

NEWS ARTICLES ON KEY ISSUES – MARCH 30, 2026

LATEST STATISTICS

U.S. Border Patrol Southwest Border Encounters						
USBP	Demographic	FY 2019 Totals	FY 2020 Totals	FY 2021 Totals	FY 2022 Totals	FY 2023 Totals
Southwest Border	Unaccompanied Child	76,020	30,557	144,834	149,093	131,519
	Family Units	473,682	52,230	451,087	482,962	621,311
	Single Adult	301,806	317,864	1,063,285	1,574,381	1,293,008
Southwest Border Total Apprehensions		851,508	400,651	1,659,206	2,206,436	2,045,838

Data Sources: <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	JUL	AUG	SEP	Total
Southwest Border	Unaccompanied Child	10,697	11,940	12,456	7,483	9,355	7,926	7,632	7,693	6,662	5,624	6,397	5,839	99,704
	Family Units	84,411	82,676	101,707	39,806	45,972	45,987	40,160	41,819	27,817	16,080	15,544	13,599	555,578
	Single Adult	93,641	96,490	135,577	76,926	85,314	83,560	81,103	68,393	49,053	34,696	36,068	34,420	875,241
Southwest Border Total Apprehensions		188,749	191,106	249,740	124,215	140,641	137,473	128,895	117,905	83,532	56,400	58,009	53,858	1,530,523

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

U.S. Border Patrol Southwest Border Encounters FY 2025														
USBP	Demographic	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	Total
Southwest Border	Unaccompanied Child	5,876	5,765	6,114	2,746	733	631	790	1,007	638	451	626	822	26,199
	Family Units	15,236	12,247	14,265	7,095	809	468	534	460	277	316	513	979	53,199
	Single Adult	35,403	28,597	26,941	19,264	6,807	6,080	7,052	7,257	5,151	3,825	5,178	6,585	158,140
Southwest Border Total Apprehensions		56,515	46,609	47,320	29,105	8,349	7,179	8,376	8,724	6,066	4,592	6,317	8,386	237,538

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

U.S. Border Patrol Southwest Border Encounters FY 2026						
Demographic	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	Total
Unaccompanied Child	831	680	545	447	455	2,958
Family Units	639	385	386	180	197	1,787
Single Adult	6,517	6,283	5,543	5,447	5,951	29,741
Southwest Border Total Apprehensions	7,987	7,348	6,474	6,074	6,603	34,486

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

Immigration Detention Quick Facts – February 2026

By the Transactional Records Access Clearinghouse (TRAC), February 2026

As of February 7, 2026, 68,289 individuals are held in ICE detention facilities. 50,259 out of 68,289—or 73.6% held in ICE detention have no criminal conviction. As of February 5, Texas leads with 18,734 detainees, followed by Louisiana (8,244), California (6,459), Florida (5,231) and Georgia (4,227).

Source: <https://tracreports.org/immigration/quickfacts/>

Asylum approvals plummet as fearful immigrants skip hearings

By Andrea Castillo, Los Angeles Times, March 3, 2026

Fewer than 3% of asylum cases decided in January were approved — a record low, according to Mobile Pathways, a San Francisco nonprofit that analyzes federal immigration data. That's compared with an 18% approval rate in January 2025. Nationally, 20% of immigrants seeking asylum missed their hearings in January, compared with half that rate a year earlier. Asylum seekers with pending applications are in the country legally, but under federal law, failing to appear for a hearing can result in a deportation order. As of December, nearly 3.4 million cases were pending in immigration courts, with more than 2.3 million of them asylum cases, according to TRAC, a data research organization.

Source: <https://www.latimes.com/politics/story/2026-03-03/asylum-approvals-plummet-as-fearful-immigrants-skip-hearings>

ICE WAREHOUSES

ICE begins to purchase warehouses, but some owners are backing out of deals

By Heather Hollingsworth, Associated Press, February 21, 2026

- After the town of Merrillville, Indiana raised concerns about ICE touring a new warehouse, owner Opus Holding LLC sent a letter stating it isn't negotiating with federal officials for the property.
- The owners of warehouses in the Minneapolis suburbs of Woodbury and Shakopee pulled out of possible ICE deals after public outcry, according to local officials.
- U.S. Sen. Roger Wicker posted that Noem agreed to look elsewhere after local elected and zoning officials opposed a possible detention center in the town of Byhalia, Mississippi.
- After weeks of public pressure, development company Platform Ventures announced it would not move forward with the sale of a massive warehouse in Kansas City, Missouri.
- ICE said it made a mistake when it announced the purchase of a vacant warehouse in Chester, New York. New York state Assemblyman Brian Maher said that ICE is no longer considering the facility.
- Oklahoma City Mayor David Holt announced last month that property owners had informed him they are no longer engaged with DHS about a potential acquisition or lease of a warehouse.
- DHS purchased a warehouse in Tremont Township, Pennsylvania for \$119.5 million and one in Upper Bern Township, Pennsylvania for \$87.4 million. Gov. Josh Shapiro has said his administration will fight DHS' plans to convert the warehouses into immigrant detention and processing centers.
- In the Dallas suburb of Hutchins, Texas, a real estate company confirmed that it was contacted about one of its properties but wouldn't sell or lease any buildings to DHS for use as a detention facility.
- Mayor Erin Mendenhall from Salt Lake City, Utah, expressed gratitude in her State of the City address that the owners of a warehouse that ICE was eyeing as a detention facility had announced plans not to sell or lease the property to the federal government.
- Jim Pattison Developments said in a statement last month that it became aware of the intended use of a warehouse in the suburbs of Richmond, Virginia, after agreeing to sell to a U.S. government contractor. Following boycott threats, the Vancouver-based company announced that the transaction "will not be proceeding."

