

Role of the drug enforcement agency



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The Drug Enforcement Administration

Every year thousands of Americans and foreigners are convicted for transporting and selling narcotics around the United States. The Drug Enforcement Administration is the leading agency under the United States Department of Justice whose task is to fight against and enforce drug smuggling and use within the United States. The Drug Enforcement Administration, better known as the DEA, not only is in control of enforcing narcotics and controlled substances, but they also enforce Federal money laundering and bulk currency smuggling. (Federal Register 1.) The DEA is organized from the head of the DEA, known as the Administrator of Drug Enforcement, who is appointed by the president of the United States. A Deputy Administrator, the Chief of Operations, the Chief Inspector and three Assistant Administrators assist the Administrator. The Drug Enforcement Administration's headquarters is set in Arlington, Virginia.

“ The mission of the Drug Enforcement Administration is to enforce the controlled substance laws and regulations of the United States, or any other competent jurisdiction, those organizations and principal members of organizations, involved in the growing, manufacture, or distribution of controlled substances appearing in or destined for illicit traffic in the United States; and to recommend and support non-enforcement programs aimed at reducing the availability of illicit controlled substances on the domestic and international markets.

In carrying out its mission as the agency responsible for enforcing the controlled substances laws and regulations of the United States, the DEA's primary responsibilities include:

- Investigation and preparation for the prosecution of major violators of controlled substance laws operating at interstate and international levels.
- Investigation and preparation for prosecution of criminals and drug gangs who perpetrate violence in our communities and terrorize citizens through fear and intimidation.
- Management of a national drug intelligence program in cooperation with federal, state, local, and foreign officials to collect, analyze, and disseminate strategic and operational drug intelligence information.
- Seizure and forfeiture of assets derived from, traceable to, or intended to be used for illicit drug trafficking.
- Enforcement of the provisions of the Controlled Substances Act as they pertain to the manufacture, distribution, and dispensing of legally produced controlled substances.
- Coordination and cooperation with federal, state and local law enforcement officials on mutual drug enforcement efforts and enhancement of such efforts through exploitation of potential interstate and international investigations beyond local or limited federal jurisdictions and resources.
- Coordination and cooperation with federal, state, and local agencies, and with foreign governments, in programs designed to reduce the availability of illicit abuse-type drugs on the United States market

through nonenforcement methods such as crop eradication, crop substitution, and training of foreign officials.

- Responsibility, under the policy guidance of the Secretary of State and U. S. Ambassadors, for all programs associated with drug law enforcement counterparts in foreign countries.

Liaison with the United Nations, Interpol, and other organizations on matters relating to international drug control programs.” (Mission Statement 1.)

The Drug Enforcement Administration was created in 1973, by President Richard Nixon. (DEA History 1.) Prior to the 1970's, approximately only four million Americans had ever tried drugs, but by the early 1970's, drug use in the United States started to increase, resulting in the Drug Enforcement Administration. The DEA was not an overnight thought put in to action the next morning. The DEA rooted from several different developments dating all the way back to 1915 with The Bureau of International Revenue Department of Treasury. Along with three other developments The Bureau of Narcotics Department of Treasury, and The Bureau of Drug Abuse Control Food and Drug Administration Department of Health, Education and Welfare all became Bureau of Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs Department of Justice in 1963, which was later established as the Drug Enforcement Administration, Department of Justice. In 1973, the DEA started off with 1, 470 special agents and a budget of 74. 9 million dollars. (DEA history 4.)

By 1979, approximately twenty six million Americans were known to be regular drug users. (DEA History 25.) In nine years the number of Americans doing drugs almost tripled. The DEA wanted to take emphasis off of the drugs marijuana and cocaine and focus on the more addictive drug, heroine.

