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U.S. Customs and
Border Protection
(/)

U.S. and Mexico continue Interior Repatriation Initiative


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First flight of 2020 returns 124 Mexican nationals to Guadalajara

TUCSON, Ariz. — U.S. Customs and Protection and U.S. Immigrations and Customs Enforcement this week continued the Interior Repatriation Initiative (IRI), which included the first flight in 2020. The IRI is a joint agreement between the governments of the United States and Mexico to ensure that those repatriated to Mexico are returned closer to their homes in a safe and expeditious manner.

Thursday’s flight carried 124 Mexican nationals to Guadalajara from Tucson. The Government of Mexico will provide additional transportation to the cities of origin.

ICE will continue operating these flights as needed. Several more are scheduled in January and February. This framework will reduce recidivism and border violence by returning Mexican nationals to their cities of origin, where there is a higher likelihood that they will reintegrate back into their communities, rather than fall victim to human smuggling schemes.

 CBP and ICE this week continued the Interior Repatriation Initiative (IRI), which included the first flight in 2020 that carried 124 Mexican nationals to Guadalajara from Tucson, Ariz. The IRI is a joint agreement between the governments of the United States and Mexico to ensure that those repatriated to Mexico are returned closer to their homes in a safe and expeditious manner.

“These interior repatriation flights to Mexico demonstrate our resolve to apprehend and remove those who illegally cross the border,” said CBP Acting Commissioner Mark Morgan. “If you cross our border illegally and you have no meritorious claim to stay, we will apprehend and remove you.”

ICE works closely with CBP to ensure the safe and timely removal of individuals who have unlawfully crossed the southern border.

IRI began as a pilot program in 2012 and was signed as a permanent initiative April 18, 2013.

Headquartered in Mesa, Arizona, ICE Air Operations has supported Enforcement and Removal Operations field offices nationwide by providing air transportation and removal coordination services since 2006. Staffed by ERO officers, these air charters enable the agency to repatriate large groups of deportees in an efficient, expeditious and humane manner with assistance and coordination from CBP.

U.S. Customs and Border Protection is the unified border agency within the Department of Homeland Security charged with the management, control and protection of our nation's borders at and between official ports of entry. CBP is charged with securing the borders of the United States while enforcing hundreds of laws and facilitating lawful trade and travel.

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