

## NEWS ARTICLES ON KEY ISSUES – APRIL 15, 2020

### LATEST STATISTICS AND NEWS

#### NUMBER OF CONFIRMED COVID-19 CASES AMONG ICE STAFF AND DETAINED IMMIGRANTS

*There have been 91 confirmed cases of COVID-19 among those in ICE custody\*.*

- 5 detainees in Adams County Correctional Center (Natchez, MS)
- 2 detainees in Bergen County Jail (Hackensack, NJ)
- 11 detainees in Buffalo Federal Detention Facility (Buffalo, NY)
- 7 detainees in Elizabeth Detention Center (Elizabeth, NJ)
- 2 detainees in Essex County Correctional Facility (Newark, NJ)
- 6 detainees in Florence Detention Center (Florence, AZ)
- 5 detainees in Hudson County Jail (Kearny, NJ)
- 1 detainee in IAH Secure Adult Detention Facility (Livingston, TX)
- 1 detainee in Irwin County Detention Center (Ocilla, GA)
- 1 detainee in Krome Detention Center (Miami, FL)
- 2 detainees in La Palma Correctional Facility (Eloy, AZ)
- 2 detainees in LaSalle Correctional Center (Olla, LA)
- 1 detainee in LaSalle ICE Processing Center (Jena, LA)
- 15 detainees in Otay Mesa Detention Center (San Diego, CA)
- 1 detainee in Otero County Processing Center (Chaparral, NM)
- 1 detainee in Prarieland Detention Center (Alvarado, LA)
- 2 detainees in Richwood Correctional Center (Monroe, LA)
- 6 detainees in Pike County Correctional Facility (Hawley, PA)
- 2 detainees in Pine Prairie ICE Processing Center (Pine Prairie, LA)
- 3 detainees in Pulaski County Detention Center (Ullin, IL)
- 3 detainees in St. Clair County Jail (Huron, MI)
- 9 detainees in Stewart Detention Center (Lumpkin, GA)
- 1 detainee in Winn Correctional Center (Winnfield, LA)
- 1 detainee in York County Prison (York, PA)
- 1 ICE detainee at local hospital (Miami, FL)

\*Some detainees may no longer be in ICE custody. Updated 04/15/2020 12:15pm

*There have been 21 confirmed cases of COVID-19 among ICE employees working in ICE detention facilities.*

- 13 at Alexandria Staging Facility (Alexandria, LA)
- 2 at Aurora Contract Detention Facility (Aurora, CO)
- 1 at Butler County Jail (Hamilton, OH)
- 2 at Elizabeth Contract Detention Facility (Elizabeth, NJ)
- 1 at Houston Contract Detention Facility (Houston, TX)
- 1 at Hudson County Jail (Kearny, NJ)
- 1 at Otay Mesa Detention Center (San Diego, CA)

Updated 04/14/2020 6:15pm

*There have been 80 confirmed cases of COVID-19 among ICE employees not assigned to detention facilities.*

Updated 04/14/2020 6:15pm

Data Source: <https://www.ice.gov/coronavirus>



Detained migrants at a Border Patrol station in McAllen, Texas.

Credit: REUTERS/Verónica G. Cárdenas

## **GUATEMALA HEALTH CHIEF SAYS AT LEAST HALF OF DEPORTEES FROM U.S. HAVE CORONAVIRUS**

*By Patrick J. McDonnell, Molly O'Toole, Cindy Carcamo – The Los Angeles Times – April 14, 2020*

- ❖ More than half the deportees flown back to Guatemala by U.S. immigration authorities have tested positive for coronavirus, the top Guatemalan health official said Tuesday, April 14. Speaking to reporters in Guatemala City, Hugo Monroy, the minister of health, did not specify a time frame or the total number of deportees who had arrived home with infections. But hundreds of Guatemalans have been returned in recent weeks, including 182 who arrived Monday (April 13) on two flights from Texas. Monroy said that on one flight — which he declined to identify — more than 75% of the deportees tested positive. But he made clear this was not an isolated incident and said many deportees arrived with fevers and coughs and were immediately tested. “We’re not just talking about one flight,” he said. “We’re talking about all the flights.” The Guatemalan Foreign Ministry said through a spokesman Tuesday (April 14) that the “official” number of deportees diagnosed with COVID-19 is four, including one who arrived on one of the flights Monday (April 13). A high number of infections among deportees would cast doubt on the official tally of how many of the more than 33,000 migrants in U.S. detention are infected. U.S. immigration officials have said that 77 have tested positive, noting that some of those may no longer be in custody. Another flight was scheduled for Tuesday (April 14) afternoon, but Guatemalan officials did not confirm whether it had arrived. Guatemala is under a quarantine order and, as of Tuesday (April 14), had reported 150 active cases of COVID-19 and five deaths. In the United States, at least 21 U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement employees working at migrant detention centers have tested positive for COVID-19, according to the agency. That includes 13 at the Alexandria, La., staging facility that has been sending deportation flights to Guatemala and other countries. An additional 80 ICE employees who work outside of detention have also tested positive. The agency has refused to provide a count for the number of cases among thousands of contractors and personnel at private facilities that contract with the federal government to hold migrants. Since January, the U.S. government has deported more than 11,758 Guatemalans. Since March 20, when the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention issued an order blocking travelers from Canada and Mexico regardless of country of origin, U.S. officials have expelled nearly 11,000 migrants with minimal processing.
- ❖ News Article Source: <https://www.latimes.com/world-nation/story/2020-04-14/guatemala-health-chief-says-at-least-50-of-all-deportees-from-u-s-positive-for-coronavirus>

