

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

MAIKER ALEJANDRO ESPINOZA
ESCALONA, et al.,

Plaintiffs,

v.

KRISTI NOEM
Secretary of Homeland Security, et al.,

Defendants.

Civil Action No. 25-00604

DECLARATION OF JUAN LOPEZ-VEGA

I, Juan Lopez Vega, declare the following under 28 U.S.C. § 1746, and state that under penalty of perjury the following is true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief:

1. I am employed by U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS), U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), Enforcement and Removal Operations (ERO), as the Deputy Field Office Director (DFOD) in Miami, Florida. I have held this position since February 9, 2024. Since February 28, 2025, I have been serving as the Acting Field Office Director ((A)FOD). As (A)FOD, I am responsible for the oversight of the ERO Miami Area of Responsibility (AOR). At the ERO Miami Field Office, I manage ERO personnel and provide oversight of ICE operations in detention facilities housing ICE detainees. My responsibilities include overseeing ERO enforcement operations overseeing and detention facility operations within the Miami AOR, including those at the U.S. Naval Station Guantanamo Bay (NSGB) in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba.
2. I provide this declaration based on my personal knowledge, reasonable inquiry, and

information obtained from various records, systems, databases, other DHS employees, and information portals maintained and relied upon by DHS in the regular course of business.

3. I am aware that this litigation, *Espinoza Escalona v. Noem*, 1:25-cv-00604 (D.D.C. filed Mar. 1, 2025), has been filed in the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia.
4. I am also aware that litigation, *Las Americas Immigrant Advocacy Ctr. v. Noem*, No. 1:25-cv-418 (D.D.C. filed Feb. 12, 2025), has been filed in the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia. I have reviewed Acting Field Office Director Juan Agudelo's Declaration (DOC No. 14-1, filed Feb. 20, 2025), attached as **Exhibit A**, and provide supplemental information within this declaration.
5. On January 29, 2025, President Donald J. Trump signed a memorandum directing the Department of Defense (DoD) and DHS to expand the Migrant Operations Center (MOC) at NSGB.
6. NSGB will temporarily house aliens with final orders of removal before they are removed to their home country or a safe alternative country. The use of NSGB supports the ongoing removal operations due to the number of illegal aliens present in the United States and the current and ever-evolving availability of detention space in ICE detention facilities or other contracted detention facilities to house aliens for civil immigration purposes. The ongoing mandate of the Administration to execute the immigration laws of the United States requires the use of all available detention options. Available detention space fluctuates due to, for example, contracting issues, state laws, and injunctions issued by federal district courts.
7. A total of 290 aliens have been transferred to NSGB.
8. As of March 7, 2025, there are 40 aliens housed at NSGB. Seventeen (17) of those aliens are housed at the MOC, and 23 aliens are housed at Camp VI. All 40 aliens have final orders of

removal. None of the 40 are Venezuelan. Although DHS first used NSGB to stage a removal mission for 178 aliens with final orders of removal to Venezuela, NSGB has since housed aliens originating from 27 distinct countries and is being used for a variety of removal missions.

General Policies and Care at NSGB

9. All aliens housed at NSGB are treated with dignity and respect. Mistreatment is not tolerated. Any allegation of mistreatment would be properly investigated and handled appropriately.
10. Defendants are providing immigration detainees with access to counsel, nutrition, and medical care in a manner not inconsistent with other ICE detention facilities.
11. Attorney-client phone calls for detainees at NSGB will take place between Monday and Friday 8 a.m. – 5 p.m. EST, and Saturday through Sunday from 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. EST with no time limitations, subject to detainee population numbers and phone availability.
12. Written notice of the right to contact counsel is posted in Camp VI and the MOC and distributed to each incoming alien. The notice is currently available in both English and Spanish. ERO will continue to assess whether additional translations become necessary. A copy of the notice provided to detainees is attached as **Exhibit B** to this declaration.
13. The notice lists a toll-free number for the American Bar Association (ABA) Information Line, which has Spanish language capability. A legal representative from the ABA can request a pre-representational phone call with the detainee by emailing Legal.GTMO@ice.dhs.gov, pursuant to the procedures outlined at <https://www.ice.gov/detain/detention-facilities/naval-station-guantanamo-bay>.
14. Detainees at Camp VI and the MOC can request to speak with their counsel or with a representative from the ABA Information Line by filling out and submitting a detainee

