

# Fugitives, it's safe to surrender

## Program set to clear up old warrants

Detroit will be the latest city in the country to host a federal program allowing those with an outstanding warrant for their arrest to turn themselves in.

The Fugitive Safe Surrender program, created in 2005 by the U.S. Marshals Service to allow scofflaws to surrender in a nonhostile environment, is expected to clear up some of the backlog of thousands of outstanding warrants in Wayne County.

Today at Second Ebenezer Church, authorities are to announce the local program, which will run June 4-7.

Robert Grubbs, U.S. marshal for the Eastern District of Michigan, said the program's goal is to reduce the risk of violent confrontations when police arrest people with outstanding warrants. There are nearly 18,000 outstanding misdemeanor warrants and more than 29,500 outstanding felony warrants in Wayne County, according to the Wayne County Sheriff's Office.

The Rev. Edgar Vann of Second Ebenezer called the program "a second chance for people who may have been marginalized out of the system."

Safe Surrender is a collaboration among the U.S. Attorney's Office, the Wayne County Prosecutor's Office, the state Defender's Office, Michigan State Police, the Wayne County Sheriff's Office, the Detroit Police Department, the 36th District Court and community and faith-based organizations.

U.S. marshals have hosted Safe Surrender in Cleveland; Akron, Ohio; Nashville, Tenn.; Indianapolis; Phoenix; Rochester, N.Y.; Washington, D.C., and Memphis, Tenn. More than 6,000 people have turned themselves in.

Because judges, prosecutors and public defenders participate in the program, the outstanding warrant cases will be adjudicated on the spot.

The program does not provide amnesty, Grubbs said, adding nonviolent offenders who turn themselves in likely will receive favorable consideration, such as possible reduced charges, fines, or jail sentences, or could be allowed to go home the same day.

*Fugitive Safe Surrender will be 9 a.m.-5 p.m. June 4-7 at Second Ebenezer Church, 14601 Dequindre Road, at the I-75 and McNichols exit, in Detroit. Call 888-377-7233, or go to [www.detroitsafesurrender.org](http://www.detroitsafesurrender.org). Contact **NAOMI R. PATTON** at 313-223-4485 or [npatton@freepress.com](mailto:npatton@freepress.com).*