Source: <https://apnews.com/article/immigrant-detention-warehouses-ice-trump-a4a71226409cd9fcdc9aa5de5ec90654>

ICE will not lease office space on San Antonio's Northwest Side, building owner says

By Molly Smith, San Antonio Express-News, February 16, 2026

The owner of a Northwest Side office building that U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement was reportedly eyeing said it will not be leasing to the agency. WIRED magazine reported on Feb. 10 that ICE was considering leasing office space at the Landmark One building at 15727 Anthem Parkway as part of a nationwide effort to expand its administrative operations. But Tourmaline Capital Partners, which purchased the building in 2022, told KSAT on Tuesday that "ICE is not, and will not be, leasing space at Landmark One." Neither Tourmaline Capital Partners nor Dallas-based CBRE Group Inc., which is leasing the building, have responded to requests for comment from the San Antonio Express-News. The six-story office building is located just southeast of the interchange of Interstate 10 and Loop 1604. A commercial listing indicates that as much as 27,000 square feet of space is available for lease, and that interested parties should "contact broker for pricing." WIRED published a list of more than 50 potential ICE office locations based on federal records it obtained. They include sites in El Paso, Eagle Pass, Harlingen, The Woodlands outside Houston and Irving. ICE recently purchased an industrial building on San Antonio's East Side, which it plans to convert into a 1,500-bed short-term processing center. U.S. Rep. Henry Cuellar said the facility would hold migrants temporarily before transferring them elsewhere — likely to detention centers before they are ultimately deported. The building, at 542 S.E. Loop 410, is in Cuellar's district. ICE paid \$66.1 million to Atlanta-based Oakmont Industrial Group to purchase Oakmont 410, a vacant 639,595-square-foot facility at 542 S.E. Loop 410. The deed was signed by the seller on Jan. 20 and electronically recorded by the Bexar County Clerk's Office in early February.

Source: <https://www.expressnews.com/news/article/ice-lease-office-space-san-antonio-landmark-one-21356923.php>

ICE selects untested firms to oversee new warehouse detention centers

By Douglas MacMillan and Aaron Schaffer, Washington Post, March 9, 2026

For decades, two companies have been the government's go-to partners for immigrant detention: Geo Group and CoreCivic run the facilities where the majority of people detained by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement are held. But as the Trump administration embarks on a \$38 billion plan to convert industrial warehouses into a new breed of large-scale holding centers, it is turning to a crop of relatively untested businesses to rapidly build and operate the facilities. On Friday, March 6, the administration awarded a contract worth at least \$113.1 million to KVG LLC, a defense contractor, to build and operate a detention center in a Williamsport, Maryland warehouse, according to federal spending website USASpending.gov. The company has not been awarded any previous federal contracts for immigrant detention, according to government procurement records. GardaWorld Federal Services, a security contractor, was awarded at least \$313.4 million to run the detention center planned at a Surprise, Arizona, warehouse. The company employs guards at immigrant holding centers in Canada as well as at the "Alligator Alcatraz" facility in the Florida Everglades. Prior to the Arizona award, it had not been directly contracted by ICE to oversee any detention centers, records show. Both contracts have a potential end date of 2029. The companies will install climate control and build dormitories, recreational spaces, courtrooms, cafeterias, visitation rooms and medical facilities. And they will have to work around what local leaders in many places have described as insurmountable limitations on infrastructure, including access to water, sewer and electricity.

Source: <https://wapo.st/4bfQ1jG>

ICE spending billions to turn warehouses into migrant detention facilities

By Liz Landers and Doug Adams, PBS News, February 27, 2026

For months, ICE has been quietly buying industrial warehouses around the country, reportedly with plans to turn them into a network of immigration detention and processing centers to hold tens of thousands of detainees. A national controversy lands on the agenda of a small Maryland city during an otherwise mundane weekly meeting. The Hagerstown City Council and mayor represent about 45,000 residents, but the broader community is bracing for the arrival of as many as 1,500 mostly undocumented migrants. This huge warehouse right here was recently purchased by Immigration and Customs Enforcement as a detention facility. This is more than 800,000 square feet, and, if it opens, it could be one of the largest detention facilities of its kind in the country. ICE already spent \$102 million purchasing the warehouse. The Department of Homeland Security responded to our questions with a statement touting its economic benefits and reading in part -- quote -- "These will be very well-structured detention facilities meeting our regular detention standards. Sites will undergo community impact studies and a rigorous due diligence process to make sure there is no hardship on local utilities or infrastructure." What's the overall cost of this? How much is the Department of Homeland Security and ICE spending on this? They're [ICE] projecting to spend \$38 billion. That involves buying the warehouses. Many of them cost around \$100 million. That involves significant upgrades in retrofitting these warehouses to basically turn what are empty, vacant shells of buildings into a kind of functioning detention center with housing units, recreation areas, kitchens, outside basketball courts. They want to kind of, like, build these out and spending a lot up to \$150 million for a single facility in some cases.

