



The Secret Service Story

United States Secret Service

Worthy of Trust and Confidence



*U.S. Department of
Homeland Security*

**United States
Secret Service**



The Secret Service Story

The United States Secret Service is one of the most elite law enforcement organizations in the world. It has earned this reputation through more than 140 years of integrity and service to the nation. As one of the oldest federal law enforcement agencies in the country, the U.S. Secret Service has a dual mission that includes investigations as well as protection of the President and Vice President of the United States and others. These unique characteristics distinguish the U.S. Secret Service from all other law enforcement organizations.

History

By the end of the American Civil War, nearly one-third of all U.S. currency in circulation was counterfeit. As a result, the country's financial stability was in jeopardy. To address this concern, the U.S. Secret Service was established in 1865 as a bureau of the Treasury Department to suppress the widespread counterfeiting of U.S. currency. The U.S. Secret Service's protective mission began after President William McKinley's assassination in 1901. Following this tragedy, Congress authorized the U.S. Secret Service to protect the President of the United States. On March 1, 2003, the U.S. Secret Service was transferred to the U.S. Department of Homeland Security. The U.S. Secret Service's expertise in carrying out protection and investigations are integral to the department's mission of keeping America safe.





Protective Mission

Title 18 of the United States Code, Section 3056, describes the agency's authority as provided by law. Since the U.S. Secret Service's protective mission began in 1901, the agency's jurisdiction has expanded to meet the needs of an evolving security environment. The U.S. Secret Service is authorized by law to protect:

- The President of the United States
- The Vice President of the United States
- The President's and Vice President's immediate families
- Former Presidents, their spouses and their minor children under the age of 16. In 1997, Congress authorized legislation limiting protection of former presidents to 10 years after leaving office, making President Clinton the last President who will receive lifetime Secret Service protection.
- Foreign heads of state and their spouses visiting the United States
- Major presidential and vice presidential candidates and their spouses
- Events designated as National Special Security Events by the Secretary, U.S. Department of Homeland Security

Permanent protectees, such as the President and Vice President, have special agents permanently assigned to them. Temporary protectees, such as presidential and vice presidential candidates/nominees and foreign Heads of State, are staffed with special agents on temporary assignment from U.S. Secret Service field offices. Protection for the President and Vice President of the United States is mandatory. All other individuals entitled to Secret Service protection may decline security if they choose.

One of the many components that work together to carry out the protective mission is the U.S. Secret Service Uniformed Division. Officers of the Uniformed Division are responsible for the physical security of the White House Complex, the Vice President's Residence, the Treasury Department, and foreign diplomatic missions in Washington, D.C. They provide additional assistance to the U.S. Secret Service's protective mission through the following special support programs: the Canine Unit; Magnetometer Unit; Emergency Response Team; Countersniper Team; Motorcade Support Unit; and Bicycle Patrol.

Investigative Mission

Since its inception in 1865, the U.S. Secret Service's investigative responsibilities have greatly expanded. In addition to the Secret Service's jurisdiction in investigating counterfeit currency, its investigative authority includes financial institution fraud, access device fraud, computer crimes, credit card fraud, fraudulent government and commercial securities, fictitious financial instruments, telecommunications fraud, false identification and identity theft. The Secret Service is authorized to seize and forfeit assets identified as the proceeds of these financial crimes and associated money laundering activities.

The U.S. Secret Service has a pivotal role in securing the nation's critical infrastructures, specifically in the areas of telecommunications, banking and finance. Other directives address the need to combat international organized crime that targets the citizens and financial institutions of the United States.

In response to the globalization of technology-based threats, the U.S. Secret Service's investigative mission abroad is growing as well, creating the need for a heightened overseas liaison presence and employees with foreign language skills.

The U.S. Secret Service in the 21st Century

The U.S. Secret Service has grown from a small bureau staffed by a few operatives in 1865, to a law enforcement organization of nearly 7,000 employees worldwide. Today, the U.S. Secret Service fights crime on a global scale through its field offices located in the United States, Canada, Mexico, South America, Europe, Africa and Asia. The agency works closely with local, state and federal law enforcement organizations. These entities are valued partners of the Secret Service, and they are integral to the agency's investigative and protective endeavors.

U.S. Secret Service employees contribute a wealth of experience and expertise towards accomplishing the agency's mission. In addition to law enforcement personnel, specialists and technicians in various fields including security; computer programming; communications; administration; intelligence; and forensics contribute their skills to fulfill the agency's dual mission.



For further information about career opportunities with the U.S. Secret Service, please call the U.S. Secret Service Employment Line at 1-888-813-USSS (8777) or TTY 202-406-5390 or visit www.secretservice.gov/join.

The U.S. Secret Service is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

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