

HUMAN RIGHTS STAIN, PUBLIC HEALTH FARCE



**Evasion of Asylum Law
and Title 42 Abuse Must End—
and Never Be Revived**

Introduction

For nearly two years, the Biden administration has wielded the Trump administration's Title 42 policy to block people from seeking asylum at official ports of entry, expel to grave dangers asylum seekers and migrants who cross the border, and evade the due process and refugee protection provisions of U.S. immigration and asylum law. Though efforts to force continuation of this cruel and counterproductive policy continue, after a federal district court in Washington DC [vacated](#) it in November for violating U.S. law, it is scheduled to end on December 21, 2022.

The misuse of Title 42 has been a [public health](#), [border management](#) and human rights fiasco. Human Rights First has, as of the date this report was issued, tracked over [13,480](#) reports of murder, torture, kidnapping, rape, and other violent attacks on migrants and asylum seekers blocked in or expelled to Mexico under Title 42 since President Biden took office. It is a staggering number that will continue to mount every day that Title 42 or similar policies that evade refugee law are in place.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) attempted to [end](#) the Title 42 policy in May 2022, but in the wake of a court [order](#) issued by a federal judge in Louisiana forcing the policy's continuation in a case brought by state attorneys general aligned with the former Trump administration, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) continued to use it. In October 2022, in a disturbing step backwards, the Biden administration [announced](#) it would expand use of the policy to expel Venezuelans seeking refuge at the southern U.S. border without allowing them to apply for asylum, attempting to justify this abrogation of asylum law by pairing it with a limited parole program available to some Venezuelans. Since then, DHS has expelled [thousands](#) of Venezuelans to dangerous conditions in Mexico where they are also at risk of *refoulement*, i.e. illegal return, to persecution in Venezuela. In response to the October parole announcement, the U.N. Refugee Agency (UNHCR), IOM and UNICEF immediately [warned](#) that such efforts "cannot come at the expense of the fundamental human right to seek asylum."

The targeted, expanded use of Title 42 against Venezuelans again [confirms](#) that this policy has no basis in public health. As medical and public health experts have [repeatedly affirmed](#) and recently-revealed Congressional testimony of a top CDC scientist [confirms](#), the Title 42 policy has no scientific basis. It was adopted at the behest of [Stephen Miller](#) and other Trump administration [officials](#) as yet another [discriminatory](#) effort to restrict immigration and block asylum. As leading epidemiologists and public health experts [warned](#) President Biden in November, the continued and expanded use of Title 42 is "a travesty" that manipulates, misuses and undermines trust in public health, and "feeds and propagates racially-based tropes that falsely paint migrants as vectors of disease, fostering stigma and heightening the vulnerability of already marginalized groups in a manner that is antithetical to the tenets of good public health practice."

Some members of Congress have attempted to force continuation of Title 42 or a similar suspension of asylum at the border – a codification of failed Trump policy that would eviscerate U.S. refugee law and subvert international refugee law globally. At the same time, the Biden administration is considering replacing Title 42 with other inhumane [Trump policies](#) or versions of them, including an asylum transit ban – [an illegal](#) policy that, when in effect, turned refugees away to danger and deprived other refugees of a path to family reunification, stability and citizenship, as Human Rights First detailed in a 2020 [report](#).

Senior Biden administration officials are reportedly [planning](#) to impose other harsh policies as Title 42 ends, as well as [use](#) the notorious migrant detention center at Guantánamo Bay or other third country detention facilities to hold Haitians interdicted at sea. The United States recently returned [180](#) men, women and children – who had attempted to reach safety in the United States by boat – to Haiti despite multiple U.N. authorities’ calls for states to halt returns to Haiti given the life-threatening conditions there.

A [ruling](#) by the U.S. Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit that took effect in May 2022 prohibits DHS from using Title 42 to return asylum-seeking families “to places where they will be persecuted or tortured.” As the policy’s scheduled end date approaches, DHS retains clear authority, consistent with the various court rulings, to except individuals from Title 42. It also remains obligated under U.S. refugee law and binding treaty commitments, and a November D.C. Circuit Court decision, not to return anyone—family, adult, or child—to persecution or torture, consistent with the legal rationale of the D.C. Circuit Court. In his November ruling concluding that the Title 42 policy violated the Administrative Procedure Act, the D.C. District Court judge who [vacated](#) the Title 42 policy cited Human Rights First’s [prior research](#) documenting violent attacks against people impacted by the policy and emphasized the “harms Plaintiffs face if summarily expelled to countries [where] they may be persecuted or tortured” as well as the earlier finding by the Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit that “the record is replete with stomach-churning evidence of death, torture, and rape.” The Trump-aligned state attorneys general who initiated the Louisiana litigation are now seeking to intervene in the separate case before the D.C. District Court and also seeking to stay that court’s November ruling requiring the Title 42 policy to end on December 21. Their stay request is now pending before the D.C. Circuit Court after the District Court denied it.

It is far past time to end this illegal, inhumane, and ineffective policy and all attempts to force its continuation. After nearly two years in office, the Biden administration should institute a more effective and humanitarian [response](#) to the reception, identification, and processing of refugees seeking protection in the United States – a response that upholds U.S. refugee and immigration laws, as Human Rights First has outlined in its [recommendation papers](#). The Biden administration should not replace one failed and illegal Trump policy with another by embracing, supporting or employing the ineffective, inhumane, xenophobic and racist immigration policies of the prior administration.

This report is based on in-person interviews Human Rights First conducted with asylum seekers in Tijuana in September 2022 and Ciudad Juárez in December 2022; and interviews by telephone and in-person with attorneys, other humanitarian workers, and additional asylum seekers in Mexico conducted from October to December 2022; reports of attacks drawn from an ongoing



survey of asylum seekers in Mexico conducted by Al Otro Lado between mid-June and early November 2022; open-source information identified by students from the University of California Network for Human Rights and Digital Fact Finding (Berkeley, Santa Cruz, Los Angeles); review of U.S. government data; and media and other human rights reporting.

Human Rights First published prior research on the Title 42 policy in [June 2022](#), [April 2022](#) (with Al Otro Lado and Haitian Bridge Alliance), [March 2022](#), [February 2022](#), [January 2022](#), [December 2021](#), [November 2021](#) (with Florence Immigrant and Refugee Rights Project), [October 2021](#), [August 2021](#), [July 2021](#) (with Hope Border Institute), [June 2021](#), [May 2021](#) (with RAICES and Interfaith Welcome Coalition), [April 2021](#) (with Al Otro Lado and Haitian Bridge Alliance), [December 2020](#), and [May 2020](#).

