

NEWS ARTICLES ON KEY ISSUES – JULY 17, 2024

LATEST STATISTICS

U.S. Border Patrol Southwest Border Encounters					
USBP	Demographic	FY 2019 Totals	FY 2020 Totals	FY 2021 Totals	FY 2022 Totals
Southwest Border	Unaccompanied Child	76,020	30,557	144,834	149,093
	Family Units	473,682	52,230	451,087	482,962
	Single Adult	301,806	317,864	1,063,285	1,574,381
Southwest Border Total Apprehensions		851,508	400,651	1,659,206	2,206,436

Data Sources: <https://www.cbp.gov/newsroom/stats/sw-border-migration/fy-2019> ; <https://www.cbp.gov/newsroom/stats/sw-border-migration/fy2020> ; <https://www.cbp.gov/newsroom/stats/southwest-land-border-encounters> ; <https://www.cbp.gov/newsroom/stats/southwest-land-border-encounters>

U.S. Border Patrol Southwest Border Encounters FY2023														
USBP	Demographic	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	Total
Southwest Border	Unaccompanied Child	11,654	12,780	11,829	9,034	10,418	11,852	11,062	9,442	6,732	10,035	13,527	13,154	131,519
	Family Units	46,745	49,827	60,843	25,829	25,643	33,269	46,555	45,026	31,271	60,165	93,111	103,027	621,311
	Single Adult	146,735	145,073	149,346	94,650	94,460	118,551	126,304	116,914	61,535	62,442	74,416	102,582	1,293,008
Southwest Border Total Apprehensions		205,134	207,680	222,018	129,513	130,521	163,672	183,921	171,382	99,538	132,642	181,054	218,763	2,045,838

Data Source: <https://www.cbp.gov/newsroom/stats/southwest-land-border-encounters>

U.S. Border Patrol Southwest Border Encounters FY2024											
USBP	Demographic	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	Total
Southwest Border	Unaccompanied Child	10,697	11,939	12,456	7,483	9,356	7,927	7,632	7,697	6,663	81,850
	Family Units	84,409	82,675	101,710	39,807	45,972	45,988	40,160	41,821	27,821	510,363
	Single Adult	93,646	96,492	135,575	76,925	85,310	83,558	81,102	68,383	49,052	770,043
Southwest Border Total Apprehensions		188,752	191,106	249,741	124,215	140,638	137,473	128,894	117,901	83,536	1,362,256

Data Source: <https://www.cbp.gov/newsroom/stats/southwest-land-border-encounters>

Texas Upholds National Security In President Biden's Absence

By the Office of the Texas Governor, Press Release, June 28, 2024

❖ As of June 28, Texas has bused:

- Over 12,500 migrants to Washington, D.C. since April 2022
- Over 45,900 migrants to New York City since August 2022
- Over 36,900 migrants to Chicago since August 2022
- Over 3,400 migrants to Philadelphia since November 2022
- Over 19,200 migrants to Denver since May 18 2023
- Over 1,500 migrants to Los Angeles since June 14 2023

❖ Press Release Source: <https://gov.texas.gov/news/post/texas-upholds-national-security-in-president-bidens-absence>

Texas is busing far fewer migrants to Democratic-led cities, state figures show

By Jeremy Wallace, Houston Chronicle, June 14, 2024

- ❖ In the second half of 2023, Abbott's busing program sent about 77,000 migrants to six U.S. cities with Democratic mayors. But over the last six months, that number fell to about 17,000, and three cities (Philadelphia, Los Angeles or Washington, D.C.) are no longer getting bused migrants at all. Abbott's office declined to comment on the declining ridership numbers.
- ❖ Source: <https://www.houstonchronicle.com/politics/texas/article/abbott-migrant-buses-19512595.php>

Illegal crossings at U.S.-Mexico border fall to 3-year low, the lowest level under Biden

