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ICE NEWSROOM

MARCH 17, 2021 • HARLINGEN, TX • DETAINEE DEATH NOTIFICATIONS

Colombian man in ICE custody passes away in South Texas Hospital

HARLINGEN, Texas — A Colombian man in the custody of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) passed away Monday evening at Valley Baptist Medical Center (VBMC) in Harlingen, Texas.

Diego Fernando Gallego-Agudelo, 45, national of Colombia, entered ICE custody at the Port Isabel Detention Center (PIDC) in Los Fresnos, Texas, on March 3. Gallego-Agudelo had been hospitalized since March 6.

On March 2, Gallego-Agudelo was apprehended by U.S. Border Patrol entering the United States near Hidalgo, Texas. On March 3, he was transferred to PIDC. On March 6, he entered the facility's medical health unit with health complaints and was transferred to the hospital that same day. The preliminary cause of death is unknown pending the outcome of an autopsy.

Consistent with the agency's protocols, the appropriate agencies have been notified about the death, including the Department of Homeland Security's Office of Inspector General, and the ICE Office of Professional Responsibility. Additionally, ICE has notified

the Colombian consulate and Mr. Gallego-Agudelo's next of kin.

ICE is firmly committed to the health and welfare of all those in its custody and is undertaking a comprehensive agency-wide review of this incident, as it does follow all in-custody deaths. Fatalities in ICE custody, statistically, are exceedingly rare and occur at a fraction of the national average for the U.S. detained population.

This agency's comprehensive review will be conducted by ICE senior leadership to include Enforcement and Removal Operations and the Office of the Principal Legal Advisor.

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