

How to Refer a Lead to the National Intellectual Property Rights Coordination Center



The National Intellectual Property Rights Coordination Center (IPR Center) relies on cooperation from private industry and the public to submit information on intellectual property rights violations. We utilize a comprehensive evaluation process to review lead referrals. This process provides a repeatable and articulable process to develop leads that may prompt criminal investigation. This process is informed by federal law enforcement agencies, federal sentencing guidelines, and best practices for evidence collection. Please refer to the information below to enhance your lead referral.

Lead Referral Assessment

When a lead referral is sent to the IPR Center, it is assessed and assigned a score. A lead referral's score is based on information in the lead referral, government and proprietary database checks, and assessment by criminal analysts. A lead referral's score determines whether further investigation is recommended. Lead referrals are assessed on the following attributes:



Criminal History



Prior Import/Export History



Prior Seizure History



Financial Analysis



Monetary Loss



Victims



Health and Safety



Civil Litigation History



Knowledge of Criminality



Marketplace



Special Factors



Lead Reviewer's Adjustment

Lead Referral Prioritization

In addition to the scoring attributes above, lead referrals with the following are prioritized:

- Ties to recognized criminal or terrorist organizations
- Ties to known criminal schemes
- National security concerns
- Ties to licensed professionals/brokers
- Emerging technology
- Ties to persons in positions of public trust
- Alignment with federal goals and initiatives
- Political or public corruption
- Targeting elderly or vulnerable populations
- Alignment with federal goals and initiatives

Lead Referral Score



Lead referral scores are based on the lead referral’s attributes and whether or not the lead referral meets the requirements for prioritization. Lead referral scores range from low to high priority. The figure below describes each lead referral score and the associated next steps:

Low Priority	Low/Medium	Medium Priority	Medium/High	High Priority
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •The lead lacks sufficient evidence to evaluate and pursue an investigation ➤ Action: No further action taken 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •The lead shows few indicators for future potential investigation ➤ Action: Information published on listserv for other agencies to pursue 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •The lead shows some indicators for future potential investigation ➤ Action: Information shared to law enforcement partners; Lead is monitored and re-evaluated in 6 months; Published to listserv for other agencies to pursue 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •The lead shows many indicators for a near term investigation ➤ Action: Information is distributed via law enforcement systems; Lead could result in investigation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •The lead demonstrates credible evidence to immediately initiate investigation ➤ Action: Investigation is initiated; Information is briefed to IPR Center program manager; Lead distributed via law enforcement systems

What to Include in Your Lead Referral

The more information you provide in your lead referral, the stronger the case we can build. In particular, we look for the following information:

- Monetary loss
- Civil litigation history
- Victims
- Seizure history
- Health and safety nexus
- Knowledge and documentation that the items are counterfeit.
- Marketplace and method of sales
- Special factors

As law enforcement, we will supplement your lead with criminal history, import history, financial analysis, and additional information.

How to Submit Your Lead Referral

Please provide your lead referral to IPRcenter@dhs.gov in the following format:

- Send lead referral in one email
- Merge all attachments into PDF less than 25 MB
- Include: Dates, point(s) of contact, report writer (include name, title & company)
- Blend of paragraphs, bullet-statements, and tables
- If applicable, please also provide:
 - Cease and desist letters, civil processes, etc.
 - Trademark numbers related to violation
 - List of items of evidentiary value
 - Attach link charts, photos, and videos as available