By Camilo Montoya-Galvez, CBS News, July 1, 2024

- ❖ Border Patrol processed approximately 84,000 migrants who crossed the U.S.-Mexico border without authorization in June, the lowest monthly level since Mr. Biden took office in January 2021, when the agency reported just over 75,000 migrant apprehensions, the internal statistics show. June's migrant apprehension tally was also the fourth consecutive monthly drop, continuing an unexpected downward trend in illegal border crossings that started in the early spring. Senior U.S. officials told CBS News the partial asylum ban is the main driving force behind the steep decline in crossings. One official noted the drop has been more acute since the crackdown was announced on June 4. In the past week, the average of daily migrant apprehensions fell below 2,000 — or nearly half of May's 3,800 average, internal CBP data show. That number is also close to the 1,500 threshold the Biden administration set to suspend the asylum restrictions.
- ❖ Source: <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/border-crossings-us-mexico-border-june-2024/>

LATEST NEWS

Biden is offering some migrants a pathway to citizenship. Here's how the plan will work

By Rebecca Santana, Associated Press, June 18, 2024

- ❖ A new Biden administration policy announced Tuesday, June 18, will give roughly half a million immigrants who are married to American citizens but lack legal status in the United States a pathway to citizenship for them and their children. To be eligible, people have to have lived in the U.S. for at least 10 years, not pose a security threat and have been married by June 17, 2024. They would have to apply to the Department of Homeland Security, which considers the applications on a case-by-case basis. Immigrant spouses cannot have already been admitted or paroled into the country previously. Applicants will be vetted for previous immigration history, criminal history and more, including potential fraud. Once Homeland Security approves an application, the White House said, the person would then have three years to apply for permanent residency and could get work authorization for up to three years. About 1.1 million immigrants without legal status are married to American citizens in the United States, according to immigration advocacy organization FWD.us. The administration thinks that ultimately about half that number — about 500,000 — could be eligible for this program, plus about 50,000 of their children.
- ❖ Source: <https://apnews.com/article/biden-immigration-order-spouse-border-54f6ad19bb5f645b9c6717e9c6256c9d>

Small Step Could Bring Big Relief to Young Undocumented Immigrants

By Miriam Jordan, New York Times, June 18, 2024

- ❖ A new Biden administration measure enables "Dreamers" to get work visas that could free them from relying on the DACA program, whose survival is in doubt.
- ❖ Source: https://www.nytimes.com/2024/06/18/us/biden-immigration-daca-dreamers.html?unlocked_article_code=1.000.yX3r.ukxJ0ChRFsbc&smid=url-share

Immigration could add \$9 trillion to U.S. GDP over ten years: report

By José Díaz-Balart, MSNBC, June 20, 2024

- ❖ A new report from Capitol Hill is predicting the U.S. will experience an economic boost thanks to immigration. The influx of potential workers could raise the country's GDP by almost \$9 Trillion. CNBC's Dominic Chu explains more.
- ❖ Source: <https://www.msnbc.com/jose-diaz-balart/watch/immigration-could-add-9-trillion-to-u-s-gdp-over-ten-years-report-213363269550>

DEVELOPING – 1997 FLORES SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT

Judge partially terminates agreement governing conditions for migrant children in US custody

By Rosa Flores, CNN, July 2, 2024

❖ A federal judge has partially terminated a decades-old agreement that oversees conditions for migrant children in federal government custody, according to a court order that took effect Monday, July 1. US District Judge Dolly M. Gee's ruling terminates, with exceptions, the 1997 Flores Settlement agreement – which has set the national standards for the humane treatment of children in US custody – at the Department of Health and Human Services, while allowing the agreement to remain in full effect at US Customs and Border Protection and US Immigration Customs Enforcement. The court agreed with the Biden administration, with some exceptions, that a new HHS regulation, which went into effect on Monday [July 1], provided appropriate oversight and “multiple safeguards” to account for the lack of state licensing in places like Texas and Florida. Unaccompanied migrant children go through immigration processing while in CBP custody before they are transferred to the care of HHS, where they remain until they are reunited with a sponsor, like a parent or relative in the US. The Biden administration argued in May that the new HHS regulation, known as the “Unaccompanied Children Program Foundational Rule,” provided additional protections and responded to unforeseen changes, CNN previously reported. “The Rule ‘return[s] both parties as nearly as possible to where they would have been absent the changed circumstances’ because it still requires unlicensed facilities to meet their state’s licensing requirements,” Gee said in the ruling. Attorneys for the plaintiffs argued that the federal regulation fell short of providing some migrant children, like those in medium-secure facilities, with the protections of the Flores Settlement and failed to address the lack of state licensing of unaccompanied migrant shelters in places like Texas and Florida, according to the court order. The Biden administration argued that the new federal regulations require shelters housing unaccompanied migrant children “to be state-licensed or, if state licensing is not available ... to adhere to the state’s licensing requirements,” according to court documents. Under Gee’s ruling, the court has the power to modify the order if the circumstances change, including if the new federal regulation is rescinded or modified to be inconsistent with the Flores Settlement – which gives some attorneys confidence that the order has the necessary guardrails to protect migrant children regardless of who occupies the White House.

