ICE Gestapo kidnaps record 51,000 people in July as Trump expands mass deportation operation

Jacob Crosse
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US Immigration and Customs Enforcement kidnapped as many as 51,000 people in July, the highest monthly total in the agency's history, as the Trump administration intensified its mass deportation operation across the country.

Fox News reported Monday that ICE made approximately 51,000 arrests during the month, an average of 1,645 every day. The figure, attributed to multiple federal sources, surpassed the previous record of roughly 43,000 arrests set in June.

Separate preliminary Department of Homeland Security figures obtained by CBS News recorded more than 46,000 people booked into ICE detention during July. The figures measure somewhat different stages of the mass deportation operation. The CBS total includes people initially arrested by Customs and Border Protection before being transferred to ICE custody.

Both reports confirm an immense nationwide escalation. ICE is kidnapping workers at their homes and workplaces, ambushing immigrants at airports and immigration check-ins, and carrying out traffic stops using masked agents in unmarked vehicles.

At airports alone, ICE agents are reportedly seizing between 20 and 40 people every day, with the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) supplying passenger information used to identify and target travelers.

The airport arrests expose the Democrats' complicity in Trump's attacks on immigrants, which serve as a spearhead for the creation of a presidential dictatorship. During the partial DHS shutdown in the spring, Democratic politicians made limited calls for the removal of ICE agents deployed as substitute airport personnel. Those demands have been completely abandoned even as ICE and the TSA have transformed airports into hunting grounds.

As of last weekend, ICE has imprisoned approximately 68,000 people across its sprawling network of concentration camps and makeshift holding facilities. The vast majority of those detained are held in facilities operated by private prison companies or local governments under lucrative contracts with the federal government.

The Trump administration has continued to escalate the mass deportation operation despite widespread opposition following the murders of US citizens Renee Good and Alex Pretti in Minneapolis and the recent killings of immigrant workers Lorenzo Salgado Araujo in Houston and Johan Sebastián Durán Guerrero in Biddeford, Maine.

After replacing Kristi Noem as secretary of the Department of Homeland Security, Markwayne Mullin sought to reduce public attention surrounding the operations while continuing to increase arrests. Rather than the highly publicized occupation-style deployments, ICE is increasingly relying on quieter arrests at homes, workplaces, airports and routine immigration appointments.

Tens of thousands of immigrant workers, the vast majority of whom have committed no crimes and are abiding by law, are being seized every month and disappeared into a network of filthy and deadly concentration camps.

The consequences of this operation were underscored by the death this past weekend of Edwin Jeovanny López Cornejo, an immigrant worker from El Salvador who had been imprisoned for six weeks at the privately operated Delaney Hall detention center in Newark, New Jersey.

In a video published Monday by the immigrant rights organization Movimiento Cosecha New Jersey, María Cornejo, who identified herself as López Cornejo's mother, said she believed her son died because he was denied adequate medical treatment.

López Cornejo suffered from high blood pressure, diabetes and seizures and required regular medication. His brother, Danilo López, said he had a valid work permit. His aunt said ICE agents seized him outside his home while he was on his way to work.

López Cornejo had lived in the United States for approximately 20 years and was the father of a 12-year-old daughter.

María Cornejo said she last spoke with her son on Friday. He told her that he felt ill and that part of his face and one of his hands had gone numb. He said he had been taken to a doctor and that laboratory tests were supposed to be conducted.

Democratic Representative Rob Menendez said López Cornejo complained of medical difficulties on Saturday before collapsing inside Delaney Hall. Staff reportedly performed cardiopulmonary resuscitation before emergency medical personnel transported him to University Hospital, where he was pronounced dead.

After visiting the facility Monday, Menendez admitted that ICE officials could not answer "certain medical questions" concerning López Cornejo's treatment and death.

Neither ICE nor the DHS publicly announced his death. María Cornejo said hospital staff, not ICE, notified the family that her son had died.

"What I want is justice," she said. "I don't want my son's death to go unanswered."

She continued, "If they don't ensure that justice is served, well, they're going to keep doing this forever, and we don't know how many more people we'll have to lose in this country."

The family said that during the six weeks López Cornejo was imprisoned, neither his mother, his daughter nor other relatives were

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permitted to visit him.

López Cornejo is at least the second immigrant to die after being imprisoned at Delaney Hall since the facility reopened last year.

