated fleeing. Estrada-Pastrana was sentenced to ten months in prison for his illegal re-entry conviction.

Illegal Alien Who Possessed a Dangerous Weapon in Cook County Jail and Committed an Attempted Vehicular Hijacking Indicted for Allegedly Unlawfully Re-Entering U.S. After Deportation

Hector Daniel Gamboa-Mantalvo, a Mexican national who resided in Palatine, Ill., was removed from the United States in July 2020. Gamboa-Mantalvo was later discovered in the United States in 2023 when he was arrested for committing an attempted vehicular hijacking. In April, he was indicted on federal immigration charges.

Foreign National Residing in Chicago Suburb Indicted for Allegedly Bringing Illegal Aliens Into United States and Forcing Them To Work

Fredy Hernandez allegedly brought four individuals from Honduras into the U.S. in 2022 and 2023 and forced them to work for his private financial gain.

Healthcare Fraud

United States Attorney Andrew S. Boutros Announces Charges Against Two Chicago-Area Defendants as Part of Department of Justice's National Healthcare Fraud Takedown

In the first matter, a defendant was charged with participating in a scheme to defraud Medicare out of approximately $240 million in reimbursements for over-the-counter Covid-19 test kits that were either never provided or never requested by Medicare beneficiaries, all within a span of less than six months. In the second matter, a healthcare provider was charged with orchestrating a scheme to defraud the Illinois Medicaid program out of more than $75 million for purported behavioral health counseling and therapy services that were never provided.

The charges filed in federal court in Chicago were part of the Department of Justice's 2026 National Healthcare Fraud Takedown. The charges continue the trend of the U.S. Attorney's Office in Chicago as well as the Midwest Strike Force to bring criminal healthcare fraud prosecutions, especially against gatekeepers, that dismantle significant schemes that syphon taxpayer funds from Medicare and Medicaid. Two Foreign Nationals Indicted in Chicago as Part of $10 Million Health Care Fraud Scheme

Burhan Mirza and Kashif Iqbal allegedly used nominee-owned laboratories and durable medical equipment providers to submit fraudulent claims to Medicare and private healthcare benefit programs for items and services that were not provided. "Every fraudulent submission in this case diverts much needed monies from senior citizens and disabled persons who rely on Medicare to fund critically important health needs," said U.S. Attorney Boutros. "The defendants didn't just steal from a government program; they did damage to the promise of healthcare in this country and the peace of mind that comes with it."

Suburban Chicago Chiropractor Convicted of Healthcare Fraud

Seung Han Lim and his clinic fraudulently billed more than $600,000 to Blue Cross Blue Shield of Illinois for services not rendered.

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