



REFERENCE MANUAL
BLACK GANGS

SIGNS, SYMBOLS, AND TATTOOS

2021





(U) This reference book is a basic overview of signs, symbols and tattoos used by some Black Street Gangs present in the United States. This is not a complete list of gangs and symbols used by these gangs and should be used as a guide to enhance the understanding of gangs and not as the sole tool for gang validation.

(U) This product is compilation of updated signs, symbols, and tattoos available to the NGIC and is strictly for intelligence purposes. State, local and federal law enforcement agencies are referenced in the acknowledgments.



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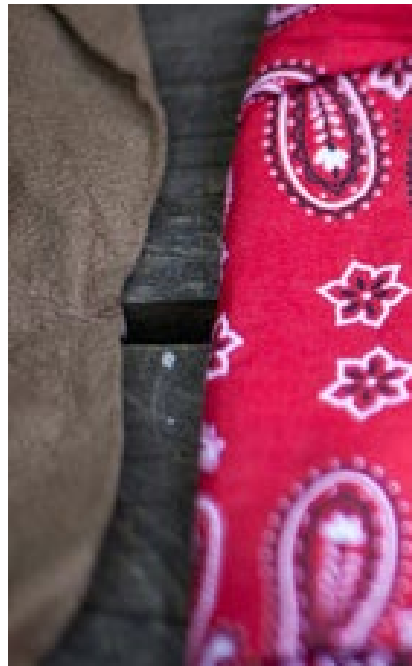
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STREET GANG DEFINITIONS AND TERMINOLOGY



Street Gang definitions vary between states and even between federal agencies. The NGIC conforms to the US Department of Justice definition of gangs:

- (1) an association of three or more individuals;
- (2) whose members collectively identify themselves by adopting a group identity which they use to create an atmosphere of fear or intimidation frequently by employing one or more of the following: a common name, slogan, identifying sign, symbol, tattoo or other physical marking, style or color of clothing, hairstyle, hand sign or graffiti
- (3) the association's purpose, in part, is to engage in criminal activity and the association uses violence or intimidation to further its criminal objectives



(4) its members engage in criminal activity, or acts of juvenile delinquency that if committed by an adult would be crimes

(5) with the intent to enhance or preserve the association's power, reputation, or economic resources

(6) the association may also possess some of the following characteristics: (a) the members employ rules for joining and operating within the association; (b) the members meet on a recurring basis; (c) the association provides physical

protection of its members from other criminals and gangs; (d) the association seeks to exercise control over a particular location or region, or it may simply defend its perceived interests against rivals; or (e) the association has an identifiable structure

(7) this definition is not intended to include traditional organized crime groups such as La Cosa Nostra, groups that fall within the Department's definition of "international organized crime," drug trafficking organizations or terrorist organizations



<http://www.justice.gov/criminal-ocgs/about-violent-gangs>



CRIPS



QUICK FACTS



FOUNDED

EARLY 1970's



FOUNDING LOCATION

LOS ANGELES, CA



RIVALRY

**ARYAN BROTHERHOOD, BLOODS,
LATIN KINGS, UNITED BLOOD
NATION**



"Crip or Die" tattoo

INTRODUCTION

(U//LES) The Crips street gang was established in Los Angeles, California, in the early 1970s by Raymond Lee Washington (deceased 1979) and co-founder, Stanley Tookie Williams (executed by lethal injection in 2005).

Crips are generally known by their geographical set names such as the Inglewood Crips, Hoover Crips, Grape Street Watts Crips, or the Rolling 60s Crips and identify themselves with the color blue. Crips have been known to cross out the letter "B," or replace it with the letter "C" to show disrespect to the Bloods. In other instances, Crip members will avoid using the letters "CK," because Blood gang members use these initials to mean "Crip Killer." Instead, Crip members commonly use the letters "BK" to mean "Blood Killer." Crip members will also use the phrase "LOC," to mean "Love Only Crips," and "cuz," "gangster" or "gangsta" to refer to each other.

The six-pointed Star of David, the number 6, and the upright pitchfork is also displayed by Crip gang members in their SST to depict their relationship with the Folk Nation alliance. The six-pointed star is used to represent life, loyalty, love, knowledge, wisdom, and understanding.

SIGNS



ABOVE
“C” hand sign



LEFT
“Double C” hand sign
Crips have been known to replace the letter “B” with the letter “C” to show disrespect to the Bloods.