request form to an ICE officer or ICE contract security officer. ICE contract security officers will transmit submitted detainee request forms to ICE personnel, who will then review the detainees' requests in the order that they are submitted. Detainees' requests for phone calls will be accommodated generally within 24 hours of the submitted request. A copy of the detainee request form is attached as **Exhibit C** to this declaration.

15. Attorneys can follow the procedures outlined at <https://www.ice.gov/detain/detention-facilities/naval-station-guantanamo-bay> to request a legal call with a detainee. Representation and pre-representational call requests are permitted.
16. Attorney calls are confidential and will not be audio-monitored. During the call, a security officer will visually monitor the detainee.
17. The ICE Detainee Locator has been updated to reflect the current location of aliens who are currently housed at the MOC and Camp VI.
18. Attorneys can follow the procedures outlined at <https://www.ice.gov/detain/detention-facilities/naval-station-guantanamo-bay> to send emails to detainees. All correspondence must be sent to Legal.GTMO@ice.dhs.gov and cannot contain more than 20 pages. All documents will be inspected for contraband but not read. Electronic communication requests will be processed between Monday and Friday 8 a.m. – 4 p.m. EST. ICE personnel will print and provide copies of the documents to the detainees.
19. Legal mail will be delivered to NSGB on a weekly basis via the Defense Courier Service, consistent with the procedures used in habeas proceedings involving law of war detainees. ERO provides all detainees with access to pens and paper.
20. The Joint Task Force Guantanamo and DHS are not accommodating requests for in-person visits with the immigration detainees at this time due to the extensive logistical challenges

with such visits, the potential need for counsel to possess security clearances, the anticipated short-term stay of the immigration detainees, and the potential for a very high volume of counsel to request to conduct such visits. They will continue to evaluate the feasibility and necessity of authorizing counsel travel to NSGB for in-person visits between hired attorneys and their clients as the mission develops.

21. Detainees at Camp VI and the MOC can request to schedule calls with family by filling out and submitting a detainee request form to an ICE officer or ICE contract security officer. Family calls are audio monitored by security personnel.
22. Aliens housed at the MOC and Camp VI receive three nutritionally adequate hot meals per day.
23. All housing units at the MOC and Camp VI are air-conditioned to ensure that aliens are not subject to extreme temperatures during their stay. Temperatures at both the MOC and Camp VI are generally kept between 69-74° Fahrenheit to control humidity and moisture levels. Extra blankets are available upon request.
24. ICE does not conduct strip searches at either the MOC or Camp VI. DoD does conduct, with ICE personnel present, strip searches on aliens entering Camp VI for the first time. ICE conducts pat-down searches as part of intake procedures to ensure that no contraband is introduced into the facility. Pat-down searches are also conducted whenever aliens leave their assigned housing units.
25. Aliens housed at the MOC and Camp VI have freedom of movement without use of restraints within their housing units.
26. Before being transferred to NSGB, aliens are prescreened for medical issues.

Migrant Operations Center (MOC)

27. At the MOC, aliens are currently housed in a building with dormitory style housing units, with each unit accommodating 6 to 7 individuals. Each unit is equipped with its own bathroom, sink, and shower. Each unit has a window. Each alien is assigned his own bed.
28. Aliens at the MOC are afforded outdoor recreation time daily. The allotted outdoor recreation time for each alien may vary depending on certain factors, such as the weather and/or size of the population.
29. At the MOC, aliens are provided with potable water upon request. Aliens at the MOC also have access to drinking water at a communal water fountain.
30. Aliens at the MOC are guarded by ICE contract security staff.
31. Restraints are generally not used within the MOC absent exigent circumstances and unless aliens are being transported beyond the MOC compound.
32. There are two (2) cell phones available for the aliens at the MOC. Currently, there is a plan to add additional phone lines.

