

# NEWS ARTICLES ON KEY ISSUES - SEPTEMBER 23, 2020

## LATEST STATISTICS

### Number Of Confirmed COVID-19 Cases Among ICE Staff And Detained Immigrants

By U.S. Immigration And Customs Enforcement – September 23, 2020

As of **September 18, 2020**, the total detained population is: **20,097**<sup>1</sup>. There have been **634** confirmed cases of COVID-19 among those in ICE custody as of **September 21, 2020**<sup>2</sup>. To date, there have been **39,443** total detainees tested.

COVID-19 ICE Detainee Statistics by Facility			
Custody/AOR/Facility	Confirmed cases currently under isolation or monitoring	Detainee deaths <sup>3</sup>	Total confirmed COVID-19 cases <sup>4</sup>
<b>Atlanta Field Office</b>			
Charleston County Detention Center	0	0	2
Columbia Regional Care Center	0	0	1
Folkston ICE Processing Center	19	0	68
Irwin County Detention Center	11	0	43
Robert A. Deyton Detention Center	0	0	1
Sheriff Al Cannon Detention Center	0	0	1
Stewart Detention Center	5	3	341
<b>Baltimore Field Office</b>			
Worcester County Jail	1	0	1
<b>Boston Field Office</b>			
Bristol County Detention Center	0	0	1
Franklin County House of Corrections	0	0	7
Strafford County Corrections	0	0	2
Wyatt Detention Center	0	0	2
<b>Buffalo Field Office</b>			
Buffalo (Batavia) Service Processing Center	0	0	49
<b>Chicago Field Office</b>			
Chase County Detention Facility	5	0	60
Lincoln County Detention Center	0	0	1
McHenry County Adult Correctional Facility	0	0	5
Pulaski County Detention Center	2	0	72
<b>Dallas Field Office</b>			
Bluebonnet Detention Facility	0	0	296
Eden Detention Center	50	0	54
Johnson County Law Enforcement Center	1	0	1
Kay County Detention Center	0	0	1
Moore Detention Center	0	0	20
PrairieLand Detention Facility	15	0	90
Rolling Plains Detention Center	1	0	56

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<b>Denver Field Office</b>			
Aurora Contract Detention Facility	28	0	47
<b>Detroit Field Office</b>			
Calhoun County Correctional Center	3	0	16
Geauga County Jail	1	0	1
Morrow County Correctional Facility	0	0	48
Saint Clair County Jail	0	0	11
<b>El Paso Field Office</b>			
Cibola County Correctional Center	0	0	1
El Paso Service Processing Center	10	0	202
Otero County Processing Center	2	0	152
Torrance County Detention Center	0	0	55
<b>Houston Field Office</b>			
Coastal Bend Detention Center	3	0	12
Houston Contract Detention Facility	16	0	145
IAH Polk Adult Detention Facility	6	0	25
Joe Corley Detention Center	0	1	50
Montgomery Processing Center (Houston)	0	0	207
<b>Los Angeles Field Office</b>			
Adelanto ICE Processing Center	57	0	73
<b>Miami Field Office</b>			
Baker County Detention Center	1	0	4
Broward Transitional Center	34	0	146
Glades County Detention Center	10	1	165
Krome North Service Processing Center	2	0	182
Larkin Behavioral Health Center	0	0	2
San Juan Staging Facility	0	0	1
Wakulla County Jail	3	0	33
<b>Newark Field Office</b>			
Elizabeth Detention Center	0	0	18
Essex County Jail	0	0	8
<b>New Orleans Field Office</b>			
Adams County Correctional Center	18	0	82
Alexandria Staging Facility	11	0	146
Allen Parish Detention Center	0	0	10
Catahoula Correctional Center	2	0	119

