

Secretary

U.S. Department of Homeland Security
Washington, DC 20528



**Homeland
Security**

February 23, 2026

Senator Patty Murray
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Murray:

Thank you for your September 18, 2025 letter to the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) regarding the detention of pregnant, postpartum, and nursing women.

Consistent with its statutory authorities and longstanding policy, DHS enforces the immigration laws enacted by Congress while prioritizing the safety, security, and humanitarian care of individuals in its custody. U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) works expeditiously to screen and identify aliens in its custody who are pregnant, postpartum, or nursing and take the necessary steps to ensure that their health needs are addressed by healthcare professionals.

Generally, ICE does not detain, arrest, or take into custody aliens known to be pregnant, postpartum, or nursing for an administrative violation of immigration laws unless release is prohibited by law²¹ or for exceptional circumstances. This policy reflects ICE's longstanding directive governing the identification, monitoring, and appropriate placement of pregnant, postpartum, and nursing women.

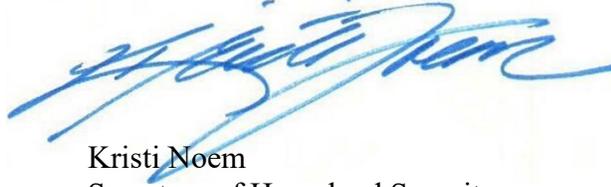
In the limited circumstances in which detention is legally mandated and appropriate, ICE monitors pregnant, postpartum, and nursing women for general health and wellbeing. This includes regular medical evaluations to ensure that appropriate prenatal, postnatal and other medical and mental health care is provided. Furthermore, ICE regularly conducts custody reevaluations of detained women known to be pregnant, postpartum, or nursing. In certain cases, an alien who is pregnant, postpartum, or nursing may be transferred to a detention facility where a more appropriate level of healthcare may be provided.

In addition to medical, mental health, and dental services provided to all detained women as required by ICE detention standards, facilities directly or contractually provide women with pregnancy services such as pregnancy testing, routine or specialized prenatal care, postpartum follow-up, and nursing services.

²¹ ICE is bound to detain women subject to mandatory detention as set by U.S. immigration law and has limited discretion to release individuals determined to be a flight risk or a danger to the community.

Thank you again for your letter. Enclosed are responses to the specific questions raised in your letter. Should you wish to discuss this matter further, please contact the DHS Office of Legislative Affairs at (202) 447-5890.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Kristi Noem", is written over a faint, light-colored rectangular stamp or watermark.

Kristi Noem
Secretary of Homeland Security

Enclosure