Source: <https://www.pbs.org/newshour/show/ice-spending-billions-to-turn-warehouses-into-migrant-detention-facilities>

DETENTION CENTERS

Worms in food, poor medical care, lights on 24/7: Families tell of life in Texas detention center

By Garance Burke, Adam Geller and Valerie Gonzalez, Associated Press, February 28, 2026

Kids cry often and don't get enough sleep, in part because lights are on around the clock, Leecia Welch, the chief legal director at Children's Rights, who visits Dilley regularly to ensure compliance said. The water tastes terrible and causes stomachaches and rashes, so some families stick to what they can buy in the commissary. Their children don't eat enough and have lost weight, Welch said. There are classrooms, but instruction is limited to an hour daily, mostly filling out worksheets.

Source: <https://apnews.com/article/children-immigration-detention-dilley-trump-administration-ice-8ab12c9357ff3b8d400cfa2b2dbe85ed>

Judge restores lawmakers' unfettered access to ICE detention facilities

By Kyle Cheney, Politico, March 2, 2026

The Department of Homeland Security may not bar members of Congress from making unannounced visits to ICE detention facilities, a federal judge ruled Monday, March 2, blocking a policy imposed in January by Secretary Kristi Noem requiring a week's notice before lawmakers could gain access. U.S. District Judge Jia Cobb ruled that Noem's policy was crafted with funds that Congress specifically said could not be used to impede lawmakers' visits to detention facilities, even if those visits are not announced in advance. And she rejected DHS' claim that it had relied on alternative funding sources to craft and implement the policy — namely the One Big Beautiful Bill Act, which directed unprecedented sums toward DHS operations.

Source: <https://www.politico.com/news/2026/03/02/lawmaker-access-ice-detention-ruling-00807198>

17 measles cases reported in El Paso, including 13 at ICE detention facility

By El Paso Matters, February 26, 2026

Seventeen measles cases have been reported in El Paso, including 13 at the Camp East Montana Immigration and Customs Enforcement detention center, health officials said Thursday, February 26. The cases at the ICE detention center are outside the city's jurisdiction and reported through federal authorities, the El Paso Department of Public Health said in a news release. City health officials are coordinating with federal partners and have provided testing support and vaccines for prevention efforts, the release states. Earlier this month, two cases of tuberculosis and 18 cases of COVID-19 were identified at the ICE detention facility, which is located on Fort Bliss. The four new measles cases in the city of El Paso involve a man in his 20s, a man in his 30s and two women in their 30s, all with unknown vaccination status.

Source: <https://www.texastribune.org/2026/02/26/measles-el-paso-camp-east-montana-ice/>

Faith leaders push for access to ICE detention centers during Lent and Ramadan

By Giovanna Dell'orto, Associated Press, March 7, 2026

The long-held practice of faith leaders ministering to detained migrants has become far more contentious — and consequential — as detention numbers soar across the United States during the federal government's immigration crackdown. Clergy are pushing for more access at detention centers, especially during the ongoing holy seasons of Lent and Ramadan. After celebrating an Ash Wednesday service with four migrants who had just arrived at a detention center near Chicago, clergy there are working with immigration authorities to set up regular visits. At the start of Ramadan, a Muslim chaplain was allowed to visit two women held for many months in immigration detention in the Dallas-Fort Worth area. She is hoping to return throughout the fasting month.

Source: <https://www.expressnews.com/news/article/faith-leaders-push-for-access-to-ice-detention-21961106.php>

A Woodlands company is quietly making tens of millions off President Trump's family detention policies

By Eric Dexheimer, Neena Satija, Houston Chronicle, February 25, 2026

As owner of the sprawling secure facility about an hour south of San Antonio known as the Dilley Immigration Processing Center, **Target Hospitality** last year signed a contract to collect a quarter-billion dollars over the next five years to house and feed families the government alleges are in the country illegally. It was welcome financial news for the company, headquartered in an office park in The Woodlands. Less than two years ago, Target was forced to lay off nearly 100 workers when the Biden administration closed the facility, then known as the South Texas Family Residential Center. But when President Trump revived it months later the company saw an opening. "I'll tell you we've never, in my 30-year career, had this many real opportunities in front of us," Target's CEO, Brad Archer, said in a 4th quarter 2024 earnings call. Its 524,000 square-foot facility in Dilley now serves as the country's only family immigration detention center. Jason Vlacich, the company's chief financial officer, recently told shareholders the new contract could produce as much as \$25 million in annual profits. Yet Target also acknowledged the risks of inserting itself into heated debates over the legality and humanity of a policy that has bitterly divided the country.