Last December 12, Jean Wilson Brutus, a 41-year-old asylum seeker from Haiti, died one day after being transferred to the facility. ICE smeared Brutus as a "criminal illegal alien" and claimed he died from "suspected natural causes."

His family has disputed the agency's account and demanded a full investigation into his death. They have also rejected ICE's depiction of Brutus, who was seeking asylum in the United States when he was imprisoned.

Between Trump's inauguration on January 20, 2025, and June 4, 2026, 52 people died in ICE custody, according to a joint investigation by Human Rights Watch and Physicians for Human Rights. The mortality rate is nearly four times that recorded under the Biden administration and more than two and a half times the rate during Trump's first term.

Additional deaths since the report's cutoff, including that of López Cornejo, have driven the toll still higher. On average, an immigrant has died in ICE custody approximately every 10 days since Trump returned to office.

Responding to López Cornejo's death, Democratic New Jersey Governor Mikie Sherrill sought to channel popular opposition behind the demand that the government, rather than private corporations, operate the detention centers.

"I have long opposed the use of private, for-profit prisons operating in a space that should be reserved for government," Sherrill declared.

Her statement amounts to an endorsement of the concentration camp system as long as the state operates it directly. The issue, according to Sherrill, is not the mass imprisonment of workers who have committed no crime, but whether GEO Group or the government manages their confinement.

Sherrill's own record makes clear the class interests she defends. In May, amid reports of a hunger strike inside Delaney Hall and growing protests outside the facility, she deployed New Jersey State Police against demonstrators. Newark's Democratic mayor, Ras Baraka, imposed a nightly curfew around the detention center.

State police arrested protesters, while Sherrill denounced those who traveled to oppose ICE as outside agitators who "should not be here."

Research by Syracuse University professor Austin Kocher found that 88.3 percent of those detained at Delaney Hall had no criminal convictions.

The bipartisan character of the attack on immigrants was further exposed Monday by a *Guardian* investigation into the forced treatment of hunger strikers in ICE custody.

The newspaper reviewed hundreds of pages of court filings showing that DHS officials sought permission to subject at least 10 hunger strikers to involuntary medical procedures since Trump returned to the White House in January 2025.

At least three immigrants were definitely subjected to the procedures, while court records indicate that two more probably underwent them. Another five ended their hunger strikes as force-feeding was about to begin.

Force-feeding involves restraining a prisoner while medical personnel insert a tube through the nose and down the throat before pumping liquid nutrition into the stomach. The procedure can damage the nose, esophagus and internal organs and is widely regarded by human rights and medical organizations as torture.

Other procedures authorized by federal judges included forced intravenous hydration, involuntary blood draws and the collection of urine samples.

In six of the cases reviewed by the *Guardian*, the immigrants had no legal representation during proceedings authorizing their forced treatment. Federal judges frequently approved emergency requests before the hunger strikers had any meaningful opportunity to object.

The practice did not begin with Trump. In 2024, during the final year of the Biden administration, DHS attempted to subject at least 10 hunger strikers to forced medical treatment. The *Guardian* confirmed that the procedures were carried out against at least two people and probably against four others.

The continuity exposes the fraud of claims that the Democratic Party represents an alternative to Trump's mass deportation operation. Biden maintained ICE, expanded its resources and authorized the same methods of physical coercion now being employed on a vastly greater scale.

Hunger strikes have erupted across the detention system in response to indefinite imprisonment, medical neglect, solitary confinement, inedible food and filthy water.

Last week, detainees at the GEO Group-operated Adelanto ICE Processing Center in Southern California released video appearing to show small worm-like organisms swimming in water provided for them to drink.

The footage was recorded by Carlitos Ricardo Parias, a Los Angeles resident and TikTok streamer who has been detained at Adelanto for nine months. Parias, known online as Richard L.A., was shot in the elbow by federal agents during an immigration operation in South Los Angeles last October.

Parias told L.A. Taco that 75 to 80 detainees receive drinking water from two 10-gallon containers. After another detainee discovered the apparent worms, they collected several in a plastic bottle to preserve the evidence.

"They are little animals, like worms, black in color, and small that are moving around in the water, swimming and alive," Parias said.

"They are almost poisoning us with this type of little animal," he added. "Many people are experiencing stomach issues."

Parias said detainees drank the contaminated water despite the apparent organisms because they were thirsty. He also alleged that when the containers were emptied, staff sometimes waited as long as three hours before refilling them.

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