

Casa Alitas Welcome Center Arrivals Report

Kendra Lyons

5/6/2022

Contents

Data Dates: 1/26/21-1/20/22	1
Timelines	2
Stay Length	6
To Learn More	9

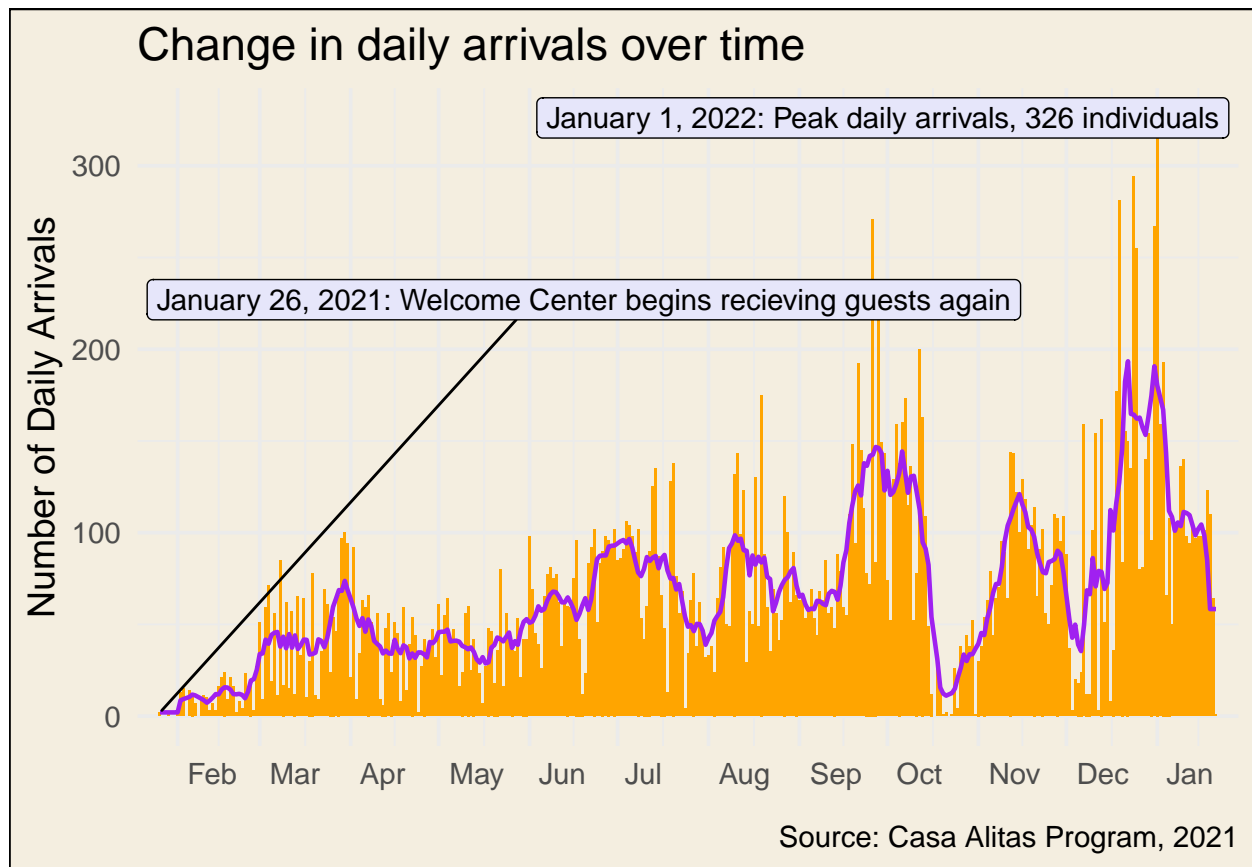
Data Dates: 1/26/21-1/20/22

Data for this project were collected by staff and volunteers at Casa Alitas Welcome Center in Tucson, Arizona. Throughout **2021**, asylum seeker arrivals at Casa Alitas Welcome Center grew from just a few to more than *300 people* in a single day. Fluctuations in arrival numbers posed significant challenges throughout the year. Often, they were related to policy shifts at the federal level that affected how U.S. authorities at the U.S.-Mexico border were detaining, deporting or releasing individuals and groups of migrants of different nationalities.