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<b>New Orleans Field Office Cont'd</b>			
Etowah County Jail	1	0	22
Jackson Parish Correctional	79	0	85
LaSalle ICE Processing Center - Jena	3	0	32
LaSalle ICE Processing Center - Olla	1	0	25
Pine Prairie ICE Processing Center	0	0	65
Richwood Correctional Center	43	0	116
River Correctional Center	9	0	22
South Louisiana Correctional Center	0	0	3
Winn Correctional Center	11	0	207
<b>New York City Field Office</b>			
Bergen County Jail	0	0	5
Hudson County Jail	0	0	14
<b>Philadelphia Field Office</b>			
Pike County Correctional Facility	0	0	22
York County Prison	51	0	81
<b>Phoenix Field Office</b>			
CCA Florence Correctional Center	4	0	23
Eloy Federal Contract Facility	2	0	251
Florence Detention Center	2	0	67
La Palma Correctional Facility	11	0	366
<b>Salt Lake City Field Office</b>			
Cache County Jail	12	0	15
Henderson Detention Center	16	0	20
Nevada Southern Detention Center	3	0	10
Nye County Jail	0	0	37
Washington County Jail	2	0	3
<b>San Antonio Field Office</b>			
El Valle Detention Facility	14	0	45
Karnes County Family Residential Center	1	0	80
Laredo Processing Center	5	0	6
LaSalle County Regional Detention Center	1	0	1
Limestone County Detention Center	2	0	55
Port Isabel Detention Center	5	0	148
Rio Grande Detention Center	1	0	161
South Texas Family Residential Center (Dilley)	0	0	4

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<b>San Antonio Field Office Cont'd</b>			
South Texas ICE Processing Center (Pearsall)	5	0	180
Webb County Detention Center (CCA)	0	0	84
<b>San Diego Field Office</b>			
Imperial Regional Detention Facility	0	0	3
Otay Mesa Detention Center (San Diego CDF)	2	1	171
San Luis Regional Detention Center	0	0	11
<b>San Francisco Field Office</b>			
Golden State Annex Facility	2	0	2
Mesa Verde ICE Processing Center	2	0	59
<b>Seattle Field Office</b>			
Tacoma ICE Processing Center (Northwest Detention Center)	0	0	15
<b>St. Paul Field Office</b>			
Douglas County Corrections	0	0	1
Freeborn County Adult Detention Center	0	0	4
Linn County Jail	0	0	2
Phelps County Jail	0	0	2
Polk County Jail	0	0	12
<b>Washington D.C. Field Office</b>			
Caroline Detention Facility	27	0	32
Immigration Centers of America - Farmville	0	1	339
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>634</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>6,044</b>

<sup>1</sup> ICE's FY 2019 Average Daily Population was 50,165.

<sup>2</sup> "Currently under isolation or monitoring" includes detainees who tested positive for COVID-19 and are currently in ICE custody under isolation or monitoring. This number excludes detainees who previously tested positive for COVID-19 and were either returned to the general population after a discontinuation of medical monitoring/isolation or are no longer in ICE custody.

<sup>3</sup> "Detainee deaths" includes those who have died after testing positive for COVID-19 while in custody; COVID-19 may not be the official cause of death.

<sup>4</sup> "Total confirmed COVID-19 cases" is the cumulative total of detainees who have tested positive for COVID-19 while in ICE custody since testing began in February 2020. Some detainees may no longer be in ICE custody or may have since tested negative.

**There have been 45 confirmed cases of COVID-19 among ICE employees working in ICE detention facilities.**

1 at Adelanto ICE Processing Center (Adelanto, CA)  
 15 at Alexandria Staging Facility (Alexandria, LA)  
 2 at Aurora Contract Detention Facility (Aurora, CO)  
 1 in Bergen County Jail (Hackensack, NJ)  
 1 at Butler County Jail (Hamilton, OH)  
 1 at El Paso Processing Center (El Paso, TX)  
 2 at Elizabeth Contract Detention Facility (Elizabeth, NJ)  
 1 at Eloy Detention Center (Eloy, AZ)

1 at Essex County Correctional Facility (Newark, NJ)  
 1 at Florence Correctional Center (Florence, AZ)  
 2 at Houston Contract Detention Facility (Houston, TX)  
 1 at Hudson County Jail (Kearny, NJ)  
 2 at La Salle ICE Processing Center (Jena, AL)  
 11 at Otay Mesa Detention Center (San Diego, CA)  
 2 at Stewart Detention Center (Lumpkin, GA)  
 1 at T. Don Hutto Residential Center (Taylor, TX)

