



emergency relief to obtain his release and prevent his unlawful removal. In support thereof, Petitioner states the following:

## II. FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Petitioner is a forty-three-year-old female native and citizen of Guatemala. *See attached, Exhibit A: Petitioner's Identification.* He first entered the United States on or about April 9, 2019 after fleeing Guatemala to escape threats and violence directed against him and his family. Petitioner fears that, if returned to Guatemala, he would face serious harm and substantial risk of persecution or torture on account of his membership in a particular social group.

On April 9, 2019, Petitioner entered the United States without inspection. On November 18, 2025, Petitioner was detained by ICE officers and charged with being an alien present in the United States without being admitted or paroled. Following his arrest, Petitioner was processed and held at the Port Isabel Service Detention Center, located at 806 Hilbig Road, Conroe, Texas 77301.

Petitioner previously filed an asylum application on December 2, 2025, which remains pending.

The government has not been able to articulate any meaningful reason why Petitioner should continue to remain in detention pending the outcome of his removal proceedings. Petitioner, through Counsel, now submits the present Petition for Writ of Habeas Corpus to this Honorable Court, and respectfully requests the Court to order Respondents to effect his immediate release.

## III. LEGAL STANDARD

The standard for granting a temporary restraining order ("TRO") in the Fifth Circuit requires the petitioner to demonstrate:

- (1) a substantial likelihood of success on the merits;
- (2) a substantial threat of irreparable injury if the injunction is not granted;
- (3) that the threatened injury outweighs any harm the injunction may cause the government; and
- (4) that the injunction will not disserve the public interest.

*Mississippi Power & Light Co. v. United Gas Pipe Line Co.*, 760 F.2d 618, 621 (5th Cir. 1985).

In the immigration habeas context, a TRO serves to preserve this Court's jurisdiction and prevent continued unlawful restraint of liberty in violation of the Constitution and federal law. See *Zadvydas v. Davis*, 533 U.S. 678, 690 (2001).

#### **IV. ARGUMENT**

##### **A. Petitioner Faces Immediate and Irreparable Harm from Continued Detention**

Petitioner has been detained by ICE since November 18, 2025, with no final order of removal having ever been issued against him in a removal proceeding, though he is subject to no form of mandatory detention. Petitioner has no criminal history and poses no risk to the community. He has demonstrated no conduct indicating that he is a threat to the United States or otherwise eligible for deportation.

Continued confinement of a noncitizen without lawful authority constitutes irreparable harm. *Zadvydas*, 533 U.S. at 690; *Demore v. Kim*, 538 U.S. 510, 529–30 (2003). Each additional day of unlawful detention deepens the constitutional injury and cannot be remedied by monetary damages. See *Jennings v. Rodriguez*, 583 U.S. 281 (2018).

##### **B. Petitioner is Substantially Likely to Succeed on the Merits**

Petitioner's detention is unlawful under 28 U.S.C. § 2241 because no final order of removal exists, and ICE has failed to justify his continued confinement. Under *Zadvydas*, detention authority under 8 U.S.C. § 1231(a) arises only after a removal order becomes final. Petitioner is in appeal of his removal proceedings, and no final removal order has been issued against him.

The Fifth Circuit has recognized that immigration detention must be narrowly tailored and subject to constitutional limits. *Zadvydas v. Underdown*, 185 F.3d 279 (5th Cir. 1999), rev'd on other grounds, 533 U.S. 678 (2001). Absent a final removal order or individualized finding of necessity, detention becomes arbitrary and violates substantive due process. See *Reno v. Flores*, 507 U.S. 292, 302 (1993).

Petitioner poses no flight risk or danger to the community—he has no criminal record, has complied with all ICE reporting requirements, and possesses valid work authorization. ICE's failure to articulate any legitimate reason for his detention demonstrates that it is punitive, not regulatory, and therefore unconstitutional. *Zadvydas*, 533 U.S. at 690–91.

For these reasons, Petitioner is substantially likely to prevail on the merits of his habeas corpus petition and is entitled to immediate release.

### **C. The Balance of Harms Favors Petitioner**

The harm to Petitioner from continued unlawful detention—loss of liberty in a facility meant for criminal aliens, and ongoing constitutional injury—vastly outweighs any administrative burden on the government in effecting his release under appropriate conditions. The government retains full authority to supervise Petitioner through reporting or monitoring conditions, rendering detention unnecessary to ensure appearance.

Where, as here, the government cannot articulate a lawful basis for custody, continued detention serves no legitimate purpose and inflicts disproportionate harm.

