



U.S. Customs and  
Border Protection

January 21, 2025

MEMORANDUM FOR: Executive Directors  
Directors, Office of Field Operations  
Assistant Directors, Office of Field Operations

FROM: Diane J. Sabatino  
(A) Executive Assistant Commissioner  
Office of Field Operations

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Diane Sabatino".

SUBJECT: Requirement to Use Legal, Nonpolitical Terminology

On January 20, 2025, the Senior Official Performing the Duties of the Commissioner (SOPDOC), Pete Flores, issued a memorandum to all U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) offices on the updated requirement to use legal, nonpolitical terminology, which goes into effect immediately. All prior guidance related to non-regulatory terminology is rescinded. For example, CBP personnel in distributed policy and subject case files should resume use of the term 'alien' in lieu of 'noncitizen.'

All Office of Field Operations personnel are required to classify any individuals, encountered or referenced based on their nationalities and status, as recognized by U.S. law and regulation.

Please ensure this memorandum and attached SOPDOC memorandum are distributed to port personnel. Should you require additional information, please contact Ray Provencio, Executive Director, Admissibility and Passenger Programs.

Attachment