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## Immigrant Removals Under Trump Jump 28%, DOJ Says

By **Steven Trader**

Law360, New York (August 8, 2017, 7:32 PM EDT) -- Between the time President Donald Trump took office earlier this year and the end of July, nearly 50,000 unauthorized immigrants were ordered removed from the U.S., a 28 percent increase over last year, according to statistics released Tuesday by the immigration review branch of the U.S. Department of Justice.

The DOJ's Executive Office of Immigration Review collected the data, which also indicated that total orders of removal combined with voluntary departures by immigrants in the U.S. between Feb. 1 and July 31 were up close to 31 percent over that same period last year. Final decisions issued by immigration judges also rose 14.5 percent during that time frame this year, the DOJ statement, which featured only timeline statistics, said on Tuesday.

Between Feb. 1 and July 31 this year, 49,983 unauthorized immigrants were ordered removed, compared to 39,113 last year. Another 7,086 unauthorized immigrants agreed to voluntarily depart the U.S., bringing the total removal and voluntary departures so far this year to 57,069. The total removals and voluntary departures in that same six months last year was 43,595.

There was also a total of 73,127 final decisions issued by immigration judges between February and the end of July this year, compared to 63,850 issued in that window last year.

The boost in removals over last year could be the product of Trump's **signing of an executive order** on Jan. 25 requiring more stringent enforcement on immigration.

The order called for the hiring of 10,000 more immigration officers, targeted funding for so-called sanctuary cities and revived a controversial information sharing program known as Secure Communities, which allows fingerprints of arrested individuals to be checked against U.S. Department of Homeland Security databases.

According to the DOJ statement on Tuesday, the agency mobilized more than 100 existing immigration judges to DHS detention facilities across the country after Trump signed his Jan. 25 order. More than 90 percent of the cases those new judges oversaw resulted in orders requiring unauthorized immigrants to depart or be removed, the DOJ said.

The Justice Department has also hired an additional 54 immigration judges since Trump took office "and continues to hire new immigration judges each month," its statement said.

"In addition to carrying out the president's executive order, the Justice Department is also reviewing internal practices, procedures, and technology in order to identify ways in which

it can further enhance immigration judges' productivity without compromising due process," the agency said.

A DOJ representative on Tuesday declined further comment at this time.

--Additional reporting by Allissa Wickham. Editing by Christine Chun.

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