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WASHINGTON—U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services is now authorized to expand its law enforcement authorities and newly-minted USCIS 1811 classified officers (commonly known as special agents) will be empowered to investigate, arrest, and present for prosecution those who violate America’s immigration laws under a [final rule](#) published today.

In the final rule, the DHS authorities provided to USCIS include making arrests, carrying firearms, executing search and arrest warrants, and other powers standard for federal law enforcement. This rule allows USCIS to implement Homeland Security Kristi Noem’s delegation of certain law enforcement authorities to the agency. This rule allows USCIS to thoroughly fulfill its national security, fraud detection, and public safety missions related to immigration adjudications.

“USCIS has always been an enforcement agency. By upholding the integrity of our immigration system, we enforce the laws of this nation. As Secretary Noem delegated lawful authorities to expand the agency’s law enforcement capabilities, this rule allows us to fulfill our critical mission. This historic moment will better address immigration crimes, hold those that perpetrate immigration fraud accountable, and act as a force multiplier for DHS and our federal law enforcement partners, including the Joint Terrorism Task Force,” said USCIS Director Joseph B. Edlow.

Through this [delegation](#), the USCIS director has the authority to order expedited removal and investigate civil and criminal violations of the immigration laws within the jurisdiction of USCIS.

USCIS will have greater capacity to support DHS efforts by handling investigations from start to finish, instead of referring certain cases to Homeland Security Investigation within U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement. This will allow ICE HSI and ERO to focus on disrupting transnational crime and capturing and deporting illegal aliens. USCIS will be able to more efficiently clear its backlogs of aliens who seek to exploit our immigration system through fraud, prosecute them, and remove them from the country.

USCIS plans to recruit and train special agents who will exercise the additional law enforcement authorities. For more details, see the final rule in the [Federal Register](#). The rule is effective 30 days from publication.

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