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Fact Sheets

Witness Security

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- [The U.S. Marshals Service operates the federal Witness Security Program, sometimes referred to as the "Witness Protection Program."](#)
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- [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.](#)
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- 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 8,300 witnesses and 9,800 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.

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