**There have been 153 confirmed cases of COVID-19 among ICE employees not assigned to detention facilities.**

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

## ICE Air Deportation Flights

By Tom Cartwright – *Witness at the Border* – September 20, 2020

- ❖ ICE Air flights totaled 84 with 24 deportation flights from Sept. 14 thru Sept. 18.
  - Mexico (9)
  - Honduras (4)
  - Guatemala (4)
  - El Salvador (1)
  - Ecuador (1)
  - 16 Deportation U.S. Connections
  - 20 Deportation Returns
  - 39 Shuffle flights in the U.S.
- ❖ Statistics Source: <https://www.witnessattheborder.org/posts/82920>

## LATEST NEWS

### Administration Reimposes "Public Charge" Immigration Wealth Test Following Court Orders

By Camilo Montoya-Galvez – *CBS News* – September 22, 2020

- ❖ The administration on Tuesday [September 22] said it is reimposing its "public charge" wealth test for green cards that had been blocked during the pandemic, a move likely to alarm advocates, who have warned about the policy's impact on immigrant communities ravaged by the coronavirus. The 2019 rule, which gives officials more power to deny permanent residency to applicants the government deems rely or could rely on public benefits like food stamps or housing vouchers, was blocked in late July by a federal judge who found it was hampering efforts to contain the virus. Citing declarations by doctors and local officials who said immigrants across the country feared they could jeopardize their immigration status by seeking medical treatment and government aid during the pandemic, Judge George Daniels blocked the policy's implementation for the duration of the national coronavirus emergency. However, subsequent orders by the 2nd Circuit Court of Appeals, including one earlier this month, limited and ultimately suspended Daniels' ruling, allowing the administration to again enforce the public charge test. In updated guidance on its website on Tuesday [September 22], U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) said it would apply the 2019 public charge test to all future and pending green card applications filed after February 24, 2020, when the agency implemented the rule following the Supreme Court's green light. Applications filed after Daniels' injunction in July that have been approved will not be re-adjudicated, USCIS said. The 2019 rule broadened the type and amount of benefits that count against immigrants seeking to stay in or move to the U.S., requiring immigration caseworkers to consider enrollment in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), certain federally funded Medicaid benefits, and a variety of forms of government-subsidized housing, including Section 8 vouchers.
- ❖ News Article Source: <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/trump-public-charge-immigration-wealth-test-court-ruling/?ftag=CNM-00-10aac3a>



Customs and Border Protection officials detain a migrant group near the Paso del Norte International Bridge.  
Photo Credit: Ivan Pierre Aguirre/The Texas Tribune

### Administration Pushes To Reap Biometric Data From Immigrants, Americans

By Genevieve Douglas and Shaun Courtney – *Bloomberg Law* – September 21, 2020

- ❖ Six million would-be U.S. immigrants face expanded collection of their biometric data, including iris scans, palm-, and voice-prints, facial recognition images, and DNA, under a proposed federal rule. The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) also for the first time would gather that data from American citizens sponsoring or benefiting from a visa application. Years in the making, the biometrics immigration rule has garnered more than 160 comments since its Sept. 11 publication. The 30-day comment period closes on Oct 13. A final version could be in place by Inauguration Day. The 300-plus-page plan updates current biometrics requirements so that "any applicant, petitioner, sponsor, beneficiary, or individual filing or associated with an immigration benefit or request, including U.S. citizens, must appear for biometrics collection without regard to age unless the agency waives or exempts the requirement." The DHS estimates an additional 2.17 million new biometrics submissions will be collected annually, an increase from the current 3.9 million, under the rule. The DHS already collects fingerprints from some visa applicants. The new rule would expand that biometrics-gathering to iris images, palm- and voice- prints. The agency wants authority to require or request DNA testing to prove familial relationships where kinship is in question. The DNA data could be stored indefinitely, under the proposed rule. The potential influx of millions of biometrics submissions raises the question of whether the DHS has the infrastructure to store, secure, and retain this sensitive data, and with whom it will be shared, Saira Hussain, a staff attorney for the Electronic Frontier Foundation's civil liberties team, said.
- ❖ News Article Source: <https://news.bloomberglaw.com/daily-labor-report/trump-pushes-to-reap-biometric-data-from-immigrants-americans>
- ❖ To read the entire proposal go to: <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2020/09/11/2020-19145/collection-and-use-of-biometrics-by-us-citizenship-and-immigration-services>

