



Fact Sheet

Witness Security

2013

- ▶ The U.S. Marshals Service operates the federal Witness Security Program, sometimes referred to as the “Witness Protection Program.”
- ▶ The Witness Security Program provides for the security, safety and health of government witnesses and their authorized family members, whose lives are in danger as a result of their cooperation with the U.S. government.
- ▶ The U.S. Marshals Service provides 24-hour protection to all witnesses while they are in a high-threat environment, including pretrial conferences, trial testimonials and other court appearances.
- ▶ Witnesses and their families typically get new identities with authentic documentation.
- ▶ Witnesses receive financial assistance for housing, subsistence for basic living expenses and medical care. Job training and employment assistance may also be provided.
- ▶ More than 8,500 witnesses and 9,900 of their authorized family members have participated in the program since it began in 1971.
- ▶ No Witness Security Program participant following program guidelines has been harmed while under the active protection of the U.S. Marshals Service.
- ▶ The program provides a unique and valuable tool in the U.S. government’s battle against organized crime, drug trafficking organizations, terrorism and other major criminal enterprises.
- ▶ U.S. Marshals Service Witness Security personnel are the leading authorities and foremost experts on witness security matters, providing guidance and training to many government officials throughout the world.
- ▶ The U.S. Marshals Service cooperates fully with local law enforcement and court authorities when protected witnesses become involved in criminal and/or civil matters.
- ▶ The Witness Security Program was authorized by the Organized Crime Control Act of 1970 and amended by the Comprehensive Crime Control Act of 1984.