



U.S. Customs and
Border Protection



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CBP Strengthens Maritime Border Security, Expands Jurisdiction

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Release Date: Tue, 08/25/2026

WASHINGTON — U.S. Customs and Border Protection announced today the establishment of four Customs Enforcement Areas, expanding its enforcement jurisdiction from 12 to 24 nautical miles in designated waters adjacent to South Florida, Southern California, Puerto Rico, and the Gulf Coast of Texas.

Smuggling organizations have exploited the outer edge of traditional customs waters by positioning vessels beyond the 12 nautical mile boundary, transferring illicit cargo at sea, and coordinating landings along remote shorelines. The new designations strengthen CBP's ability to counter those tactics and align its customs enforcement authority in these areas with the 24-nautical mile U.S. contiguous zone.

"The ocean is not a safe haven for cartels and smugglers," said Rodney Scott, Commissioner of U.S. Customs and Border Protection. "These designations give our agents the room to act sooner and stop threats before they reach the American people. If you are moving drugs, contraband, or people toward our shores, expect us to find you."

The establishment of these CEAs supports the Administration's efforts to secure U.S. borders and strengthen customs enforcement. The designations comply with Executive Order 14165, *Securing Our Borders*, by enhancing operational control in areas facing ongoing maritime smuggling threats,

and are consistent with Executive Order 14411, *Strengthening Customs Enforcement*, which directs the Department of Homeland Security to take action to bolster enforcement of customs laws.

Within the four Customs Enforcement Areas, CBP's Air and Marine Operations will work with the U.S. Coast Guard and other federal partners to detect and interdict vessels used by cartels, foreign terrorist organizations, and other criminal networks to move people, narcotics, and contraband toward the United States. The designations provide more consistent customs enforcement authority across these waters and support the investigation and prosecution of maritime smugglers.

U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) is America's frontline: the nation's largest law enforcement organization and the world's first unified border management agency. The 70,000+ men and women of CBP protect America on the ground, in the air and on the seas. We enforce safe, lawful travel and trade and ensure our country's economic prosperity. We enhance the nation's security through innovation, intelligence, collaboration and trust.

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Last Modified: Aug 25, 2026



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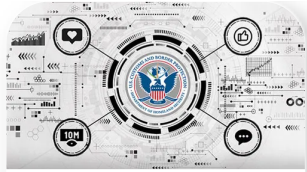
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