

Your Weekly Briefing

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- **A federal judge blocked a Trump Administration policy that would only allow migrants who entered the U.S. at a port of entry to claim asylum.** District Judge Randolph Moss in Washington, D.C. [found the policy “inconsistent with” the Immigration and Nationality Act](#), which states that “any alien who is physically present in the United States or who arrives in the United States (whether or not at a designated port of arrival...), irrespective of such alien’s status, may apply for asylum.” District Judge Jon Tigar in San Francisco [had already temporarily blocked the policy last year](#). The ruling last Friday went further by finding that the policy violated statutory immigration law. It found that “aliens have a statutory right to seek asylum regardless of whether they enter the United States at a designated port of entry, [and defendants may not extinguish that statutory right by regulation or proclamation.](#)”
- **A pilot program by the Trump Administration aims to “fast-track” family asylum cases.** From September 2018 to June 2019, the Department of Homeland Security tracked [56,000 cases across 10 large cities that it wanted to fast-track](#). For these cases, the timetable is a matter of months, much faster than the average two years for asylum claims. Immigration lawyers have complained that the policy does not leave enough time to prepare their cases, including preparing their clients to testify and to get foreign documents to support their asylum claims. The aim of this policy is to “disincentivize families — where an overwhelming majority of cases don’t qualify for relief, but instead end with removal orders — from making the treacherous journey to the United States,” said Immigration and Customs Enforcement.
- **Immigration and Customs Enforcement is reversing internal guidelines on U-visas, allowing greater discretion to deport victims of crimes.** Previously, ICE had policies instructing officers to ask USCIS what the likelihood of approval of a certain U-visa petition would be before denying a stay of removal request. If USCIS made an initial positive determination, the ICE officer would then stop the deportation pending a final decision on the visa petition unless there were “serious adverse factors.” Now, [ICE officers and attorneys will not ask USCIS for a prima facie determination and will have total discretion](#) based on the “totality of the circumstances” to deny the stay of removal request. ICE stated that the reversal was based on the [burden of the original policy](#)

[and its lack of impact on decisions](#). The decision to reverse the policy will affect applicants by subjecting them to the risk of ICE arrests while their visa is pending, and attorneys warn that if the new policy is used as a deportation tool, there will be fewer reports and victims will be unable to help law enforcement because of their immigration status.

- **ICE agents raided 7 Mississippi worksites, arresting 680 people in the largest single-state enforcement action in U.S. history.** On Wednesday, August 7, ICE agents raided 7 worksites in 6 cities, targeting agricultural processing centers and [arresting approximately 680 people ICE claims are undocumented](#). ICE Acting Director Albence announced that some of the people would be prosecuted for crimes, some would be deported, and some would be released pending an immigration court hearing. The raids were reportedly the culmination of a long-running investigation and serve as a reminder that the Trump administration is [“cast\[ing\] a wider net”](#) than previously in its search for deportable people in the U.S.
- **Two civil rights groups have filed a lawsuit challenging President Trump’s policy to fast-track deportations.** On Tuesday, August 6, the ACLU, the American Immigration Council, and Simpson Thacher & Bartlett LLP [filed the complaint on behalf of immigrant organizations which challenges the president’s new policy to fast-track deportations](#). The rule puts any immigrant at risk for expedited removal if they cannot prove continuous residence in the U.S. for more than two years, eliminating the previous requirement that expedited removal only apply within 100 miles of the border to those who had been in the country for less than two weeks (and without a hearing from an immigration judge). The complaint alleges in part that [the policy gives officers too much discretion without meaningful review](#). An attorney with the ACLU emphasized the issue: “this is a dramatic — and illegal — escalation in the Trump administration’s attacks on immigrant communities.”
- **The number of Mexicans denied visas on public charge grounds has grown sharply in the last fiscal year.** From October 2018 through July 2019, [5,343 immigrant visa applications from Mexican nationals were denied on the grounds that they risked becoming a public charge](#). During the same year, the total number of immigrant visa denials on public charge grounds was 12,179. Both of these numbers have skyrocketed since President Obama left office, as in his last full year of 2016, the total number of public charge denials for immigrant

visas was 1,033, with only 7 of those being from Mexican nationals. Applicants from other countries, including India and Haiti, also had sharp increases in denials on public charge grounds. These numbers shed light on an upcoming DHS regulation, which would base the public charge analysis not only on someone's poverty level and the likelihood that that person would receive, among other things, Medicaid, food stamps, and prescription drug subsidies, but also on whether they have received those benefits before. In addition to the increased denials, experts also expect a chilling effect on immigrant families seeking to come to the U.S.

- **Tucson, Arizona will vote on a ballot measure to establish itself as a sanctuary city.** After the measure achieved the required amount of signatures, the Tucson City Council voted Tuesday night to [put a measure establishing protections for undocumented people on the ballot in November](#). These protections would include forbidding police from asking about immigration status and prohibiting cooperation between some city and federal agencies in reference to immigration status.
- **An Iraqi national from Detroit has died after being deported to Iraq, a country he had never been to.** Jimmy Aldaoud, an Iraqi national who was born in Greece and spent most of his life in the United States, [has died after being deported to Iraq](#). Jimmy had never been to Iraq nor did he speak Arabic and was a part of the religious group the Chaldean Catholics, who are targets for torture and terrorism by ISIS. Jimmy died as a result of being unable to obtain insulin to treat his diabetes. Supporters say [he should never have been deported somewhere with insufficient healthcare and high political risk](#). Among those speaking out against deportations such as this was U.S. Representative Andy Levin, who argued that the executive branch must “cease deportation of such vulnerable people.”
- **After Wednesday's ICE raids in Mississippi, hundreds of immigrant workers have been released.** 680 people were arrested by ICE officers on Wednesday throughout the state of Mississippi, [but by Thursday morning more than 300 had been released](#). Officials said on Wednesday that people who met certain conditions, [such as being pregnant or having not faced immigration proceedings before](#), would be released pending a future immigration court date, but the specific reasons and terms for these workers' releases are still unclear. The only answer given by ICE was that the workers were released due to

“humanitarian factors.”

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