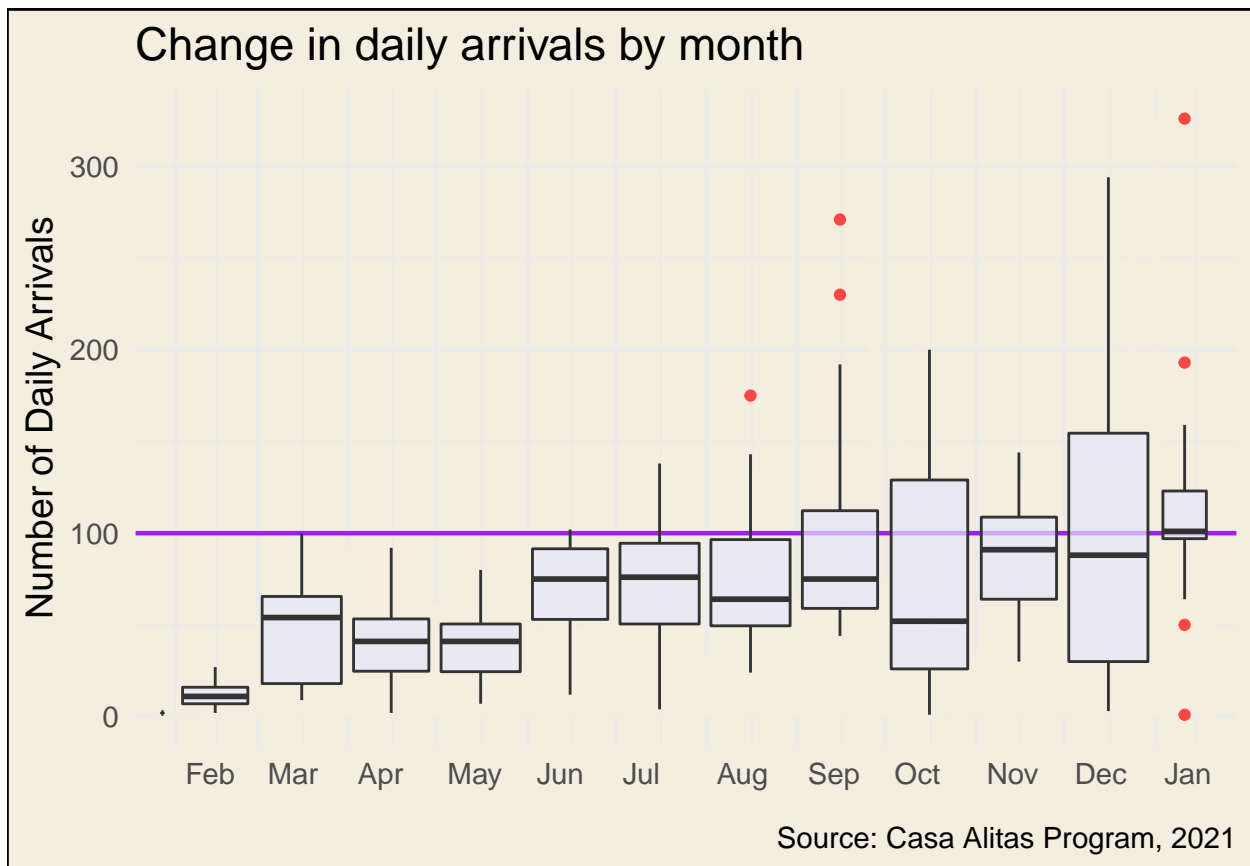
Data entrusted to staff and volunteers at Alitas illustrate these sudden ups and downs in asylum seeker releases by CBP and ICE. However, data cannot capture the intensity of the reality on the ground; neither the precarity of those facing the long, uncertain asylum case process, nor the challenges of effectively coordinating hundreds of volunteers who work to offer them assistance. Along with a small but growing staff, an army of volunteers make food, shelter, COVID-19 screening and vaccines, emergency medical aid, travel assistance and information services available to all guests. They find innovative ways to accommodate the wide range of needs of a constantly changing flow of arrivals.

