Report **Marriage Fraud** to the Homeland Security Investigations Tip Line

Contact Us

For more information, contact the nearest HSI office and ask to speak to a group supervisor in the Identity and Benefit Fraud Unit. If marriage fraud is suspected, contact the HSI Tip Line at

1-866-347-2423

www.ice.gov/tips

MARRIAGE FRAUD IS A FEDERAL CRIME

Up to 5 years in Prison | Fines up to $250,000 | Loss of Benefits

HOMELAND SECURITY INVESTIGATIONS

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement

Marriage fraud is not a victimless, innocent crime.

Marriage fraud is a serious crime that weakens our nation's security and makes us less safe.
Participating in marriage fraud can result in imprisonment of up to five years for those involved.

U.S. Citizenship is Not for Sale

Background

Marriage fraud is a threat to U.S. national security, financial institutions and the integrity of the immigration system.

Marriage fraud investigations conducted by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement's (ICE) Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) have revealed massive schemes that involve complex criminal organizations.

Neither victimless nor limited in scope, the crime of marriage fraud is anything but a trivial matter. Engaging in this fraud and trading America's security for financial gain is a felony with serious criminal penalties and consequences.

Types of Marriage Fraud

- A U.S. citizen is paid, or asked to perform a favor, to marry a foreign national;
- "Mail-order" marriage where either the U.S. citizen or alien knows it is a fraud;
- Visa lottery fraudulent marriage; and,
- A foreign national defrauds a U.S. citizen who believes the marriage is legitimate.

Penalties

An individual will be charged with marriage fraud if they entered into a marriage for the purpose of evading U.S. immigration law. This felony offense carries a prison sentence of up to five years and a fine of up to $250,000, and applies to both foreign nationals and U.S. citizens who perpetrate this crime.

Those charged with marriage fraud may also be charged with visa fraud, harboring an alien, conspiracy and making false statements; each charge carries additional prison sentences and financial penalties.

Further Consequences

U.S. citizens who enter into fraudulent marriages assume great personal liability. The foreign spouse may gain access to sensitive, personal information including, but not limited to, bank accounts, safe deposit boxes, retirement and investment accounts, personal identity information, and family heirlooms.

Terrorists and other criminals can use marriage fraud as a vehicle to enter the United States, often due to the willingness of U.S. citizens. They can then hide their identity, gain unlawful employment, access government buildings, and open bank accounts and businesses to conduct further criminal activity.

Participants in marriage fraud may, knowingly or unknowingly, be aiding terrorists, foreign intelligence or other criminal organizations, and will be held accountable.

Vigilance

To combat marriage fraud and other similar crimes, HSI created the Document and Benefit Fraud Task Forces (DBFTF) in 2006. Led by HSI, the DBFTFs build upon existing partnerships with other federal and state law enforcement investigators with document and benefit fraud expertise. The Task Forces also ally themselves with U.S. Attorneys, to use a comprehensive approach against the criminal organizations and beneficiaries behind these fraudulent schemes.