## After A Pandemic Pause, ICE Resumes Deportation Arrests

By Miriam Jordan – *The New York Times* – September 12, 2020

- ❖ Since mid-July, immigration agents have taken more than 2,000 people into custody from their homes, workplaces and other sites, including a post office, often after staking them out for days. In Los Angeles, agents made 300 arrests. More than a thousand others were rounded up in New York, Atlanta and Phoenix, as well as in cities in Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Jersey, Utah and Wyoming. About 85 percent of those arrested either had criminal convictions or pending criminal charges. Fourteen people had been convicted of homicide, and 12 faced murder charges. Assault, domestic violence and “family offenses” comprised the bulk of convictions or pending charges. But analysis of the totality of the government’s own data shows that the administration is arresting large numbers of undocumented immigrants whose crimes are minor, or who have not committed any crime at all. These immigrants are easier to locate and remove precisely because they are not trying to evade law enforcement, even if they have outstanding deportation orders. In the 2019 fiscal year, federal agents arrested more than 143,000 people in the interior. The most common convictions or criminal charges pending against them were for driving under the influence (74,000), followed by drug offenses (67,000). Only 1,900 had been charged or convicted of homicide. The most recent deportation data available, for the first five months of the 2020 fiscal year, shows that 52 percent of those removed from the country had no criminal record, according to Transactional Records Access Clearinghouse (TRAC), up from about 40 percent in each of the previous three fiscal years.
- ❖ News Article Source: <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/09/12/us/ice-immigration-sweeps-deportation.html>

## DETENTION CENTERS NEWS DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC

### Immigrant Detainees Get Poor Medical Care, Face Retaliation For Speaking Out, According To Democrat-Led Report

By Nick Miroff – *The Washington Post* – September 21, 2020

- ❖ Immigrant detainees in U.S. government custody are getting inadequate medical, dental and mental health care, and they face potential punishment for speaking out, according to a report issued Monday [September 21] by Democrats on the House Homeland Security Committee. Citing inspections of eight private and county-run detention facilities overseen by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), the report said guards threatened to lock detainees in isolation cells in retaliation for making too many complaints or medical requests. The committee said its staff spoke to 400 detainees. “The Committee’s review of the conditions at ICE detention facilities confirms that ICE does not do enough to ensure that its own standards of confinement are met,” the report says. “Conditions at ICE facilities also revealed ongoing problems with cleanliness, use of segregation, and access to legal and language services.” In one instance described in the findings, an ICE detainee in Louisiana went into anaphylactic shock four times in four months before blood tests were administered that determined the man had a peanut allergy. At a jail in New Mexico, where an inspector made an unannounced visit, the facility was “a mess” and 300 sick calls by detainees had gone unanswered, while immigrants with chronic conditions lacked routine care. The committee’s report said the facilities it toured were generally clean, but it also noted several of the sites appeared to have been spruced up before inspectors’ scheduled visits. The report questioned the private detention companies’ use of detainees to clean and otherwise perform unpaid labor while in custody. The report follows allegations made by a former nurse who worked at the Irwin County Detention Facility in southern Georgia, one of the more than 200 detention facilities ICE uses nationwide. The nurse, Dawn Wooten, said the facility failed to adhere to coronavirus safety protocols, and she also alleged that a large number of unwanted hysterectomies have been performed on detainees by a local doctor known as “the uterus collector.”
- ❖ To read the report, go to: <https://homeland.house.gov/imo/media/doc/Homeland%20ICE%20facility%20staff%20report.pdf>
- ❖ News Article Source: [https://www.washingtonpost.com/immigration/ice-detainees-health-care-report/2020/09/21/270a64f4-fc1e-11ea-830c-a160b331ca62\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/immigration/ice-detainees-health-care-report/2020/09/21/270a64f4-fc1e-11ea-830c-a160b331ca62_story.html)



Inside the U.S. Border Patrol station in McAllen, Texas.  
Photo Credit: Office of Inspector General/  
Department of Homeland Security/Getty Images