Timelines

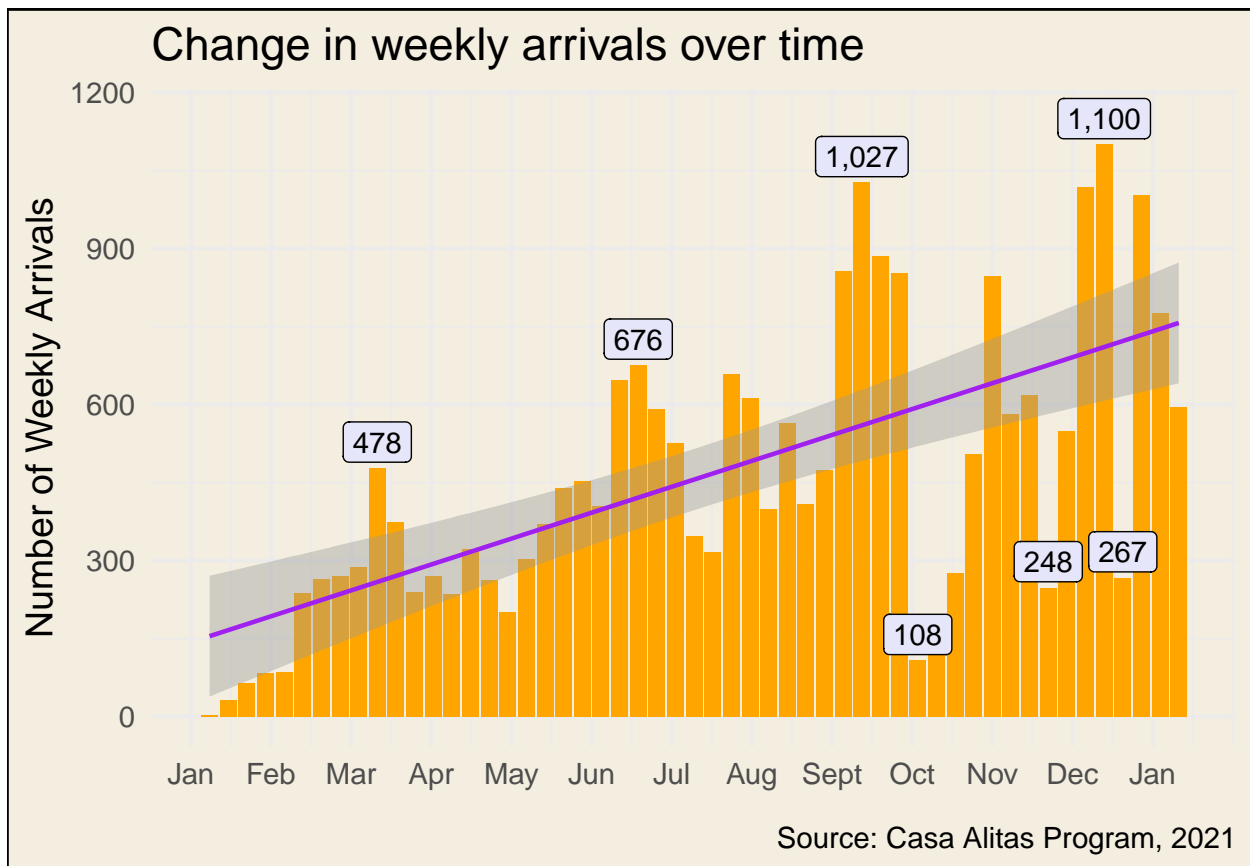
By Individual



The bar plot above shows daily arrivals at Casa Alitas from their re-opening in late January of 2021 through January of 2022, when arrivals peaked on New Years Day at 326 people. The purple line represent the rolling 7-day mean of daily arrivals. Taking into account that around 30% of guests had stays longer one night, there were an average of 112 people staying with Alitas every night of the year.