Camp VI

33. At Camp VI, the facility is designed with POD-style cell blocks across two tiers. Each POD contains 11 cells per tier with one individual housed in each cell. Each cell is equipped with a bed and its own commode, sink, and water fountain.
34. Aliens housed at Camp VI are provided with potable water upon request. They also have ready access to drinking water in their cells.
35. Aliens at Camp VI are guarded by a combination of military personnel, non-uniformed ICE personnel, and ICE contract security staff.


36. Restraints are generally not used within Camp VI absent exigent circumstances and unless aliens are being transported from their cells, such as to medical appointments or to make phone calls.
37. Aliens at Camp VI are also afforded daily access to a communal day room, which is naturally lighted. The communal day room is equipped with showers, reading materials, pens and paper, and accommodations for detainees to have meals together.
38. There are six (6) phones available for detainee phone calls in a building near Camp VI.

Named Plaintiffs

39. I have reviewed the immigration and custody status of the ten (10) named Plaintiffs from the *Espinoza Escalona v. Noem*, 1:25-cv-00604 (D.D.C. filed Mar. 1, 2025) case. All ten (10) Plaintiffs have final orders of removal. None were at imminent risk of transfer to NSGB. ICE confirms that it will not transfer the 10 Plaintiffs to NSGB through March 17, 2025.

I declare, under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct to the best of my knowledge, information, and belief, as of the time of signature.

Executed this 10th day of March, 2025.



Juan Lopez-Vega
Acting Field Office Director
Enforcement and Removal Operations
U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement
U.S. Department of Homeland Security

EXHIBIT A

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

LAS AMERICAS IMMIGRANT
ADVOCACY CENTER, et al.,

Plaintiffs,

v.

KRISTI NOEM
Secretary of Homeland Security, et al.,

Defendants.

Civil Action No. 25-0418

DECLARATION OF JUAN AGUDELO

I, Juan Agudelo, declare the following under 28 U.S.C. § 1746, and state that under penalty of perjury the following is true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief:

1. I am employed by U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS), U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), Enforcement and Removal Operations (ERO), as the Deputy Field Office Director (DFOD) for Miami, Florida. I have held this position since October 23, 2022. From January 13, 2025, I began serving as the Acting Field Office Director ((A)FOD). As (A)FOD, I am responsible for the oversight of the ERO Miami Area of Responsibility (AOR). At the Miami Field Office, I manage ERO personnel and provide oversight of ICE operations in detention facilities. My responsibilities include overseeing ERO enforcement operations as well as detention facility operations within the Miami AOR.
2. I provide this declaration based on my personal knowledge, reasonable inquiry, and information obtained from various records, systems, databases, other DHS employees, and information portals maintained and relied upon by DHS in the regular course of business.
3. I am aware that this litigation, *Las Americas Immigrant Advocacy Ctr. v. Noem*, 1:25-cv-00418 (D.D.C. filed Feb. 12, 2025), has been filed in the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia.
4. On January 29, 2025, President Donald J. Trump signed a memorandum directing the

Department of Defense and Department of Homeland Security to expand the Migrant Operations Center (MOC) at the U.S. Naval Station Guantanamo Bay (NSGB) in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba.