Key Findings

- **The use of the Trump-initiated Title 42 policy over the nearly two years since President Biden took office, its forced continuation through court order, and its recent expansion by the administration have inflicted terrible human rights abuses.** Human Rights First has tracked [13,480](#) reports of murder, kidnapping, rape, torture, and other violent attacks against people blocked in or expelled to Mexico due to Title 42 since January 2021. These numbers are likely just the tip of the iceberg as many victims have not spoken with investigators, journalists, or attorneys. Some recent examples include: Mexican officers kidnapped a Guatemalan family with two young children after DHS expelled them to Nuevo Laredo, and turned them over to a cartel that held them hostage for three months and tortured them; a Honduran asylum seeker and her four-year-old daughter were kidnapped, the daughter beaten and the mother raped in front of her daughter as they waited in Tijuana due to Title 42; a 13-year-old girl was nearly abducted at gunpoint in Juárez after her family fled political persecution in Venezuela but was expelled under Title 42; and a Guatemalan lesbian trans woman was raped by Mexican police in Piedras Negras after CBP turned her away from protection at the Eagle Pass port of entry. Black and Indigenous asylum seekers continue to be targets of bias-motivated violence and discrimination while stranded in Mexico.
- **The Biden administration’s expansion of Title 42 to Venezuelans in October 2022 has denied thousands access to the U.S. asylum process in flagrant violation of U.S. refugee law. The expansion has stranded adults, families, and children in dangerous Mexican border cities where they are targets of kidnapping, torture, and brutal attacks. It has subjected others to onward *refoulement* to persecution and torture. It has also separated many families.** In some cases, this expansion has resulted in the separation of married couples and the delivery of mothers, wives, teenage daughters, and other family members to grave dangers in Mexico. CBP has subjected many Venezuelans to “lateral expulsions,” transporting them to areas far from where they entered the United States and to locations where they have no knowledge of the specific dangers or local refugee shelters. In many cases, asylum seekers appear to have been transported to cities that lack shelter capacity.
- **Mexican asylum seekers fleeing persecution and torture have been trapped in or expelled by CBP to the very country they are trying to flee without access to the U.S. asylum process in violation of U.S. law and non-refoulement legal obligations.** They include: a woman who was decapitated by the cartel that had threatened her after DHS, citing Title 42, would not let her



seek asylum; a lesbian women who had suffered multiple attacks, rape, and threats due to her sexual orientation and was refused the right to seek asylum at the San Ysidro port of entry; a gay man who had suffered beatings, sexual assaults, and an attempted kidnapping due to his sexual orientation and was turned away from asylum at the El Paso port of entry; and an Indigenous woman who had been attacked by police, threatened, and her family members murdered for her activism defending her Indigenous community was turned away from seeking asylum with her three children at the San Ysidro port of entry in September 2022 and subsequently suffered sexual abuse by Mexican police.

- **Faith-based, humanitarian, and legal workers assisting asylum seekers stranded in Mexico by the Title 42 policy face acute and mounting threats and attacks from violent cartels that exercise widespread control over territory in Mexico.** Recent threats and attacks include the June 2022 kidnapping and November 2022 [threats](#) against a Baptist pastor in Nuevo Laredo, the armed [raiding](#) of a shelter in Ciudad Juarez in late November 2022, the forced closure of a Nuevo Laredo shelter after threats demanding that the shelter pay a “protection fee,” and the robbery at gunpoint of a staff member of a legal organization in a Tijuana plaza near the San Ysidro port of entry while the staff member accompanied asylum seekers instructed by CBP to appear at 6 a.m. to be processed for a Title 42 exemption.
- **CBP and Border Patrol officers continue to use Title 42 to expel migrants and asylum seekers in ways that make them even more vulnerable to harm in Mexico and undermine their ability to seek asylum in the United States** – including by sometimes expelling asylum seekers in the middle of the night, depriving them of necessary medical care, or taking their passports or other identity documents, religious items, medical items, or other documents necessary for their asylum cases. Many were expelled to deplorable conditions without secure housing, leaving some sleeping on the streets. Mexican authorities transported some expelled Venezuelans to other parts of Mexico, abandoning them in cities where migrant shelters are full beyond capacity.
- **The Title 42 policy has continued to inflict disorder at the border, triggering multiple border crossings, artificially inflating CBP border statistics,** pushing dangerous crossings away from ports of entry, and facilitating [exploitation](#). With Title 42 spurring dangerous attempts to cross into the United States outside of ports of entry, at least [853](#) asylum seekers and migrants have died in border crossings in FY 2022, making it the deadliest year since the U.S. government began record keeping on border crossing deaths in 1998.

Recommendations

- **Congress:** Reject any efforts to codify or legislatively extend the Title 42 policy or similar policies that suspend refugee law or improperly block refugees from seeking asylum, direct sufficient appropriations for asylum adjudications and to community-based, non-profit organizations providing temporary housing, transportation, and other assistance to people seeking refuge at the border, and continue to conduct oversight of the disorder and human rights abuses caused by the Title 42 policy and any similar policies that deny access to asylum.



- **Biden Administration:** Take all steps to ensure a final end to the Title 42 policy, restore compliance with U.S. refugee law and treaties, continue to request appropriations to conduct timely asylum adjudications and address backlogs, oppose any efforts to force continuation or resurrection of the Title 42 policy or similar policies, and reject any proposals to replace Title 42 with other policies that block, ban or prevent refugees from seeking asylum in the United States and/or turn them away to danger. Never again use an actual or purported pathway to the U.S. as an excuse to evade refugee law or abrogate the right to seek asylum.
- **Department of Homeland Security:** As Title 42 ends, uphold U.S. refugee law at U.S. ports of entry and along the border, ramp up asylum adjudication capacity and end attempts to replace it with other illegal and inhumane Trump-era policies, and during the time Title 42 is still in place, take all legally available actions to restore asylum access at and between ports of entry and mitigate the harms of Title 42, including through the use of exceptions to Title 42 and by affirmatively screening individuals subjected to Title 42 for fear of return to persecution and torture, as U.S. law and international treaty obligations require.
- **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention:** Publicly identify steps to ensure public health authority is never again misused to evade refugee law and endanger the lives and safety of people seeking protection, and if the Title 42 policy should be prolonged yet again, take any additional steps necessary to help ensure its firm and final termination.
- **The Government of Mexico:** End cooperation with U.S. policies that violate international law and/or result in human rights violations, and take steps to end Mexican police and other officers' perpetration of and complicity or acquiescence in attacks, extortions, kidnappings, rape and other harms inflicted on migrants and asylum seekers.

