

1. OVERVIEW

This dashboard tracks the number of immigration bond hearings held each month in U.S. immigration courts, along with how many individuals were granted or denied bond. In immigration proceedings, a bond is a monetary guarantee paid to the government that allows a detained immigrant to be released from custody while their case proceeds through court. An immigration judge determines at a bond hearing whether the individual is eligible for release and, if so, sets a bond amount. If bond is granted and paid, the person is released; if denied or unaffordable, the person remains detained for the duration of their case, which can span months or years. Bond hearings are therefore a critical gateway: when fewer hearings are held or bond is denied more frequently, more immigrants remain detained and separated from their families, jobs, and legal support, making it significantly harder to mount an effective defense. Current policies restricting whether bond hearings are even scheduled make this dashboard a key indicator of real-time access to liberty in the immigration system.

2. DATA SOURCE

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| Agency | Executive Office for Immigration Review (EOIR), U.S. Department of Justice |
| How obtained | Proactive disclosure – EOIR publishes monthly case data extracts to its public FOIA Library (justice.gov/eoir/foia-library-0) pursuant to the FOIA Improvement Act of 2016 |
| Primary table | Bond table (pipe-delimited CSV) |
| Date range | All available time periods included (records extend from the 1970s through the current release) |
| Release cadence | EOIR publishes updated extracts approximately monthly; this dashboard is refreshed mid-month for the prior month's data |

3. DATA PROCESSING

- **Hearing date vs. Comp Date:** Mobile Pathways uses the actual hearing date, not the administrative completion date ("Comp Date") to determine when a bond hearing occurred. The Comp Date reflects "the date on which the immigration judge rendered a decision on the proceeding" (per EOIR definition). This can lag the actual hearing by weeks, months, or years. In February 2026, for example, completions recorded that month included cases with hearing dates spanning back to 2013. Using Comp Date does not accurately reflect how many hearings occurred within the month and misrepresents real-time court activity. This dashboard is designed to measure when bond hearings actually took place, particularly important given current policies restricting whether bond hearings are scheduled at all. Thus, the hearing date is the operationally accurate date for this purpose.
- **Bond determination methodology:** Rather than using EOIR decision field, which include twelve (12) values such as "Granted" and "Denied", bond outcomes are assessed using actual bond amount values. A case is counted as bond granted when a non-zero bond amount is recorded; this approach captures the real financial outcome and avoids classification ambiguities in the decision field. The decision field has observable data quality issues that cannot be easily corrected, such as records with a 'Denied' or 'Released on own recognizance' bonds listing a bond amount.

4. KEY DEFINITIONS

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|---------------------|--|
| Bond granted | A bond hearing outcome in which the immigration judge sets a non-zero bond amount for either the 'initial bond' or 'new bond', allowing the individual to be released upon payment. Determined here by the presence of a bond amount value, not solely by the decision code field. |
| Bond denied | A bond hearing outcome in which the immigration judge records a zero bond amount, determining the individual is not eligible for release. |
| Hearing date | The date the bond hearing actually took place before the immigration judge. This is the date field used to assign hearings to a calendar month in this dashboard. |

5. LIMITATIONS & KNOWN DATA GAPS

- **Data entry timeliness:** EOIR data entry is variable in timeliness and accuracy. Hearing dates, outcomes, and bond amounts are entered by court staff and may be delayed or miscoded. Results cannot be fully validated at the individual record level; this is a known, systemic issue across the EOIR dataset.
- **Data corrections & updates:** EOIR data will vary from month to month, with recorded values and rows within the dataset changing across periods. These discrepancies are sometimes documented through an 'update date' field, but not consistently. Proceeding records, including bond amounts, may be changed or updated from a previous period without documentation.
- **Bond amounts vs. affordability:** This dashboard tracks whether bond was set using the bond amount, but does not track whether the bond was paid. A high bond amount may function as a de facto detention order even when technically "granted."
- **ROR releases:** Cases coded R, indicating release on own recognizance (ROR), are excluded from grant and denial counts. While ROR represents an unambiguously favorable outcome, this code carries both zero and non-zero bond amounts across records,

making consistent classification unreliable under the bond amount methodology. R codes represent approximately 0.1% of monthly bond records, so the effect on overall grant counts is minimal.

6. ANALYTICAL DECISIONS

- **Hearing date for monthly aggregation:** Using hearing date (rather than Comp Date) makes this dashboard a real-time indicator of court activity, key for tracking the immediate impact of policy changes on whether hearings are being scheduled and heard.
- **Bond amount as outcome measure:** Measuring bond outcomes by actual dollar amounts set rather than coded decision fields produces a more precise and auditable indicator of release access than binary grant/deny classifications alone.
- **Calendar month aggregation:** Data is displayed by calendar month (not fiscal year) to reflect policy effects as they emerge in near-real time.

7. DECISION CODE REFERENCE

EOIR's bond decision field contains eleven coded values plus cases where no code is recorded. The codes are an internal EOIR coding system and are not formally published in a public data dictionary. The table below reflects Mobile Pathways' internal analysis for classification of each code and the basis for that classification.

| Code | Classification | Basis for Classification |
|---------|----------------|--|
| C | GRANT | Non-zero bond amount present |
| G | GRANT | Non-zero bond amount present |
| I | GRANT | Non-zero bond amount present |
| R | EXCLUDED | Both zero and non-zero bond amounts present; ROR releases fall outside the bond amount methodology. See Limitations. |
| D | DENIAL | No bond amount present |
| E | DENIAL | No bond amount present |
| J | DENIAL | No bond amount present |
| N | DENIAL | No bond amount present |
| S | DENIAL | No bond amount present |
| A | EXCLUDED | No bond amount present; no adjudicated outcome as bond was never heard |
| W | EXCLUDED | No bond amount present; withdrawal may reflect a habeas grant, continuance, or voluntary withdrawal – because these represent fundamentally different outcomes, no determination can be made. |
| (blank) | EXCLUDED | No bond amount present; these records likely represent hearings where a decision code has not yet been entered and will be assigned in a subsequent data release. Because the dashboard revises historical figures with each new drop, prior blank records may be reclassified retroactively as codes are added. |

Note: The bond amount methodology takes precedence over decision codes in both directions. Where a denial-coded record (D, E, J, N, S) carries a non-zero bond amount, it is classified as a grant. Conversely, where a grant-coded record (C, G, I) carries no bond amount, it is classified as a denial. This means grant counts may be modestly understated where bond amounts were set by an IJ but never recorded in the dataset.

8. QUESTIONS & FEEDBACK

Please submit your request or comments [here](#).