








Official website of the Department of Homeland Security

Homeland Security



TopicsHow Do I?Get InvolvedNewsAbout DHS



News
Blog
DHS Apps
Data
Events
Fact Sheets
In Focus
Media Contacts
Multimedia
National Terrorism Advisory System
Press Releases
Comunicados de Prensa
Publications Library
Social Media
Speeches
Testimony

Statement by Secretary Jeh C. Johnson on Reforms to Family Residential Centers

Release Date: September 18, 2015

For Immediate Release
DHS Press Office
Contact: 202-282-8010

Last summer, this Department took a number of steps to respond to an unprecedented influx in illegal migration from Central America. Many of those apprehended at the border were adults who brought their children with them. In response to this influx, we increased our family residential center capacity. We recognize, however, the special concerns involved in detaining families with children. And over the past several months, we have implemented significant reforms to how we operate our family residential centers. We are also engaging with stakeholders to listen and discuss their concerns, and will continue to make additional improvements when appropriate. We have established a Federal Advisory Committee with experts in mental health, family and youth services, and other areas to advise on our policies going forward.

With these reforms, the detention of families is becoming short-term in most cases. We are transitioning our family residential center facilities into processing centers where individuals can be interviewed and screened rather than detained for a prolonged period of time. Families who establish a credible or reasonable fear of persecution in their home countries are now being released after asserting their claim, under conditions designed to ensure they will appear in immigration court for their case. The Department will also continue to expedite, to the greatest extent possible, the removal of those who are not eligible for relief under our laws. We take seriously our obligation to secure our borders and will continue our aggressive enforcement of our nation's immigration laws.

Finally, we are taking steps to ensure compliance with the July 24 and August 21 orders issued by the U.S. District Court in Los Angeles, which hold that a 1997 settlement agreement requires us to implement new detention policies. We disagree with portions of the legal reasoning in the decision and have filed a notice of appeal preserving our ability to challenge those portions. But we remain committed to reforming our family residential center policies, as we have been doing for the past several months.

##

Review Date: September 18, 2015



Homeland Security

TOPICS	GET INVOLVED	HOW DO I?	NEWS	ABOUT DHS	SITE LINKS
Academic Engagement	Blue Campaign	For the Public	Blog	The Secretary	Accessibility
Border Security	Citizen Corps	For Businesses	Comunicado de Prensa	Budget & Performance	Contact Us
Citizenship and Immigration Services	If You See Something Say Something	For Travelers	Data	Contact Us	DHS Component Websites
Civil Rights and Civil Liberties	Ready.gov	At DHS	DHS Apps	DHS Digital Strategy	En Español
Cybersecurity		By Alphabet	Events	Doing Business with DHS	FOIA
Disasters			Fact Sheets	History	Frequently Requested Pages
Economic Security			Media Contacts	Laws & Regulations	Inspector General
Homeland Security Enterprise			Multimedia	Mission	Metrics
Homeland Security Jobs			Press Releases	Organization	Notices
Human Trafficking			Publications		Plain Writing at DHS
International Engagement			Social Media		

Immigration and Enforcement	Speeches	Plug-ins
Law Enforcement Partnerships	Testimony	Privacy Policy
Preventing Terrorism		No FEAR Act
Resilience		Site Map
Transportation Security		The White House
		USA.gov
		GobiernoUSA.gov