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APRIL 12, 2011 KALAMAZOO, MI

### **7 additional Michigan counties to benefit from ICE program to enhance identification and removal of aliens convicted of a crime**

KALAMAZOO, Mich.- U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) today began using the Secure Communities program in seven Michigan counties including Allegan, Barry, Calhoun, Jackson, Kalamazoo, Muskegon, Muskegon and Ottawa to help federal immigration officials identify criminal aliens in state prisons and local jails by running their fingerprints against federal immigration databases when they are booked into the system.

"Secure Communities enhances public safety by enabling ICE to identify and remove criminal aliens more efficiently and effectively from the United States," said Secure Communities Acting Assistant Director Marc Rapp. "As we expand ICE's use of biometric information sharing nationwide, we are helping to keep communities safe and ensuring the integrity of our immigration system."

With the expansion of Secure Communities to Allegan, Barry, Calhoun, Jackson, Kalamazoo, Muskegon and Ottawa counties, ICE is using this capability in 14 Mich. jurisdictions. Across the country, ICE is using this capability in 1,188 jurisdictions in 41 states. Since ICE began using this enhanced information sharing capability in October 2008, Secure Communities has resulted in the removal of more than 72,000 criminal aliens-more than 26,000 of whom were convicted of violent crimes, such as murder, rape, kidnapping and the sexual abuse of children. ICE continues to work with its law enforcement partners across the country to responsibly and effectively implement Secure Communities and plans to reach complete nationwide deployment by 2013.

Prior to the implementation of Secure Communities, fingerprints taken of individuals charged with a crime and booked into state or local custody were checked for criminal history information against the Department of Justice's (DOJ) criminal history records. Once Secure Communities is activated in a jurisdiction, the fingerprints that jurisdiction submits to DOJ's biometric system to check for criminal history records are also automatically sent to DHS' biometric system to check against its immigration law enforcement records. When a match is discovered, ICE evaluates the specific case to determine the individual's immigration status and takes appropriate enforcement action. ICE prioritizes the removal of criminal aliens convicted of serious crimes such as major drug offenses, murder, rape and kidnapping, as well as other threats to public safety, such as those with known gang affiliations, drunk driving arrests, or who are fugitives or frequently try to game the immigration system.

The biometric systems are maintained by DHS's US-VISIT program and the FBI's Criminal Justice Information Services (CJIS).

"US VISIT is proud to support ICE by providing comprehensive, reliable information to assist in the smart and effective enforcement of our immigration laws," said US-VISIT Director Robert Mocny. "By enhancing the interoperability of DHS's and the FBI's biometric systems, we are helping federal, state and local government better protect our communities and our nation."

"Under this federal information sharing initiative, ICE will be utilizing FBI system enhancements that allow improved information sharing at the state and local law enforcement level based on positive identification of incarcerated criminal aliens," said Daniel D. Roberts, assistant director of the FBI's Criminal Justice Information Services Division. "Additionally, ICE and the

FBI are working together to take advantage of the strong relationships already forged between the FBI and state and local law enforcement necessary to assist ICE in achieving its goals."

For more information about Secure Communities, visit [www.ice.gov/secure\\_communities/](http://www.ice.gov/secure_communities/)

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U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) is the largest investigative arm of the Department of Homeland Security.

ICE is a 21st century law enforcement agency with broad responsibilities for a number of key homeland security priorities. For more information, visit [www.ICE.gov](http://www.ICE.gov). To report suspicious activity, call 1-866-347-2423.