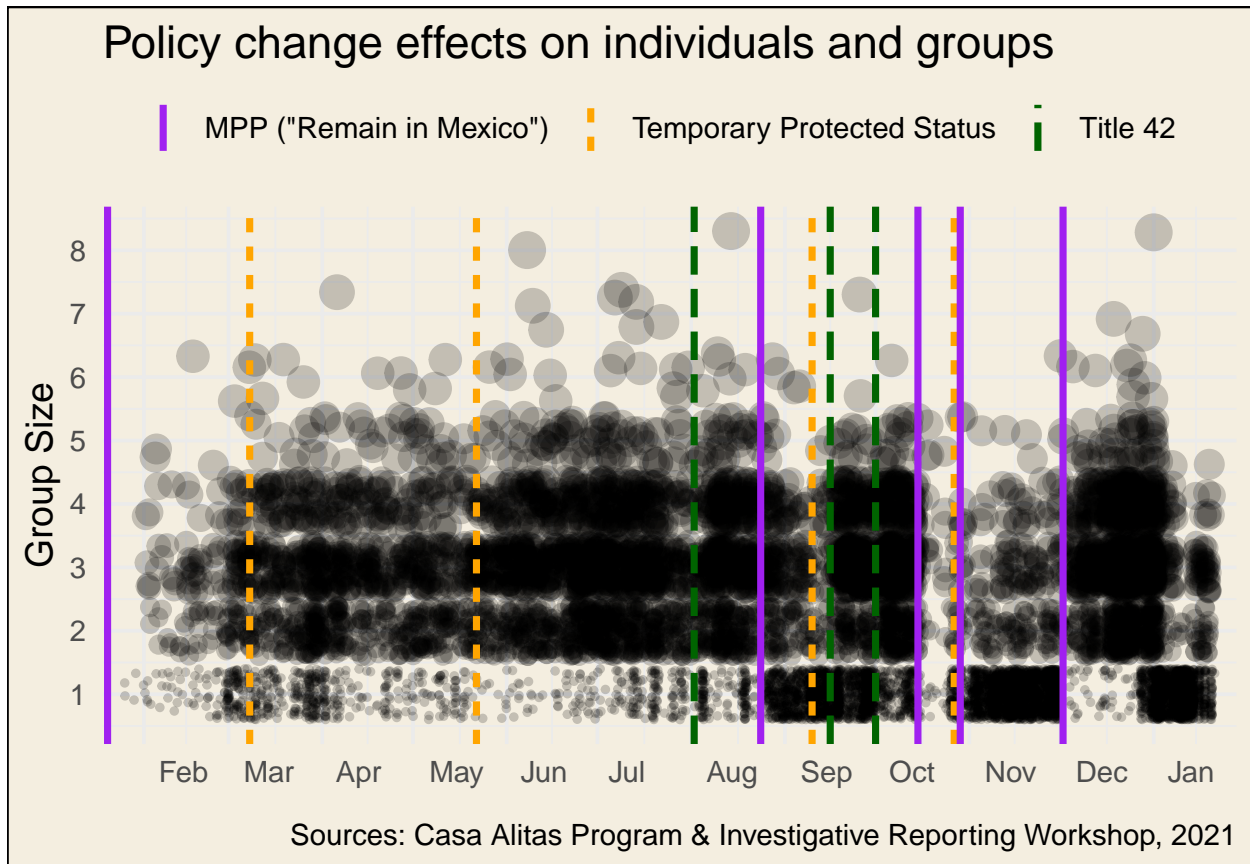


The plot above displays differences in the distributions of daily arrivals by month. Throughout 2021, the monthly average of daily arrivals (black horizontal line) gradually approached one-hundred, finally edging past it in the first several weeks of 2022. High and low arrival day outliers (in red) are also present in August and September of 2021 and January of 2022.



The increasing trend in arrivals is even more evident in the plot above, which displays total weekly arrival numbers with a linear regression line (purple) and confidence interval (shaded). So are the abrupt and unusual drops in arrivals late in the year. In October and December of 2021, there were several weeks with sudden and significant drops or spikes in arrivals that were *far* outside of the predictable range of usual variation. However, knowledge of potential forthcoming policy changes gleaned through networks of migrant-serving organizations and direct communication with border authorities and local government officials sometimes allowed staff to prepare for large decreases or increases in arrivals.