Title 42 expansion returns Venezuelans fleeing persecution and humanitarian catastrophe to danger, deplorable conditions

On October 12, 2022, the Biden administration [announced](#) it would expand the use of Title 42 to expel Venezuelans to [Mexico](#), through a "New Migration Enforcement Process," pairing the expansion with a new limited humanitarian parole program that would enable some Venezuelans to enter the United States. The parole program's requirements actually preclude many refugees from accessing it, including due to its identification, sponsorship, and airline ticket purchase requirements, as well as its numerical limitations. The Hope Border Institute, which interviewed expelled asylum seekers in October, [concluded](#) that the program "left no path for relief for the people in the most vulnerable situations" and left thousands of Venezuelans in Mexico "in a cruel state of limbo."

While UNHCR and other U.N. agencies welcomed efforts to provide safe pathways for displaced persons, they [warned](#) that such pathways "cannot come at the expense of the fundamental human right to seek asylum." In their statement, these U.N. authorities specifically reminded the United States that: "**Access to safe territory for asylum seekers is a cornerstone of the 1951 Refugee Convention and of international refugee law. We remain concerned by asylum restrictions that are inconsistent with international law standards, including those imposed through Title 42 public health action, and reiterate the call for their urgent termination.**" Days after the Biden administration's decision to expand Title 42 to expel Venezuelans seeking U.S.



asylum, CBP [again](#) acknowledged in an [October 21, 2022 statement](#) that recent arrivals at the southern border included “an increased number of asylum seekers fleeing [the] authoritarian regime[] in Venezuela.”

Venezuelans expelled to or blocked in Mexico due to Title 42’s expanded use are now stranded in highly dangerous Mexican border cities as well as other locations in Mexico that lack capacity to safely accommodate them. Many are also at risk of onward *refoulement* – illegal return - to persecution and torture, with some Venezuelans pushed across the border into Guatemala and others flown directly back to Venezuela by Mexican authorities. Title 42 expulsions of Venezuelans by DHS are also separating families at the border.

The expanded use of Title 42 has already resulted in thousands of Venezuelans expelled to Mexico without access to the U.S. asylum process. Between October 12 and mid-November 2022, more than [8,000](#) Venezuelans were expelled by DHS to Mexico. As of November 7, more than [2,100](#) Venezuelans had been expelled to Ciudad Juárez alone since the policy was expanded less than a month prior. Human Rights First researchers interviewed multiple sources who indicated that around December 1, 2022, DHS in the El Paso region began conducting lateral expulsions of Venezuelans to Matamoros and other cities and appeared to have halted direct expulsions to Ciudad Juárez.

As it has wielded Title 42 to expel Venezuelans to Mexico, CBP has separated some families at the border and turned away mothers, daughters, wives, partners, and other family members to danger in Mexico. For example:

- **In October 2022, DHS released [Miguel Peñaranda](#), a Venezuelan man, and his 18-year-old stepson into the United States but expelled to Mexico Peñaranda’s wife, Heyllyn Yopez, and his 18-year-old stepdaughter.** The family members, who had entered the United States in El Paso, were separated and flown to other parts of the border within Texas: Peñaranda and his stepson were flown to Brownsville, where they were released, while Yopez and her daughter were flown to Laredo, where they were expelled at the border and then bused to Acapulco, Mexico. Yopez told *The New York Times*, “**I never, ever could have imagined this happening...How can they do this to families? It’s so inhuman.**”
- **DHS separated a Venezuelan family of four in October 2022, releasing the father and son into the United States to pursue their asylum claims while expelling the mother and daughter to Mexico under Title 42,** according to a migrant shelter director in Austin, Texas.
- **A young Venezuelan woman was separated from her mother at the border in October 2022, and while she was processed into the United States, her mother was expelled to Mexico,** according to a migrant shelter director in Austin, Texas.
- **DHS has separated numerous Venezuelan married couples since October 2022.** A woman who was returned to Ciudad Juárez without her husband in October 2022 told *Reuters*, “I am alone in a country where I have no one to help me. He was my only companion, my only help, my only support.”
- **In October 2022, DHS [expelled](#) a mother to Mexico while her 20-year-old son was permitted to seek asylum in the United States.**



- **DHS separated [Luis Alexander Bonilla](#) from his mother, sister, and nine-year-old nephew at the border, detained Bonilla for 11 days, and expelled him to Tijuana, Mexico in October 2022.** Bonilla told [Milenio](#) his mother had been expelled to Ciudad Juárez, Mexico. Two weeks after the family had entered the United States, Bonilla was unaware of the whereabouts of his sister and nephew.

Venezuelans who are stranded after expulsion or are unable to seek asylum at ports of entry due to Title 42's continuation face grave dangers in Mexico. As UNHCR, IOM and UNICEF publicly warned the United States after it announced this Title 42 expansion in October, "[m]any people subject to this measure since its implementation in March 2020 have been sent to border communities with significant security challenges, limited support networks and inadequate shelter capacities, making their return to Mexico both dangerous and unsustainable." Many Venezuelan asylum seekers have already been targeted by cartels and corrupt officials in Mexico for kidnappings and other violent attacks in the wake of this Title 42 expansion. Some recent examples include:

- **In November 2022, a Venezuelan police investigator fleeing death threats for investigating cases of disappeared people was assaulted and robbed by armed men who bashed his head with the back of a gun, ordered him off the bus he was riding near Ciudad Juárez, and tried to kidnap him.** He managed to escape, but when he arrived in Ciudad Juárez, police stopped him and stole his money. The man told Human Rights First he is terrified to stay in Juárez, where he remains stranded due to Title 42, because the cartel hunting him in Venezuela also operates there.
- **In November 2022, a gay Venezuelan man was sexually assaulted and robbed in the public plaza where he had been sleeping in Ciudad Juárez.** The man told Human Rights First that he had been staying in a makeshift tent encampment near the El Paso port of entry while blocked from seeking U.S. asylum due to Title 42. After Mexican authorities forced him to leave the encampment, he moved to the plaza where he was then attacked.
- **A 13-year-old girl was nearly abducted at gunpoint in Juárez after her parents and sibling, who had fled political persecution in Venezuela, were denied the right to seek asylum and expelled to danger in Mexico in November 2022 by CBP under the Title 42 Venezuelan expansion.** They were detained by CBP for 10 days without blankets or access to showers. A CBP officer told them "You should have stayed in your country," confiscated and kept their documents, and lied to the family, telling them they were being transferred to a U.S. shelter only to then laugh at them as they were instead subjected to a lateral expulsion and sent to Sonora. The family made their way back to Juárez only to face the attempted abduction and a cartel shooting outside their shelter, as the mother explained to Human Rights First researchers.
- **A Venezuelan family with two young daughters stranded in Mexico due to Title 42 was [kidnapped](#) from a hotel in Ciudad Juárez by two hooded, armed men.** The family had been waiting for an opportunity to seek asylum in the United States. The kidnappers held the family captive for 12 days until their relatives were forced to pay a \$30,000 ransom.

