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# DSS Las Vegas Pilot Office recognized for counter-human trafficking efforts

DSS ARTICLES

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A special agent in the Diplomatic Security Service Las Vegas Pilot Office

examines a U.S. passport seized during a criminal investigation. People who attempt to obtain a U.S. passport illegally, or use stolen and altered passports, often seek to change their identities and conceal their illegal activities and movements, Las Vegas, Nev., Jan. 4. 2021. (U.S. Department of State photo)

On December 17, 2021, the U.S. Attorney's Office for the District of Nevada **recognized**  nine federal, state, and local law enforcement officers and special agents who went above and beyond in 2021, to support the Department of Justice's mission.

The U.S. Department of State's Diplomatic Security Service (DSS) was among the award recipients who were honored for their dedication, contributions, and collaboration with the U.S. Attorney's Office towards reducing violent crime, combating human trafficking, and preventing fraud in Nevada.

"These awards honor law enforcement's commitment to maintaining public safety across Nevada," said Acting U.S. Attorney Christopher Chiou for the District of Nevada. "Each recipient has made a significant impact in our communities, and our office is grateful for the opportunity to work with them."

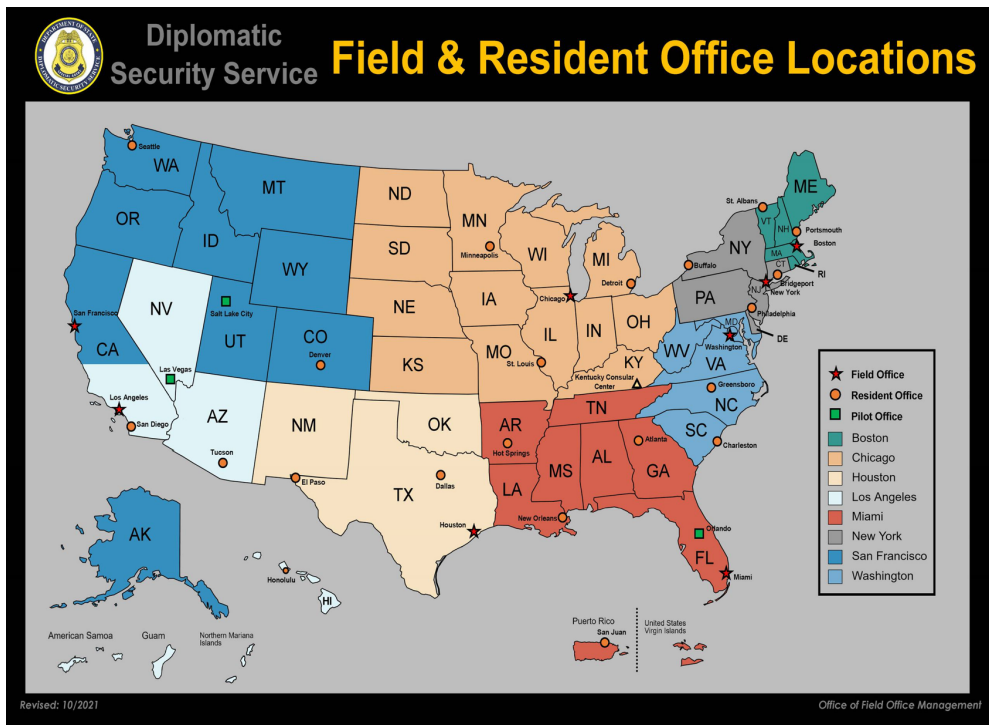
This recognition by the U.S. Attorney's Office is also a testament to the success of the newly established DSS Pilot Office in Las Vegas, Nevada. The DSS Los Angeles Field Office (LAFO) worked with authorities in Las Vegas to establish the pilot office in fall 2020 and has since expanded the DSS presence in Nevada and strengthened partnerships with local law enforcement.

"Special Agents Jon Searles and Mario Evangelista have taken full reign of our criminal investigative portfolio in Las Vegas, and they have built and sustained some very strong contacts across agencies and with the U.S. Attorney's Office," said LAFO Assistant Special Agent-in-Charge Lance Leveque. "They have done an outstanding job at making DSS an integral law enforcement partner in the Las Vegas area."

DSS established pilot offices in Las Vegas, Orlando, and Salt Lake City in the fall of 2020 and assigned three special agents to each location to

conduct investigations, support dignitary protection operations and protective liaison work, and other duties as assigned. The original two-year trial was extended through 2024, at which time a determination will be made on the operational requirements for each location and whether a full-time resident office should be established.

The Las Vegas Pilot Office is setting the bar high and making a strong case to become the next DSS field or resident office, but stay tuned for updates from the Orlando and Salt Lake City Pilot Offices in 2022!



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