Source: <https://www.houstonchronicle.com/news/investigations/article/target-hospitality-trump-ice-profits-21343561.php>

Three People Die in ICE Detention Over 4 Days

By Billal Rahman, Newsweek, March 9, 2026

Three people being held by Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) died within four days in late February and early March, according to several agency press releases. At least 11 detainees have died in ICE custody so far in 2026, according to a Newsweek analysis of detainee death notifications. The deaths have renewed concerns over medical care and oversight in ICE detention facilities under the Trump administration. Newsweek has revealed multiple allegations of abuse in ICE-run centers, including instances of medical neglect and mistreatment of detainees. The number of deaths in ICE custody have increased in recent years, with seven in-custody deaths occurring in 2023, 11 in 2024 and 32 in 2025. At the same time, the number of people held in ICE detention has climbed to historically high levels. The Transactional Records Access Clearinghouse (TRAC) recorded 68,289 people in ICE custody on February 7, 2026. That compares with TRAC snapshots showing about 32,743 in late August 2023 and about 37,782 on January 13, 2024.

Source: <https://www.newsweek.com/three-people-die-ice-detention-over-4-days-11644110>

US Rep. Escobar: ICE looking to close sprawling immigration detention camp

By Jeff Abbott, El Paso Times, March 4, 2026

U.S. Rep. Veronica Escobar, D-Texas, is "rejoicing that this dark chapter is over" in response to reports that ICE is closing Camp East Montana on Fort Bliss Army Post in El Paso. The Department of Homeland Security is taking steps to close the sprawling immigration detention camp, the Washington Post reports. The report comes from an internal document obtained by the post that was distributed to staff. It says DHS was looking to terminate the contract with Acquisition Logistics LLC, the Henrico, Virginia-based firm contracted with constructing and managing soft-sided detention center. The firm was given a \$1.2 billion dollar contract to build and manage the site. The report does not include a timeline for closure. The closure follows a series of scandals at the detention center, including the death of Geraldo Lunas Campos on Jan. 3, who's death was ruled a homicide. He is one of three people held there who have died since it opened. The El Paso Times reported nearly 90 emergency 911 calls coming from the center in the first 15 weeks of operation. The Washington Post reported multiple violations during construction and the American Civil Liberties Union reported acts of physical violence against detainees and attempts to force detainees to self-deport. Camp East Montana held over 3,100 people in January, and currently holds around 1,500 detainees. The DHS purchased another warehouse in Socorro, Texas, which is set to hold 8,500 people.

Source: <https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/nation/2026/03/04/us-rep-escobar-ice-looking-to-close-sprawling-immigration-detention-camp/88989195007/>

911 calls capture kids burning with fever, struggling to breathe at ICE detention center

By Mike Hixenbaugh, NBC News, February 27, 2026

Since mid-September, emergency crews have been dispatched to Dilley at least 11 times to treat children in medical distress, according to EMS call logs and 911 audio obtained by NBC News. The calls offer a glimpse into what happens when children fall seriously ill inside a detention center that has become a flashpoint in the national immigration debate. Most of the children were taken to a nearby community hospital, the records show. In at least three cases, children were transferred more than an hour away to a specialized pediatric hospital in San Antonio equipped to treat complex or life-threatening conditions, according to the logs. In one case involving a 22-month-old in respiratory distress, the boy's condition was so serious, first responders wanted to fly him to the hospital by helicopter but couldn't because of bad weather, the records show. Parents of another toddler with low oxygen refused to be transported. The records don't include information about what happened after the ambulance rides.

Source: <https://www.nbcnews.com/news/us-news/911-calls-kids-struggling-breathe-ice-detention-texas-immigration-rcna260595>

DEPORTATIONS

Judge rules Trump administration's policy for "third-country" deportations is unlawful

By Melissa Quinn and Jacob Rosen, CBS News, February 26, 2026

A federal judge ruled Wednesday, February 25, that a Department of Homeland Security policy that allows immigration authorities to deport migrants to "third countries" that are not their own, without first giving them notice or the opportunity to object, is unlawful. U.S. District Judge Brian Murphy in Massachusetts sided with a group of noncitizens who filed a class-action lawsuit against the Department of Homeland Security last year. He ruled that the Trump administration's policy regarding third-country removals must be set aside. Murphy paused his ruling for 15 days to give the Trump administration time to appeal.

Source: <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/judge-third-country-deportations-trump-administration/>

DHS still has \$150 billion to spend on Trump's deportation campaign

By Laura Barrón-López, MS NOW, March 2, 2026

Eight months after congressional Republicans approved roughly \$191 billion in spending for President Donald Trump's deportation agenda, the Department of Homeland Security has an estimated \$150 billion left to spend, according to a new analysis provided first to MS NOW by FWD.us, a group that studies immigration policy and advocates for reforms. DHS has not disclosed how it intends to spend all the funds. The analysis was compiled based on comparisons to past Immigration and Customs Enforcement and Customs and Border Protection budgets, DHS dispersals beginning last fall, and information shared by Hill and DHS sources. The sum would be enough to fund the entire DHS — excluding the Coast Guard — until the fourth quarter of 2027, according to the advocacy group's analysis. The reconciliation bill also appropriated roughly \$75 billion for ICE; if ICE were to operate under its pre-Trump spending rate of roughly \$10 billion per year, it would have enough funds via DHS to sustain it until 2033. (In 2024, the last full year of Joe Biden's presidency, ICE's total budget was roughly \$9.6 billion.) The party-line spending bill included \$22 billion for unspecified immigration enforcement with "no line items" and "no oversight requirements," according to FWD.us' analysis.