**ABOVE**

“Wazup Cuz,” “Crip,” 2 pitchforks up, six-pointed star with “G” in the Center

**TOP RIGHT**

“CRIP SIDE,” six pointed star, 2 pitchforks up

BOTTOM RIGHT

187 is a California Penal Code for homicide. Slobs is a derogatory word used for a Blood gang member. This graffiti is interpreted as Crips kill Bloods.



TATTOOS



ABOVE

"Killer Blood" hand sign tattoo



LEFT

Crip members commonly use the letter "BK" to mean "Blood Killer"



GAGNSTER DISCIPLES





**“GD” on separate arms,
pitchforks up,
six pointed star**

QUICK FACTS



FOUNDED

LATE 1960's



FOUNDING LOCATION

CHICAGO, IL



RIVALS

**BLACK P STONES, BLOODS, LATIN
KINGS, PEOPLE NATION, VICE
LORDS**

(U//LES) Gangster Disciples (GD), previously known as the Black Gangster Disciples Nation, were formed in the late 1960s on the Southside of Chicago, Illinois by founders Larry Hoover and David Barksdale.

This street gang is recognized by the six-pointed star (a reference to founder, David Barksdale a.k.a. King David), upright pitchfork, heart with wings, dice with six showing, and devil tail and horns. Tattoos may also consist of the initials: BGD, GD, BGDN, and/or BOS (Brothers of the Struggle). Other identifiers for GDs include the number six (reference to the six-pointed star), 7-4, 7-4-14 (numeric representation for the letters GD and GDN). The primary colors for the GDs are blue and black. The GDs have hand signs that are in the shape of a pitchfork, a six pointed star, an “L” for Long Live Larry (Hoover), fists on top of each other (stacking), and arms crossed (standing on their six).



ABOVE

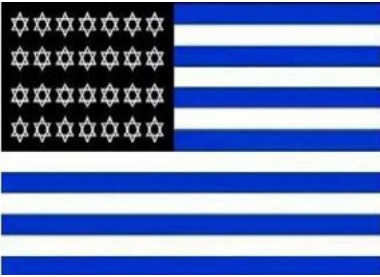
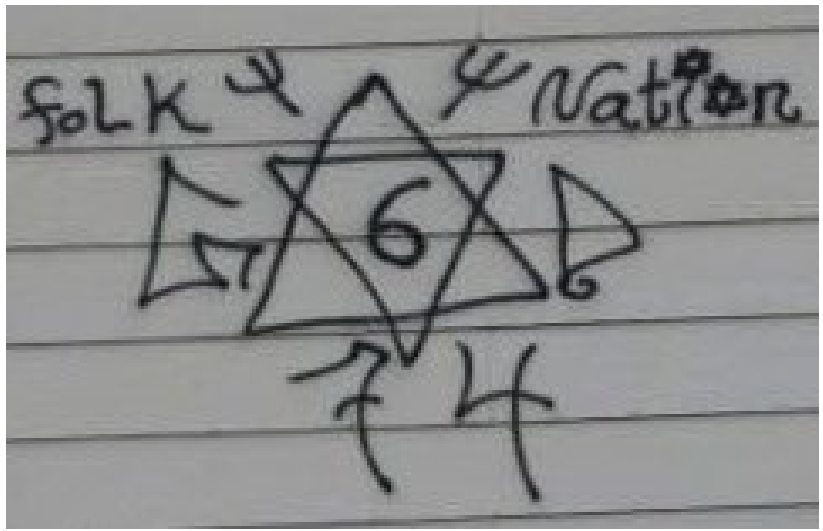
Six-pointed star hand sign

RIGHT

Pitchfork up and hand sign with six-pointed star



SYMBOLS

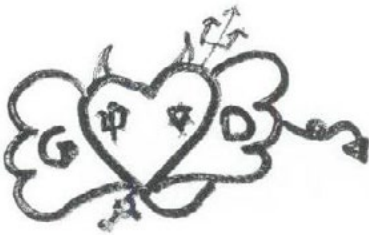


ABOVE

"GD," "7-4," "6," pitchforks up, six-pointed star, "Folk Nation"

LEFT

GD Flag



MIDDLE LEFT

"GD," heart with wings and horns, pitchfork up, six-pointed star, curled devil tail.