The U.S. government's expulsion of Venezuelans to Mexico violates U.S. *non-refoulement* legal obligations not only by exposing them to serious harm in Mexico but also because returned individuals are at high risk of onward or so-called chain *refoulement* to countries where they would face persecution or torture. Mexican officials ordered some expelled Venezuelans to



depart Mexico through the southern border within [15 days](#), while others were provided Mexican migration documents (*forma migratoria múltiple* or FMM) leaving them with temporary status in Mexico for reportedly as little as one [week](#) in some cases.

Expelled Venezuelans are at risk of detention and potential deportation by Mexican authorities without access to the asylum process in Mexico. For instance, a [video](#) posted online in October 2022 appears to show hundreds of Venezuelans and other nationals detained in a Mexican National Migration Institute (*Instituto Nacional de Migración* or INM) facility near the U.S.-Mexico border, reporting they had been held in crowded, unsanitary conditions for weeks. Venezuelans, as well as other asylum seekers and migrants in Mexico often [report](#) that Mexican police and other government officials routinely extort them by threatening them with deportation. In Ciudad Juárez, Mexican National Guard officers have reportedly entered hotels where Venezuelans are staying, demanded their documents, and detained those without valid visas, according to a witness account in a [video](#) posted to social media.

In early November 2022, INM began [flying](#) some Venezuelans, who supposedly agreed to be repatriated, directly to Venezuela – though there is no indication that any international or independent authorities observed these returns to confirm that they were voluntary. Concerningly, displaced Venezuelans transiting through Mexico [reported](#) in October 2022 that Mexican migration officials forced them to sign false documentation stating that they had voluntarily requested to leave Mexico through the southern border to Guatemala. In late September 2022, just prior to the Title 42 expansion, hundreds of Venezuelans were [reportedly](#) deceived by Mexican authorities into boarding buses that transported them to the land border with Guatemala. These incidents reflect a well-documented history of failures by Mexican immigration officers to [inform](#) detained migrants of their right to seek asylum and failure to [forward](#) their requests to the Mexican asylum agency.

Displaced Venezuelans in Guatemala may face further chain expulsion. In 2022, with [support](#) from the U.S. government, Guatemalan authorities expelled more than [9,000 Venezuelans](#) across the border into Honduras without consistently administering protection screenings.

Many Venezuelans expelled by DHS to Mexico have been [stranded](#) in deplorable conditions without secure housing, leaving some sleeping on the streets. Mexican authorities have transported some expelled Venezuelans to other parts of Mexico, abandoning them in cities where migrant shelters are full beyond capacity. For instance:

- **DHS has expelled [hundreds](#) of Venezuelans to Tijuana since October 2022, including some who were flown from the Texas border and expelled to Tijuana without being provided any information about what was happening to them.** Mexican immigration officers also [reportedly](#) abandoned at a bus station in Tijuana 60 Venezuelans whom DHS had expelled. With Tijuana shelters full, some spent several nights sleeping on the ground. A [fitness center](#) was later prepared to provide temporary shelter for 300 Venezuelans expelled to Tijuana from the United States.
- **On a Saturday in October 2022, Mexican migration officers [bused](#) approximately 100 displaced Venezuelans whom DHS had expelled to Mexico City, abandoning them without food, accommodation, or basic support outside an office of the Comisión Mexicana de Ayuda a Refugiados (COMAR), the Mexican refugee assistance agency, which was closed for the weekend.** As of December 2022, migrant shelters in Mexico City are full beyond their capacity as Venezuelans expelled from the United States continue to be bused there, resulting in [hundreds](#) sleeping in city streets. Shelters are operating at double capacity with many sleeping on mattresses in common spaces, according to Gretchen Kuhner, director of the *Instituto para las Mujeres en la Migración* (IMUMI). Kuhner said IMUMI and other nonprofit organizations in



Mexico City have had to provide food, shelter, medications, and other supplies to Venezuelans arriving in the city.

- **The Mexican government has bused at least 600 Venezuelans whom DHS had expelled from the United States to the central Mexican city of Hermosillo, where shelters struggling to meet their needs are requesting food and clothing donations.** Those bused to Hermosillo include 24-year-old [Juan Carlos García](#), who reported that he could not afford to travel to Mexico City to reunite with his relatives, from whom DHS separated him at the border.
- **Thousands of Venezuelans, including many who had been expelled from the United States under Title 42, have been sleeping in dangerous conditions in makeshift tent encampments.** Approximately 12,000 migrants and asylum seekers, most of whom are Venezuelan, have been [sleeping](#) in a makeshift tent encampment on a muddy sports field in San Pedro Tapanatepec in Oaxaca state, Mexico. In Ciudad Juárez, in November 2022, as many as a thousand Venezuelans were [staying](#) in a tent encampment on the Rio Grande near the El Paso port of entry, where temperatures had dropped below freezing and many fell ill. In November 2022, members of an organized criminal group attempted to [kidnap](#) residents of the encampment, rthm into separate lines for men, women, and families, and instructed them to enter nearby vehicles, but the kidnappers retreated when law enforcement intervened. Ciudad Juárez government officials [cleared](#) the camp in late November 2022, citing safety concerns.

The Hope Border Institute in El Paso [concluded](#) based on its interviews with asylum seekers and migrants that the expanded expulsions of Venezuelans “separated family units and placed individuals, including vulnerable people such as young children, single mothers and elderly people on the streets, lacking access to food, shelter and medical support.”

