

CBP expected to release an estimated 5,600 migrants over next few days across RGV

Mark Reagan - March 29, 2019



Migrant wait in line after arriving Thursday at Good Neighbor Settlement House in Brownsville. (Ryan Henry/The Brownsville Herald)

Brownsville City Manager Noel Bernal said today that U.S. Customs and Border Protection told him that approximately 5,600 migrants would be released in Brownsville, Harlingen and McAllen over the next few days.

"That's the total number we are aware of and are preparing to process to handle," Bernal said.

The mass releases began last week in McAllen and started in Brownsville on Tuesday. The releases followed comments by U.S. Border Patrol Sector Chief Agent Rodolfo Karisch who said on Wednesday that the releases were necessary because the Rio Grande Valley Sector's resources are "overwhelmed and over-stretched."

The 5,600 estimate became public in Brownsville the same day President Donald Trump threatened to close the border next week.

"If Mexico doesn't immediately stop ALL illegal immigration coming into the United States through [sic] our Southern Border, I will be CLOSING the border, of large sections of the Border, next week," Trump said in a series of Twitter posts.

Today, Bernal said Border Patrol released around 300 people into Brownsville—an increase from the past two days where the releases totaled around 130 on Thursday and Wednesday.

However, there was a new dynamic today, Bernal said, explaining that 19 people released in Brownsville were running fevers and were treated at the hospital and released.

Mayor Tony Martinez said Border Patrol is not allowed to release sick migrants into the public.

"That's one of my biggest concerns in the sense of when they detain someone and they are either believed to be ill or show symptoms of illness, the law requires them to provide medical assistance before they release them into the general public," Martinez said.

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