BOTTOM LEFT

Six-pointed star "L" hand sign for "Long Live Larry (Hoover)"



ABOVE

"7-4," Larry Hoover (GD Chairman)



LEFT

"GD," "BOS," "7-4," six-pointed star, Pitchfork up and hand signs

BOTTOM LEFT

Six-pointed star, G in the star

BOTTOM

"7-4" in roman numeral





BLOODS



QUICK FACTS

 FOUNDED

EARLY 1970's

 FOUNDING LOCATION

LOS ANGELES, CA

 RIVALS

**ARYAN BROTHERHOOD, CRIPS,
FOLK NATION, GANGSTER
DISCIPLES, MS-13**



**Bloods "b" hand sign along
with red bandana**

INTRODUCTION

(U//LES) Bloods SST include a five-pointed star and the number five (symbolizing the Bloods affiliation with the People Nation alliance), "DAMU" (Swahili for Blood), "CK" (Crip Killer), various numbers representing Blood street sets, and they identify with the color red.

The Bloods also use the acronym M.O.B (Member of Blood/ Money Over Bitches), a dog paw (often represented by three dots, sometimes burned onto the skin into a triangular shape), a bulldog, and/or the letter "B." They commonly cross out the letter "C" to show disrespect to the Crips, and cross out the letter "S" to denounce the Crip term "slobs," which is used as an offensive reference to the Bloods.

SIGNS



ABOVE

“Blood” spelled out



LEFT

Hand sign Big “B” for Bloods



BOTTOM LEFT

CK “Crip Killer” Hand Sign

**ABOVE**

“Crip Killer” and five pointed star graffiti

BELOW

“BLOODS,” “5 Poppin,” five-pointed stars and crown



TATTOOS

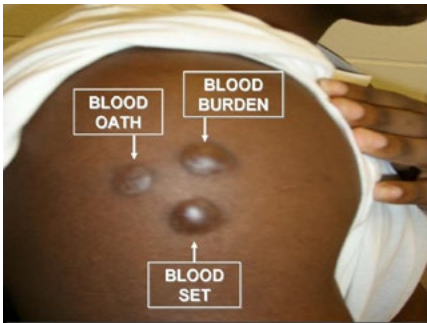


ABOVE

“Blood” carved into skin bandanna

BELOW

“Blood Gang” tattoo on forearms



Three burn marks to represent dog paw



“DAMU” on chest (Swahili for Blood)



BLACK P STONE NATION





**Pyramid with an
all-seeing eye Sun rising
above**

QUICK FACTS



FOUNDED

LATE 1950's



FOUNDING LOCATION

CHICAGO, IL



RIVALS

**FOLK NATION, GANGSTER
DISCIPLES, ARYAN BROTHERHOOD**

(U//LES) The Black P Stone Nation (BPSN) is a street gang that originated on the Southside of Chicago in the late 1950s, by Jeff Fort and Eugene Hairston. Members identify with the five-pointed star, the number five, and the crescent moon, which can also be attributed to common Islamic and Moorish symbolism. A pyramid with an all-seeing eye on the left side, 21 bricks on the right side (represent the 21 original members), the circle of seven (represents seven branches of the gang), or a rising sun above are also BPSN SST. Members use the word “P-Stones” or the letters “BPS” and identify with the colors black, red, and green. They also use the letters “LTPFJ,” which represent Love, Truth, Peace, Freedom, and Justice. Known associates of BPSN include members of El Rukn, the Moorish Science Temple, the Nation of Islam, and the Five Percenters.



ABOVE
Various signs of the pyramid

RIGHT ABOVE
5-pointed star



RIGHT BELOW
"Open right hand"



SYMBOLS

**ABOVE**

Crescent moon, five-pointed stars, "B.P.S.N.," "LTPFJ," and downward pitch forks representing disrespect to Folk Nation.

LEFT

Pyramid with an all-seeing eye, sun rising above, five-pointed stars, pitch forks down (disrespect to folk nation). "Moe Town" known as Englewood in Chicago, IL.





ABOVE

“B PEE S” a variation for Black P Stone



“BPS” on abdomen for Black P Stone.



“Black Stone” tattoo on forearms.



Pyramid with five-pointed star and an all-seeing eye on the left façade and sun rising above “B.P.S.N” for Black P Stone Nation.