Court-ordered Title 42 continuation condemns asylum seekers and migrants expelled to or blocked in Mexico to grave dangers

The continued implementation of Title 42 is causing mounting human rights abuses against asylum seekers and migrants blocked in or expelled to Mexico. Individuals and families who are expelled or blocked from protection due to Title 42 are targeted for attacks in Mexico by corrupt officials as well as powerful cartels that exercise control throughout the border region and profit from kidnapping, torturing, and extorting asylum seekers turned away by the United States. These attacks often target asylum seekers and other migrants on account of their race, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, and nationality. Black and Indigenous asylum seekers continue to be targets of bias-motivated violence and discrimination while stranded in or transiting through Mexico.

As of the date this report was published in December 2022, Human Rights First has tracked at least 13,480 reports of murder, kidnapping, rape, torture, and other violent attacks against people blocked in or expelled to Mexico due to Title 42 since January 2021. This count is likely just the tip of the iceberg since many asylum seekers have not spoken with investigators, journalists, or attorneys. Some recent attacks on people stranded in or expelled to Mexico due to Title 42’s court-ordered continuation and recent expansion by DHS include:



- **Ibrahima Gueye, a 39-year-old Senegalese man, was shot and killed in a Tijuana park in broad daylight on October 18, 2022.** Police believe Gueye, who was carrying a backpack with clothing and personal belongings, was attacked by members of the violent “de la Castillo” group, which is engaged in criminal migrant smuggling in the area. With asylum seekers unable to approach ports of entry to request asylum, some have attempted to cross into the United States, unaware of danger from violent groups that control access to the border.
- **In October 2022, a Guatemalan lesbian trans woman was violently raped by Mexican police officers in Piedras Negras soon after CBP officers turned her away from protection at the Eagle Pass port of entry.** The woman reported to Al Otro Lado that she had sought protection due to her gender and sexual orientation.
- **A Haitian asylum seeker, whom DHS had previously expelled to Haiti under Title 42, was robbed at gunpoint in Tijuana in summer 2022 while unable to seek U.S. asylum at a port of entry due to the continuation of Title 42.** The armed assailants pulled the man’s pants down and groped him looking for money, according to his cousin, another asylum seeker who spoke with Human Rights First.
- **A Guatemalan woman and her four-year-old son were kidnapped in Nogales and held captive for four days after DHS expelled them under Title 42. The family had sought U.S. protection to escape threats from the son’s father.** The man who kidnapped the family had approached them offering help after DHS expelled them to Nogales, where they had no support and were unfamiliar with the area, according to Kino Border Initiative, who spoke with the woman in July 2022.
- **Mexican immigration (INM) officers kidnapped and turned over to the Zetas cartel a Guatemalan family with two young children after DHS expelled them to Nuevo Laredo. The cartel held the family hostage for three months, tortured them, and extorted their relatives.** The mother told Kino Border Initiative in July 2022 that the family had watched as their captors killed other migrants who attempted to escape.
- **An Indigenous Guatemalan woman and her three young children were kidnapped and extorted after CBP officers turned them away from asylum protection at the Nogales port of entry.** The woman told Kino Border Initiative in September 2022 that after the family was expelled, a woman approached them offering to bring them to a free shelter, but instead led them to a house where they were held captive for ransom.
- **In August 2022, a Salvadoran woman and her two children were held captive for hours by members of an armed group who forced them to strip and robbed them of all their belongings, including their clothing, shoes, and water.** The family had been attempting to enter the United States near Calexico to seek asylum when the armed group approached them. “They were asking their boss what to do with us...I thought they were going to kill us,” the woman told Human Rights First.
- **Juárez police sexually assaulted a Honduran mother and her four-year-old daughter after the family was blocked from seeking protection in Ciudad Juárez in August 2022, then turned**



them over to cartel members who held the family captive for 22 days, raped the mother in front of the daughter, and physically attacked the daughter. The mother reported the incident to Al Otro Lado.

With Title 42 still in place, Mexican asylum seekers fleeing persecution and torture are trapped in or expelled by DHS to the very country they are trying to flee without access to the U.S. asylum process in violation of U.S. law and non-refoulement legal obligations. Mexican asylum seekers stranded in Mexico or turned away from U.S. protection due to Title 42 have been brutally attacked and threatened, including:

- **A young asylum-seeking woman was decapitated by cartel members who had previously threatened her in southern Mexico after DHS turned her and her children away and would not allow them to seek asylum at a port of entry, citing Title 42.** The woman's brother-in-law, who is also seeking asylum, told Human Rights First in September 2022 that the family had been unable to find space in Tijuana shelters and after spending several nights in the streets, had no choice but to return to their hometown where they had been threatened.
- **In late October 2022, DHS used Title 42 to turn away a transgender woman from southern Mexico who had sought protection at a port of entry near Tijuana, Mexico, after an assailant had tried to kill her.** She reported to Al Otro Lado that she had suffered violence and discrimination based on her gender and sexual orientation, including multiple rapes, in Mexico.
- **A trans woman from the south of Mexico and her Indigenous partner remain stranded in Ciudad Juárez after fleeing death threats based on their race, gender, and sexual orientation by a criminal group who disappeared the woman's gay cousin and warned her not to look for him.** The woman told Human Rights First, "I am harassed every day of my life. I am afraid to go outside. There is so much hate. Even churches won't help us."
- **A woman from Michoacán who travelled to the Calexico port of entry in August 2022 with her infant and her younger brothers, ages 10 and 13, was threatened by cartel members after DHS officers turned them away due to Title 42.** The cartel members shot and killed the woman's husband in front of the family while they were eating lunch together, then threatened the woman after she reported the murder to police. The family had attempted to seek asylum at the Calexico port of entry, but U.S. officers turned them away because of Title 42. The woman told Human Rights First they fled to another city after receiving messages from neighbors warning them that the cartel members who had threatened them knew they were in Mexicali.
- **A Mexican lesbian woman who had suffered multiple attacks in her hometown due to her sexual orientation, including being kidnapped, raped, and threatened with death by police officers, was turned away from asylum protection at the San Ysidro port of entry in October 2022.** The woman reported her experience to Al Otro Lado.
- **A gay man from southern Mexico who had suffered beatings, sexual assaults, and an attempted kidnapping in his hometown due to his sexual orientation was turned away from**



asylum at the El Paso port of entry in October 2022. The man reported to Al Otro Lado that the people threatening him had killed his nephew to intimidate him.