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Marijuana and Cocaine were looked at as a non-addictive, less serious drug. But, taking the attention off of the drug resulting in a widespread of usage and trafficking. In the mid 1970's, Miami, Florida became the largest drug capital of the United States and the western hemisphere. Bringing in dangerous and violent drug traffickers from Cuba and Colombia and other Latin American countries. July of 1979, Dadeland Mall was the largest shopping mall in the state of Florida. In the middle of the day two men parked an industrial van and walked into a package liquor store and shot fire. Two men were gunned down, who were soon to be identified as a Colombian cocaine trafficker and his bodyguard. This tragic incident opened the DEA's eyes to the war on marijuana and cocaine in South Florida.

By 1985, the DEA had moved up to 2, 234 special agents and a budget of \$362. 4 million dollars. As the drug trafficking continued to grow more powerful every year, the need for a higher budget and more special agents grew as well. In 1985, the crack epidemic took over majority of the United States, resulting in much violence. By 1989, it was the largest concern of the DEA. Crack is cocaine based, cooked with baking soda and water. It can be made in any average kitchen. Crack is also much cheaper than cocaine, making it easier and faster to sell. The crack epidemic originated in Miami Florida, home of the cocaine trade, then gradually moved to New York, then Chicago and eventually out to the west coast. In 1986, President Reagan enforced a Drug Free Federal Workplace Program. Allowing federal agencies to set up programs to test its employees against illegal drugs. (DEA History 59).

The early nineties, Americans considered the issue on drugs as a huge concern, spreading knowledge and awareness on drug abuse and drug trafficking throughout the nation. President George Bush focused and put in effort to target the supply and demand of the drugs in America. Bush called for the DEA to work with the counterparts overseas to reduce the supply of drugs. (DEA History 77). Crack and cocaine remain the number one challenge for law enforcement.

In 1986, the DEA established a prevention program known as the Demand Reduction program to help fight and prevent illicit drug activity through the youth of the nation. Special agents of the DEA provide trendy drug information throughout their local communities to spread word about the most common drugs in the area and what harm each of the drugs possess, targeting the younger generation. This prevention program is targeted to the youth and their caregivers

“ The teen brain is still developing. The frontal cortex is the area of the brain that controls judgment, and as a teen, this part of the brain is not fully developed and usually doesn't fully develop until around the age 25.”

(Program overview 1.)

“ The longer a child prolongs using drugs, the lower the chances are of having drug addiction or abusing drugs.” (Program overview 1.)

There are two different websites designed by the DEA provided to the teen youth and their caregivers. www.justthinktwice.com is a website dedicated to teens with tons of information about various drugs, recent news and media and the consequences of certain drug usage. The other website <https://assignbuster.com/role-of-the-drug-enforcement-agency/>

provided is directed to the parents and caregivers, www.getsmartaboutdrugs.com.

This website provides parents and caregivers with valuable information on drugs that someone's child can be exposed to, helping them identify warning signs of drug abuse and the harmful side effects of most commonly used drugs.

“ Support initiatives to reduce the demand for drugs and give assistance to community coalitions and drug prevention initiatives.” (DEA 3)

The DEA has over fifteen different programs and operations to help the function of the DEA run as successful as possible. Operations such as Organized Crime and Drug Enforcement Task Force, Southwest Border Initiative and High Intensity Drug Trafficking Areas (HIDTA) all help attack drug trafficking and reduce the drug supply in the states as well as drug supply being transported into the states from other countries. The High Intensity Drug Trafficking Areas program was created by congress to provide assistance to federal, state, local and tribal law enforcement in areas of the United States where drug trafficking is at an high. There are twenty eight current HIDTAs, they are located in 46 states. The purpose of this program is to reduce the traffic of drugs by providing reliable law enforcement intelligence to law enforcement agencies the design of effective enforcement strategies and operations. (HIDTAs 1).

“ Mission Statement

To reduce drug availability by supporting multi-agency task forces and facilitating intelligence-driven interdiction and investigation aimed at

disrupting or dismantling international and domestic drug trafficking organizations and their harmful consequences. (HIDTA 1).”