## ICE Is Trying To Deport A Man With COVID Over A Year After Beating And Tasing Him

By Trone Dowd – Vice News – September 21, 2020

- ❖ ICE agents beat and tased an Uzbekistan man as they tried to force him onto a plane back to his home country, even though he had gotten a stay that day. Now they're using the incident against him as he seeks release after contracting COVID-19 while in ICE custody. Bakhodir Madjitov, a 39-year-old father of three, is seeking damages related to injuries and mental anguish suffered in a June 2019 incident at JFK Airport in New York, according to a Sept. 18 court filing submitted to the U.S. District Court in New York. ICE agents used force as they attempted to deport Madjitov the same day a federal appeals court enacted the stay for his removal from the country, according to the court filing. The agents repeatedly ignored his pleas to check for the court's recent ruling and tried to force him on a plane back to Uzbekistan, where he will likely face persecution due to a family member's involvement in a local religious movement fighting against Syrian government forces. As he resisted, ICE agents battered and tased him twice, and the situation only deescalated when a crowd of onlookers gathered. Madjitov was hospitalized after the incident, suffering burns and head and spine trauma, according to the court filing. He's been held in ICE custody ever since, moved around to detention facilities in four different states, and in July 2020 tested positive for coronavirus. As he's now appealing for a medical release, ICE is denying it on the grounds that he resisted the agents in the JFK Airport incident. His COVID diagnosis, his lawyer says, poses a serious threat to his life due to existing health issues. Diana Blank, an attorney with the New Haven Legal Assistance Association acting as Madjitov's legal counsel, told VICE News that he suffers from hypertension, liver ailments, and Bradycardia, or slower-than-average heart rate. Instead of releasing him following his COVID-19 diagnosis, Madjitov has been placed in solitary confinement, according to the court filing, cutting him off from communicating with his lawyers and family. Placing detainees in solitary confinement has been a common ICE practice since the start of the pandemic. Madjitov is now suing the agency for assault and battery, false imprisonment, intentional infliction of emotional distress, negligence, negligent supervision, and abuse of process and seeking a restraining order against the U.S. government.
- ❖ News Article Source: [https://www.vice.com/en\\_us/article/wxq3yb/ice-is-trying-to-deport-a-man-with-covid-over-a-year-after-beating-and-tasing-him](https://www.vice.com/en_us/article/wxq3yb/ice-is-trying-to-deport-a-man-with-covid-over-a-year-after-beating-and-tasing-him)



Families detained at a U.S. Border Patrol Station in McAllen, Texas.

Photo Credit: Office of Inspector General/ Department of Homeland Security/Getty Images

## This Florida Prison Is Now Partners With ICE In Enforcing Immigration Crackdown

By Ana Ceballos – Miami Herald – September 18, 2020

- ❖ A select group of correctional officers at a Northwest Florida prison is set to take part in a federal immigration program that will allow officers to interrogate any detainee who they believe is in the country illegally and process them for potential immigration violations. Florida Corrections Secretary Mark Inch signed the agreement with U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) in mid-August, though corrections officials only made the formal partnership public on Friday [September 18]. The push to participate in the program — known as 287(g) — began a year and a half ago, at the request of Gov. Ron DeSantis, who has long embraced the administration's hard-line immigration policies. Opponents say, the new partnership will fuel more family separations in Florida, where about 20% of the state's population is foreign-born. "In a state where 1 in 5 people are immigrants, and where U.S. citizens are often caught in ICE's sprawling net, we should be taking steps to protect our communities and not furthering our role in the federal deportation agenda leading to the separation of families," said Gaby Guadalupe, a spokeswoman for the American Civil Liberties Union Foundation of Florida. Under the agreement, correctional officers will need to get trained by ICE instructors before they can perform any of the functions of a federal immigration agent. Department of Corrections spokeswoman Michelle Glady said the department wants to train five or six officers to serve in the program, but the numbers have not been finalized. Under the agreement, ICE is responsible for paying all travel, housing and per-diem costs associated with department personnel's training for the program. But once the officers are trained, the state will be responsible for all costs associated with immigration enforcement duties, including travel, per-diem and overtime expenses. Once trained, state correctional officers will have the authority to interrogate any detainee about "their right to be or remain in the United States," if the officer believes they are in the country illegally, according to the agreement. Officers will have the power to identify undocumented immigrants and hand them over to ICE, and they will be allowed to interview undocumented immigrants and prepare affidavits and charging documents for their court appearances. Under the agreement, officers will also be authorized to issue "immigration detainers," meaning a request at another law enforcement agency to detain a person based on probable cause that the person is a "removal alien" under federal immigration law.
- ❖ News Article Source: <https://www.miamiherald.com/news/politics-government/state-politics/article245837490.html>

