

JUSTICE NEWS

Department of Justice

Office of Public Affairs

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Wednesday, May 2, 2018

Justice Department Announces Additional Prosecutors and Immigration Judges For Southwest Border Crisis

Attorney General Jeff Sessions today announced the dedication of additional prosecutors to handle the prosecutions of improper entry, illegal reentry, and alien smuggling cases, and additional immigration judges to handle the adjudication of immigration court cases that result from the crisis at the Southwest border.

Thirty-five new Assistant United States Attorney (AUSA) positions have been allocated to U.S. Attorney's Offices along the Southwest border. The breakdown of those positions is as follows:

- Southern District of Texas: Eight (8);
- Southern District of California: Eight (8);
- Western District of Texas: Seven (7);
- District of Arizona: Six (6); and,
- District of New Mexico: Six (6).

"The American people made very clear their desire to secure our borders and prioritize the public safety and national security of our homeland," said Attorney General Jeff Sessions. "Promoting and enforcing the rule of law is essential to our republic. By deploying these additional resources to the Southwest border, the Justice Department and the Trump Administration take yet another step in protecting our nation, its borders, and its citizens. It must be clear that there is no right to demand entry without justification."

Due to a recent increase in the number of apprehensions at the Southwest border, the new AUSA positions announced today will assist in the prosecutions of illegal reentry (8 U.S.C. § 1326), alien smuggling (8 U.S.C. § 1324), and improper entry (8 U.S.C. § 1325) pursuant to the Justice Department's "Zero-Tolerance Policy" announced by Attorney General Sessions on April 6, 2018 and its prior April 11, 2017 directive to AUSAs to prioritize charging immigration offenses.

In addition to the new AUSA positions, Attorney General Sessions and Executive Office for Immigration Review (EOIR) Director James McHenry announced the utilization of 18 current supervisory immigration judges to adjudicate cases in immigration courts near the southwest border. The supervisory immigration judges will hear cases in-person and use video conferencing (VTC) to handle cases at immigration courts and represent a roughly 50 percent increase in the current number of immigration judges:

- [Eloy \(AZ\) Immigration Court](#);
- [Florence \(AZ\) Immigration Court](#);
- [Adelanto \(CA\) Immigration Court](#);
- [Imperial \(CA\) Immigration Court](#);
- [Otay Mesa \(CA\) Immigration Court](#);
- [Otero \(NM\) Immigration Court](#);
- [El Paso \(TX\) Service Processing Center](#);
- [Harlingen \(TX\) Immigration Court](#);
- [Pearsall \(TX\) Immigration Court](#); and
- [Port Isabel \(TX\) Immigration Court](#).

“The Justice Department, under Attorney General Jeff Sessions, has made significant reforms and progress in tackling the overwhelming backlog in the immigration court system,” said EOIR Director James McHenry. “We must not let attempts to undermine our lawful immigration system deter that progress, and the men and women at EOIR are proud to play a small role in the Attorney General’s response to the crisis at our Southwest border.”

Between March and September 2017, EOIR mobilized over one hundred immigration judges to Department of Homeland Security detention facilities across the country, including along the Southwest border. In October, EOIR [projected](#) that the mobilized immigration judges—hearing both in-person and VTC cases—completed approximately 2,700 more cases than expected if the immigration judges had not been detailed.

Topic(s):

Immigration

Component(s):

[Executive Office for Immigration Review](#)
[Office of the Attorney General](#)

Press Release Number:

18-564

Updated May 2, 2018