Seeking Asylum During the Coronavirus Pandemic

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Panelists

Maria Celina Márquez, Moderator
Migration Policy Consultant
USCCB/MRS

Sister Tracey Horan
Interim Director of Education and Advocacy
KINO Border Initiative

Kathryn Kuennen
Director, Children’s Services
USCCB/MRS

Michelle Mendez
Director of Defending Vulnerable Populations
CLINIC

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2016
Background

• Under the current Administration, there have been many changes to the asylum process

• The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated existing challenges and created new ones

• Vulnerable populations at HIGH RISK
Border
ICE Detention Facilities
Immigration Courts
Kino Border Initiative

Tracey Horan
Associate Director, Education & Advocacy
Families Waiting Long-Term

- Education
- Work permits, availability
- Housing
- Returning to danger
Vulnerable Families, Individuals being Returned

• Title 42 Expulsions
• Facing threats, extortion
• Health concerns
• Pregnant women
One migrant leader’s story
Join children and their families seeking asylum Wed, Oct 21, 11AM PST/2PM EST

Comment on proposed anti-asylum rule
https://bit.ly/33WsVgR
Impact on Unaccompanied Children

- President’s Partial Border Closure Order (March 20th, 2020)
- CDC Order (March 20th, 2020)
- Suspension of the processing of certain persons, including unaccompanied children
- The order cites Title 42 of the U.S. Code
Impact on Unaccompanied Children (cont.)

• Most UCs are not being processed but instead are being “expelled” due to recent regulations and administrative orders
  • Violation of Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act (TVPRA)

• Nearly 9,000 children have been forcibly expelled and denied protection

• “Hoteling” of children
What Does This Mean for Children?

- Record Low Numbers of Children in ORR Custody
  - Significant decline in the number of children in ORR custody

- Disregard for Existing Legal Protections
  - Administration argues it does not have to comply with the TVPRA
  - Has given conflicting information to Congress about existing screening of UCs
  - Child protection concerns remain paramount
Advocacy

• Join asylum seekers on Wednesday, October 21st 11AM PST/2PM EST
• Comment on proposed asylum regulations
• Override border closures; resume allowing children to access protection
• Ensure robust funding for legal and social services
Questions?