VICE LORDS



QUICK FACTS



FOUNDED

LATE 1950's



FOUNDING LOCATION

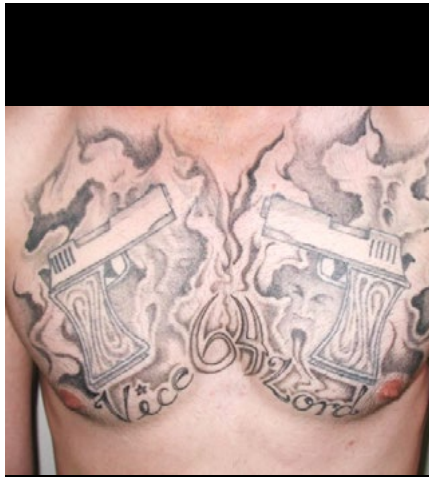
CHICAGO, IL



RIVALS

**FOLK NATION, GANGSTER
DISCIPLES**

(U//LES) The Almighty Vice Lord Nation (AVLN), aka Vice Lords (VL) was created around 1958 by a group of juvenile



"Vice Lord" tattoo with the number "64."
The "6" represents the six words asked to determine the truth (who, what, when, where, why, how) and the "4" represents the four corners of one's square.

inmates from the Illinois State Training School for Boys in St. Charles, Illinois. Following their release, the inmates migrated to the area of 16th and Lawndale Streets in Chicago, Illinois, which is referred to by VL members as the "Holy City." VL members are identified by a five-pointed star and crown (symbolizing the VL affiliation with the People Nation alliance), and to signify the gang's five principles: love, truth, peace, freedom and justice. The five-pointed star also represents the eye of Allah watching over his people.

Additional VL SST include a martini glass, a glove, pyramid with an eye above, top hat, a cane, crescent moon, a crescent moon with a fivepointed star, a rabbit head (playboy logo with both ears straight to show awareness), and area codes representing the VL member's territory (i.e. 312 for Chicago). Abbreviations for various VL sets include but are not limited to: 4CH (4-Corner Hustlers), CVL (Conservative Vice Lord), IIVL (Imperial Insane Vice Lord), UVL (Universal Vice Lords), and TVL (Traveling Vice Lords). SST with an inverted pitchfork, a broken heart with wings, and a six-pointed star broken in half signifies disrespect to their Gangster Disciples rivals. VL identify with the colors gold, black and red.

SIGNS



ABOVE
"VL" hand sign for Vice Lord



"T" hand sign for
Traveling
Vice Lord



Five-pointed crown



Five-pointed star



“20 MOB” a Traveling Vice Lord set, “21 Brick” Pyramid with an all-seeing eye and sun shining over the pyramid, “TVL” for Traveling Vice Lord.



“VL” five-pointed star, downward pitchfork (represents disrespect to Folk Nation), “4CH” for 4-Corner Hustlers

TATTOOS



Four Leaf Clover and
"CORNER HUSTLER" for
4-Corner Hustler



Cane, top hat, playboy bunny
logo, champagne glass
representing VL symbols



ABOVE

"3-22-12" for Conservative Vice Lord
(CVL) and a five-pointed crown.



LEFT

"9-9-22-12" for Imperial
Insane Vice Lord (IIVL), "VL" inside
five-pointed star with top hat,
cane, and two all-seeing eyes representing
VL symbols.



UNITED BLOOD NATION (UBN)





Red letter "B,"
"BLOOD IN BLOOD OUT,"
five-pointed stars

QUICK FACTS



FOUNDED

1993



FOUNDING LOCATION

RIKER'S ISLAND, NY

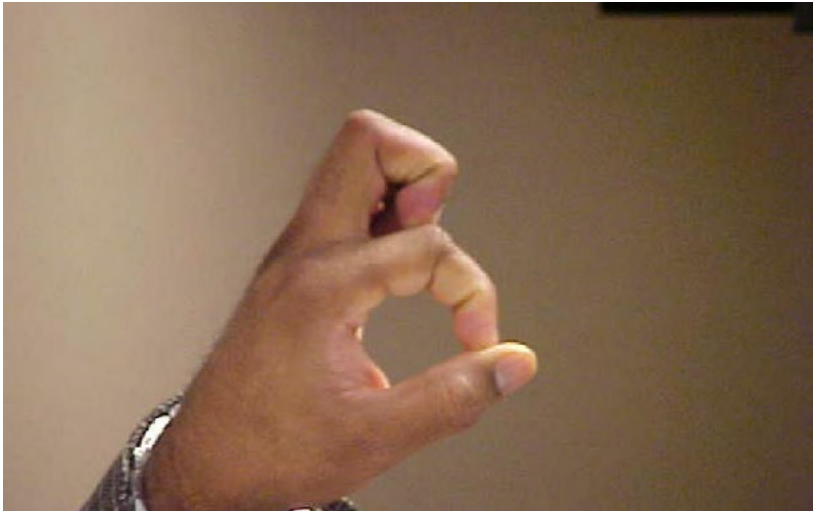


RIVALS

CRIPS, LATIN KINGS, NETAS

(U//LES) The United Blood Nation (UBN), aka East Coast Bloods was formed in 1993 by Omar Portee, aka "OG Mack" and Leonard Mackenzie, aka "OG Deadeye" while they were incarcerated at Rikers Island, New York.