❖ Source: <https://www.cnn.com/2024/07/02/politics/judge-terminates-agreement-migrant-children/index.html>

Judge Dolly Gee's Ruling on the Flores Settlement Agreement explained

By Gianna Boroto, Senior Attorney, at the American Immigration Council, July 10, 2024

Essentially, the Flores Settlement Agreement was never meant to be permanent. It always had a provision stating that it would terminate once the government passed regulations that complied with the settlement. The Trump administration attempted to end the settlement by promulgating harmful regulations that did not comply with the settlement, but Judge Gee refused to terminate the settlement at that time because they did not comply.

The recent partial termination is a result of the regulations passed by the Biden administration, which do match the settlement in many ways, though there are some key ways in which they differ. This is why Flores counsel opposed the partial termination. The biggest change is that they allow for unaccompanied children to be housed in unlicensed shelters in states like Texas, where Governor Abbott has refused to license Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) shelters and revoked licenses for existing shelters. Since most of the ORR beds are in Texas, the government states that it felt obligated to make this change or it would not have sufficient bed space for the numbers of children it is receiving.

Although the government proposed increased monitoring over the unlicensed facilities and the new regs create a new Ombuds office that could help deal with abuse and other issues at the shelters, Flores counsel's position is that more oversight is needed. Judge Gee partially terminated the settlement as to HHS (the Flores protections for children in CBP custody remain), since the new regulation was proposed by only HHS and not DHS. However, she left a few provisions of the settlement in place, such as allowing Flores counsel to continue to monitor the shelters and interview detained children. The Flores protections also remain in place for children in secure and out of network placements. Judge Gee also left open the possibility of reinstating the settlement if the government is not complying.

So although children will be allowed to be housed in unlicensed facilities in states like Texas and Florida, Flores counsel will continue its monitoring of the shelters. I imagine they will be doing increased monitoring in those states to ensure that the facilities are in compliance with previous licensing requirements.

Here's a helpful explainer on the new regulations: <https://immigrantjustice.org/research-items/explainer-final-regulations-care-unaccompanied-children-federal-custody-0>

ANNUNCIATION HOUSE, EL PASO, TX

Judge's ruling protects migrant shelter on US-Mexico border and accuses Texas of harassment

By Valerie Gonzalez, Associated Press, July 2, 2024

- ❖ Judge Francisco X. Dominguez ruled that Paxton's attempts to enforce a subpoena for records of migrants who have been served at Annunciation House in the last few years violated the El Paso shelter's constitutional rights. His ruling prevents Paxton from seeking the records and protects the shelter from what Dominguez called "harassment and overreaching" by Paxton's office.
- ❖ Source: <https://apnews.com/article/migrant-shelter-texas-paxton-d9eeafdc00fdd2b555aafceb515a93e8>

How Texas is still investigating migrant aid groups on the border after a judge's scathing order

By Valerie Gonzalez, Associated Press, July 5, 2024

- ❖ Texas is widening investigations into aid organizations along the U.S.-Mexico border over claims that nonprofits are helping migrants illegally enter the country, taking some groups to court and making demands that a judge called harassment after the state tried shuttering an El Paso shelter. The efforts are led by Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton. Since February, Paxton has asked for documents from at least four groups in Texas that provide shelter and food to migrants. That includes one of the largest migrant aid organizations in Texas, Catholic Charities of the Rio Grande Valley, which on Wednesday [July 3] asked a court to stop what the group called a "fishing expedition into a pond where no one has ever seen a fish."
- ❖ **What started the investigations?** Gov. Greg Abbott sent Paxton a letter in 2022 urging him to investigate the role nongovernmental organizations play in "planning and facilitating the illegal transportation of illegal immigrants across our borders." Two years earlier, Abbott began rolling out his multibillion-dollar border security apparatus known as Operation Lone Star. Without citing evidence, Abbott's letter referenced unspecified "recent reports" that some groups may be acting unlawfully. Paxton later accused Annunciation House in El Paso, one of the oldest migrant shelters on the border, of human smuggling and other crimes. The groups have denied the accusations and no charges have been filed.
- ❖ **Which groups are targets?** In addition to Annunciation House, Paxton has sent letters to Angeles Sin Fronteras in Mission, Texas; Team Brownsville; and Catholic Charities of the Rio Grande Valley.
- ❖ Source: <https://apnews.com/article/immigration-texas-shelters-investigations-paxton-1a1537b16742d5229fe906f5b73a8c2e>