Source: <https://www.ms.now/news/dhs-ice-funding-shutdown-immigration>

'God-given dignity': Border bishops urge U.S., Mexico to reject 'inhumane' immigration enforcement

By Cindy Ramirez, El Paso Matters, February 27, 2026

A delegation of Catholic bishops from the Texas-Mexico border are calling on the governments of the United States and Mexico — and on residents of both nations — to seek out immigration enforcement policy that upholds immigrants' "God-given dignity" and to take action against the inhumane treatment of people. "Holding many, many people — not things, people — with so many people in immigration centers, it's very easy that people, individuals, will be forgotten, unattended, not served well, even in basic needs," the Rev. Gustavo Garcia-Siller, archbishop of San Antonio, said during a Friday morning news conference at the El Paso Catholic Diocesan Pastoral Center, 499 St. Matthews St. "We can do something about it in advocacy and in actions." Garcia-Siller was among the delegation members, also known as the Tex-Mex Bishops, who met in El Paso this week for what has become the longest-running international gathering of Catholic bishops worldwide. The bishops have alternated gatherings between the United States and Mexico over the last 40 years. On Friday, they spoke primarily on immigration and the rapidly changing landscape impacting people in the United States and Mexico. They also touched on the violence in Mexico following the killing of Mexican cartel leader Nemesio Rubén "El Mencho" Oseguera Cervantes and the need for an ongoing pastoral response to affected communities. The group was outspoken about what they called a new chapter of migration, saying it has been largely provoked by the political unrest, poverty and violence in migrants' countries of origin but also by what Garcia-Siller called "unjust, unlawful and wrong, irrational laws of the United States of America that is asking us to see differently, to find new ways of how to be in action in favor of our brothers and sisters who are in suffering." El Paso Bishop Mark Seitz pointed to immigrant ministries within the diocese and area nonprofit organizations where people can volunteer to provide hospitality, support for legal services and engage in advocacy, including Estrella del Paso, Annunciation House and Hope Border Institute. He said volunteers have been accompanying people to immigration court, and that the diocese is creating a network of volunteers to reach out to families who have had relatives detained by immigration officers — especially those who have lost the breadwinners. Two bishops from Mexico — the Rev. Alfonso Gerardo Miranda Guardiola of Piedras Negras and the Rev. Francisco Gallardo of Matamoros-Reynosa — touched on the state of migration in Mexico. They said Mexico's churches welcome migrants with open arms, particularly when many have experienced kidnapping, violence and extortion on their journeys.

Source: <https://elpasomatters.org/2026/02/27/border-catholic-bishops-el-paso-immigration-humane-enforcement-call-to-action/>

TEXAS IN THE NEWS

New records reveal ICE agent fatally shot a San Antonio man during traffic incident last year

By Bayliss Wagner, San Antonio Express-News, February 22, 2026

Months before immigration agents killed two U.S. citizens in Minneapolis (Renee Nicole Good and Alex Pretti), and triggered nationwide protests, an Immigration and Customs Enforcement agent fatally shot a San Antonio man during a traffic incident on South Padre Island, according to newly released records. The ICE agent fatally shot 23-year-old Ruben Ray Martinez, a U.S. citizen, in March 2025, according to internal records watchdog group American Oversight obtained through a Freedom of Information Act request and made public this week. Newsweek first reported on the agency's role in Martinez's death, which had not been previously disclosed. In the internal report, an ICE agent wrote that Martinez appeared intoxicated or impaired and disobeyed verbal instructions to stop and exit his vehicle. After Martinez accelerated and hit an agent, another ICE agent "discharg(ed) multiple rounds" through the driver's side window. A passenger in the vehicle, also a citizen, was taken into police custody.

Source: <https://www.expressnews.com/politics/article/records-ice-shot-texas-man-ruben-martinez-21547998.php>

Texas grand jury votes not to charge ICE agent who shot and killed San Antonio man

By Bayliss Wagner, San Antonio Express-News, February 25, 2026

A South Texas grand jury on Wednesday, February 25, declined to indict an Immigration and Customs Enforcement agent who shot a San Antonio man last year, dampening the family's hopes for further investigation of a killing that captured national attention after ICE's role was revealed last week. Cameron County District Attorney Luis Saenz said a grand jury did not find probable cause to charge anyone in the March 15, 2025, death of 23-year-old Ruben Ray Martinez on South Padre Island. The Department of Homeland Security has said Martinez was intoxicated and struck an agent with his car. Another agent shot him multiple times through a side window at point-blank range.

Source: <https://www.expressnews.com/politics/article/grand-jury-no-charges-ice-killing-ruben-martinez-21942089.php>

Ken Paxton appeals ruling in lawsuit against Bexar County for immigrant legal defense

By Saul Pink, San Antonio Express-News, February 27, 2026

Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton appealed a judge's ruling last week that threatened to derail his lawsuit against Bexar County for a \$1 million program that funds legal defense for immigrants facing deportation. Paxton sued the county earlier this month over the program, which county commissioners first planning more than three years ago. Last week, District Judge Mary Lou Alvarez ruled that Paxton's office didn't have the authority to represent the state in the case — a decision that effectively stalled the lawsuit before the court could consider Paxton's claims that the program is unconstitutional. Paxton appealed that ruling on Monday. He asked the newly formed Fifteenth Court of Appeals to overturn Alvarez's ruling and to temporarily halt the funding until a district judge can hear the full case. The appeals court allowed the attorney general's office to continue litigating the case in district court but declined to temporarily stop the county from funding the program. The case will appear before district court again next month.