- **A Mexican family of five was nearly kidnapped after DHS turned them away from seeking asylum at the San Ysidro port of entry in November of 2022.** The mother reported to Al Otro Lado that her husband and son had been kidnapped, beaten, and held for ransom in their home state in southern Mexico. After the expulsion, the family continued to receive death threats.
- **An Indigenous Triqui woman from Oaxaca who had been beaten by police, threatened, and her family members murdered for her activism defending her Indigenous community was turned away from seeking asylum with her three children at the San Ysidro port of entry in September 2022 in Tijuana.** She shared with Al Otro Lado that after the family was turned away, she was sexually abused by Mexican police in Tijuana.

The broad reach of cartels and other organized criminal groups in Mexico, which often have ties to government authorities (including Mexican military collusion with cartels that was recently confirmed by [data leaks](#)), can make relocation within Mexico impossible for Mexicans fleeing persecution and torture. For instance, at least three Mexican asylum seekers reported to Kino Border Initiative in October 2022 that the organized criminal groups persecuting them had pursued them to multiple cities within the country where they had moved in an attempt to escape these threats, confirming the national reach of these organizations.

In addition, humanitarian, faith, and legal workers assisting asylum seekers stranded in Mexico continue to face threats, as Human Rights First has previously documented, including:

- **In June 2022, cartel members [kidnapped](#) Baptist Pastor Lorenzo Ortiz, who has long provided humanitarian aid to asylum seekers in Nuevo Laredo and Monterrey, including those expelled or blocked under Title 42.** In July 2022, the U.N. Special Rapporteur on human rights defenders [condemned](#) the kidnapping, indicating that the cartel who kidnapped Ortiz accused him of stealing their business and refused to believe he aids migrants free of charge. The Special Rapporteur said, “Ortiz’s case shows the extraordinary risk that human rights defenders run to provide basic support in the region. This is not an acceptable state of affairs.” In November 2022, the [Special Rapporteur](#) continued to express grave concern that Pastor Ortiz was being “threatened, surveilled and harassed for his work in defence of the rights of migrants,” and that asylum seekers and migrants “in his shelters are being abducted, harassed and extorted, with the alleged acquiescence of local police.”
- **Another shelter in Nuevo Laredo was forced to shut down after a violent cartel demanded the shelter pay a “protection fee,”** according to a migrant who had been staying there and who reported the incident to Kino Border Initiative in October 2022. The migrant said that when the shelter closed, their family and other shelter residents were forced onto Nuevo Laredo streets, where members of a cartel photographed and threatened them.
- **In August 2022, an Al Otro Lado staff member was robbed at gunpoint in Tijuana in a plaza near the San Ysidro port of entry while accompanying asylum seekers who had been**



instructed by CBP to appear at the port at 6 a.m. to be processed under an exception to Title 42.

- **Members of organized criminal groups have threatened numerous staff and residents of several Tijuana [shelters](#), including [Ágape Misión Mundial](#) and [Espacio Migrante](#), in connection with their work assisting migrants with the Title 42 exemption process.** In November 2022, Embajada Migrante, a migrant shelter in Tijuana, was forced to close due to threats by members of an organized criminal group. A director of Embajada Migrante told [EFE](#) that members of an organized criminal group that controls the area have been harassing shelter staff for months, and at one point forcibly entered the shelter at night, demanding \$200 from each of the migrants as a fee for crossing the border.
- **In November 2022, members of a violent cartel [attacked](#) a migrant shelter in Ciudad Juárez, plowing down its gate with a truck.** The cartel members forced the migrants to line up against a wall and ordered them to turn over their cell phones. The cartel retreated after realizing the space was a faith-based migrant shelter.

Triggering Multiple Crossings, Artificially Inflating CBP's Border Encounters Statistics

The continued and now expanded use of Title 42 is, while in place, trampling on U.S. refugee and immigration laws, preventing them from being [upheld](#), prolonging disorder at the border, and inflating Customs and Border Protection (CBP) encounter statistics due to [repeat entry attempts](#). Due to Title 42, the percentage of individuals who have attempted to repeatedly cross the southern border has increased, according to government data. Information released by CBP shows that in FY 2019 repeat crossings made up [7 percent](#) of Border Patrol encounters, but with Title 42 in place since March 2020, repeated crossings rose to 27 percent of Border Patrol encounters in FY 2021, were [22 percent](#) in August 2022 and 19 percent in [September](#) and [October](#) 2022 (the last months with data available).

Repeat crossings triggered by Title 42 expulsions have artificially inflated CBP's border apprehension statistics. CBP has [concluded](#) that the number of border encounters "was partly driven by high recidivism rates (repeat encounters) among individuals processed under the CDC's Title 42 public health authorities, meaning the actual number of unique individuals attempting to cross the border was substantially lower than total encounters." For example, in September 2022, government [data](#) shows that at least 43,000 encounters with Border Patrol were with individuals who had crossed the border multiple times, such that CBP acknowledged that its encounters statistics "overstate the number of unique individuals arriving at the border." Recent [analysis](#) by Syracuse University's Transactional Records Access Clearinghouse emphasizes the need for more accurate CBP data on repeat entry attempts. The American Immigration Council estimates that there were over [1.2 million](#) repeat border encounters from August 2021 to September 2022 with Title 42 in place – inflating CBP's border apprehension data.



Pushing dangerous crossings, resulting in record deaths as asylum remains blocked at ports of entry

As Title 42 continues to block asylum at ports of entry, tens of [thousands](#) of migrants and asylum seekers are waiting in border cities for the opportunity to enter the United States through a limited exemption process. The exemption process requires nonprofit organizations and service providers, including migrant shelters, to refer migrants and asylum seekers with particular vulnerabilities in Mexico to DHS for consideration for Title 42 exemptions. Border cities in Mexico lack capacity to serve the thousands of migrants and asylum seekers stranded in Mexico awaiting the opportunity to request Title 42 exemptions. For example, shelters are full beyond capacity in Reynosa, forcing many migrants and asylum seekers to sleep in tent encampments or on the streets, often in sweltering heat or freezing temperatures. In September 2022, Haitian migrants frustrated by the slow Title 42 exemption process [protested](#) outside Reynosa shelters. Likewise, small tent encampments have [emerged](#) outside shelters in Tijuana, where [tens of thousands](#) of migrants and asylum seekers remain stranded as they await the opportunity to request Title 42 exemptions.

