



U.S. Department of Justice FY 2015 Budget Request

ENFORCE IMMIGRATION LAWS

\$2.9 Billion in Total Funding

FY 2015 Overview

The Department maintains substantial responsibilities with respect to immigration, including enforcement, detention, judicial functions, administrative hearings, and litigation. The Department's Executive Office for Immigration Review (EOIR) maintains a nationwide presence overseeing the immigration court and appeals process. EOIR receives cases directly from the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) enforcement personnel. EOIR's immigration court caseload is increasing to unsustainable levels. Between FY 2009 and FY 2013, the caseload pending adjudication grew by 56 percent, from 229,000 to 358,000.

The FY 2015 Budget request includes \$22.6 million in new resources to support and advance EOIR's mission. Of this amount, \$17 million is requested for EOIR to support an additional 35 Immigration Judge Teams and 15 BIA attorneys to help adjudicate rising immigration court caseloads. Also included in this \$22.6 million enhancement is an additional \$2.8 million to expand EOIR's Legal Orientation Program, which improves immigration court proceedings for detained aliens by increasing their awareness of their rights and the overall process, and another \$2.8 million to allow EOIR to continue the development and expansion of its pilot program that provides counsel to vulnerable populations, such as unaccompanied alien children, for which initial funding was provided in FY 2014.

The Civil Division's Office of Immigration Litigation (OIL) also plays a crucial role in upholding the enforcement actions of DHS and EOIR. OIL provides the government with the best possible defense in district court cases and challenges to removal orders filed in circuit courts by illegal aliens. The FY 2015 Budget maintains the current staffing levels for OIL.

FY 2015 Program Increases

The Department requests a total of \$22.6 million in program increases for FY 2015, including:

Executive Office for Immigration Review (EOIR)

- **Immigration Judge Teams - Coordination with DHS Enforcement Initiatives: \$17.0 million and 211 positions (53 attorneys)**

The requested funding increase will enable EOIR to add 35 new Immigration Judge (IJ) Teams to help adjudicate between 20,000 and 39,000 additional immigration cases annually. EOIR's rising caseloads are a result of increased DHS enforcement efforts, most notably DHS's high priority Secure Communities Initiative. An IJ team consists of an Immigration Judge, Language Specialist, Legal Technician, Clerk and Law Clerk, as well as a BIA Attorney and Paralegal for every other team. EOIR currently has 249 IJs on board. The addition of 35 new IJ Teams will bring EOIR's total number to 284 IJs. FY 2015 current services for this program are 1,582 positions (530 attorneys) and \$326.2 million.

- **Legal Orientation Program: \$2.8 million and 0 positions**

The requested increase will expand the successful Legal Orientation Program and improve efficiencies in immigration court proceedings for detained aliens by increasing their awareness of their rights and the overall process. Evaluation reports have shown that LOP participants complete their immigration court cases in detention an average of 12 days faster than detainees who do not participate in an LOP. The requested program increase will respond to elevated demand at existing sites and enable LOP to add 12 additional sites to the 26 already operating, 24 of which are in detention centers. FY 2015 current services for this initiative are \$7.2 million.

- **Pilot - Innovation Ideas: \$2.8 million and 0 positions**

This additional funding will enable EOIR to continue the development and expansion of its pilot program to provide counsel to vulnerable populations, such as unaccompanied alien children, thus increasing efficiencies within the immigration courts. FY 2015 current services for this initiative are \$3.0 million.

FY 2015 Program Increase Summary (Amount in \$000s)

Component/Initiative	Positions	Agents/ Attorneys	Amount
Executive Office for Immigration Review			
Immigration Judge Teams - Coordination with DHS Enforcement Initiatives	211	53	17,000
Legal Orientation Program	0	0	2,824
Pilot - Innovation Ideas	0	0	2,824
Grand Total, Program Increases	211	53	\$22,648