5. NSGB will temporarily house aliens before they are removed to their home country or a safe third country. The use of NSGB is deemed necessary to complete ongoing removal operations due to the number of illegal aliens present in the United States and the current and ever-evolving availability of detention space in ICE detention facilities or other contracted detention facilities to house aliens for civil immigration purposes. Available detention space fluctuates due to, for example, contracting issues, state laws, and injunctions issued by federal district courts.
6. On February 4, 2025, ICE began transferring aliens with final orders of removal located in the continental United States to NSGB. ICE intends to use NSGB as a temporary staging facility for aliens being repatriated and expects the average length of stay at the MOC to be as limited to the time necessary to effect the removal orders. On February 4, 2025, the first flight of 10 aliens departed Fort Bliss, Texas to Guantanamo Bay. These aliens are natives and citizens of Venezuela who have final orders of removal, many of whom are believed to be part of the transnational criminal organization “Tren de Aragua,” which the United States designated as a specially designated global terrorist organization by Federal Register Notice on February 20, 2025. These 10 aliens were placed in a complex called Camp VI, which houses aliens who are considered to be high security threat.
7. On February 6, 2025, 13 aliens arrived at NSGB and were transferred to Camp VI. There were 15 aliens on February 7, 2025, 14 aliens on February 8, 2025, 10 aliens on February 12, 2025, 13 aliens on February 13, 2025, 15 aliens on February 14, 2025, and 15 aliens on February 15, 2025, 15 aliens on February 16, 2025, and 7 aliens on February 17, 2025, who arrived at NSGB and were transferred to Camp VI.
8. On February 9, 2025, 15 aliens arrived at NSGB and were transferred to the MOC. There were 15 aliens on February 10, 2025, 15 aliens on February 11, 2025, 5 aliens on February 12, 2025, and 1 alien on February 13, 2025, who arrived at NSGB and were transferred to the

MOC.

9. One alien who arrived at NSGB on February 8, 2025, was returned to El Paso, Texas on February 12, 2025, after an immigration judge granted a motion to reopen the alien's immigration proceedings.
10. There are currently 51 aliens housed at the MOC, and 127 aliens housed at Camp VI. These 178 aliens at NSGB are all natives and citizens of Venezuela and have final orders of removal, including several with expedited removal orders.
11. Venezuela has historically resisted accepting repatriation of its citizens but has recently begun accepting removals following high-level political discussions and an investment of significant resources. As such, ICE expeditiously removes Venezuelans with final orders of removal in ICE custody. 190 aliens were removed from the ERO El Paso field office to Venezuela on February 10, 2025.
12. I am familiar with the current process for affording access to counsel for immigration detainees at NSGB. Written notice of the right to contact counsel is to be posted and distributed to each alien at both Camp VI and the MOC. The notice, now available in English, is currently being translated into Spanish. ERO will continue to assess this mechanism as the scope of the mission develops.
13. Detainees may request a legal call with a legal representative by submitting a detainee request form. Detainees may use the time allotted to speak with a legal representative or try to find a legal representative. If a detainee does not have a legal representative, the detainee can call the ABA Information Line for a legal referral. ERO requested the ABA provide a toll-free number by which detainees may call the ABA Information Line from NSGB, which has Spanish language capability. The toll-free number is listed on the notice of the right to contact counsel which has been posted at both Camp VI and the MOC.
14. The legal representative of detainees may also file a Form G-28, Notice of Entry of Appearance, through the ERO eFile platform on ICE.gov that will notify ICE that a person is represented. Legal representatives can request legal calls with their clients by following instructions on ICE.gov.

15. For immigration detainees housed at Camp VI, the facility has six telephone lines that are installed in separate rooms that offer privacy. Immigration detainees housed at Camp VI will be given the opportunity to request a private telephone call with no audio monitoring to their lawyers. No detainees in Camp VI have made a request to any DHS officers to speak with a lawyer.
16. For immigration detainees housed in MOC, the facility currently offers one private room for legal calls. Up to five immigration detainees per day will be permitted a 20-minute phone call to their lawyers. Immigration detainees housed at MOC will be given the opportunity to request a private telephone call with no audio monitoring to their lawyers. No detainees in the MOC have made a request to any DHS officers to speak with a lawyer.
17. I am familiar with the current process for affording access to legal mail for immigration detainees housed at NSGB. Legal mail will be delivered to NSGB on a weekly basis via the Defense Courier Service. Similarly, legal mail originating from immigration detainees housed at NSGB will be transported to Washington, D.C. on a weekly basis via the Defense Courier Service. ERO is currently developing a process to ensure that all ICE detainees have access to pens and paper to send mail.