For people seeking refuge from persecution, the denial of access to asylum at U.S. ports of entry leaves them [stranded](#) in dangerous border cities and pushes some to attempt risky and sometimes life-threatening border crossings. These crossings result in severe injuries, dehydration, starvation, and drownings as well as kidnappings and other violent attacks by cartels and organized criminal groups that control border crossings. At least [853](#) asylum seekers and migrants have died in border crossings in FY 2022, making it the deadliest year since the U.S. government began tracking and recording border crossing deaths in 1998. The true number of deaths is likely much higher, as Border Patrol only counts deaths of individuals the agency identifies.

Some of the people who have died or were seriously injured while attempting to cross the U.S.-Mexico border to reach refuge in the United States include:

- **Dozens of migrants and asylum seekers have drowned since July 2022 attempting to cross the Rio Grande to enter Texas from the Mexican state of Chihuahua.** They include a five-year-old Guatemalan girl who [drowned](#) after a strong current ripped the girl from her mother's arms in August 2022, a [3-year-old](#) boy who died in August 2022, nine individuals whose bodies were [recovered](#) on a single day in September 2022, and 12 people whose bodies were [recovered](#) on a single day in July 2022. Eagle Pass fire chief Manuel Mello said, "it's basically a drowning a day that you're seeing."
- **Twenty-two migrants and asylum seekers have [drowned](#) in the river and in the agricultural canals of the El Paso, Texas region in 2022 while attempting to cross the U.S.-Mexico border.** They include a young Colombian man whose body was recovered from the Rio Bravo in Reynosa, Mexico in November 2022.
- **In December 2022, a Russian man and another migrant [drowned](#) in the Pacific Ocean while attempting to swim across the U.S. border from Tijuana.**



- **In August 2022, Mexican brothers Carlos Enrique Mendoza and Edgar Mendoza died from dehydration, and were found with their bodies embracing,** in the Arizona desert after a criminal smuggling organization abandoned them.
- **A Guatemalan asylum seeker fleeing death threats in his country who had previously been expelled under Title 42 was hospitalized after he became lost in the desert in the Arizona border region as he attempted to seek U.S. protection** for the second time in September 2022. He was expelled again after recovering, according to Kino Border Initiative.
- **In December 2022, an Indian man and his 3-year-old son died after falling off the border wall** attempting to enter the United States from Tijuana, Mexico. An Indian woman also fell off the border wall and sustained injuries.

CBP misconduct exacerbates danger for people subjected to Title 42

CBP and Border Patrol officers continue to use Title 42 to expel migrants and asylum seekers in ways that increase their vulnerability to danger and violent crime in Mexico. Some Border Patrol agents have failed to provide medical attention to people with injuries, carried out Title 42 expulsions in the middle of the night, and expelled migrants and asylum seekers without their personal belongings. These practices exacerbate the risks migrants and asylum seekers face in Mexico after expulsion.

For example, CBP has endangered the lives of migrants at the Arizona border by carrying out expulsions in the middle of the night. Kino Border Initiative reported that CBP expelled at least sixteen migrants and asylum seekers to Nogales between the nighttime hours of 12:00 and 3:00 a.m. in August 2022. The organization also reported that some migrants were expelled in the rain, at times when shelters and services were closed, and had to sleep in the streets. After these CBP expulsions, some migrants were then robbed by Mexican police and other individuals. Those expelled at night include a Mexican mother and daughter fleeing sexual violence, who were expelled to Nogales at 3:00 am in August 2022.

CBP also continues to separate families subjected to Title 42 expulsions. In addition to the many examples of Venezuelan family separations detailed in a previous section, CBP separated a Mexican family fleeing death threats by cartel members in Guerrero who burned their house and killed a relative. CBP allowed the mother and younger brother to seek U.S. asylum but expelled the 18-year-old sister to Ciudad Juárez alone, according to a shelter director who assisted the young woman.

In its research, Human Rights First heard numerous accounts of instances where Border Patrol and CBP agents engaged in abusive conduct or failed to provide necessary medical attention for migrants and asylum seekers with serious medical conditions or injuries before expelling them to Mexico, including:

- **Border Patrol agents refused to provide medical attention to a woman who was eight months pregnant and who requested aid for complications with her pregnancy.** The woman



told Kino Border Initiative in October 2022 that she had requested a medical examination on three occasions while in Border Patrol custody after she had not felt the baby move in hours, but Border Patrol officers expelled her to Nogales, Mexico without allowing her to see a doctor. The following morning, the woman experienced severe pain and went to a hospital, where she learned the baby had died.

- **In July 2022, a Border Patrol officer beat an asylum seeker who requested water in the Arizona desert and told him “if you want water, go get it in your own country,”** The man told Kino Border Initiative that the officer had shoved his face into the ground, kicked him repeatedly, and stood on the back of his head, causing the man to bleed and lose consciousness. Officers eventually took the man to the hospital after repeated requests but expelled him to Mexico without any of his medical paperwork. He said, *“I’m trying to escape death in my country, only to nearly die here [in the US].”*
- **Border Patrol agents denied medical attention to a migrant who was stung on his hip by a venomous scorpion and was having difficulty breathing.** A Border Patrol agent told him to “sit down and be quiet” when he asked for medical attention for the sting. He was only brought to the emergency room and provided an anti-venom shot many hours later, after his condition had worsened while he waited in a holding cell. The man told Kino Border Initiative in October 2022 that Border Patrol agents later expelled the man to Mexico without returning his personal belongings.
- **Border Patrol agents ignored the pleas for medical attention of a man who had been severely beaten by members of an organized criminal group before seeking U.S. protection.** The man told Kino Border Initiative in October 2022 that Border Patrol agents expelled him to Mexico without providing medical attention and instructed him to ask Mexican authorities for help for his injuries.

CBP and Border Patrol officers also seize and fail to return migrants’ personal property. In October 2022, ACLU of Arizona and other nonprofit organizations assisting migrants at the Arizona border sent a [letter](#) expressing concern about the practice to CBP Commissioner Chris Magnus. They wrote: “Border Patrol agents in Arizona are forcing migrants they apprehend to discard all their belongings into on-site dumpsters, the only exceptions being a single layer of clothing and certain items that can fit into a 7-by-7-inch plastic bag...The mass dispossession of migrants’ belongings by Border Patrol agents is not new, yet the problem has now reached unprecedented levels of magnitude and severity.” Personal belongings migrants have been forced to discard include **“items of religious, sentimental, medical, and legal significance.”** The letter indicates that in some cases, Border Patrol has provided claim tickets that would supposedly enable migrants to reclaim seized belongings, but the agency expelled those individuals to Mexico under Title 42 without providing them an opportunity to reclaim their property.