Source: <https://www.expressnews.com/news/article/ken-paxton-bexar-county-immigration-lawsuit-21943040.php>

'We will keep walking': Faith leaders complete 90-mile march from Dilley to San Antonio

By Saul Pink, San Antonio Express-News, February 28, 2026

Some of the marchers had started four days and 90 miles earlier in Dilley, the town that's home to a U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement detention center where a 5-year-old boy and his father were held for nearly two weeks. Others joined Saturday morning on Quintana Road, near the site where 53 migrants died in 2022 after being trapped inside a sweltering tractor-trailer. More fell in along the way, and on Saturday afternoon, the group was singing as it marched down Nueva Street toward the immigration courthouse downtown, capping a dayslong march organized by faith leaders against the detention of immigrant children and families by federal authorities. "I feel like I couldn't walk another step," said Dianne Garcia, the pastor of Iglesia Christiana Roca de Refugio, who organized the march. "We will keep walking until no child has to worry that their mother or their father won't return home today. We will keep walking until our communities are safe again," she told a group of about 100 people gathered across from the courthouse. "We will keep walking until the detention centers are closed."

Source: <https://www.expressnews.com/news/article/dilley-san-antonio-march-detention-dianne-garcia-21946092.php>

City Council weighs detention center limits. ICE site beyond reach.

By Madison Iszler, San Antonio Express-News, March 5, 2026

When she found out that immigration officials had detained her husband, San Antonio resident Hilda said she dropped to her knees in tears. It was exactly what the couple feared could happen, despite their efforts to secure his immigration status since they married in 2018, Hilda told the San Antonio City Council at a meeting Thursday. After spending more than \$10,000 on legal fees and \$500 on commissary and phone expenses, he was released, Hilda said. She urged council members to direct city staff to examine potential code or policy changes to prevent or regulate detention centers and "to do everything in your power" to prevent ICE from opening a facility on the city's East Side. But council members can't do much. They voted 8-2 on Thursday, March 5, in favor of exploring options for controlling municipal and privately owned detention centers, such as setting a minimum distance a facility would have to be from housing and parks, and creating a new zoning category. They also directed staff to establish a moratorium on such centers. But any potential changes would not affect ICE's plan to turn an empty industrial building at 542 S.E. Loop 410 into a detention center. Properties owned by or leased to the federal government are not required to follow local rules. ICE paid Oakmont Industrial Group \$66.1 million for the property in January as part of a nationwide buying spree aimed at expanding its deportation efforts. District 2 Council Member Jalen McKee-Rodriguez, who represents an area that includes the building, urged residents to pressure Texas lawmakers to curb funding for ICE.

Source: <https://www.expressnews.com/news/article/ice-detention-center-council-rules-zoning-code-21955217.php>

Why thousands of refugees in Texas could face arrest under new mandates by the Trump administration

By Julián Aguilar, San Antonio Express-News, March 9, 2026

In a memo issued Feb. 18 by Immigration and Customs Enforcement, the agency said a refugee must “return or be returned” to custody after one year of being admitted into the country and be vetted for permanent residency, also called a green card. If they don’t return voluntarily, ICE will arrest and detain them. The guidance replaces a 2010 memorandum that said failure to apply for or adjust to green card status was not a deportable offense on its own. Under that policy, a refugee who was detained by ICE would be released within 48 hours unless removal proceedings were initiated. The new guidance does not state a time limit for how long someone can be detained. From October 2017 through September 2024, nearly 289,000 refugees had resettled in the United States, with Texas home to more than any other state at about 25,500, according to data from the American Immigration Council. About 3,900 arrived in Texas during the 2025 fiscal year. Litigation was filed Friday, March 6, in federal court in Massachusetts alleging that the policy “flouts fundamental constitutional principles,” including the Fourth Amendment’s prohibition of warrantless seizure and the Fifth Amendment’s guarantees of due process. One of the refugees from Texas, identified in court documents as Hamad B., was detained at a Border Patrol checkpoint and held for three weeks, despite furnishing documentation attesting to his refugee status. The other, identified as Jasmine, is married to a refugee who was arrested and detained with Hamad B. The couple’s documents were taken and not returned. Approximately 100,000 refugees hadn’t adjusted their status at the time the lawsuit was filed, according to court documents. Tens of thousands more have green card applications that were paused after the Trump administration announced in November that it would reexamine green card applications of more than 200,000 refugees who were lawfully admitted into the country under the Biden administration.

