

JUSTICE NEWS

Department of Justice

Office of Public Affairs

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Attorney General Sessions Issues Memo Outlining Principles to Ensure That the Adjudication of Immigration Cases Serves the National Interest

Today, as part of a continued effort to return the rule of law to America's immigration system in order to serve national interest, Attorney General Jeff Sessions released a memo to the Executive Office for Immigration Review (EOIR) renewing the Justice Department's commitment to timely and efficient adjudication of immigration cases. The memo expresses the Attorney General's appreciation for the progress made since the beginning of the Trump Administration, encourages EOIR personnel to identify new efficiencies in their operations, and articulates five core principles that EOIR personnel should support and adhere to when adjudicating immigration cases.

The Justice Department's commitment to the timely and efficient adjudication of immigration cases is the foundation of EOIR's Caseload Reduction Plan—a series of common-sense reforms that aim to reduce the so-called "backlog" by realigning the agency towards completing cases, increasing both productivity and capacity, and changing policies that lead to inefficiencies and delay justice. EOIR is also committed to hiring additional immigration judges—with 50 brought on board since January 20, and another 60 additional who will be hired in the next six months—which, when combined with new efficiencies in the system, will ensure that EOIR's mission of fairly, expeditiously, and uniformly administering the immigration laws is fulfilled.

EOIR released data on orders of removal, voluntary departures, and final decisions for the first 10 months of the Trump Administration.

The data released for Feb. 1, 2017 – Nov. 30, 2017 is as follows:

- Total Orders of Removal [1]: 87,063
 - Up 30 percent over the same time last year

- Total Orders of Removal and Voluntary Departures [2]: 100,180
 - Up 34 percent over the same time last year

- Total Final Decisions [3]: 127,570
 - Up by roughly 18,200 decisions (16.6 percent) over the same time last year

The Department of Justice will continue to review internal practices, procedures, and technology in order to identify ways in which it can further enhance Immigration Judges' productivity without compromising due process.

"The state of our nation's immigration court system has major implications on national security, public safety, and labor markets. With today's memo, the Attorney General reaffirms his commitment to the rule of law and to the timely and proper adjudication of immigration court cases," said Executive Office for Immigration Review Acting Director James McHenry. "EOIR has already begun to see the effects of this commitment, and—with the same dedication from EOIR staff, attorneys, and judges—can further work toward realizing our goal of cutting the pending caseload in half by 2020."

[1] An "order of removal" by an Immigration Judge allows in the removal of an illegal alien from the United States by the Department of Homeland Security.

[2] Under an order of "voluntary departure", an illegal alien agrees to voluntarily depart the United States by a certain date. If the illegal alien does not depart, the order automatically converts to an order of removal.

[3] A "final decision" is one that ends the proceeding at the Immigration Judge level such that the case is no longer pending.

Attachment(s):

[Download Memorandum for EOIR](#)

[Download EOIR Caseload Reduction Plan Backgrounder](#)

Topic(s):

Immigration

Component(s):

[Executive Office for Immigration Review](#)

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