#### **D. The Public Interest Supports Immediate Release**

The public interest is served by ensuring that government detention authority is exercised within constitutional and statutory bounds. Upholding due process and preventing unlawful imprisonment preserves confidence in the rule of law and the integrity of immigration proceedings.

Granting the requested relief promotes judicial economy by ensuring this Court can fully adjudicate the habeas petition without the case becoming moot due to prolonged or arbitrary detention.

### **V. CONCLUSION**

Because Petitioner has shown (1) a substantial likelihood of success on the merits of his habeas claim; (2) irreparable harm from continued detention; (3) that the balance of equities strongly favors release; and (4) that release under appropriate safeguards serves the public interest, this Court should grant the temporary restraining order and order Petitioner's **immediate release from ICE custody under appropriate safeguards determined by DHS.**

### **VI. REQUEST FOR RELIEF**

WHEREFORE, Petitioner respectfully requests that this Honorable Court **IMMEDIATELY** issue a temporary restraining order:

- 1. Directing Respondents to immediately release Petitioner from custody;**

2. Restraining and enjoining Respondent, their agents, employees, and successors from removing Petitioner from the United States;
3. Directing Respondent to take all necessary steps to halt any removal preparations;
4. Requiring Respondent to notify all relevant personnel that Petitioner shall not be removed;
5. Set an expedited hearing on Petitioner's motion for preliminary injunction;
6. After hearing, issue a preliminary injunction maintaining the relief requested above during the pendency of this action;
7. Waive or set security in a nominal amount;
8. Award attorney's fees and costs; and
9. Grant such other relief as this Court deems just and proper.

## **VII. SECURITY AND NOTICE**

Petitioner respectfully requests that the Court waive the security requirement under Fed. R. Civ. P. 65(c) due to his indigent status, or alternatively, set security in a nominal amount.

Petitioner has taken reasonably calculated steps to effect service of process on each of the Respondents named herein, and has provided them with copies of the present motion as described in the Certificate of Service, below.

Respectfully submitted,

*/s/ Matthew R. Mendez*

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Matthew Mendez  
Attorney for Petitioner  
State Bar No. 24098092

6300 Gulfon Street  
Houston, Texas 77081  
Tel. (346) 205-4343  
[matt@mendezlawoffice.com](mailto:matt@mendezlawoffice.com)

Attorney for Petitioner

**PETITIONER VERIFICATION**

Petitioner, is currently detained in ICE custody, and has authorized Counsel, Matthew Mendez, to verify, on her behalf, that the facts stated therein are true and correct to the best of his knowledge and belief.

/S/ Matthew Mendez  
Matthew Mendez  
Attorney for Petitioner

12/9/25  
Date

**CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE**

On December 9, 2025, Counsel for Plaintiff served a copy of the attached Petition via USPS Certified Mail, in compliance with Rule 4 of Federal Rules of Civil Procedure, upon the Respondent, Miguel Vergara, in his Official Capacity as Field Office Director, of ICE Enforcement and Removal Operations, Harlingen Field Office, at (1) Office of the Field Office Director, Enforcement and Removal Operations, Harlingen Field Office, 1717 Zoy Street.

/S/ Matthew Mendez  
Matthew Mendez  
Attorney for Petitioner

12/9/25  
Date

**CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE**

On December 9, 2025, Counsel for Plaintiff served a copy of the attached Petition via USPS Mail, in compliance with Rule 4 of Federal Rules of Civil Procedure, upon the **Respondent, Kristi Noem, in her Official Capacity as Director of U.S. Department of Homeland Security**, at (1) Office of General Counsel, U.S. Department of Homeland Security, 245 Murray Lane, SW, Mail Stop 0485, Washington, D.C. 20530; and (2) to the United States at Civil Process Clerk, U.S. Attorney’s Office, 1000 Louisiana Street, Suite 2300, Houston, Texas 77002.

/S/ Matthew Mendez  
Matthew Mendez  
Attorney for Petitioner

12/9/25  
Date

**CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE**

On December 9, 2025, Counsel for Plaintiff served a copy of the attached Petition via email, in compliance with Rule 4 of Federal Rules of Civil Procedure, upon the Respondent, Pam

Bondi, in her Official Capacity as Attorney General of the United States, at  
USATXS.CivilNotice@usdoj.gov.

/S/ Matthew Mendez\_\_\_\_\_

Matthew Mendez  
Attorney for Petitioner

12/9/25\_\_\_\_\_

Date