



# Office for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties

## Summary of CRCL's Recommendations and ICE's Response *Bluebonnet Detention Center*

On August 5, 2022, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) responded to an *Expert Recommendation Memorandum* issued in January 2022 by the Office for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties (CRCL) that followed an onsite investigation at the Bluebonnet Detention Center (Bluebonnet). ICE concurred with 15 recommendations and partially concurred with one.

### Background

Between April and September 2020, CRCL opened five complaint investigations involving noncitizens in ICE custody at Bluebonnet. The allegations raised concerns related to inadequate medical care, lack of COVID-19 policies and procedures, legal access, religious accommodation, inadequate food and/or nutrition, facility response to Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) complaints, structural safety concerns in a housing unit, disciplinary process issues, and the quality of food service. As a result of these complaints, CRCL conducted a multidisciplinary investigation at Bluebonnet in September 2021 to examine the facility's operations and assess issues raising civil rights and civil liberties concerns.

### Findings and Recommendations

On January 14, 2022, CRCL issued ICE an *Expert Recommendation Memorandum* based on its investigation conducted with the assistance of contract subject matter experts. The memorandum includes 16 recommendations in the general areas of conditions of detention, medical care, mental health care, and environmental health and safety. The following highlights the top three findings and actions that ICE agreed to take as a result of CRCL's recommendations.

#### **Noncitizen Safety**

CRCL concluded that the number of correctional officer positions was insufficient to allow housing staff officers to have critical oversight and personal contact and interaction with noncitizens or to respond to emergency situations. ICE agreed to increase staffing levels to permit direct supervision in noncitizen housing units.

#### **Language Access**

CRCL found that the facility grievance officer does not routinely translate grievance responses in the noncitizen's preferred language when responses are returned to the noncitizen via the tablet. ICE agreed to respond to noncitizens' grievances in their preferred language. Following CRCL's onsite, Bluebonnet also placed instructions within the housing units in several languages on how to navigate the tablets.

#### **PREA**

CRCL found that the security camera system uses such an extensive redaction method that the recordings of the noncitizen showers or restrooms may not facilitate a PREA investigation. ICE agreed to adjust the camera system to enhance security camera features to achieve both noncitizen privacy and facilitate investigation of any assault/sexual assault allegations. ICE confirmed that all standard operating procedures were updated to reflect this change.

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*CRCL provides the public with documents related to complaint investigations. After it is prepared and reviewed, CRCL will post a redacted version of this Expert Recommendation Memorandum on our [website](#) that will contain additional information about the complaint investigation and CRCL's findings and recommendations.*

February 8, 2024