

# New Fraud Task Force Puts Larger Spotlight on Federal Program Enforcement

The Trump Administration is expanding its efforts to target and eliminate fraud on a national scale. On March 16, President Trump signed an executive order to establish a task force to combat fraud in federal programs.

Chaired by Vice President Vance, the Task Force to Eliminate Fraud will coordinate a comprehensive national strategy to stop fraud, waste and abuse across housing, food, medical care and cash assistance-related programs. Additional functions of the task force include:

- Promoting the facilitation of information and data sharing and coordination between state, local, tribal and territorial governments and the federal government, as well as benefit and law enforcement agencies.
- Coordinating measures to improve eligibility verification, implement pre-payment controls, detect high-risk fraud trends and disrupt and dismantle fraud networks and their associated mechanisms.
- Coordinating development of anti-fraud requirements to prevent exploitation of taxpayer-funded benefits, including proof of identity and documentation, risk controls and audit and remedial actions.

The scope of this task force appears comprehensive, but it remains to be seen how well it will be able to execute fraud enforcement.

## Ongoing Fraud Focus

Fraud reduction has long been a mandate of the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ's), though recent actions by the Trump Administration have thrust it well into the national spotlight. The Trump Administration previously unveiled the [National Fraud Enforcement Division](#) on January 8, 2026, nominating Colin McDonald to lead it.

According to the U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO), fraud costs the federal government between \$233 billion and \$521 billion annually, based on data from fiscal years 2018 through 2022.

### POSTED:

Apr 21, 2026

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Curbing nationwide fraud isn't exclusive to the Trump Administration, though the president has fixated on fraud since the start of his second term. In March 2025, President Trump signed an executive order to eliminate information silos in the federal government to stop waste, fraud and abuse. The fraud focus continued in earnest at the start of the year, with the president often citing Minnesota as an example of a state rife with widespread fraud.

Minnesota, however, isn't the only state mentioned by the Trump Administration concerning fraud. According to the administration, insufficient safeguards and weak oversight have created vulnerabilities for large-scale fraud in California, Colorado, Illinois, New York and Maine.

## Increased Enforcement Coming?

Creating the new national fraud enforcement division and now the task force sets the stage for the potential for substantially increased activity. Both fraud-focused entities do not replace the already established fraud enforcement teams housed within the Criminal and Civil Divisions of the DOJ, which have several examples of fraud-related recoveries to the tune of billions of dollars.

For example, False Claims Act (FCA) enforcement netted the federal government nearly \$3 billion in recoveries in fiscal year 2024, capping off a three-year trend of increasing recoveries. The highest FCA recovery since fiscal year 2010 came in fiscal year 2014 when the recoveries topped \$6 billion, according to the DOJ.

One thing appears certain: Fraud enforcement will likely not slow down. During the executive order signing on March 16, Trump alluded to fraud being a rampant problem, stating that if the task force found half the fraud occurring in the United States, the federal government could balance the budget. If Trump continues to view fraud through this lens, it's likely that his focus on enforcement will not soften anytime soon, especially as the new division and task force start ramping up.

Reinhart's White Collar Litigation and Investigations team includes a multidisciplinary team of attorneys who specialize in white collar and criminal fraud cases and can help if you or your company becomes subject to a government fraud investigation. If you have any questions about the new task force or any of the recent federal actions related to fraud enforcement, please contact the leaders of the White Collar Litigation and Investigations team, Mark Cameli at [mcameli@reinhartlaw.com](mailto:mcameli@reinhartlaw.com) or Ryan Stippich at

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