In November 2022, members of Congress Bennie Thompson, Joaquin Castro, Raúl Grijalva and Nanette Barragán [requested](#) that the Government Accountability Office “conduct a review of [CBP’s] activities, policies, and procedures regarding the handling of personal property belonging to individuals in its custody.”



During the course of its research, Human Rights First also heard reports of CBP and Border Patrol taking personal possessions from asylum seekers or migrants, or forcing them to discard passports, religious items, money, and other essential personal items. For example:

- **Several Venezuelan asylum seekers told Human Rights First in December 2022 that CBP expelled them without their personal possessions.** One family was expelled in November 2022 without any of the documents they had brought that were critical to their asylum case, including identification documents, birth certificates, and evidence for their asylum cases.
- **In October 2022, CBP expelled dozens of migrants and asylum seekers, including many Venezuelans, to Tijuana without any of their personal possessions, including their passports and clothing.** Nicole Ramos, Al Otro Lado’s Border Rights Project director, said Al Otro Lado has had to purchase clothes and other basic supplies for individuals whose personal belongings had been seized by CBP.
- **At least thirty migrants and asylum seekers have reported to Kino Border Initiative that Border Patrol or CBP destroyed or failed to return their personal possessions from September to November 2022.** One man said Border Patrol agents confiscated his cash, a diamond ring his father had given him, a bible, the keys to his home, his cell phone with all his contacts, and his identity documents, including his birth certificate.
- **Another person reported to Kino Border Initiative that Border Patrol officers seized the SIM card from his cell phone, pocketed the cash and credit cards from his wallet, and tore up his birth certificate in front of him.** Another individual observed a Border Patrol agent rip up \$3,000 pesos from a migrant they had apprehended. The officer said, “this is trash, this is of no value to you here” before disposing of the ripped bills in a trash can.

Expansive use of Title 42 further undermines specious public health rationale, violates U.S. refugee obligations

The increasingly expansive use of Title 42 and the calls to further prolong its use as a tool – albeit an ineffective and counterproductive one – for border management have completely undermined the already flimsy pretense that the Title 42 policy is justified on public health grounds. Indeed, Marty Cetron, the director of the CDC’s Division of Global Migration and Quarantine, [told](#) congressional investigators in May 2022 that the CDC order issued by the Trump administration to expel asylum seekers and migrants under Title 42 “did not originate from CDC.” It has long been [confirmed](#) that the White House pressured the CDC to issue the order after the CDC’s medical experts objected to its lack of justification as a public health measure. Cetron noted that he had refused to sign the CDC order, asked to be “excused” from the policy, and warned of the “significant harms” that could arise from its use. In addressing a statement he had reportedly made to colleagues at the time, Cetron confirmed to congressional investigators that this statement was consistent with some of his concerns about the order: **“to use public health authority that has never, ever been used this way, it’s to keep Hispanics out of the country and it’s wrong.”**

The Biden administration’s decision to expand use of Title 42 to Venezuelans, which was clearly a decision based on migration management considerations, was additional confirmation that the



policy has nothing to do with public health. Following the [announcement](#) of this expansion, which made no mention of public health in the context of Title 42 expulsions and repeatedly described the expansion as part of a migration management strategy, leading epidemiologists and public health experts [wrote](#) to President Biden emphasizing that the continued and expanded use of Title 42 is a “travesty” and that the Biden administration was “manipulating and misusing public health to advance immigration control objectives.”

Not only has DHS expanded its misuse of Title 42 public health authority by adding a new nationality to its expulsion list, but some DHS officers appear to be using the supposed public health policy to expel people who have been in the United States for weeks or years, evading the (minimal but critical) due process protections of U.S. immigration law. Some DHS officers have used Title 42 as cover to expel individuals who have long resided in the United States to Mexico without due process, in some instances in coordination with Texas state officers. For example:

- **In 2022 DHS expelled to Mexico a young Honduran man who had been living in the United States for nine years and had a pending immigration court hearing in Houston, Texas scheduled for December 2022, as his attorney reported to Human Rights First.** After being expelled to Mexico, the man was beaten by Mexican police officers, kidnapped by a cartel, and threatened at gunpoint. He was only able to reenter the United States with assistance from his attorney.
- **DHS also expelled a middle-aged Mexican man who had been in the United States for at least several weeks after a Texas state sheriff pulled over the trailer truck he was driving in a small Texas town in July 2022.** The sheriff demanded to see the man’s permit to drive the truck, which he produced, and then asked for his work permit, which the man did not have. The sheriff detained the man in an isolated area where the man was provided no opportunity to speak with U.S. officials or to make any phone calls before DHS expelled him to Mexico, according to Kino Border Initiative.

The U.S. government is also using Title 42 to expel asylum seekers and migrants to Mexico after they have been arrested, jailed for weeks or months, and subjected to state prosecution under Texas’ [illegal](#) Operation Lone Star. These prosecutions violate Article 31 of the [Refugee Convention](#) which generally prohibits the penalization of asylum seekers for their entry or presence in a country to seek refugee protection. DHS’s expulsion of asylum seekers subject to Operation Lone Star also interferes with their ability to defend themselves against pending state criminal charges and to challenge abusive and discriminatory treatment by state and local authorities. Examples of these wrongful expulsions include:

- **In August 2022, DHS expelled to Honduras a 22-year-old Honduran asylum seeker who had spent three weeks in Texas state custody after he was charged with criminal trespass under Operation Lonestar.** The young man had posted bond so that he could be released to challenge the criminal charges against him, but Texas authorities immediately turned him over to CBP upon release from custody. Though the man was visibly distressed and expressed his fear of returning to Honduras on multiple occasions, DHS expelled him to Honduras, where he remains in hiding from individuals who threatened his life, according to a South Texas legal services provider.



- **The same legal services office assisted two other Honduran individuals whom DHS expelled to Mexico under Title 42 after they had spent two months in Texas state custody on pending criminal charges under Operation Lonestar, which were dismissed.**

The expansive and expanded misuse of Title 42 is additional confirmation that the Title 42 policy has nothing to do with public health but has instead been wielded to punish people for migrating or for exercising their human right to seek asylum from persecution.



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Mission Statement

Human Rights First works to create a just world in which every person's intrinsic human rights are respected and protected, to build societies that value and invest in all their people. To reach that goal demands assisting victims of injustice, bringing perpetrators of abuse to justice, and building institutions that ensure universal rights.

Human Rights First is a nonprofit, nonpartisan international human rights organization based in Los Angeles, New York, and Washington D.C.

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