



# Office for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties

## Summary of CRCL Recommendation Memorandum and ICE's Response *Investigation of Irwin County Detention Center*

On February 6, 2023, U.S. Customs and Immigration Enforcement (ICE) responded to a *Recommendation Memorandum* issued in September 2022 by the Office for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties (CRCL) that followed a review of policies and procedures at the Irwin County Detention Center (Irwin). ICE concurred with CRCL's two recommendations.

### Background

Beginning in 2018 and 2021, CRCL began receiving a significant number of allegations concerning medical care at Irwin. In September 2020, CRCL had begun planning an onsite investigation at Irwin when CRCL received allegations involving unnecessary gynecological procedures performed on women without their informed consent. CRCL opened numerous complaints to investigate these allegations; however, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Office of the Inspector General (OIG) exercised its statutory right to retain these complaints, prohibiting CRCL from investigating until the OIG investigation is complete.

In October and November 2020, CRCL continued to receive additional serious allegations involving lack of medical care, retaliation by facility staff towards noncitizens who reported poor conditions, inappropriate use of force. CRCL schedule an onsite investigation at Irwin for June 2021 onsite; however, DHS Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas announced in May 2021 that ICE would discontinue the use of Irwin. As a result, CRCL canceled its onsite investigation.

### Investigation

Despite the cancellation of CRCL's onsite investigation, CRCL's contract subject matter experts reviewed Irwin's policies and procedures. Based on this review, the experts made findings related to both the facility and LaSalle Corrections, which operates Irwin. These include issues related to the Prison Rape Elimination Act, COVID-19 protocols, segregation, grievances, telephone access, food service, sick call, medication management, medical records, dental care, mental health staffing, mental health evaluations, and suicide prevention.

### Recommendations

On September 12, 2022, CRCL sent ICE a *Recommendation Memorandum* with two overarching recommendations and included an appendix with recommendations from the experts related to Irwin. CRCL acknowledged that DHS had decided that noncitizens would no longer be held at Irwin and did not request that ICE respond to the experts' facility-specific recommendations. ICE concurred with both overarching recommendations.

ICE agreed to notify CRCL at least 30 days in advance if ICE decides to resume detaining noncitizens at the Irwin. ICE also agreed that it would review the expert findings and recommendations to consider their applicability to other detention facilities operated by LaSalle Corrections.

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

April 24, 2023