

Another Guatemalan child migrant dies in US Custody



Albuquerque, December 26 (RHC)—A second Guatemalan child migrant died while being held by the U.S. Customs and Border Protection Agency (CBP).

The agency announced that 8-year-old boy as Felix Alonso Gomez died of unknown causes on Christmas Eve in New Mexico. The boy was first taken into custody with his father 3 miles outside EL Paso on December 18, according to a CBP statement.

It was the second death of a child in the agency's care this month. Jakelin Caal Maquin, 7, also of Guatemala, died in custody after traveling to the U.S. with a group of 163 people. Her body arrived in Guatemala on Monday.

After the 8-year-old boy's death, the agency said in a statement late Tuesday that Border Patrol would now conduct "secondary medical checks" on all children in custody, with a focus on children under the age of 10. It was not clear from the statement how and where those checks would be conducted.

It is considering requesting additional medical assistance from other agencies — including Health and Human Services and the Department of Defense — and coordinating with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention on the numbers of children in custody, the statement said.

The agency said it is also reviewing how it holds immigrants in custody so it can relieve problems with capacity in its centers in the El Paso, Texas, area.

The federal government is currently partially shut down because of a dispute between President Donald Trump and Congress over his demand for a border wall. Trump dug in on the issue Tuesday, telling reporters that the U.S. must have "a wall, a fence, whatever they'd like to call it."

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