CBP ONE APP

CBP Releases June 2024 Monthly Update

U.S. Customs and Border Protection, Press Release, July 15, 2024

- ❖ In June, CBP processed over 41,800 individuals through appointments at ports of entry utilizing advanced information submitted through CBP One™. Since the appointment scheduling function in CBP One™ was introduced in January 2023 through the end of June 2024, more than 680,500 individuals have successfully scheduled appointments to present at ports of entry instead of risking their lives in the hands of smugglers. The top nationalities processed subsequent to arrival for their appointment are Venezuelan, Cuban, and Haitian.
- ❖ Source: <https://www.cbp.gov/newsroom/national-media-release/cbp-releases-june-2024-monthly-update>

ASYLUM SEEKERS

Biden expands immigration protections for 300,000 Haitians

By Rafael Bernal, The Hill, June 28, 2024

- ❖ The Biden administration is expanding a humanitarian program to allow an estimated 309,000 Haitians in the United States to stay and legally work. Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas announced Friday, June 28, he is renewing and redesignating Haiti for temporary protected status (TPS). Under TPS, foreign nationals from a designated country are protected from deportation and allowed to work in the U.S. while the designation remains in place. The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) said in a statement that Mayorkas designated Haiti on June 3, extending the nation's TPS for the maximum 18-month period. The TPS renewal covers the nearly 165,000 Haitians covered by the previous renewal and redesignation in December of 2022, plus an estimated 309,000 Haitians who had set up residence in the U.S. by June 3 of this year.
- ❖ Source: <https://thehill.com/latino/4745949-biden-immigration-tps-haiti-mayorkas/>

U.S. agrees to help Panama deport migrants crossing Darién Gap

By Camilo Montoya-Galvez, CBS News, July 2, 2024

- ❖ The U.S. and Panama signed an agreement on Monday, July 1, that will allow American officials to help the Panamanian government deport migrants who cross the Darién Gap, a once-impenetrable jungle that has become a popular transit point for those traveling to the U.S. southern border. Under the joint initiative, U.S. immigration officials will train and provide assistance to Panamanian authorities to help them carry out more deportations of migrants heading north. In recent years, Panama has reported record numbers of crossings along the roadless Darién jungle, including over half a million in 2023 alone. The Department of Homeland Security will be dispatching officials who have experience screening asylum claims and deporting migrants to Panama so they can assist their Panamanian counterparts on the ground. Using State Department funds, the U.S. will also help Panama build up its deportation infrastructure.
- ❖ Source: <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/darien-gap-migration-panama-deportation-agreement/?ftag=CNM-00-10aac3a>

New York Expands Divisive Food Debit Card Program for Migrants

By Lola Fadulu, New York Times, July 3, 2024

- ❖ Over 7,300 migrants in New York City are expected to receive debit cards to pay for food and baby items over the next six months, city officials said, as part of an expansion of a pilot program that has been met with fierce pushback. The debit card program began earlier this year and started with around 900 families, or around 3,000 migrants. During the program's first 13 weeks, the cards were used to feed more than 1,300 children and 42 pregnant women, our colleagues Emma G. Fitzsimmons and Luis Ferré-Sadurní reported. Now, the program is expanding from three hotels where migrants are housed to 17. City officials estimate that the debit cards could serve about 2 percent of the total migrant population; more than 60,000 migrants are in the city's care. The city is legally mandated to provide food to migrants under a right-to-shelter requirement. The cards will cost the city around \$2.6 million, which officials said was less than a previous program that delivered meals.
- ❖ Source: https://www.nytimes.com/2024/07/03/nyregion/new-york-city-food-debit-cards-migrants.html?unlocked_article_code=1.500.NQJp.LoYu2MNoQjLH&smid=url-share