Source: <https://www.expressnews.com/news/houston-texas/immigration/article/texas-refugee-dhs-memo-detention-21957667.php>

Bodycam footage shows shooting of San Antonio man by ICE agent last year

By Saul Pink, Bayliss Wagner, San Antonio Express-News, March 9, 2026

Newly-released body camera footage of the shooting of a San Antonio man by an ICE officer last year does not appear to show the man trying to run over an agent with his car — something federal authorities have used to justify the shooting. The San Antonio Express-News and other news outlets obtained the video of the March 15, 2025 shooting, when 23-year-old Ruben Ray Martinez was shot at point-blank range by an ICE officer. The Department of Public Safety released the video from the body camera of a South Padre Island police officer. The federal agent who shot Martinez was not wearing a body camera. The role of an ICE agent in the shooting death of Martinez wasn’t known until the nonprofit watchdog American Oversight published records it obtained through a public records request in February. Newsweek was first to report on the revelations. The U.S. Department of Homeland Security said in a statement in February that the federal agent fired “defensive shots” and that Martinez “intentionally ran over” another agent. The body camera footage shows Martinez driving his blue Ford Fusion at a low rate of speed and occasionally interacting with officers. When Martinez is shot three times, his brake lights appear to be on. Afterward, an ICE officer appears to pull Martinez out of the car, put him face down on the ground and handcuff him. The footage does not clearly show the moments right before the shooting, when federal officials say Martinez struck an agent with his car. At the time of the incident, Homeland Security Investigation special agents were assisting local police with traffic control on South Padre Island after a major accident. Martinez is the third known U.S. citizen to be killed by an ICE agent since President Donald Trump started a nationwide crackdown on immigration after taking office. His killing came months before the deaths of Alex Pretti and Renée Nicole Good by ICE agents in Minneapolis, which drew national attention. Joshua Orta, a friend of Martinez, was in the passenger seat. Orta disputed the official account of the incident, saying his friend was confused by conflicting directives, according to attorneys for Martinez’s family. He said local police told Martinez to turn around before federal agents surrounded his vehicle and ordered him to stop. He also said Martinez was “crawling” or “coasting” and did not accelerate into the officer. Days after giving a statement to lawyers about the killing, Orta died in an unrelated car crash near the southwestern edge of downtown San Antonio. DPS also released footage on Friday of investigators interviewing Orta. Orta said he and Martinez had been drinking earlier in the evening, and Martinez got “jittery” and “panicked” when a police officer told him to stop the car. He said Martinez didn’t push the gas hard and the car was “barely moving.”

Source: <https://www.expressnews.com/news/article/body-camera-footage-texas-ice-shooting-ruben-21961284.php>

Bexar commissioners oppose ICE detention center but say they can't stop it

By Saul Pink, San Antonio Express-News, March 10, 2026

Two dozen people told Bexar County commissioners on Tuesday, March 10, that they're against U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement's plan to open an immigrant detention facility on San Antonio's East Side, and called on the commissioners to do something about it. The five members of the Commissioners Court, for the most part, agreed with them, as commissioners approved a resolution to formally oppose the facility. But they reiterated that there's not much Bexar County can do to stop ICE, which has already bought the warehouse, from carrying out its plan. "I have people in my own life who have been picked up (by ICE), and as powerful as I am as a Bexar County commissioner, there is jack that I can do about it," said Precinct 1 Commissioner Rebeca Clay-Flores. "Because whether you want to understand it or not, we do have jurisdiction and law." What she means is that ICE is a federal agency, and Bexar County has little ability to impact how it operates. That includes ICE's plan to turn the empty warehouse at 542 S.E. Loop 410 into a detention center. Counties in Texas don't hold zoning powers — and even if they did, properties owned by the federal government are exempt from local land use rules. The resolution commissioners approved is largely symbolic. It says the county "expresses its strong opposition" to the plan and encourages ICE to adopt "an open and transparent approach" to operating the facility. It also leaves the door open to the county pursuing legal action to protect people being held in the facility. The language is vague. "The county may evaluate, as appropriate, potential legal and policy options that ensure the rights of citizens and immigrants are maintained," it reads. Commissioners voted 4-1 for the resolution. Grant Moody, the lone Republican on the court, cast the only dissenting vote. Moody called the resolution "political posturing," noting that ICE's activities are far outside of the county's jurisdiction. "The federal government is responsible for the enforcement of immigration law," he said. "It's not Bexar County's responsibility." The council voted last week to explore imposing controls on municipal and privately owned detention centers, like setting a minimum distance a facility would have to be from housing and parks. Council members also asked staff to create a new zoning category for such facilities and establish a moratorium on detention centers. ICE bought the property from Oakmont Industrial Group for \$66.1 million in January — one of dozens of purchases nationwide as the federal government continues its increased enforcement of federal immigration law.

Source: <https://www.expressnews.com/news/article/san-antonio-ice-detention-center-bexar-21959520.php>

MINNESOTA IN THE NEWS

Minnesota launches investigation that could bring charges against federal immigration officers

By Sarah Raza and Hannah Fingerhut, Associated Press, March 2, 2026

A Minnesota prosecutor announced an investigation Monday, March 2, that may lead to charges against federal officers, including Border Patrol official Greg Bovino, for misconduct during an immigration enforcement crackdown. Hennepin County Attorney Mary Moriarty said in a news conference that her office is already looking into 17 cases, including one where Bovino threw a smoke canister at protesters on Jan. 21. Another on Jan. 7 involved federal officers making an arrest outside a high school and deploying chemical irritants while students and staff were in the area.