UBN uses various SST to show their affiliation and loyalty to the gang that may often be mistaken for West Coast Bloods affiliation. "Blood" has become a term used to identify both the West Coast Bloods and the UBN. Despite the fact that these are two distinctly separate entities, they often use similar SST. The most common SST include the five-pointed star, five-pointed crown, the letters M.O.B. (Member of Blood/Money Over Bitches), a dog paw, a bulldog, and/or the letter "B." To differentiate UBN sets from Blood sets, UBN sets will often exhibit SST specific to their set (i.e. 5-9 Brims, Valentine Bloods, 9-Tre; Sex, Money, Murder; Gangster Killer Bloods/G-Shine).



ABOVE

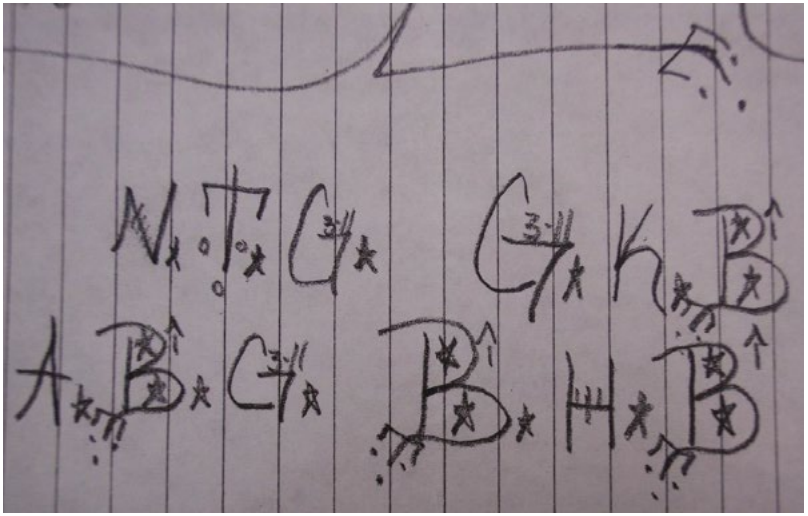
“B” for blood



“CK” for Crip Killer



Five-pointed Star



ABOVE

“NTG” (Nine Trey Gangsters), “GKB” (Gangsta Killer Bloods), “ABG” (Atlanta Blood Gang), “BHB” (Bounty Hunter Bloods), five-pointed stars, upside down pitchforks, 3 dots.



LEFT

Upside down pitchfork; letter “B,” “UBN,” “5 POPPIN 6 DROPPIN” (6 is in reference to the Crips), “CK”



LEFT

“BLOOD LOVE” and red bandana



TOP LEFT

"Blood Nation"

TOP RIGHT

Five-pointed star, number "5"

BOTTOM LEFT

Five-pointed star with initials "UBN," 3 dots, number "5," crossed out "6" (sign of disrespect to the Crips)



BLACK GUERRILLA FAMILY



QUICK FACTS

 FOUNDED

1966

 FOUNDED LOCATION

SAN QUENTIN, CA

 RIVALS

**ARYAN BROTHERHOOD, ARYAN
BROTHERHOOD OF TEXAS,
MEXICAN MAFIA**



“BGF” and dragon tattoo

INTRODUCTION

(U//LES) The Black Guerilla Family (BGF) originated from San Quentin State Prison, in San Quentin, CA, by incarcerated inmate and former Black Panther member, George Jackson, in 1966.

SST most commonly associated with BGF members include a Chinese dragon (resulting from the revolutionary influence of Mao Tse-Tung), a rifle and sword crossed, the letters BGF, the numbers 276, a silverback gorilla, and terms “silverback” and “G Family.” The BGF is the most politically oriented of the major prison gangs and draws membership from all African American street gangs nationwide. Members will try to avoid these SST in an effort to evade law enforcement and corrections’ scrutiny and rely on other SST to include two hands chained over a crossed rifle and sword, and the word “Jama” (Swahili for family).

