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CBP Shares Additional Information about Recent Passing of Guatemalan Child

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An eight year-old Guatemalan national, previously apprehended by U.S. Customs and Border Protection, died shortly before midnight on December 24 at Gerald Champion Regional Medical Center in Alamogordo, New Mexico. CBP released an initial statement, which can be found [here \(https://www.dhs.gov/news/2018/12/25/guatemalan-national-passes-away-gerald-champion-regional-medical-center-alamogordo\)](https://www.dhs.gov/news/2018/12/25/guatemalan-national-passes-away-gerald-champion-regional-medical-center-alamogordo). Consistent with CBP's commitment to accountability and transparency, CBP is releasing a timeline reflecting a current understanding of key events that occurred prior to the child's passing. These updates are based on initial operational reporting.

The following statement is attributable to Commissioner Kevin K. McAleenan, Commissioner, U.S. Customs and Border Protection:

“This is a tragic loss. On behalf of U.S. Customs and Border Protection, our deepest sympathies go out to the family.

Deaths in CBP custody are extraordinarily rare. In light of recent events, the Commissioner has directed the following actions:

- U.S. Border Patrol is conducting secondary medical checks upon all children in CBP care and custody, including children arriving as part of Family Units (FMUA) and

Unaccompanied Children (UACs), with a focus on children under 10 years old;

- U.S. Border Patrol is engaging U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement regarding available surge options for transportation to Family Residential Centers and/or supervised release. CBP is also reviewing all available custody options to relieve capacity issues in Border Patrol stations and checkpoints in El Paso Sector, including any options identified by NGOs and/or local partners for temporary housing that can safely accommodate those in our custody;
- CBP is considering options for surge medical assistance from interagency partners, including receiving support from the U.S. Coast Guard, and potentially requesting further aid from the Department of Defense, Federal Emergency Management Agency, and Health and Human Services to assist the U.S. Border Patrol with supplemental medical capabilities. CBP is coordinating with the Centers for Disease Control on the numbers of children in custody as well; and
- CBP is also reviewing its policies with particular focus upon care and custody of children under 10 both at intake and beyond 24 hours in custody.

The following timeline, based on an understanding of the facts at this stage, is in local time, Mountain Standard Time.

- On December 18, at approximately 1300 hours, an eight year-old child was apprehended with his father at 3.29 miles west of the Paso Del Norte Port of Entry in El Paso, Texas for illegal entry.
- Driving distance from that apprehension location to Paso Del Norte Port (PDT) is less than 15 minutes; however, groups may be detained in the field until transportation becomes available.
- On December 18, at approximately 1639 hours, the father and child were transferred to the PDT processing center.
- While detained at PDT, the child and his father were provided hot food, snacks, juice, and water, and the agents logged six welfare checks.
- On December 20, at 1200 hours, the child and his father were transferred to El Paso Border Patrol Station (EPS).

- From December 20 to December 22, the child and his father were provided with showers, food, juice, and water, and the agents logged 17 welfare checks.

- On December 22, at approximately 2317 hours, U.S. Border Patrol transferred the child and father to the Alamogordo Border Patrol Station (ALA) to finalize processing. The child and his father were transferred because of capacity levels at the El Paso Station.

- On December 23, at approximately 0108 hours, the child and his father arrived at the Alamogordo Station.
 - Upon arrival, the child and his father were provided with personal hygiene products and meals, and they received several welfare checks.

- On December 24, at about 0539 hours, a placement request for the child and his father was e-mailed to Immigration and Customs Enforcement's Enforcement and Removal Operations' family placement inbox.

- On December 24, at approximately 0900 hours, a processing agent noticed that the child was coughing and appeared to have glossy eyes.
 - On December 24, at approximately 0930 hours, based on the agents' observations, the child and his father were transferred to GCRMC with possible influenza symptoms.

- On December 24, at about 1130 hours, hospital staff conducted several tests on the child for strep throat.
 - On December 24, at about 1245 hours, the child was given a diagnosis of common cold and given Tylenol.
 - On December 24, at about 1320 hours, the child was evaluated for release and found to have a 103 degree fever and was held for continued observation.

- On December 24, at about 1450 hours, the child was released from the ER with a prescription for amoxicillin and Ibuprofen.
 - The child and his father were transported to temporary holding at the Highway 70 checkpoint. While at the checkpoint, the child and his father were offered and accepted a hot meal.

- At about 1700, agents provided the child with a dose of the prescribed medication as ordered by the medical staff and agents conducted several welfare checks that evening.

- On December 24 at 1900 hours, the child appeared to be nauseous and vomited. Agents were aware of this and helped clean up the vomit.
 - His father declined further medical assistance as the child had been feeling better.

- On December 24, at about 2200 hours, the child appeared lethargic and nauseous again.
 - As no EMT was on-duty, out of caution, agents made the decision to return the child and his father to GCRMC.

- On December 24, during transportation to the hospital the boy began to vomit and he lost consciousness.

- At 2307 hours, radio traffic indicated that the agent had arrived at GCRMC where he was met by hospital staff.
 - The GCRMC staff were unable to revive the child and pronounced him deceased at 2348 hours on December 24, 2018.
 - The child's body will be transported to Alamogordo Funeral Home pending transfer to Albuquerque for autopsy.

- The Guatemalan Consulate was contacted at 0740 hours on December 25, 2018. The father is currently detained at the Alamogordo Station pending transfer to ICE ERO. He has spoken to his spouse in Guatemala and the Guatemalan Consulate.

***Welfare check definition:** Agent directly observes all detainees are safe and secure, and attends to any issues observed or relayed by those detained.

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