DEPORTATION FLIGHTS

U.S. will fund deportations from Panama, expanding migrant crackdown

By Nick Miroff, Washington Post, July 2, 2024

- ❖ The Biden administration will begin paying for Panama to detain and deport more of the migrants streaming through Central America en route to the United States, the latest White House effort to curb illegal crossings at the southern border, officials said Tuesday, July 2. The \$6 million pilot program is the administration's first attempt to fund deportations in a foreign country. More than 500,000 migrants entered Panama illegally last year, and officials there have appealed to the United States for help, saying Panama lacks the resources to contend with the influx. In recent years, the Darién Gap region along the Colombia-Panama border has become a human superhighway, as U.S.-bound migrants from around the world follow a treacherous path through the jungle. U.S. officials said the deportation flights will commence in the coming weeks, and they will be conducted by the government of new Panamanian President José Raúl Mulino. Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas attended Mulino's inauguration Monday and finalized the accord, Biden officials said. "I won't allow Panama to be an open path for thousands of people who enter our country illegally," Mulino, a former security official, said during his speech.
- ❖ Source: <https://wapo.st/3xP7Rua>

Chinese migrants deported on first large flight from U.S. since 2018

By David Hodari, David Noriega and Julia Ainsley, NBC News, July 3, 2024

- ❖ A group of migrants was deported to China over the weekend on the first large charter flight there since 2018, the Department of Homeland Security said in a statement Tuesday, July 2. The department said that it was working with authorities in Beijing on further removal flights and declined to say how many migrants were on the weekend flight. The Associated Press reported that 116 were on board the plane.
- ❖ Source: <https://www.nbcnews.com/news/world/chinese-migrants-deported-first-large-flight-us-2018-rcna160114>

DEVELOPING STORIES

Mexican cartels offering pricey VIP package for migrants trying to get into US

By Steve Fisher and Alfredo Corchado, USA TODAY, June 20, 2024

- ❖ The tunnel is dark and narrow. Toxic gases rise from the dank water. Insects scurry along the sides, rattlesnakes wait, coiled. Rodents lurk along the water's edge. Yet this drainage network that reaches from Ciudad Juárez into El Paso, Texas, is one of the most sought-after routes for patrons of a VIP migration package offered by Mexican cartels to those with the money to pay for it. The tunnel route costs at least \$6,000, according to interviews with top Mexican state authorities, federal law enforcement officials from both sides of the border and migrants waiting to cross in encampments along the Rio Grande. Ricardo, a migrant smuggler, said he has charged as much as \$15,000. Everything in this underground world functions by a code the cartels give their VIP customers, often delivered by cellphone, that identifies which cartel "travel agency" a migrant is working with so everyone from local police to rival criminal syndicates knows not to harass them. A joint investigation by Mexican and U.S. authorities has discovered that one Juárez-based cartel, La Linea, has been smuggling at least 1,000 migrants through the tunnels into El Paso every month, according to a senior Mexican official. Experts predict the return on investment of trafficking humans has eclipsed that of trafficking drugs. "Criminals have shifted from their primary business, which was drug trafficking," said Arturo Velasco, head of the anti-kidnapping unit at the Chihuahua attorney general's office. "Now 60 to 70% of their focus is migrant smuggling. "A kilo of cocaine might bring in \$1,500, but the risk is very high. The cost-benefit of trafficking a person is \$10,000, \$12,000, \$15,000."
- ❖ Source: <https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/investigations/2024/06/20/mexican-drug-cartels-migrant-vip-package/74154061007/>

Biden is now deporting more people than Trump

By Ben Kellerman, Mica Rosenberg and Ted Hesson, Reuters, July 8, 2024

- ❖ Both President Joe Biden and former President Donald Trump have pledged to return more migrants to their home countries, with differing approaches as immigration has emerged as a top issue in the coming election.
- ❖ Source: <https://www.reuters.com/graphics/USA-ELECTION/MIGRATION-DEPORTATIONS/akpeoeoerpr/>

