## **Human Rights First**

## Discrimination, Detention, and Deportation: Immigration & Refugees

https://www.humanrightsfirst.org/resource/ailing-justice-new-jersey-inadequate-healthcare-indifference-and-indefinite-confinement

## **Policy Isssue Resources**

Work With Asylum Seekers

If you are seeking asylum, we can help

Areas of Focus

**Current Initiatives** 



Ailing Justice: New Jersey
Inadequate Medical and Mental Health
Care Services in Immigration Detention
February 2018

Every year, the U.S. government locks up hundreds of thousands of immigrants despite the existence of effectiveand cost-effectivealternative-to-detention programs. Detention itself can be traumatizing, and the conditions in immigrant detention facilities are harsh and often inhumane.

Detained immigrantsheld under civil, not criminal, authority are forced to endure a range of hardships, from dirty drinking water to harassment to solitary confinement. Many also receive inadequate medical and mental health care. These conditions can cause severe suffering, long-term physical and emotional damage, and avoidable deaths. They also compel some refugees to withdraw claims for protection.

While the unnecessary detention of immigrants is a longstanding problem in the United States, it has gotten worse in recent years. Under President Obama, the U.S. government put in place a policy of using detention to attempt to deter migrantsincluding asylum seekers fleeing persecutionfrom coming to the United States. The Trump Administration has adopted an even more aggressive and punitive approach, in line with the Presidents executive order calling for asylum seekers and migrants to be detained for the duration of their proceedings.

In February 2018, Human Rights First researchers visited the three principal facilities that U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) uses to detain noncitizens in New Jersey: Elizabeth Contract Detention Facility, the Essex County Correctional Facility, and the Hudson County Correctional Facility.

The Elizabeth Facility, operated by CoreCivic, has capacity to hold 304 people. The Essex and Hudson facilities each holds approximately 700 people in ICE custody, as well as people in criminal justice proceedings. The Elizabeth and Hudson facilities house women and men, while the Essex facility houses only men.

A team of legal and health professionals joined our staff on these visits, which included tours of the facilities, meetings with ICE and facility staff, and individual and group interviews with over one hundred detained immigrants. Based on these visits, the opinions of the legal and health professionals, in-depth research, and our twenty-plus years of experience providing pro bono legal representation to asylum seekers detained in New Jersey, we report the following:

Published on February 27, 2018

Share

Systemic Injustice-Refugee Protection 2017 Pro Bono Stars: Houston Blog Systemic Injustice-Refugee Protection Joint Letter to President Biden, Secretary Mayorkas & AG Garland on Title 42 Letter Systemic Injustice-Refugee Protection 360 Videos Document Life for Asylum Seekers at U.S. Border Press Systemic Injustice-Refugee Protection 5 Ways To Help Migrant Parents And Children At The Border Blog Systemic Injustice-Refugee Protection 5th Circuit Amicus Brief in State of Texas, State of Missouri v Biden: HRF Opposes MPP on the Merits Amicus Briefs Systemic Injustice-Refugee Protection A life in safety would not mean anything if my children were not here with me: Joys and Trauma Persist for Refugees Separated from Their Families Letter Systemic Injustice-Refugee Protection A Second Chance for Detained Asylum Seekers in Jennings v. Rodriguez Blog Systemic Injustice-Refugee Protection A Shameful Record: Biden Administrations Use of Trump Policies Endangers People Seeking Asylum Reports Systemic Injustice-Refugee Protection A Sign of Desperation: Syrian Refugees are Selling Their Organs Blog Systemic Injustice-Refugee Protection

A Sordid Scheme: The Trump Administrations Illegal Return of Asylum Seekers to Mexico

Reports

Systemic Injustice-Refugee Protection

A Sordid Scheme: The Trump Administrations Illegal Return of Asylum Seekers to Mexico

Reports

Systemic Injustice-Refugee Protection

A Year After Del Rio, Haitian Asylum Seekers Expelled Under Title 42 Are Still Suffering

Letter

Urge Congress to pass the Afghan Adjustment Act

Human Rights First is a nonpartisan, 501(c)(3). We do not favor or oppose any candidate for public office.