

# [***ICE Nabs Over 200 Foreign Nationals Convicted On Drug Charges After Nationwide Raids***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6BPG-D131-JBFB-H00J-00000-00&context=1516831)

The Daily Caller

April 2, 2024 Tuesday 03:18 PM EST

Copyright 2024 The Daily Caller, Inc. All Rights Reserved

**Section:** DAILY-CALLER-NEWS-FOUNDATION; ***politics***; ***politics***

**Length:** 691 words

**Byline:** Arjun Singh, Contributor, [*arjun@dcnf.org*](mailto:arjun@dcnf.org)

**Body**

[*Link to Image*](https://cdn01.dailycaller.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/GettyImages-1246594353-scaled-e1712065262339.jpg)

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) announced Monday that it has arrested 216 foreign nationals convicted of various drug-related offenses as part of a nationwide operation.

ICE's Enforcement and Removal Operations (ERO) division is responsible for apprehending foreign nationals who are unlawfully present in the U.S. and removing them from the country after deportation proceedings. Between March 11 and 26, ICE's [*216 arrests*](https://www.ice.gov/news/releases/ice-arrests-216-noncitizens-drug-related-convictions-during-nationwide-law) included 28 such individuals in [*Los Angeles*](https://www.ice.gov/news/releases/ero-los-angeles-arrests-28-noncitizens-drug-related-convictions-during-nationwide-law), 27 in [*San Francisco*](https://www.ice.gov/news/releases/ero-san-francisco-arrests-27-noncitizens-drug-related-convictions-during-nationwide) and six in [*Harlingen, Texas*](https://www.ice.gov/news/releases/ero-harlingen-arrests-6-noncitizens-drug-related-convictions-during-nationwide-law), many of whom had been previously convicted of possessing large quantities of narcotics with intent to distribute them. [***(RELATED: EXCLUSIVE: GOP Reps Demand ICE Official Linked To Anti-Deportation Group Not Receive Civil Service Protections)***](https://dailycaller.com/2024/02/21/ice-gop-civil-servant-anti-deportation/)

The United States is experiencing a crisis of narcotic drug addiction and overdoses, primarily of opioids, heroin and fentanyl. In 2022, 107,941 people died of a drug overdose, with the age-adjusted death rate being 32.6 per 100,000 people, [*according*](https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/products/databriefs/db491.htm) to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

“With more than 105,000 drug overdoses reported throughout the United States last year, the trafficking and proliferation of dangerous illegal drugs has shown its devastating impacts throughout our neighborhoods and schools,” said ERO Deputy Executive Associate Director Russ Hott, according to the agency's press release about the Los Angeles arrests. “[ERO] personnel will continue to fight for the safety of our communities.”

“Press Release: ICE arrests 216 noncitizens with drug-related convictions during nationwide law enforcement effort”[*https://t.co/Bq1WJSrwgf*](https://t.co/Bq1WJSrwgf)

Follow [*#EROPressRelease*](https://twitter.com/hashtag/EROPressRelease?src=hash&ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) for Enforcement and Removal Operations news and announcements. [*pic.twitter.com/86rKrZXGyX*](https://t.co/86rKrZXGyX)

- ICE Enforcement and Removal Operations (@ICEgovERO) [*March 28, 2024*](https://twitter.com/ICEgovERO/status/1773432676986310961?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw)

A plurality of the arrested individuals described in ICE press releases included those convicted of transporting methamphetamine, the manufacture and delivery of heroin, possession with intent to distribute 50 kilograms of cannabis, false imprisonment as well as other charges.

“This operation enabled us to do what ERO was created to do, and that is to focus on smart, effective immigration enforcement to protect our homeland by arresting and removing people who undermine community and public safety and violate the integrity of our immigration laws,” said ICE Deputy Director Patrick J. Lechleitner, who is performing the duties of director, in a press release.

It is estimated that over [*13.7 million*](https://cis.org/Report/ForeignBorn-Share-and-Number-Record-Highs-February-2024) foreign nationals are unlawfully present in the United States, an increase of 37% under the Biden administration, according to an analysis of Census Bureau data by the Center for Immigration Studies (CIS). Over 2 million illegal migrants were encountered at the southern border in the 2023 fiscal year, with 2.2 million being encountered in the previous fiscal year, [*according to data*](https://www.cbp.gov/newsroom/stats/southwest-land-border-encounters) published by U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP).

ICE does not [*remove*](https://dailycaller.com/2024/02/27/ice-arrests-dozens-illegally-present-foreign-sex-offenders-nationwide-operation/) every foreign national who is [*unlawfully present*](https://dailycaller.com/2024/03/20/ice-begins-detentions-county-abandoned-sanctuary-policies/) in the country.

On Sept. 30, 2021, Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas issued a [*memorandum*](https://www.ice.gov/doclib/news/guidelines-civilimmigrationlaw.pdf) that sets out guidelines for the use of removal authority by Department of Homeland Security (DHS) agencies, including ICE, which established that individuals who pose a threat to national security, [*public safety*](https://dailycaller.com/2024/03/12/illegal-immigrant-arrested-for-13th-time-after-years-long-crime-spree-ice-says/) and border security will be targeted for removal.

“[W]e are guided by the fact that the majority of undocumented noncitizens who could be subject to removal have been contributing members of our communities for years,” Mayorkas wrote. “The fact an individual is a removable noncitizen therefore should not alone be the basis of an enforcement action against them.”

All content created by the Daily Caller News Foundation, an independent and nonpartisan newswire service, is available without charge to any legitimate news publisher that can provide a large audience. All republished articles must include our logo, our reporter's byline and their DCNF affiliation. For any questions about our guidelines or partnering with us, please contact [*licensing@dailycallernewsfoundation.org*](mailto:licensing@dailycallernewsfoundation.org).

**Graphic**

US Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents prepare for the arrival of Guatemalan migrants deported from the United States at the Air Force Base in Guatemala City on January 27, 2023. - In 2022, US immigration authorities deported 40,713 Guatemalans by air for illegally entering its territory, while in 2021, the figure was 17,806, according to reports from the Guatemalan State Migration Institute. (Photo by Johan ORDONEZ / AFP) (Photo by JOHAN ORDONEZ/AFP via Getty Images)

**Load-Date:** April 2, 2024

**End of Document**