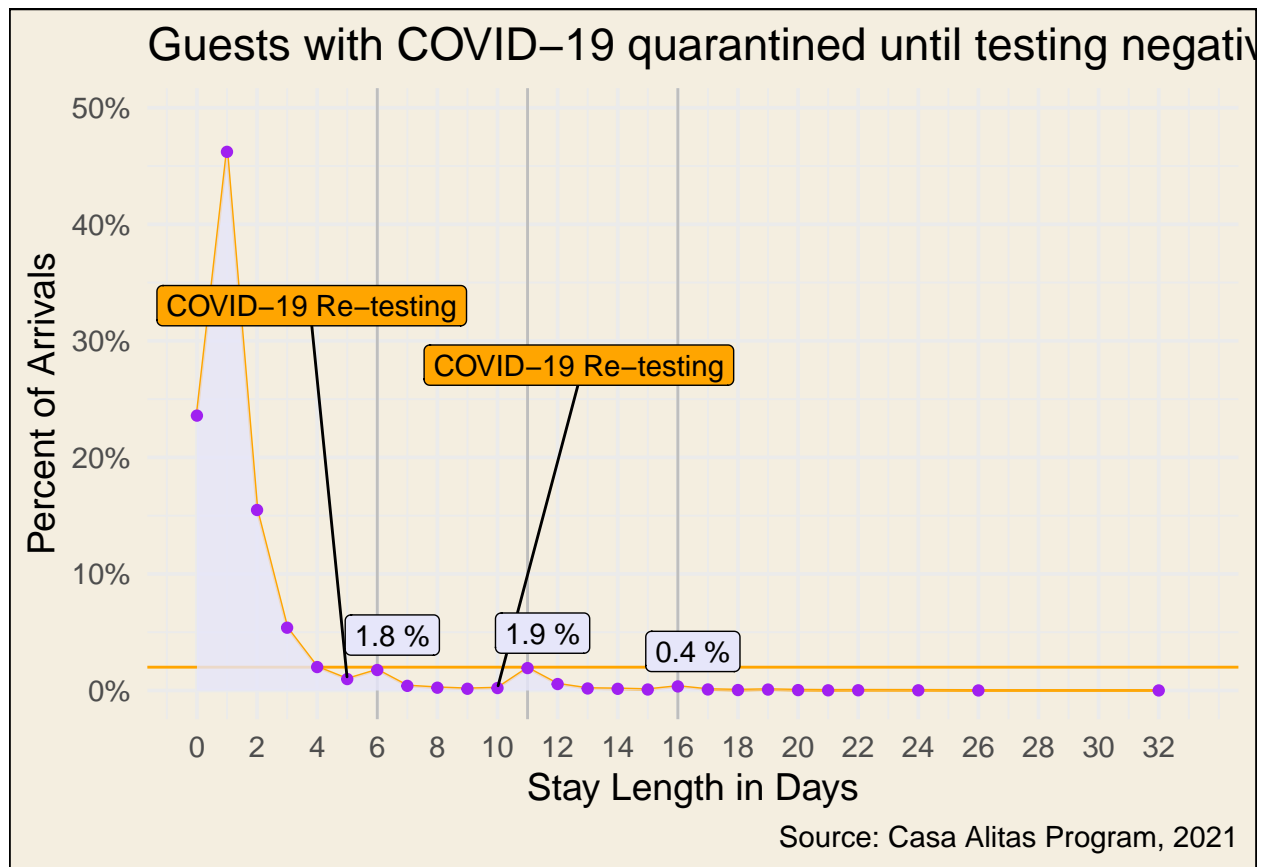
By Group Size



Throughout 2021, ups and downs in immigration policy shifts affected how individuals and groups of asylum seekers were released from detention. There were some periods of time with mostly family arrivals, such as December of 2021, and others with more individual arrivals, like month earlier in November.