## 5,000 People Contract COVID-19 While In ICE Custody, Including This Father Of 5

By Reynaldo Leañós Jr. – Texas Public Radio – September 17, 2020

- ❖ Jessica and her five children haven't seen Hilder Lainez-Alvarez—their husband and father—in several months. He's being detained at the Port Isabel Detention Center in the Rio Grande Valley. Lainez-Alvarez was transferred to that Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) facility after being held at the neighboring El Valle Detention Center in Willacy County. He was placed into removal proceedings in February and an immigration judge granted him voluntary departure. Lainez-Alvarez departed back to his home country of Nicaragua in March, where his wife said he was almost killed. He was apprehended at the border in May after trying to reenter the U.S. "When Border Patrol found him back in early May and they broke his hand, fractured his arm, they did a botched surgery," she said. "He's already had pus coming out of his hand due to the lack of medical treatment in the facility." A few weeks ago, Jessica said she got a scary call from her husband in detention. "He said, 'Jesse, I want to tell you something. I have really bad news and I want you to be strong and you're doing the best you can. You're a good mom,'" she said recalling the conversation she had with him. "Take care of my kids, but I have this virus. I have COVID-19." More than 5,000 people in ICE detention centers across the country have contracted COVID-19 and there are more than 600 active cases. During the pandemic, ICE officials have released some medically vulnerable detainees, but Jessica is struggling to get her sick husband out of ICE detention. Jessica reached out to an organization called Freedom For Immigrants. They filed a complaint with the Department of Homeland Security's Office for Civil Liberties and Civil Rights and asked them to investigate and ensure Lainez-Alvarez received immediate medical care. Freedom For Immigrants has been calling for Lainez-Alvarez's release because they say ICE has proven itself incapable to take care of him. In a statement ICE officials said, "All detainees in ICE custody are provided necessary medical care and attention, any allegation to the contrary is simply not true."
- ❖ News Article Source: <https://www.texasobserver.org/ice-covid-19-5000-cases/>

## COVID-19 Outbreak In Adelanto ICE Detention Center

By City News Service – September 17, 2020

- ❖ A civil rights group in Los Angeles called Thursday [September 17] for the government to take immediate action to combat what it called a major outbreak of COVID-19 moving through the Adelanto ICE Processing Center. Of 80 jailed immigrants tested, 39 have tested positive, with an undisclosed number of results "still pending," according to the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) Foundation of Southern California, which quoted documents provided by the U.S. Department of Justice in response to an ACLU request. The tests were done on people in two dorms at the center run by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) that had reported COVID-19 cases, according to the ACLU. ICE spokesperson Alexx Pons said that when a detainee exhibits symptoms consistent with COVID-19, immediate action is taken to isolate/monitor, provide care, and conduct contact tracing to extrapolate the possible source of the infection. The filing also asks for far more disclosure on testing and conditions at the Adelanto center. ACLU lawyers had previously asked for the U.S. Department of Homeland Security to test everyone held at the facility and the release of medically vulnerable individuals. As of Thursday [September 17], Adelanto was at 36% capacity, with 748 detainees, according to Pons. In July, defense attorneys began filing bail applications with a Los Angeles federal judge on behalf of detainees at Adelanto requesting release. Since then, the judge has ordered nearly 60 detainees to be released.
- ❖ News Article Source: <https://www.nbclosangeles.com/news/local/covid-19-outbreak-in-adelanto-ice-detention-center/2430005/>

