

Lawful permanent resident dies in ICE concentration camp

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In at least the second death this year in Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) custody in Laredo, Texas, a 56-year-old Mexican man was found dead in his cell Saturday morning. According to a statement released by ICE, Emiliano Andrade-Covarrubias was found unresponsive by facility staff at the Rio Grande Processing Center during a security check at around 10:00 a.m. and was not able to be resuscitated when staff performed CPR and contacted emergency services. He was declared dead approximately 20 minutes later.

Andrade-Covarrubias' daughter, Estefani Andrade, informed the *Texas Tribune* that he had been in custody since June, and the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) never informed her or any relatives of her father's death. Instead, she was only notified by the Webb County Medical Examiner's Office, which is performing Andrade-Covarrubias' autopsy.

In a statement released Monday, ICE denied any culpability in the death of Andrade-Covarrubias, who was a lawful legal resident. The cause of his death remains unknown, but the agency said he received proper medical care and attention while at the facility, something belied by the record of inhumane conditions at immigration detention facilities and his daughter's own testimony.

Andrade told the *Tribune* her father said medical staff would regularly ignore his pleas for aid. He was ill with chronic conditions, including high blood pressure, diabetes and a heart condition. His daughter said that her father had medicine with him when he was detained but added that staff at the center would not give him his medication. She said she witnessed the deterioration of his health in video calls between them.

In addition to losing a noticeable amount of weight, Andrade-Covarrubias developed a cough while in

custody. The persistent cough worried Andrade since her father was hospitalized for COVID-19 in 2021, which took a toll on his overall health. She said her father told her that medical staff at the center brushed off his concerns, even when he told them he was having trouble breathing and felt tightness in his chest.

Andrade-Covarrubias was a resident of Dallas for decades and had three adult children, who were all born in the US. Like Lorenzo Salgado Araujo, an immigrant murdered by ICE in Houston in July, Andrade-Covarrubias worked in construction, helping to build homes for families in Texas. His daughter says he worked as a contractor painting apartments and townhomes. He planned on returning to Mexico eventually and had actually been traveling between the US and Mexico to build a house of his own in his native country.

In its Monday statement, ICE said Andrade-Covarrubias was arrested while returning to Texas from Mexico on June 26 because immigration officers believed that he fraudulently obtained his legal status by failing to disclose a 2004 arrest for theft during his review process. His daughter maintains that her father disclosed the 2004 arrest during the review process and was granted a green card.

His arrest came three days after the Supreme Court's June 23 ruling in *Blanche v. Muk Choi Lau*, which weakened protections for lawful permanent residents returning from abroad. In a 6–3 decision written by Justice Clarence Thomas, the court held that border officers need not have “clear and convincing evidence” that a returning resident committed a qualifying offense before treating that person as an applicant for admission. This means a working-class immigrant could be torn away from the life they have built over decades for a minor non-violent incident they may, or

may not, have committed.

Indeed, DHS officials were seeking to deport him, saying that he was in removal proceedings before an immigration judge. According to court records, Andrade-Covarrubias was due to appear at an immigration court hearing on November 2.

Andrade-Covarrubias is at least the seventh person confirmed to have died while detained by ICE in Texas this year and the second to die at the detention center in Laredo. Other deaths include:

- **Luis Gustavo Núñez Cáceres**, 42, passed away from a heart-related medical emergency on January 5, 2026, at HCA Houston Healthcare in Conroe, Texas, following his transfer to the ICU from the Joe Corley Processing Center.

- **Victor Manuel Diaz**, 36, died on January 14, 2026 at Camp East Montana in El Paso, Texas. ICE claimed the death was due to suicide, but his family maintains it was medical distress suffered during early-year tent facility surges.

- **Felix Alcorta-Rodriguez**, 63, died of cardiovascular failure on June 19, 2026, after being found unresponsive in his cell at the Webb County Detention Center in Laredo, Texas (the same facility Andrade-Covarrubias died in) and rushed to a local hospital.

- **Adrian Andreas Florian**, 85, died on June 24, 2026, from medical complications at Valley Baptist Medical Center in Harlingen, Texas, after being transferred there from the Port Isabel Detention Center in Los Fresnos.

- **Geraldo Lunas Campos**, 55, died on January 3, 2026, at Camp East Montana in El Paso, Texas, from homicide via asphyxia, according to the El Paso County Medical Examiner. Witnesses described seeing guards choking him before he died.

After learning of the tragedy, US Representative Henry Cuellar, a Democrat from Laredo, told the *Tribune* that he visited the detention center to investigate the quality of the facility's medical care. Cuellar said he could not get any details about Andrade-Covarrubias' case because it was still under investigation. In a statement, he said that he has written to DHS officials to demand more transparency.

"Any death in federal custody is a serious matter, and we need to know what happened," Cuellar said on Monday.

It must be stated, however, that the Democratic Party offers no progressive solution to the escalating war against immigrants and the broader working class. In fact, workers and immigrants have not forgotten that Joe Biden continued the immigration policies of Barack Obama, who was dubbed the "deporter-in-chief."

While opposing the most egregious examples of how immigrants are being treated, the Democrats still support the apparatus that terrorizes immigrants, rounds them up, and has no regard for their contributions as members of the working class. This includes the Texas Democratic candidate for US Senate James Talarico, who recently stated during a CNN town hall that ICE is "necessary."

The defense of the rights of immigrants, which are the rights of the whole working class by extension, can only be obtained through a concerted campaign of all workers in the United States, regardless of race, nationality, gender, immigration status or any other forms of identity.



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