

ICE shackles Haitian workers with GPS monitors after stripping legal status

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Hundreds of Haitian immigrants in Ohio are being fitted with GPS ankle monitors after the Trump administration stripped them of legal status, work authorization and, in many cases, their driving privileges.

Many have received Department of Homeland Security “Call-In Letters” ordering them to appear at Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) offices within 30 days.

The electronic shackles are a modern-day version of the yellow stars of David that the Nazis forced Jews to wear in the years leading up to the Holocaust. They identify, stigmatize and continuously track a persecuted population whose legal rights were abolished virtually overnight.

Workers who were legally employed and protected from deportation less than two weeks ago are now being monitored with devices generally associated with people convicted of crimes or awaiting trial. Some are being ordered to travel dozens of miles to ICE offices after losing their legal right to drive.

This is a warning to the entire working class. If the government can revoke the rights of hundreds of thousands of people who have lived, worked, paid taxes and raised families in the United States for years, there is no barrier separating the persecution of immigrants from similar attacks on US citizens.

“Haitians with TPS, regardless of whether they have a pending asylum claim, have gotten a ‘DHS Call-In Letter’ to appear at ICE offices in person,” Steve Foster, immigration policy coordinator for the Institute for Justice and Democracy in Haiti, told ABC News.

Viles Dorsainvil, executive director of a Haitian support organization in Springfield, Ohio, confirmed the operation. “We are just helping these folks to go to this appointment, and when they get there, they interview them and eventually put [an] ankle monitor on them,” he said.

The Trump administration terminated Temporary Protected Status (TPS) for more than 300,000 Haitians on

July 27, immediately stripping them of protection from deportation and federal authorization to work legally.

The summonses have all the features of an administrative trap. Immigrants who comply risk arrest, electronic surveillance and accelerated deportation proceedings. Those unable to attend can be branded as fugitives.

According to the *Washington Post*, approximately 50 Haitians from Springfield were called into ICE offices on Friday alone. Local attorneys said they were arrested and conditionally released with electronic monitors. They were ordered not to travel more than 75 miles from their homes.

An unnamed Trump administration official confirmed the operation and said further “check-ins” would be scheduled in waves.

A Department of Homeland Security spokesperson responded to ABC News with open contempt.

“Temporary Protected Status is exactly that—temporary,” the spokesperson declared. “For too long, TPS has been allowed to function as a de facto amnesty program despite Congress never intending it to be permanent.”

The spokesperson added, “It’s closing time, which means you don’t have to go home, but you can’t stay here.”

This is a deliberate falsification of the law. “Temporary” does not mean protection must end after an arbitrary number of years regardless of the conditions awaiting deportees.

The statute requires periodic reviews of “the conditions in the foreign state” to determine whether the circumstances that justified TPS “continue to be met.” A designation is to be terminated only when the foreign country “no longer continues to meet the conditions for designation.” Otherwise, it must be extended.

In Haiti, conditions have not improved. They have

deteriorated catastrophically.

Haiti remains under a State Department “Level 4: Do Not Travel” advisory because of “crime, kidnapping, terrorism, unrest, and limited health care.” More than half the population faces acute food insecurity, armed groups control much of the capital and well over one million people have been internally displaced. US commercial flights are not operating to or from Port-au-Prince, Haiti’s capital.

The administration is simultaneously declaring Haiti safe enough for the mass deportation of Haitian workers and too dangerous for Americans to visit.

White House Deputy Chief of Staff Stephen Miller gave the fascistic logic behind this contradiction when asked in June whether Haiti was safe.

“For Haitians? Absolutely,” Miller replied. “It’d be crazy for us to say that Haitians couldn’t live in Haiti. It’s their country.”

Miller cited no improvement in Haiti. His position is that Haitians belong in Haiti solely because they are Haitian. This is the language of blood-and-soil nationalism, in which rights are determined by national origin.

The termination of TPS threatens the livelihoods of approximately 200,000 Haitian workers employed in hospitals, nursing homes, airports, farms, warehouses, restaurants, hotels and factories.

An analysis by FWD.us, the Haitian Bridge Alliance and UndocuBlack Network estimated that Haitian TPS holders include 22,000 cooks and servers, 22,000 stockers and packers, 15,000 farmworkers, 14,000 retail workers, 13,000 nursing assistants, 9,000 drivers and 8,000 caregivers.

In Florida alone, 93,000 Haitian TPS holders were working before the termination. Nationally, their labor generated an estimated \$5.9 billion annually, while they paid more than \$1.5 billion in federal, payroll, state and local taxes.

Approximately 50,000 US citizen children have at least one Haitian TPS parent. The analysis estimated that the loss of their parents’ work authorization would push 25,000 into poverty.

The targeting of Haitians in Springfield, Ohio is the culmination of a fascistic campaign initiated by neo-Nazis and elevated to national policy by Trump and Vice President JD Vance.

In August 2024, members of the neo-Nazi Blood Tribe marched through Springfield carrying swastika flags and semi-automatic rifles. Trump and Vance then elevated the

racist lie that Haitian immigrants were stealing and eating pets. Trump pledged to revoke their legal status and deport them. That threat is now being implemented.

The Democratic Party is not opposing this campaign.

A small number of Democrats have called on the Senate to approve H.R. 1689, which would extend Haitian TPS through April 2029. Even this limited measure would leave the machinery of raids, surveillance, detention and deportation intact.

Leading Democrats have otherwise remained silent, including the most prominent members of the Democratic Socialists of America. Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez has issued no public statement since Haitian TPS was terminated. New York Mayor Zohran Mamdani has likewise remained silent despite governing a city with one of the country’s largest Haitian populations.

Bernie Sanders has also refused to defend Haitian workers. Appearing on the far-right *Tim Dillon Show* last October, Sanders praised Trump’s border policy: “Trump did a better job. I don’t like Trump, you know, but we should have a secure border.”

There is nothing accidental about this silence. The Democrats quibble with Trump over tactics while defending the border and deportation regime they helped construct. Obama deported more than three million people. Biden maintained the camps, carried out millions of summary expulsions under Title 42 and sent mounted Border Patrol agents against Haitian refugees in Del Rio.

The defense of Haitian immigrants cannot be entrusted to the Democratic Party or the courts. Workers must organize independently through rank-and-file committees to oppose ICE raids, restore legal status and work authorization to all affected immigrants, remove the ankle monitors, close the concentration camps and abolish ICE and the Border Patrol.

The attack on immigrants is the spearhead of a police state directed against the entire working class. Its answer must be the unified industrial and political mobilization of workers, regardless of nationality, against the capitalist system and its entire repressive apparatus.



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