54 people pulled out Rio Grande; several cases of hypothermia reported

By Dave Burge, NBC and CBS Valley Central News, July 10, 2024

- ❖ El Paso and Sunland Park Fire departments and other agencies pulled 54 people out of the Rio Grande near the Texas-New Mexico state line during a water rescue mission on Tuesday evening, July 9, according to EP Fire. El Paso and Sunland Park Fire departments initially responded at about 5 p.m. to reports of "multiple people in the water" along the 3500 block of Doniphan. About six people suffered from hypothermia from being in the water too long and three or four were transported, but nothing critical, Sunland Park Fire Chief Daniel Medrano said. So far this year, Sunland Park Fire has done about 80 water rescues, including Tuesday's 54 individuals. A total of 30 divers from El Paso Fire, Sunland Park, Mesilla Valley Fire Rescue, Horizon, Montana Vista and Border Patrol participated in the operation. The scene and affected individuals have been turned over to law enforcement.
- ❖ Source: <https://www.valleycentral.com/news/54-people-pulled-out-rio-grande-several-cases-of-hypothermia-reported/>

At half a mile a week, Gov. Greg Abbott's border wall will take around 30 years and \$20 billion to build

By Jasper Scherer, Texas Public Radio/The Texas Tribune, July 3, 2024

- ❖ Three years after Gov. Greg Abbott announced Texas would take the extraordinary step of building a state-funded wall along the Mexico border, he has 34 miles of steel bollards to show for it. That infrastructure — which has so far run up a price tag of some \$25 million per mile — isn't yet a contiguous wall. It has gone up in bits and pieces spread across at least six counties on Texas' 1,254-mile southern border. Progress has been hampered by the state's struggles to secure land access, one of myriad challenges signaling a long and enormously expensive slog ahead for Abbott. Nonetheless, state contractors have already propped up more wall mileage than former President Donald Trump's administration managed to build in Texas, and Abbott's wall project is plowing ahead at a quickened pace. State officials hope to erect a total of 100 miles by the end of 2026, at a rate of about half a mile per week. To date, though, steel barriers cover just 4% of the more than 800 miles identified by state officials as "in need of some kind of a barrier." And at its current rate — assuming officials somehow persuade all private landowners along the way to turn their property over to the state — construction would take around 30 years and upwards of \$20 billion to finish. Under Abbott's direction, state lawmakers have approved more than \$3 billion for the wall since 2021, making it one of the biggest items under the GOP governor's \$11 billion border crackdown known as Operation Lone Star.
- ❖ Source: <https://www.tpr.org/news/2024-07-03/at-half-a-mile-a-week-gov-greg-abbotts-border-wall-will-take-around-30-years-and-20-billion-to-build?emci=29c8df6e-5339-ef11-86d2-6045bdd9e096&emdi=8b258fc2-7939-ef11-86d2-6045bdd9e096&ceid=13339864>

How Greg Abbott made the Texas border America's problem

By Benjamin Wermund, Houston Chronicle, July 16, 2024

- ❖ Greg Abbott was back at the border, describing a state under siege. Children were afraid to play outside. Ranches were being destroyed. Neighborhoods were overrun by drugs, human smuggling and gun-wielding immigrants. For three years now, Abbott has delivered a near daily version of the same indictment, hounding President Joe Biden on immigration in news conferences, on social media, in Fox News appearances and trips to South Texas. Immigration is a familiar target for Republicans, especially when a Democrat is in the White House. But Abbott has taken it to new levels, leveraging billions of state dollars on a militarized crackdown, arresting and detaining thousands of migrants, busing many more to Democratic-led cities and attempting to seize deportation duties from the federal government.
- ❖ Source: <https://www.houstonchronicle.com/politics/texas/article/greg-abbott-texas-southern-border-trump-19567820.php>

Texas AG Paxton seeks to revive effort to close El Paso-based migrant shelter network