TATTOOS



ABOVE
"276" and dragon tattoo



"SILVERBACK" tattoo



"g FAM" short for
"G Family"



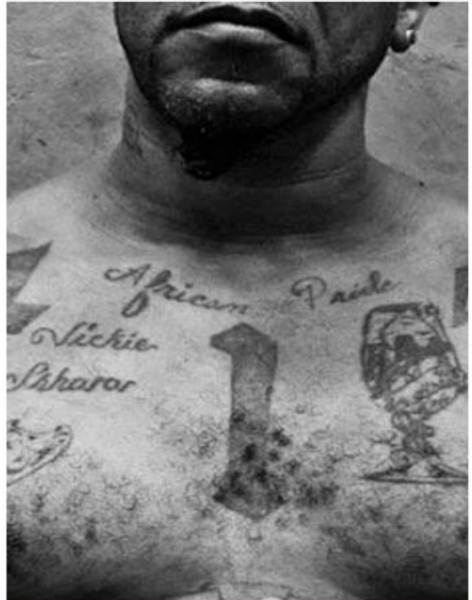
ABOVE
Silver backgorilla tattoo



“276” (2 and 6 spelled out in American Sign Language)



“BGF,” machete crossing a rifle



415 KUMI NATION



QUICK FACTS



FOUNDED

MID 1980's



FOUNDING LOCATION

SAN QUENTIN, CA



RIVALS

**ARYAN BROTHERHOOD, ARYAN
BROTHERHOOD OF TEXAS,
MEXICAN MAFIA**



"Oakland Kumi"

INTRODUCTION

(U//LES) The 415 Kumi Nation was formed in the 1980s by Leonard Fulgham, aka Mousy Brown, along with other inmates at San Quentin State Prison.

Prior to the creation of KUMI or K.A.N.O. (Kumi African Nation Organization), Fulgham and other inmates who were members of the BGF became unsatisfied with the BGF leadership and broke away and formed 415 Kumi Nation.

They began using the Swahili word "Kumi" (Koo-me) meaning "10," which is the sum of 4+1+5. 415 referred to the California Bay area code during that time.

Since they recruit from other gangs, Kumi members will often display various street gang SST.

TATTOOS



ABOVE
"Kumi"



Kumi Soldier Over Africa



"A.N.O." African Nation
Organization and "KUMI"



ABOVE
Warrior Emerging from Africa, "415"



"415"



"415," "10"



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS



- Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms & Explosives
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- Federal Bureau of Investigation
- Federal Bureau of Prisons
- Fort Bend County, Texas, Gang Unit
- Las Vegas Police Department, Nevada, Gang Unit
- National Alliance of Gang Investigators Associations
- Northwest Gang Investigators Association
- Tennessee Bureau of Investigation
- Tennessee Department of Corrections
- Tifton Police Department, Georgia, Gang Unit
- Virginia Department of Corrections



NGIC online

The NGIC's Mission is to support law enforcement agencies with timely, accurate information sharing, and strategic/tactical analysis of federal, state, local, tribal, and correctional law enforcement information. NGIC focus is on the growth, migration, criminal activity, and association of gangs that pose a significant threat to communities throughout the United States.



LAW ENFORCEMENT ENTERPRISE PORTAL (LEEP)


All NGIC Online users are authenticated through LEEP. Once authenticated they will be directed to the LEEP Portal home page, which will allow them to click on the National Gang Intelligence Center link to arrive at the NGIC Online Home Page.

WHY USE NGIC online

NGIC Online is an information system composed of web-based tools designed for researching gang-related intelligence, and sharing information with the largest possible segment of the law enforcement community. The system encourages users to contribute new data, and solicit NGIC analytical assistance in the researching existing records, conduct gang threat assessments, and/or form liaisons with our network of national subject matter experts.


SOME SERVICES OF NGIC online

GANG PROFILES




Users can view in-depth profiles about various gangs, membership, history, geography, and other topics. Users are encouraged to submit input for review and inclusion into the encyclopedia.

DICTIONARY




Users can find definitions associated with specific gangs. The gang dictionary consists of terms and their definitions, synonyms, antonyms, and pronunciations.

INTEL DOCUMENTS



The General Intelligence Library is a collection of gang-related intelligence documents. It is searchable and contains information about various street, prison, and motorcycle gangs.

SST IMAGE DETAILS



Users can view detailed information associated with an image, or notify the NGIC if they find an image useful, or require additional information.



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