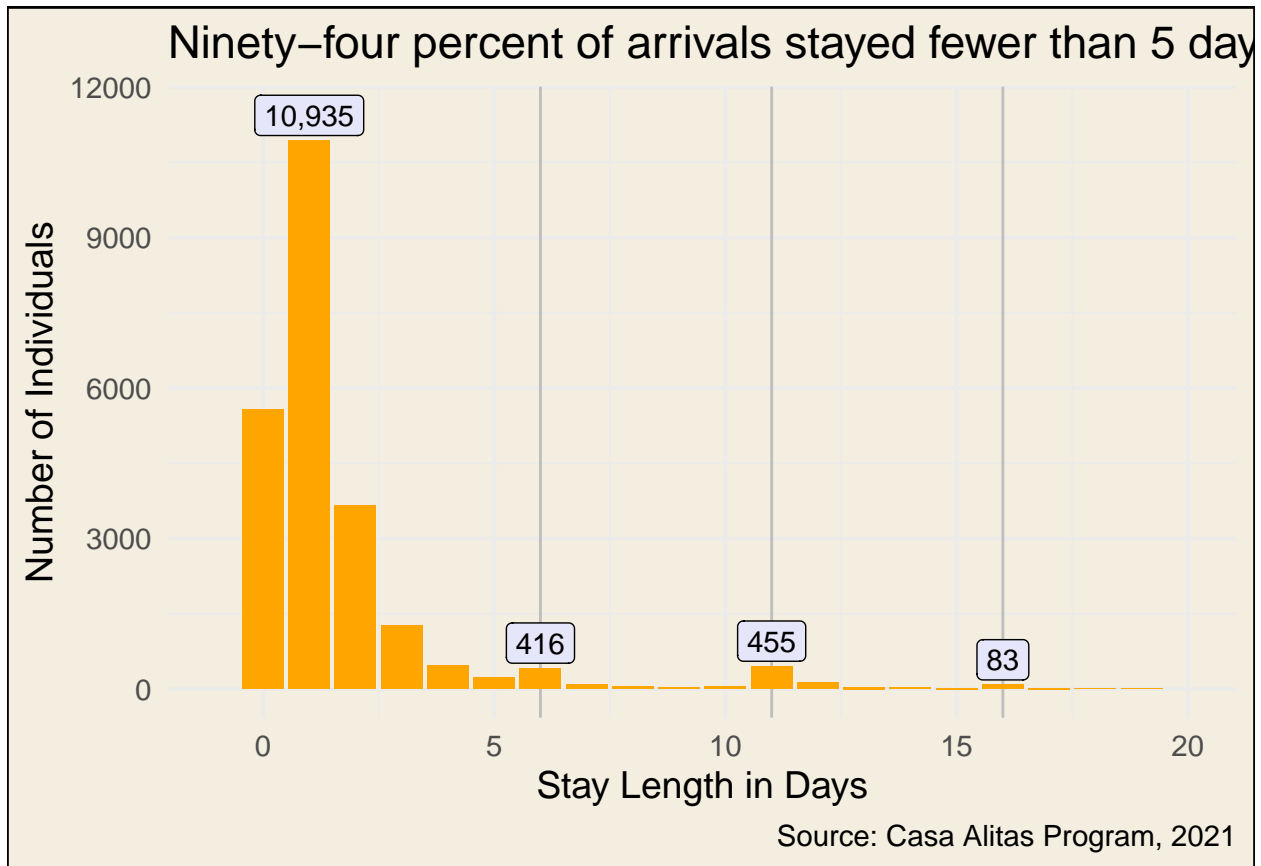
Stay Length

By Individual



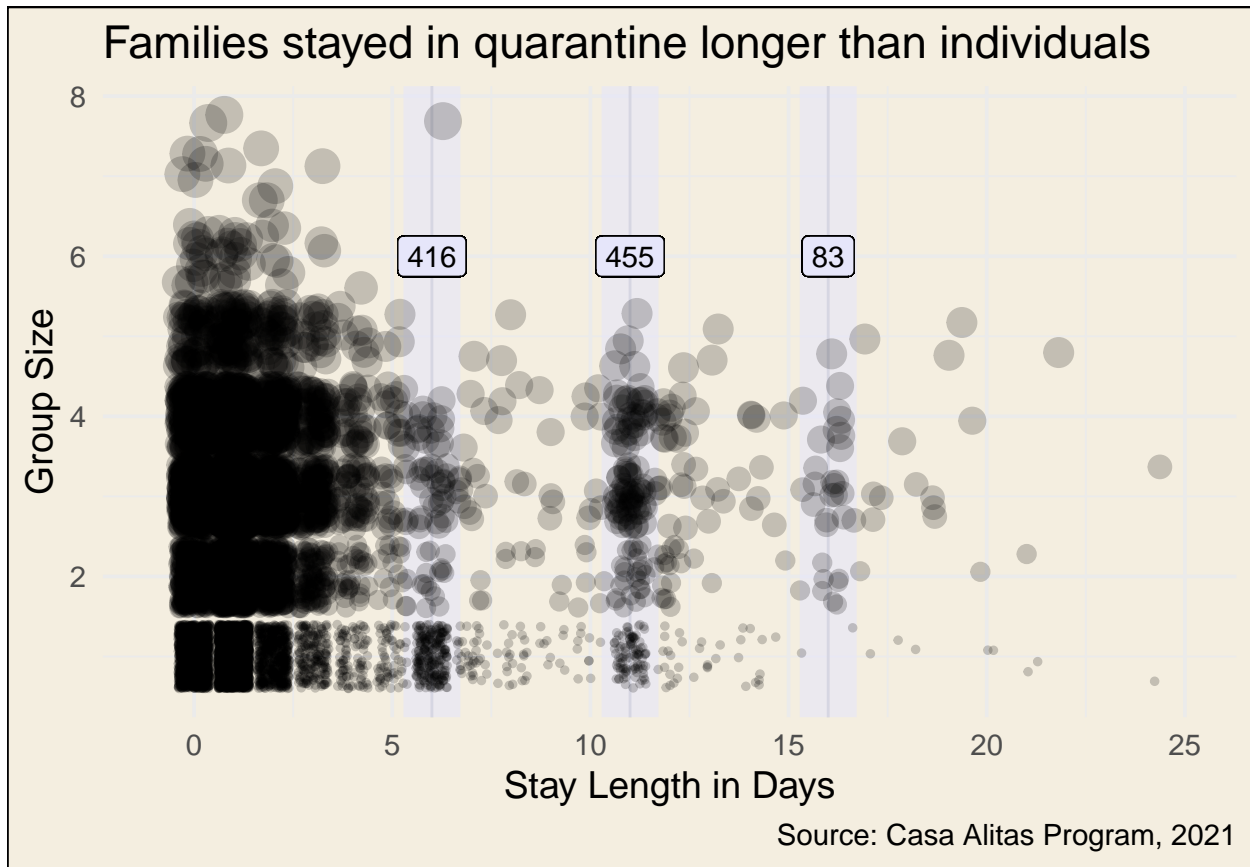
Around a 23% of people departed the same day they arrived and 70% of guests moved on after one night or less. After two nights or less, 85% of guests had moved on, and slightly more than 90% moved on after three nights or less. Only about 6% of all arrivals stayed longer than 5 days.