By Julián Aguilar, Marfa Public Radio, July 15, 2024

- ❖ Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton on Monday, July 15, asked the state's Supreme Court to allow his office to continue its efforts to shutter an El Paso-based shelter network that assists asylum seekers and other migrants. Paxton has alleged the shelter network, Annunciation House, aids illegal migration by "operating a stash house" and tried earlier this year to have the Catholic nonprofit's network of shelters closed after the state demanded records from the organization related to its operations and migrants who have used its services, which include shelter and transportation. Annunciation House was granted a temporary restraining order and asked for more time to decide which documents to turn over; Paxton's office in turn filed a countersuit. A state district judge in El Paso ruled earlier this month that the state's request was unenforceable because immigration is under the purview of the federal government. Paxton's office said in a statement Monday that state district Judge Francisco Dominguez's decision, based partly because of Annunciation House's affiliation with the Catholic church, was without merit. "The judge concluded that it was 'outrageous and intolerable' that the Office of the Attorney General would even investigate this conduct," the statement reads. "The judge falsely accused the Office of the Attorney General of investigating Annunciation House because of the organization's 'support for the Catholic Church.' The judge's assertion is not supported by any evidence, and the judge tellingly failed to identify any." In a poston social media, Paxton said he is appealing directly to the Supreme Court of Texas because: "For too long, Annunciation House has flouted the law and contributed to the worsening illegal immigration crisis at Texas's border with Mexico." Paxton's office added that his investigation into Annunciation House began as a result of Gov. Greg Abbott's request to investigate non-governmental organizations' efforts in "planning and facilitating the illegal transportation of illegal immigrants across our borders."
- ❖ Source: <https://www.marfapublicradio.org/2024-07-15/texas-ag-paxton-seeks-to-revive-effort-to-close-el-paso-based-migrant-shelter-network>

Panama installs barbed wire to block migrants traveling through the Darién Gap

By Abel Alvarado and Gerardo Lemos, CNN, July 11, 2024

- ❖ Panama has placed barbed wire across several routes in the Darién Gap, the country's Ministry of Public Security said in a statement Thursday, in a bid to block migrants making their way north.
- ❖ Source: <https://amp.cnn.com/cnn/2024/07/11/americas/panama-darien-gap-barbed-wire-migrants-intl-latam>

The Biden Administration's Parole-In-Place Announcement: Helping Mixed-Status Families Stay Together and Avoid Bureaucratic Traps

By the American Immigration Council, June 18, 2024

- ❖ On June 18, President Joe Biden announced a new program that will allow certain spouses of United States citizens to apply for "parole-in-place" from the Department of Homeland Security (DHS). This program, which is not yet open for applications, will not only allow up to 550,000 people to receive temporary protections and work permits in the United States, but will generally allow them to apply for lawful permanent resident (LPR) status (also known as a green card) through their spouses without risking years of separation from their families.
- ❖ To learn more, visit: <https://www.americanimmigrationcouncil.org/research/biden-parole-place-announcement-helping-mixed-status-families-stay-together>

Process to Promote the Unity and Stability of Families

By U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS), 2024

- ❖ On June 18, 2024, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) announced a key step toward fulfilling President Biden’s commitment to promoting family unity in the immigration system. DHS will establish a new process to consider, on a case-by-case basis, requests for certain noncitizen spouses of U.S. citizens who have been continuously physically present without admission or parole in the United States for 10 years or more; have no disqualifying criminal convictions; do not pose a threat to national security and public safety and pass vetting; are otherwise eligible to apply for adjustment of status; and merit a favorable exercise of discretion.
- ❖ **Key questions and answers about the Program:**
- ❖ **When will the process start?** U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) will soon publish a Federal Register Notice to implement this process, explain the application process, and provide additional guidance on requirements to be considered for parole in place. This notice will explain what forms to file, the associated filing fees, any required documentation, and supporting evidence that will be needed to request parole in place. The application process is expected to begin later this summer.
- ❖ **What happens if I apply to USCIS prior to the start date of the process?** USCIS will reject any filings received before the date when the application process begins. This includes applications filed through our paper and electronic filing processes as well as requests submitted in person at our offices.
- ❖ **What will be the duration of parole? What happens when it ends?** Under this process, a qualifying individual may be granted parole on a case-by-case basis for up to three years. This period provides an opportunity for eligible spouses of U.S. citizens granted parole to file a Form I-485, Application to Register Permanent Residence or Adjust Status (and concurrent Form I-130, Petition for Alien Relative, if applicable). At the conclusion of the parole period, USCIS anticipates that these individuals will have either a pending adjustment application or final adjustment adjudication completed.
- ❖ Source: <https://www.uscis.gov/keepingfamiliesstogether>