

URGENT ACTION

SHUT DOWN “ALLIGATOR ALCATRAZ” FOR GOOD

The Everglades Detention Facility, also known as “Alligator Alcatraz”, opened in the state of Florida in July 2025 to detain migrants and asylum seekers. It has operated as a deliberate system of dehumanization and abuse: there are cruel and degrading conditions there, including overflowing sewage, shackling, denial of medical care, sleep deprivation, and punishment practices that amount to torture. The Florida governor has recently announced his intention to close it down, but the federal government insists it will remain open. We demand Florida governor Ron DeSantis close “Alligator Alcatraz” immediately.

TAKE ACTION:

- Write a letter to the government official(s) listed. Use the sample letter below as a guide or use your own words.
- [Click here](#) to report your action(s) on **Second UA 70.25**. We share this number with the officials we are trying to persuade.

Governor of Florida Ron DeSantis

State of Florida

The Capitol, 400 S. Monroe St.

Tallahassee, FL 32399, USA

Email: GovernorRon.Desantis@eog.myflorida.com

Dear Governor DeSantis,

I am writing to demand that you move immediately to shut down the Everglades Detention Center in Florida, also known as “Alligator Alcatraz”, which is currently housing migrants and asylum seekers.

I am concerned about conditions at “Alligator Alcatraz”. Amnesty International’s reports that people are arbitrarily detained in inhuman, unsanitary conditions, including overflowing toilets near where people are sleeping, limited access to showers, exposure to insects, lights on 24 hours a day, poor quality food and water, and lack of privacy – including cameras above the toilets. Access to medical care is inconsistent or denied. Detainees are shackled outside their cages, and some have been subjected to treatment amounting to torture, including confinement in a small “box” with restraints.

This facility’s cruelty is intended to criminalize and intimidate immigrant communities. It is also located in the Everglades, a fragile and ecologically sensitive area. This raises concerns about the impact of pollution, water quality, and efforts to restore the Everglades and protected endangered species.

“Alligator Alcatraz” is a human rights disaster. You must close this facility immediately, release those detained so they can pursue their cases with legal support, and end Florida’s criminalization of immigrants and its role in President Trump’s mass deportation machine.

Yours sincerely,

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The Everglades Detention Facility, also known as “Alligator Alcatraz” opened in July 2025 with the capacity to detain around 3,000 people. The facility is located in the Everglades, a fragile ecosystem and one of Florida’s most ecologically sensitive areas. In May 2026, new reports announced that the facility would be closed in June or July of the same year at the behest of Florida governor Ron DeSantis. Federal officials quickly rebuked that announcement, claiming it would stay open.

“Alligator Alcatraz” is the first state-owned and operated immigration detention facility in the United States. It is also not integrated into ICE’s systems or databases. The absence of registration or tracking mechanisms for those detained at “Alligator Alcatraz” facilitates incommunicado detention and constitutes enforced disappearances when the whereabouts of a person being detained there is denied to their family, and they are not allowed to contact their lawyer. Individuals detained at the facility face barriers to accessing legal representation and due process protections.

As of December 2025, “Alligator Alcatraz” had already absorbed more than \$360 million USD in state-issued contracts and was projected to require approximately \$450 million USD annually to operate once it is fully functional. Funds for its construction and operation have been taken from the Florida Division of Emergency Management (FDEM) at the Governor’s discretion, under emergency procurement powers usually reserved for natural disasters. Amnesty International has documented that the Government of Florida cut resources from essential social and emergency management programs while also allocating discretionary funds from FDEM to finance the construction and operation of “Alligator Alcatraz”.

As of May 2026, more than 60,000 individuals were detained by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) in more than 100 facilities across the United States. Enhanced enforcement and detention as part of the Trump administration’s plans to remove at least one million individuals from the U.S. in 2025 are resulting in overcrowding and deteriorating detention conditions. In 2026, there have already been 19 deaths in ICE custody. Thirty-one individuals died in ICE custody in 2025 which was the highest number of recorded deaths in decades.

Immigration detention is only allowed in the most exceptional of circumstances. Detention is only appropriate when authorities can demonstrate in each individual case that it is necessary and proportionate to the objective being achieved and on grounds prescribed by law and that alternatives would not be effective. A limited number of specific purposes are recognized as legitimate grounds for detention under international standards, including verifying identity and preventing a person from absconding following an objective assessment or flight risk. States have an obligation to ensure that conditions of detention meet international human rights law and standards, notably that the conditions of detention are humane and the human rights of detained individuals are respected.

PREFERRED LANGUAGE TO ADDRESS TARGET: English or your own language.

PLEASE TAKE ACTION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE UNTIL: August 31, 2026

NAME AND PRONOUN: Immigrants and people seeking safety (they/them)

LINK TO PREVIOUS UA: <https://www.amnestyusa.org/urgent-actions/usa-shut-down-alligator-alcatraz/>