I declare, under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct to the best of my knowledge, information, and belief, as of the time of signature.

Executed this 20 day of February, 2025.

**JUAN E
AGUDELO**

Digitally signed by JUAN E
AGUDELO
Date: 2025.02.20 11:33:24
-05'00'

Juan Agudelo
Acting Field Office Director
Enforcement and Removal Operations
U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement
U.S. Department of Homeland Security

EXHIBIT B



Legal Calls at Guantanamo



This facility can arrange free and confidential legal calls with your legal representative, so that you can communicate with them.

You may request a legal call with a legal representative, by submitting a detainee request form. **You may use this time to speak with your legal representative or try to find a legal representative.** On the form you may include your legal representative's name, phone number(s), and email address. If you do not have a legal representative, you can also call the **ABA Information Line (1-855-641-6081)** for a legal referral. Your legal representative can also file a Form G-28, Notice of Entry of Appearance as Attorney or Accredited Representative through the online filing platform ERO eFile, on ICE.gov, which will notify ICE that you are represented.

Your legal representative can also request legal calls by following instructions on ICE.gov. Only visits with your legal representative will be allowed on the call, not visits from friends or family.

Llamadas Legales en Guantanamo



Este centro puede coordinar llamadas telefónicas legales, gratis y confidenciales, con su representante legal, para que usted pueda comunicarse con él.

Puede solicitar una llamada legal con un representante legal, sometiendo un formulario de solicitud de detenido. **Puede utilizar este tiempo para hablar con su representante legal o tratar de encontrar un representante legal.** En el formulario puede incluir el nombre, número(s) de teléfono y dirección de correo electrónico de su representante legal. Si no tiene un representante legal, también puede llamar a la **Línea de información de ABA (1-855-641-6081)** para que le remitan a un abogado. Su representante legal también puede presentar el Formulario G-28, Aviso de comparecencia como abogado o representante acreditado a través de la plataforma de presentación en línea ERO eFile, en ICE.gov, que notificará a ICE que usted está representado.

Su representante legal también puede solicitar llamadas legales siguiendo las instrucciones en ICE.gov. Solo se permitirán visitas con su representante legal en la llamada, no visitas de amigos o familiares.

EXHIBIT C



U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement
GTMO CAMP VI
DETAINEE REQUEST FORM
(Formulario para Solicitudes)

Attention: _____
(Atencion)

- () Deportation Case Inquiry *(Informacion relacionada a su caso de deportacion)*
- () Property Disposition Request *(Solicitud de entrega de propiedad)*
- () Mail Related Inquiry *(Informacion relacionada a su correspondencia)*
- () Religious / Chaplain Inquiry *(Información re/acionada a religion o a capellanes)*
- () Commissary Inquiry *(Comisaria)*
- () Payroll (Voluntary Work) Related Inquiry *(Informacion de nomina relacionada a trabajo voluntario)*
- () Other (Non-medical) Specify *(Otra solicitud no-medica especifique):*

Detainee Name: _____ **A#** _ _ _ _ _
(Nombre de/ Detenido) *(Numero de Extranjero)*

Date Arrived: _____ Date of Request: _____
(Fecha de Solicitud)

Nationality: _____ Housing Unit: _____
(Nacionalidad) *(Unidad de Vivienda)*

Request *(solicitud)*: _____

(Continue on reverse) (Continua, en el reverso)

Department Response *(Respuesta de/ Departamento)*: _____

Staff Signature / Title