## Mexico Asks U.S. For Answers About Alleged Migrant Detention Abuse

By Reuters – September 16, 2020

- ❖ Mexico said on Wednesday [September 16] said it had formally requested a report from U.S. authorities regarding alleged negligent practices in U.S. immigration detention centers, citing accusations of sexual abuse and unauthorized hysterectomies. The request come after a complaint by a whistleblower nurse alleging that detainees in a Georgia immigration detention facility had improperly received hysterectomies and other gynecological procedures. The complaint did not specify the nationality of the affected detainees. In a separate case, the Mexican ministry said its consulate in El Paso, Texas was in contact with a Mexican woman and her lawyer after an allegation of sexual abuse by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents. In August, ProPublica and The Texas Tribune reported allegations of a guard sexually abusing detainees including a Mexican woman at an El Paso immigration detention center. ICE at the time said the accusations would be investigated. The ministry said both consulates were seeking clarity from U.S. authorities and trying to identify any affected Mexicans. It said Mexico had activated consular protection mechanisms and that consular personnel had increased attention at the detention centers to ensure rights were respected, the ministry said. "The government of Mexico will promptly follow up through its various diplomatic and legal instruments to fully understand what happened," the ministry said in a statement.
- ❖ News Article Source: <https://www.reuters.com/article/idUSKBN26809V>



## MIGRANTS IN MEXICO

### Obstacles Mount For 'Remain In Mexico' Migrants

By Silvia Foster-Frau – San Antonio Express-News – September 16, 2020

- ❖ The bridge connecting Matamoros to Brownsville used to be a symbol of hope for thousands of asylum-seekers. They made an encampment of tarp and garbage bags right next to it, their tents often facing the Rio Grande and the U.S. But with court hearings postponed amid the pandemic, a lack of U.S. immigration lawyers in northern Mexico, fear of kidnapping and a recent hurricane, the migrants in Matamoros and all along the border have the slimmest of chances of getting into the U.S. More than 43,800 cases have been completed for the migrants who were caught in the administration's Migrant Protection Protocols (MPP), which requires them to wait in Mexico while they attend hearings on the U.S. side. The policy began in January 2019 but largely has been shelved. Most migrants now are quickly deported without asylum hearings. Only 525 migrants — just over 1 percent — were granted asylum or another form of relief this year. The rest were deported, or their cases were terminated. About 21,000 migrants still are stuck in the process, waiting for the courts to reopen to resume their hearings, according to the nonprofit Transactional Records Access Clearinghouse (TRAC). More than 32,500 MPP migrants already have received orders of removal. And more than 28,000 of those orders were because the migrants missed their court hearings. Since October 2019, 89 percent of the migrants who were allowed into the U.S. attended every court hearing. But only about 50 percent of migrants waiting in Mexico are attending all their hearings, TRAC found. Though the MPP program was reduced this year, August showed an uptick in MPP cases, with about 770 migrants put into the program, compared with only 124 in May. The majority of the MPP cases in August occurred in El Paso, with nearly 500 migrants put into MPP, followed by the Del Rio sector at 74. The MPP migrants who have received orders of removal were not deported to their home country. The migrants simply were sent back to Mexico and not allowed back in the U.S. Once "deported," the tens of thousands of MPP migrants can make a choice to stay in Mexico, attempt to cross into the U.S. illegally or return to their home country. More than 3,800 MPP migrants this year have attempted to re-enter the U.S., according to data from U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP). In Matamoros, the encampment that once had held more than 2,500 migrants has dropped to below 1,000. A fence was placed around the camp, and no newcomers are allowed in. In June, the first coronavirus case was recorded at the camp. Since then, 84 migrants have tested positive.
- ❖ News Article Source: <https://www.expressnews.com/news/local/article/Obstacles-mount-for-Remain-in-Mexico-15570211.php>



Migrants are gathered inside the fence of a makeshift detention center in El Paso, Texas on March 27, 2019.

