



**U.S. Customs and  
Border Protection**

APR 17 2020

ACLU

Dear Ms. Borja and Ms. Pompa,

Thank you for your letter, dated April 13, 2020, concerning U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP)'s enforcement mission during the COVID-19 pandemic. Tucson Sector Border Patrol is actively involved in our government's effort to curb and limit COVID-19 exposure.

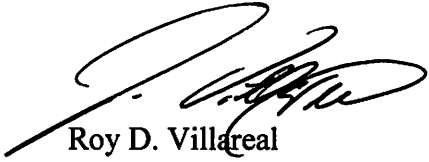
Tucson Sector has over 230 agents trained as EMTs or paramedics and contract medical providers. When individuals in our custody require care beyond what our agents and contract medical personnel can provide, we must transport them to local medical facilities. In March 2020, our agents accompanied detainees on 88 such hospital trips. These trips were conducted for various purposes, such as the administration of medical care and professional consultations to ensure individuals receive proper medical attention while in our custody. Last year, Tucson Sector agents accompanied detainees to local medical facilities on nearly 4,000 occasions. Agents also visit local pharmacies to retrieve prescriptions filled for those in our custody. Additionally, they visit hospitals to obtain medical care for themselves. In March 2020, 18 agents required medical care at hospitals for injuries sustained in the performance of their jobs. None of the hospital visits during March were conducted for enforcement purposes. Again, we have a responsibility to assure detainees receive medical treatment when needed. Observing a Border Patrol Agent at a local hospital should not be perceived as an enforcement action. Observing a Border Patrol agent or vehicle is no different than seeing other law enforcement entities at hospitals with persons in custody in need of medical attention.

The 2013 CBP memo regarding enforcement activities at sensitive locations, which you referenced in your letter, remains in effect. The U.S. Border Patrol will not carry out enforcement operations at or near healthcare facilities, such as hospitals, doctors' offices, accredited health clinics, and emergent or urgent care facilities, except in the most extraordinary of circumstances. Individuals should not avoid seeking medical care because they fear civil immigration enforcement. Any person or organization inferring differently is creating an unnecessary panic.

The threat of COVID-19 demands heightened attention from Border Patrol agents. They must take extraordinary precaution with themselves, each other, and every individual they encounter in order to reduce the threat of exposure to and spread of the virus. They protect our communities and country against COVID-19 while simultaneously fulfilling their obligations to secure our borders, safeguard our nation, and tend to the health and safety needs of those in our care. We all have a role in combating the COVID-19 threat. Presumptive, accusatory and inflammatory tones do more to spread misinformation and fear. To that end, I ask that you contact me or my staff directly when questions or concerns arise.

We all have a role in combating the COVID-19 threat. Presumptive, accusatory and inflammatory tones do more to spread misinformation and fear. To that end, I ask that you contact me or my staff directly when questions or concerns arise. I appreciate you bringing your concerns to my attention and value this opportunity to discuss the complex nature of the U.S. Border Patrol's mission during this unprecedented time.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Roy D. Villareal', written in a cursive style.

Roy D. Villareal  
Chief Patrol Agent  
Tucson Sector