Small peaks in stay lengths formed on days six and eleven, probably when an individual or all members of a group had re-tested negative for COVID-19 so were able to continue on their journey. These two peaks together represent less than 4% of all guests. A very small bump on day sixteen may represents those groups who stayed in quarantine for 15 days, most likely re-testing three times before being able to travel on to their destinations.

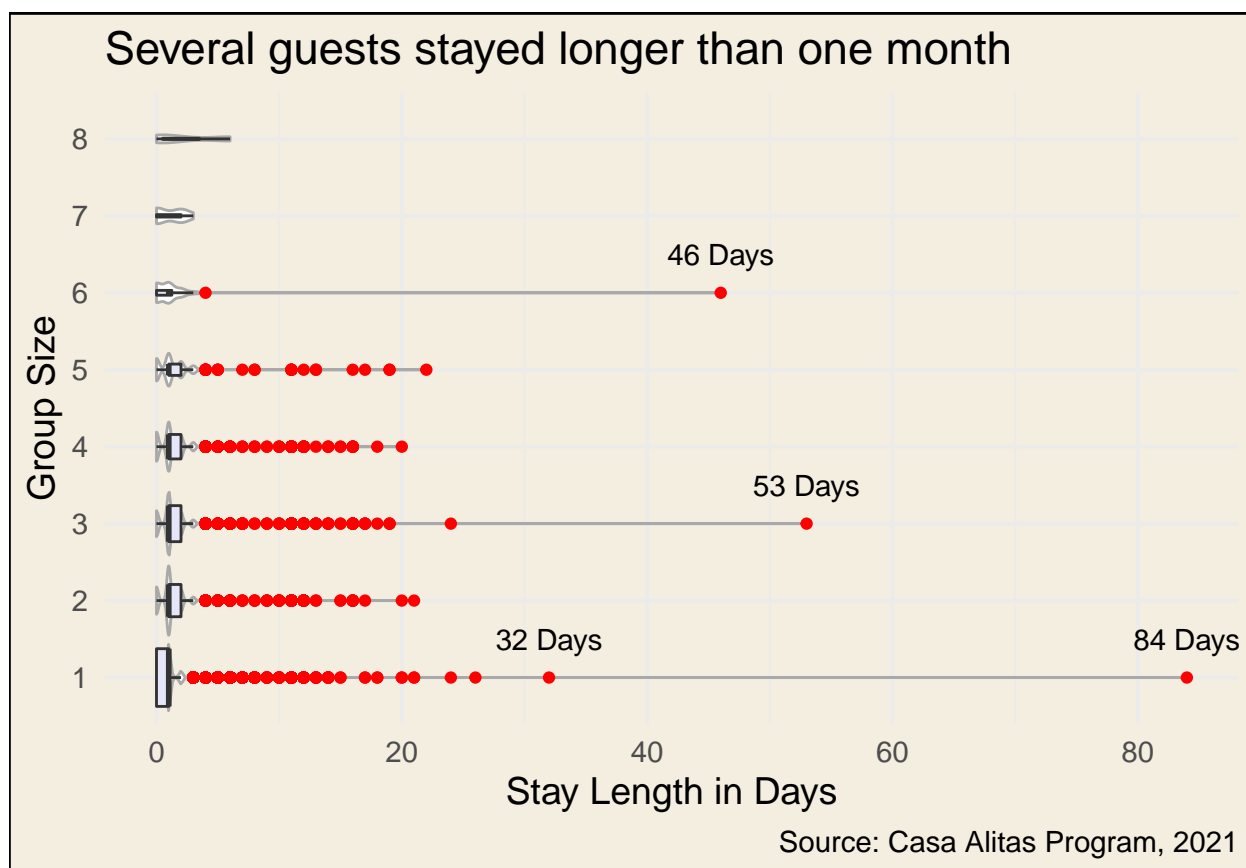


Of 23,660 arrivals, 1,498 had stays longer than 5 days. All-in-all, from January 26, 2021 until January 20, 2022, the Casa Alitas Program coordinated more than 40,000 beds (number of migrants by stay length), an average of 113 people staying with Alitas per night. It was only possible through coordination with Pima County and contracts with several Tucson motels and hotels for shelter overflow and quarantine, with substantial funding from FEMA.