Source: <https://www.expressnews.com/news/article/minnesota-launches-investigation-that-could-bring-21951554.php>

DEVELOPING STORIES

Eleven people died in US immigration custody this year, ICE says

By Ted Hesson, Reuters, March 9, 2026

At least 11 immigrants have died in U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement custody from January 2026 through early March, according to ICE. That follows 31 deaths last year, a two-decade high.

Source: <https://www.reuters.com/world/eleven-people-died-us-immigration-custody-this-year-ice-says-2026-03-09/>

Trump fires Homeland Security Secretary Noem after mounting criticism over her leadership

By Michelle L. Price, Rebecca Santana and Seung Min Kim, Associated Press, March 5, 2026

President Donald Trump on Thursday, March 5, fired his embattled Homeland Security Secretary Kristi Noem, after mounting criticism over her leadership of the department, including the handling of the administration's immigration crackdown and disaster response. Trump, who said he would nominate Oklahoma Republican Sen. Markwayne Mullin in her place, made the announcement on social media after Noem faced a two-day grilling on Capitol Hill this week from GOP members as well as Democrats. Noem is the first Cabinet secretary to leave during Trump's second term. Her tenure looked increasingly short-lived after hearings in Congress this week where she faced rare but blistering criticism from Republican lawmakers. One particular point of scrutiny was a \$220 million ad campaign featuring Noem that encouraged people in the country illegally to leave voluntarily. Noem told lawmakers that Trump was aware of the campaign in advance, but Trump disputed that in an interview Thursday with Reuters, saying he did not sign off on the ad campaign.

Source: <https://apnews.com/article/trump-homeland-security-noem-mullin-38c583b3cef97b4ef60d84b8f8b5961a>

Benedictine Sisters Corporate Responsibility Coalition

As Trump pushes deportations, immigration data becomes harder to find

By Rebecca Santana, Associated Press, March 15, 2026

The administration likes to promote its immigration enforcement agenda through numbers, with ambitious goals to deport 1 million people, report zero releases at the U.S.-Mexico border and arrest thousands of alleged gang members. For all the boasting, the administration has been releasing less reliable, carefully vetted data than its predecessors. “They aren’t publishing the data,” said Mike Howell, who heads the conservative Oversight Project, an advocacy group pushing for more deportations. Instead, Howell said, the Department of Homeland Security has put out numbers in news releases “that purport to be statistics with no statistical backup and the numbers have jumped all over the place.” The Office of Homeland Security Statistics is responsible for publishing figures from Homeland Security agencies, including removals and the nationalities of those deported, to provide a comprehensive picture of immigration trends at the border and inside the United States. But key enforcement metrics on its website have not been updated since early last year. A note on the page where the monthly reports were says it “is delayed while it is under review.” The State Department’s most recent visa issuance data is from August. Key statistics from U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services have not been updated since October.

Source: <https://apnews.com/article/trump-immigration-data-numbers-deportations-000a289890193c94474f19b877eb37d1>

Immigration detention on track for deadliest fiscal year since 2004

By Ximena Bustillo and Rahul Mukherjee, NPR, March 10, 2026

It’s the deadliest year for those in immigration detention in more than two decades. More people have died in Immigration and Customs Enforcement custody since October — 23 — than died in the whole prior fiscal year. The most recent death was of a 56-year-old Haitian man held at an immigration detention center in Arizona. He died in a hospital after going into septic shock. The increase in deaths comes as nearly 70,000 people are in ICE detention, the highest number in several years.

Source: <https://www.npr.org/2026/03/10/g-s1-111238/immigration-detention-deaths-custody>

What airports are ICE agents going to? What we know

By Natassia Paloma, El Paso Times, March 23, 2026

President Donald Trump announced that **ICE** would assist with airport operations starting **Monday, March 23**, as the Transportation Security Administration is facing staffing shortages due to weeks of unpaid federal workers, leading to long lines and delays nationwide.

- **ICE agents will be present at TSA checkpoints in the following airports:**
 - Chicago-O'Hare International Airport – Chicago, Illinois
 - Cleveland Hopkins International Airport – Cleveland, Ohio
 - Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport – *Atlanta, Georgia*
 - Houston's William P. Hobby Airport – *Houston, Texas*
 - John F. Kennedy International Airport – Queens, New York City, New York
 - LaGuardia Airport – *Queens, New York City, New York*
 - Louis Armstrong New Orleans International Airport – *Kenner, Louisiana* (serving New Orleans)
 - Luis Munoz Marin International Airport – *Carolina, Puerto Rico* (serving San Juan)
 - Newark Liberty International Airport – Newark and Elizabeth, New Jersey
 - Philadelphia International Airport – Philadelphia / Tinicum Township, Pennsylvania
 - Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport – Phoenix, Arizona
 - Pittsburgh International Airport – *Findlay & Moon Townships, Pennsylvania* (serving Pittsburgh)
 - Southwest Florida International Airport – *Lee County, Florida* (near Fort Myers)

Source: <https://www.elpasotimes.com/story/news/2026/03/23/see-list-ice-agents-are-reportedly-going-to-these-airports-on-monday/89283209007/>