

Report says U.S. Border Patrol new guidelines explicitly target Central American migrants



Washington, April 9 (RHC)-- New Border Patrol guidelines in the United States explicitly ask its agents to target Spanish speakers and migrants from Latin America in carrying out a Trump administration program requiring asylum seekers to wait in Mexico and not enter the U.S., according to memos obtained by The Associated Press.

An attorney for the American Civil Liberties Union, Judy Rabinovitz said that even though they knew the current administration is “trying to get at Central American asylum seekers to see it written there, so blatantly, is so disturbing”. Her organization was among those that sued the U.S. government in February to block the policy, which was launched in late January.

The program marks a shift in the U.S.’s policy for handling cases of migrants seeking asylum and fleeing persecution in their countries of origin. It initially applied only to those who turned themselves in at official border crossings, but a memo from a division chief of the Border Patrol’s San Diego sector says it has been expanded to include people who cross the border illegally.

These new instructions exclude Mexican asylum seekers, children traveling alone, pregnant women, LGBT migrants and people suffering medical issues; who are not to be sent back to Mexico and instead go through the traditional asylum process in the U.S. immigration court system. Thus targeting Central American asylum seekers.

The timing of this program corresponds to 12-year-high on border arrests in February, many of who turn themselves and their families in as asylum seekers trying to elude capture. Guatemala and Honduras have replaced Mexico as the top countries, a remarkable shift from only a few years ago.

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