By Group Size



Individuals with extended stays likely due to COVID-19 most commonly tested negative and departed after six days. It was more common for a family group quarantining together in a hotel or motel room (where it is easy to infect those who had previously tested negative), to have a more prolonged quarantine of 10 or 15 days.



Most guests, regardless of party size, moved on within a day or two of arrival. Close to 15% of guests ended up staying longer. In general, individuals tended to move on more quickly than groups, but some had extended stays due to extenuating circumstances like issues with health, sponsors, court dates or paperwork.

To Learn More

- **Arizona Public Media Video Feature:** https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6FUyY0_exoo
- **Casa Alitas Program Website:** <https://www.casaalitas.org/>
- **Catholic Community Services of Southern Arizona:** <https://www.ccs-soaz.org/agencies-ministries/detail/alitas-aid-for-migrant-women-and-children>

Asylum

- **Southern Border Communities Coalition:** https://www.southernborder.org/border_lens_asylum_seekers_at_the_border
- **U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services:** <https://www.uscis.gov/humanitarian/refugees-and-asylum/asylum/obtaining-asylum-in-the-united-states>
- **Syracuse University:** <https://trac.syr.edu/immigration/reports/667/>

“Remain in Mexico” (MPP)

- **Department of Homeland Security:** <https://www.dhs.gov/migrant-protection-protocols>

- **Migration Policy Institute:** <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/court-order-relaunch-remain-in-mexico>
- **Reuters:** <https://www.reuters.com/world/us/biden-administration-issues-new-memo-ending-trump-remain-mexico-policy-2021-10-29/>

Temporary Protected Status

- **Federal Register:** <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2021/09/10/2021-19617/continuation-of-documentation-for-beneficiaries-of-temporary-protected-status-designations-for-el>
- **National Immigration Forum:** <https://immigrationforum.org/article/fact-sheet-temporary-protected-status/>
- **U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services:** <https://www.uscis.gov/humanitarian/temporary-protected-status>

Title 42

- **American Immigration Council:** <https://www.americanimmigrationcouncil.org/research/guide-title-42-expulsions-border>
- **CBS News:** <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/immigration-title-42-senate-bill-border-expulsions/>
- **Deseret News:** <https://www.deseret.com/2022/4/8/23015106/what-is-title-42-and-why-does-biden-plan-to-end-it-your-questions-answered-us-mexico-border>
- **El Paso Matters:** <https://elpasomatters.org/2021/10/08/timeline-how-title-42-came-to-be-used-on-asylum-seekers/>
- **Puente Arizona:** <https://puenteaz.org/title42/>
- **Washington Office on Latin America:** <https://www.wola.org/analysis/a-tragic-milestone-20000th-migrant-deported-to-haiti-since-biden-inauguration/>

Migration Policy Changes

- **Boundless:** <https://www.boundless.com/blog/biden-immigration-tracker/>
- **Center for Migration Studies:** <https://cmsny.org/biden-immigration-executive-actions/>
- **Immigration Policy Tracking Project:** <https://impolicytracking.org/home/>
- **Investigative Reporting Workshop:** <https://investigativereportingworkshop.org/news/timeline-bidens-immigration-policy/>
- **Lawfare Blog:** <https://www.lawfareblog.com/president-bidens-immigration-executive-actions-recap#Asylum>
- **Pew Research:** <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2022/01/11/key-facts-about-u-s-immigration-policies-and-bidens-proposed-changes/>

News

- **Boundless:** <https://www.boundless.com/blog/boundless-weekly-immigration-news/>
- **FEMA Funds for Migrant Aid:** https://tucson.com/news/local/pima-county-uncertain-federal-funds-to-support-asylum-seekers-will-continue/article__1d07a4c8-901d-11ec-8e6c-a37e4491dcf4.html
- **Human Rights Watch:** <https://www.hrw.org/news/2021/03/05/mexico-abuses-against-asylum-seekers-us-border>
- **International Rescue Committee:** <https://www.rescue.org/article/what-happening-us-southern-border>
 - En español: <https://www.rescue.org/article/que-esta-pasando-en-la-frontera-sur-de-estados-unidos>
- **Tucson Sentinel:** https://www.tucsonsentinel.com/local/report/030122_casa_alitas_budget/pima-county-spending-13-million-per-month-shelter-migrants-released-by-dhs/
- **Tucson Weekly:** <https://www.tucsonweekly.com/tucson/crowded-house-casa-alitas-faces-increased-pressure-as-more-migrants-seek-refugee-status/Content?oid=30449369>