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## **ACLU Seeks DHS Inspector General Review of Treatment of Sick Children in CBP Custody**

*Civil Rights Attorneys File Second of Four Complaints to Independent  
Oversight Agency Related to CBP's Mistreatment of Detained People*

SAN DIEGO – Today, the ACLU Foundation of San Diego & Imperial Counties (ACLUF-SDIC) and the ACLU Border Rights Center filed an administrative complaint with the Office of Inspector General for the U.S. Department of Homeland Security calling for an immediate review of U.S. Customs and Border Protection's (CBP) treatment of sick children detained in CBP and U.S. Border Patrol facilities.

Between March and July 2019, ACLUF-SDIC staff interviewed more than 100 people soon after their release from CBP custody, documenting numerous disturbing accounts of abuse and mistreatment, including the neglect of sick children.

In one case, a weeks-old infant girl experienced significant weight loss over five days while in Border Patrol custody, where she was held against the express and repeated advice of medical professionals, according to the child's parents. In another case, a five-year-old boy experienced a persistent fever and diarrhea during his eight-day detention without receiving any medical attention, according to his mother.

"CBP and Border Patrol detention facilities are categorically unsuitable for the detention of any child, much less a sick child," said Mitra Ebadolahi, senior staff attorney for the ACLUF-SDIC. "Detention causes long- and short-term damage to children's mental and physical health, and detention by these agencies in particular literally endangers children's lives."

Today's administrative complaint is the second of four the ACLU has filed or will file in the coming weeks. Last month, the ACLU filed a similar complaint related to the treatment of pregnant people. Subsequent complaints will address family separation and verbal abuse reported by people who were held in CBP and Border Patrol facilities.

In all four complaints, the ACLU's priority recommendation is that no individual be held in CBP or Border Patrol detention facilities longer than the time required for initial processing – which in no case should exceed 12 hours.

A copy of this press release and the complaint can be viewed here:

- Press release [insert link]

- Complaint: <https://www.aclusandiego.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/2020-02-18-OIG-Complaint-2-FINAL.pdf>.