Photo Credit: Sergio Flores/  
The Washington Post via Getty Images

## DEVELOPING STORIES

### Administration Slow To Approve Diversity Visas Ahead Of Deadline, Despite Court Order

By Chantal Da Silva – Forbes – September 22, 2020

- ❖ The administration has revealed that it has issued just over 1,000 diversity visas to immigrants from underrepresented countries since receiving a federal court order earlier this month to resume issuing the documents ahead of a September 30 deadline. In a court filing submitted on Monday [September 21], the government said that since September 4, it had so far managed to issue 1,009 diversity visas, bringing the total number of visas issued so far in fiscal year 2020 up to just over 12,600. Each year, the U.S. government issues as many as 55,000 visas to people from countries that are underrepresented through a lottery system. Those who are selected face an easier process for obtaining green cards, but they lose their spot if they do not have their visas by September 30. In the midst of the pandemic, the administration froze the visa program in April, leaving around 43,000 lottery winners in limbo. However, with the end-of-September deadline looming, U.S. District Judge Amit Mehta brought a partial end to the freeze, ordering the government to resume the program.
- ❖ News Article Source: <https://www.forbes.com/sites/chantaldasilva/2020/09/22/trump-administration-slow-to-approve-diversity-visas-ahead-of-deadline-despite-court-order/#53fb0ea4226a>

## Calls To Block DOJ Official From Court Seat Over Role In Family Separations

By Stephanie Kirchgaessner – *The Guardian* – September 21, 2020

- ❖ Immigrant rights groups are calling on New York senators to oppose the judicial nomination of a top Department of Justice official because of her role in the administration’s child separation policy. A letter to the senators signed by Families Belong Together (FBT), a campaigning group that opposes the administration’s separation policies, said Iris Lan’s “involvement in and facilitation of” the administration’s policy made her unfit to serve on a lifetime seat as a federal judge in the southern district of New York. Senate rules require district court judges to be informally approved by the state’s two home senators in order to proceed with their confirmation, in a secretive process that is known as giving judicial nominees a “blue slip”. If Lan’s nomination were to be blocked by the two senators – Chuck Schumer and Kirsten Gillibrand – it would mark the first time that a longtime career official who had knowledge of and involvement in the administration’s separation policy would be blocked from career advancement. The letter from Families Belong Together follows a report in the *Guardian* that described how Lan, who serves as an associate deputy attorney general, had played a role in the 2017 removal of a junior prosecutor in Texas after he had raised concerns with his superiors about migrant children who were going missing after their parents had been arrested for allegedly entering the U.S. illegally. The *Guardian* also reported that Lan was present on a 2018 conference call in which her then boss, the now former deputy attorney general Rod Rosenstein, instructed U.S. attorneys in border states that there would be no exception to a “zero tolerance” policy to arrest all migrants who entered the U.S. illegally, including families with children under the age of five. In effect, the instruction meant that no child was too young to be separated from their parents. Lan was nominated to serve on the court, one of the most prestigious judicial postings in the U.S., in December 2019 and was then renominated in May 2020.
- ❖ News Article Source: <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2020/sep/21/calls-to-block-iris-lan-court-seat-role-trump-child-separation-policy>

## New California Law Expands Tax Credit For Immigrants

By CBS News, San Francisco/Bay Area – September 18, 2020

- ❖ California will give tax breaks to more immigrants — including those living in the country illegally — under a new law that Gov. Gavin Newsom signed Friday [September 18]. The earned income tax credit gives cash back to people who have jobs but make so little that they often don’t owe any income taxes. The idea is to encourage people to work by promising to boost their pay with a tax credit. People get the money as a refund when they file their taxes each year. Combined with the federal credit, qualifying families can earn up to \$8,000. California has had its own earned income tax credit since 2015. But it was only available to people who had Social Security numbers. That excluded immigrants who paid taxes with an individual taxpayer identification number issued by the IRS. In June, California expanded its earned income tax credit for the first time to immigrants who have jobs and pay taxes but don’t have Social Security numbers. But they were only eligible for the credit if they had a child under 6. The law Newsom signed Friday [September 18] removes that requirement. California has nearly 40 million people and its economy, if it were its own country, would be the fifth largest in the world. But the state also has the nation’s highest poverty rate, according to figures released this week by the U.S. Census Bureau. More than 17% of California households live below the supplemental poverty level — a measure that takes into account things like the cost of housing and child care. Advocates say the law will help bring people out of poverty.
- ❖ News Article Source: <https://sanfrancisco.cbslocal.com/2020/09/18/new-california-law-expands-tax-credit-for-immigrants/>



Arrests along the southern border have risen in recent months to their highest levels in more than a decade.  
Photo Credit: Herika Martinez/AFP/Getty Images