

# Center for Constitutional Rights

## Discrimination, Detention, and Deportation: Immigration & Refugees

**<https://ccrjustice.org/home/what-we-do/our-cases/national-security-entry-exit-registration-system-nseers-freedom>**

### Policy Issue Resources

The FOIA request was filed on January 3, 2017.

Paul, Weiss, Rifkind, Wharton & Garrison LLP

[DRUM- South Asian Organizing Center](#), The Center for Constitutional Rights

On January 3, 2017, DRUM South Asian Organizing Center (DRUM) and the Center for Constitutional Rights (CCR) filed a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) Request seeking information from multiple agencies about the National Security Entry-Exit Registration System (NSEERS), a special registration program that targeted Muslim, Arab, and South Asian communities. The request seeks information about how NSEERS was developed and implemented, including the criteria used to target individuals and data showing the race, religion, and national origin of those subject to the program.

Created in 2002 on the heels of 9/11, NSEERS consisted of three phases of registration. Upon arrival to the U.S., certain nonimmigrants holding business or student visas were required to submit to fingerprinting, photographing, and interrogation. If they stayed in the U.S. for more than 30 days, males over the age of 16 from designated countries 24 out of 25 which were majority Arab or Muslim were required to regularly check in with the government and provide proof of residence and employment or matriculation. When departing from the U.S., NSEERS registrants had to record their departure and exit through designated ports. More than 90,000 Muslims were registered under NSEERS, and thousands were detained, interrogated, and deported for failure to comply with special registration requirements. As a result, families were torn apart and a deep fear settled in Muslim, Arab, and South Asian communities. NSEERS did not produce a single terrorism prosecution. The program was implemented from 2002 to 2011, when it was suspended for lack of efficiency. The underlying regulatory framework for NSEERS was dismantled in December 2016 following a broad effort by a coalition of grassroots social justice advocates, who argued that NSEERS could easily be revived by the Trump administration.

The FOIA requests were sent to the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), the Department of Justice (DOJ), U.S. Immigration & Customs Enforcement (ICE), U.S. Citizenship & Immigration Services, and U.S. Customs & Border Protection.

Information obtained from this FOIA request will enable the public to understand the impact of NSEERS and ensure that any future implementation upholds individuals constitutional rights.

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