

VALUES ACT

SENATE BILL 54
ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2023

Rob Bonta, Attorney General
California Department of Justice
California Justice Information Services Division
Justice Data & Investigative Services Bureau
Criminal Justice Statistics Center



BACKGROUND

The California Values Act (Act), codified at Government Code section 7284 et seq., and enacted by Senate Bill 54 (Chapter 495, Statutes of 2017), provides strict guidelines on the use and storage of data collected by state and local law enforcement agencies (LEAs) to ensure that information shared for immigration enforcement purposes is limited to the fullest extent practicable and consistent with federal and state law. The Act also sets forth the circumstances under which LEAs may assist in the enforcement of federal immigration laws and participate in joint law enforcement task forces. "Joint law enforcement task force" is defined as "at least one California law enforcement agency collaborating, engaging, or partnering with at least one federal law enforcement agency in investigating federal or state crimes." (Government Code section 7284.4(g).)

The Act mandates that California LEAs report annually to the California Department of Justice (DOJ) the total number of arrests made by joint law enforcement task forces, and the total number of arrests made for the purpose of immigration enforcement by all task force participants, including federal law enforcement agencies. Effective January 4, 2018, all LEAs were required to begin collecting this data pursuant to the Act for submittal to DOJ beginning on January 4, 2019. The Act requires DOJ to publish this data in an annual report on March 1st of each year.

STATUTE

Government Code section 7284.6 subdivision (d): The Attorney General, by March 1, 2019, and annually thereafter, shall report on the total number of arrests made by joint law enforcement task forces, and the total number of arrests made for the purpose of immigration enforcement by all task force participants, including federal law enforcement agencies. To the extent that disclosure of a particular item of information would endanger the safety of a person involved in an investigation, or would endanger the successful completion of the investigation or a related investigation, that information shall not be included in the Attorney General's report. The Attorney General shall post the reports required by this subdivision on the Attorney General's web site.

REPORTING PROCESS

Outreach Efforts

In early 2018, DOJ issued an Information Bulletin to all LEAs advising them of their responsibility to report pursuant to the Act by January 15, 2019. To remind LEAs of their reporting requirements, DOJ sent reminder messages through the California Law Enforcement Telecommunications System (CLETS) for a total of two weeks. These reminder messages reached LEAs three times per day, seven days a week, and were followed up with emails and phone calls.

The reporting cycle for 2023, which commenced on January 4, 2024, represents the sixth year for this mandated data collection. For 2023, using the established contact list from 2018-2022, letters, emails, and phone calls to mandated reporting agencies began in December, and continued through the reporting cycle. All identified LEAs participated in reporting for 2023.

Reporting Challenges

The Act requires DOJ to publish the annual report containing the prior calendar year's data by March 1st of each year. Therefore, all 730+ reporting LEAs report at the same time and all submissions received, reminder contacts, and data quality control efforts occur in a very short timeframe. Given the need to report a full year of data and the statutorily mandated publication date, DOJ requires the LEAs to report no later than January 14, 2024, which only affords DOJ two weeks in January to make reminder calls, ensure all forms are received properly, ensure quality control data, and produce a publication-ready report.

Current reporting for this data set is a manual submission process. Because there is no list or registry of all joint task forces for comparison, DOJ reports information based on the submissions it receives from LEAs and can not verify the completeness or accuracy of this data.

TASK FORCE DATA

The total number of arrests made by joint law enforcement task forces in 2023 was 13,760.

The total number of arrests made for the purpose of immigration enforcement by task force participants in 2023 was 0.