In order for an area to be considered as a HIDTA the area must be a center of illegal drug production, manufacturing, importation or distribution. Drug related activities in the area are having a large harmful impact on the area and surrounding areas. The Southwest border is the largest HIDTA in America. It consists of New Mexico, West Texas, South Texas, Arizona and the California Alliance Border Group. Their mission is to create a system working together to reduce drug availability from the Mexican border and destroying international and domestic drug trafficking and the harm that it may cause.

The Drug Enforcement Administration offers many careers and opportunities. These careers are not your average everyday nine to five. These careers are challenging and exciting in more ways than someone is used to. Becoming a special agent for the DEA is the heart of the operation. Special Agents are the most talented and diverse of the DEA. Their goal is to get rid of illegal drug distribution, prosecute traffickers and get rid of any financial infrastructure of these organizations. (Occupation 1). This position takes skills, talent and specialized training, along with multiple responsibilities. Some responsibilities may involve investigating and helping prosecute violators of controlled substance laws abroad and in the United States, working with local, state, federal and foreign officials to assist manage drug intelligence programs, searching, seizing and arresting violators and assets affiliated with illicit drug trafficking. To become a special agent, there is an extensive, in depth hiring process that may take up to a year or more to <https://assignbuster.com/role-of-the-drug-enforcement-agency/>

finalize. One must have qualification reviews, written assessments and interviews, medical examinations that include a drug test, polygraph examinations and full field backgrounds.

Another career available in the DEA are the Diversion Investigator. Diversion Investigators are responsible for putting together investigations on the fastest growing drug issue, phony, Internet pharmacies. Being a Diversion Investigator is the most challenging career choices in the DEA field. In order to be a Diversion Investigator one must be able to investigate and gather data, research and analyze data, identify significant factors, and have great verbal and writing skills. A background in law enforcement or military is highly recommended and must have excellent hearing and sight for this position. (Occupations 2)

The Forensic Sciences department of the Drug Enforcement Administration has three different branches. The forensic chemist is for the science wizards. Forensic Chemists goes to combat scientifically against illicit drug manufactures. Unusual compound drugs are constantly being composed and sold in the drug trade, forensic chemists use their intellect to break the compound down and analytically help enforce federal regulations in decreasing the distribution and abuse. The DEA recruits and hires forensic chemists from all levels of experience from highly experienced chemists to recent college graduates. A degree from a four-year accredited college or university with a major in physical science, chemistry, or engineering. (Forensic Chemist 1). The second division of the Forensic Sciences department is the Forensic Specialists. Becoming a Forensic Specialist is an opportunity to use state of the art examination techniques to form latent

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prints. Forensic Specialist have to provide testimony in courts of law and conduct training for law enforcement officials. In order to take this position, there are a few qualifications you must meet like experience performing print examinations, partial and imperfect finger prints, and assist in investigations. The third department of the Forensic Sciences department is the Forensic Computer Examiner. Becoming a Forensic Computer Examiner is a very challenging career, it is the base of digital evidence. Being a Forensic Computer Examiner calls to recover and analyze digital evidence from operating systems, databases and communication networks. This field takes more previous education than the other three, must obtain a minimum of a master's degree but the DEA prefers a Doctorate Degree.

The DEA also provides other careers in professional and administrative support, careers from accountants, attorneys, to Human Resources personnel. The DEA takes pride in their employees by providing long-term benefits to their employees. Federal employees are eligible for health and life insurance, retirement benefits, along with annual and sick leave and paid holidays. You can find a link to apply for any of these positions at DEA.gov

The Drug Enforcement Administration started with a purpose to control and fight against drug smuggling and use within the United States and control the usage of illicit drugs. The DEA has done an excellent job at controlling this task while growing as one of the largest federal agencies for the government. The DEA started out with 1, 470 Special Agents and a 75 million dollar budget and now in 2014 they are home of over 5, 000 Special Agents and a 2. 02 billion dollar budget. With the aid of High Intensity Drug Trafficking Areas and the Demand Reduction Program the DEA is doing a

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fantastic job at controlling drug trafficking. Yet, with all of these states legalizing marijuana, one can not help but wonder what the future holds for the Drug Enforcement Administration.

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