

 Official website of the Department of Homeland Security



U.S. Customs and
Border Protection
(/)

Statement by U.S. Customs and Border Protection on the Death of a Seven-Year-Old Female Child

Release Date: December 14, 2018

WASHINGTON - Today, U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) is releasing the details of the death of a child that occurred after being apprehended for illegal entry with her father along the southern border in the El Paso Sector. The Guatemalan government was notified immediately following the child's death. CBP's Office of Professional Responsibility and the Department of Homeland Security Office of Inspector General is conducting a review. Out of respect to the family of the deceased, CBP did not issue a statement regarding the child's death at the time of the death. CBP is currently reviewing its public disclosure and notification policy related to deaths in our custody.

Attributable to U.S. Customs and Border Protection Commissioner Kevin K. McAleenan:

“Border Patrol Agents, including trained Emergency Medical Technicians did everything in their power to provide emergency medical assistance for Jakelin Caal Maquin immediately after her father notified the agents of her distress at a remote Forward Operating Base, 94 miles from the nearest Border Patrol Station. Border Patrol Agents revived Jakelin twice before emergency responders arrived via air ambulance to continue medical care. Emergency Medical professionals transported her by helicopter to the nearest children's hospital.”

“Despite our trained EMT agents' best efforts fighting for Jakelin's life, and the work of the Hidalgo County and Providence Children's Hospital medical teams treating her, we were unable to rescue her.”

“The agents involved are deeply affected and empathize with the father over the loss of his daughter.”

“We cannot stress enough the dangers posed by traveling long distances, in crowded transportation, or in the natural elements through remote desert areas without food, water and other supplies. No one should risk injury, or even death, by crossing our border unlawfully. This is why I asked Congress on Tuesday to change our laws so that the United States is not incentivizing families to take this dangerous path.”

“Border Patrol agents save thousands of people every year who are overcome by the elements, including people found suffering from dehydration, heat stroke, hypothermia, drowning in the river, injuries, and left for dead by these smugglers in some of the most remote areas of our border as they enter the country illegally. Our Agents have world-class rescue and medical training, and are committed to saving those put in distress by callous smugglers.”

“We welcome the Department of Homeland Security’s investigation and will review the incident operationally to learn from this tragedy.”

Background Information Attributable to CBP:

- On December 6, 2018 at 9:15 PM, a seven-year-old female juvenile Guatemalan was apprehended with her father for illegal entry with a group of 163 illegal aliens approximately a half mile west of the Antelope Wells Port of Entry at the Bounds Forward Operating Base (Bounds FOB). There were four Border Patrol Agents on scene at the time.
- Upon apprehension, the Border Patrol Agent conducted an initial screening, which consists of an interview and observation of the detainee to identify any health or safety problems to ensure that they receive necessary medical care. The initial screening revealed no evidence of health issues. Additionally, the father claimed that the child was in good health as indicated on the Form I-779.
- Due to the extreme remote nature of the location, while awaiting transport to the nearest Border Patrol station, the aliens were held inside the Sally Port of the Antelope Wells Port of Entry and had access to food, water and restrooms.
- At 10:00 PM, an MCI Transport Bus left the Lordsburg Border Patrol Station route to the Bounds FOB. The Lordsburg Border Patrol Station is approximately 94 miles away from the FOB Bounds. Due to the remoteness of this area, vehicle transport between locations takes between two to three hours.
- Around 12:20 am on December 7, the MCI Transport Bus transported the first group to the Lordsburg Border Patrol Station. Because Unaccompanied Alien Children are a priority, UACs were on the first transport to the Lordsburg Border Patrol Station.
- The MCI Transport Bus returned at 4:00 AM to the Bounds FOB. At 4:30 AM, the second group of aliens including the child and her father was loaded onto the MCI Transport Bus. Just prior to departure, at 5:00 AM, the father first advised the agent that the child was sick and vomiting while on the bus.
- At this time, the Agents notified the Lordsburg Border Patrol Station to prepare to receive the child and provide emergency medical care. Due to the remoteness of the area, meeting emergency medical personnel in Lordsburg was the best means to provide the child with emergency care.
- Shortly before 6:30 AM, the bus arrived at the Sally Port of the Lordsburg Border Patrol Station and the father advised that the child was not breathing. A Border Patrol Emergency Medical Technician began to provide medical care and revived the child twice. It was determined at this time that she had a temperature of 105.7 degrees.
- Hidalgo County EMS arrived and began providing care at 6:40 AM. A decision was made to transport to the nearest trauma center, Providence Children’s Hospital in El Paso, Texas.
- Air Ambulance departed LOB with the child at 7:45 AM, she arrived at the Providence Children’s Hospital in El Paso at 8:50 AM and immediately received additional emergency medical care.

- Her father was transported by USBP via a government vehicle to the hospital.
- At 11:00 AM December 7, LOB was notified juvenile went into cardiac arrest again and was subsequently revived. LOB learned that the CT scan revealed brain swelling. She was breathing by machine and diagnosed with liver failure.
- She died at 12:35 AM on December 8 with her father on scene. The Guatemalan government was notified immediately and is working with the El Paso Sector leadership.

CBP OPR, and DHS OIG are investigating to ensure all appropriate policies were followed.

CBP is reviewing its notification policies on deaths to the public and Congress.

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.

Last modified: December 14, 2018



Share This Page.