## **DETENTION CENTERS NEWS DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC**

### **DETAINED IMMIGRANTS PLEAD FOR MASKS, PROTECTION FROM VIRUS**

*By Nomaan Merchant – The Associated Press – April 14, 2020*

- ❖ Elsy was on the phone in an immigration detention center when guards showed up with face masks and forms to sign. The asylum-seeker from El Salvador and others had resorted to tearing their T-shirts into face coverings after a woman in their unit tested positive for COVID-19. But the guards would not give out the masks until the detainees signed the forms, which said they could not hold the private prison company running the detention center in San Diego liable if they got the coronavirus, according to Elsy and two other detainees, including one who read the form to The Associated Press over the phone. When they refused Friday (April 10), the guards took away the masks, said Elsy, who spoke on condition that her last name be withheld for fear of retribution. While U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement has started to lower the number of detainees to reduce the risk of people getting sick, those held in immigration jails and their advocates say there’s not enough protective gear, cleaning supplies or space to allow for social distancing. They fear the number of coronavirus cases will sharply rise in the coming weeks as it has in jails and prisons nationwide. The Otay Mesa Detention Center, where Elsy is held, jumped from one confirmed case last week to 15 on Tuesday (April 14). ICE reported 77 detainees in 13 states have tested positive and hundreds of others are quarantined. Detainees in at least four states say they have been denied masks, even as the White House has urged face coverings in public. Private prison company CoreCivic, which operates Otay Mesa, denied masks were withheld unless detainees signed waivers. The number of people in ICE detention now totals 33,800, down from about 37,000 a few weeks ago.
- ❖ News Article Source: <https://news.yahoo.com/detained-immigrants-plead-masks-protection-050324883.html>

## **IMMIGRANT DETENTION NUMBERS DECLINE AS COVID-19 SPIKES**

*By Quinn Owen – ABC News – April 11, 2020*

- ❖ The number of confirmed COVID-19 cases among detained immigrants has spiked, according to Immigration and Customs Enforcement data. A total of 61 detainees have tested positive as of late Friday (April 10), up from six cases confirmed on Monday (April 6). ICE also reported Friday (April 10) that 19 detention center staff members have tested positive. Two federal courts have ordered the Trump administration to provide updates on detention center conditions for children and families. The judge overseeing a long-standing legal challenge to detention center conditions instructed authorities last month to either release detained families or provide justification for holding them. The virus has also delayed the resettlement of immigrant children waiting to be reunited with parents and family in Washington, California and New York, according to the Office of Refugee Resettlement. At least five of the roughly 3,100 unaccompanied migrant children held by the Office of Refugee Resettlement have tested positive. Under a recent Trump administration public health directive that limits relief options for refugees, about 6,300 migrants were deported or “expelled” immediately after attempting to cross the southern border last month—as the numbers of coronavirus cases began to increase domestically in the U.S. ICE booked 18,528 people into its custody in March, down from about 23,000 in a typical month. At the end of March, ICE was holding 35,671 detainees on an average day.
- ❖ News Article Source: <https://abcnews.go.com/Politics/immigrant-detention-numbers-decline-covid-19-spikes-controversial/story?id=70094940>

## **COURT RULINGS/HEARINGS DURING COVID-19**

### **ICE REFUSES TO SAY IF ITS CONTRACTORS HAVE COVID-19. A FEDERAL JUDGE JUST ORDERED THEM TO**

*By Monique O. Madan – Miami Herald – April 15, 2020*

- ❖ A federal magistrate judge in Miami has ordered U.S. immigration officials to disclose how many of its detainees and third-party contractors at three South Florida detention centers have tested positive for coronavirus. The court order was issued Tuesday (April 14) night following a Miami Herald story that revealed U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement did not consider its contractors ICE “staff,” and that the agency said it had no obligation to include them on its website detailing how many employees at its detention centers nationwide had contracted the virus. The Herald also reported that the agency got around having to disclose that a Miami detainee was sick with COVID-19 because the detainee was technically no longer at the detention center, but rather at a hospital. All three detention centers in South Florida are operated by third-part contractors. The Herald’s reporting was cited in a federal lawsuit filed in Miami federal Court Monday (April 13) seeking the release of detainees at three South Florida detention centers. As part of the case — filed by immigration advocates against ICE and the U.S. Attorney General— Magistrate Judge Jonathan Goodman ordered that the government file the previously undisclosed information by Friday (April 17). As of Wednesday (April 15) morning, ICE says only 21 of its employees have tested positive. However, that does not include third-party contractors that operate at least 217 of its 222 detention centers nationwide.
- ❖ News Article Source: <https://www.miamiherald.com/news/local/immigration/article242022731.html>