

Summary of Conference Call

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement
Advisory Committee on Family Residential Centers
Subcommittee on Access to Counsel and Language Services
June 7, 2016

The U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) Advisory Committee on Family Residential Centers (ACFRC), Subcommittee on Access to Counsel and Language Services convened on Tuesday, June 7, 2016 via teleconference at 12:00 P.M. EST. The purpose of the call was to discuss observations working documents shared by the Subcommittee on Mental and Medical Health and the Subcommittee on Education.

Attendance:

Subcommittee Members Present for Teleconference:

- Jennifer Nagda
- Dora Schriro
- Kurt Schwarz
- Karen Musalo
- Sonia Parras-Konrad
- Margo Schlanger

Others Present:

- Elizabeth Cedillo-Pereira, Senior Advisor, ICE: Alternate Designated Federal Officer (ADFO), ACFRC
- Maryam Ali, Special Assistant, ICE

Opening Remarks:

Chair Jennifer Nagda provided an update on the upcoming trip to Berks. Based on the conversation from the earlier subcommittee chair call the tentative subcommittee representatives travelling to Berks for a June 28, 2016 visit are Vice Chair Schriro, Dr. Andres Pumariega, and Anadora Moss. ACFRC Chair Kurt Schwarz is still working to confirm his availability.

Chair Nagda said the plan was to hear from Vice Chair Schriro and Sonia Parras-Konrad on their review of the other subcommittees' work and determine a way forward upon receipt of the information from ICE. She also suggested dividing up the non-governmental organization (NGO) reports that Margo Schlanger compiled earlier to identify relevant information around which to develop recommendations.

Vice Chair Schriro said she was impressed with the Subcommittee on Medical and Mental Health's work. She said the group maintained a good balance between medical and mental health, including questions about parenting while children received care and timely issues such as Zika screening. She noted that the approach to trauma-informed care referenced other resources in addition to the ICE Family Residential Standards (FRS) and asked whether others

agreed that it would be beneficial to look at the other sets of standards to bolster recommendations.

ADFO Cedillo-Pereira confirmed that the FRS is the guiding policy but should not limit the members in terms of their recommendations.

Vice Chair Schriro continued that one question for this subcommittee would be to determine whether there are groups or other government agencies with existing practices for unaccompanied minors that can be applied to improve conditions within ICE.

Ms. Parras-Konrad then highlighted observations from the Subcommittee on Education's work that could be applied to the Subcommittee on Access to Counsel and Language Services. She noted that the division and further subdivision of possible recommendations in the Subcommittee on Education's outline is a good idea because it captures broad issues but also specific points. She also highlighted that parent education is an area where the Subcommittee on Access to Counsel and Language Services can collaborate with the Subcommittee on Education.

Chair Nagda said the subcommittee is on track to receive information from ICE next week. Members discussed the benefit of beginning to develop recommendations in one of the four buckets and Chair Nagda asked if anyone wanted to volunteer to tackle a bucket.

The subcommittee agreed to use the 12-page outline as a blueprint. Chair Nagda offered to work with Vice Chair Schriro over the next two weeks to finalize a master template to fill in upon receipt of information from ICE.

Ms. Schlanger shared her observations from her May 31 visit to the South Texas Family Residential Center (Dilley) and Karnes County Family Residential Center (Karnes).

She said that the tours provided good insight into what a week and a half detention looks like, but not a longer detention of 20 days; it is a moving target. She said many of the consistent complaints from NGO reports were refuted on site which is troubling and not an ideal way to sort out disagreements of the facts. Ms. Schlanger concluded that she failed to follow up on the "prisonization" of daily life at centers as reported by one NGO (e.g. bed checks and head counts). Ms. Schriro noted that there was healthy discussion about the night checks on the first trip to the facilities in March, including a demonstration as to what night light lighting looked like. Ms. Schlanger concluded that her ongoing frustration is not having the resident handbooks available as it is the document that the Committee will need the most.

ADFO Cedillo-Pereira said ICE noted that the summer meeting has yet to be scheduled. ICE will provide more information as soon as possible.

Vice Chair Schriro mentioned that the only other thing that came up in the earlier subcommittee chair call was possible examples from previous groups who drafted reports while struggling with the same issue of not having enough information. ICE will check on this.

Ms. Schlanger offered to circulate a list of links to the various NGO reports for the benefit of the group to review.

Adjournment:

The subcommittee adjourned at approximately 12:45 P.M. EST.