

URGENT ACTION

CLOSE CHILD DETENTION CENTER

An agreement with the Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) has been made to open a child and family detention facility on an airpark in Alexandria, Louisiana. The facility has a 528-bed capacity and houses children and families on one of the most polluted sites in the U.S., where contamination levels are 5,000 times higher than recommended limits. This site not only detains and deports children and families but subjects them to adverse health conditions. We call the authorities to close this detention facility.

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 **UA 100.26**. We share this number with the officials we are trying to persuade.

Executive Director Ralph Hennessy
England Air Park Board of Commissioners

1611 Arnold Drive
Alexandria, LA 71303

Email: rhennessy@englandairpark.org

Dear Director Hennessy,

I am deeply concerned about your agreement with the LaSalle Family Foundation to allow an ICE detention facility to operate on land at the England Airpark for an ICE detention facility. Distressingly, I learned that this facility is being used to jail migrant children and families. Detaining children and families for immigration purposes is a human rights violation.

It is alarming to learn that the groundwater beneath England Airpark has a per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) concentration 575,000 times higher than the federal drinking water limit, making this site one of the most contaminated in the entirety of the United States of America. In children, PFAS exposure is linked to reduced cognitive, motor, and language development, increased behavioral issues in childhood, as well as an increased risk for inflammatory bowel disease.

Further to my anguish is knowing that LaSalle Corrections, the parent company of the LaSalle Family Foundation, has a long history of abuse at their facilities throughout Louisiana. In October 2025, a jury awarded \$42.75 million to the family of a man killed at a LaSalle correctional facility when guards slammed his head into a concrete floor. In January of 2024, in another facility run by LaSalle, officers indiscriminately pepper-sprayed an entire dorm of 200 people and cut off power and water to the entire unit as retaliation for a hunger strike. These are just two in a litany of violence that happen at these facilities.

I urge you to put a stop to the collaboration of England Airpark with ICE, cancel the contract with LaSalle Family Foundation, and close the detention facility operating in the airpark.

Yours sincerely,

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The England Airpark in Alexandria, Louisiana is a former military air base that currently houses the Alexandria International Airport. In February of 2026, the England Airpark Board of Commissioners entered into a five-year contract to convert the former Air Force barracks into a staging facility for children and families. The facility would have a capacity of 528 beds and is intended to be a short-term facility to rapidly deport children and families directly from the adjoining airpark. However, under the Trump administration, the practice of detaining families for extended periods of time has become commonplace, with some families with children being detained for a period of several months to over a year.

The proposal to build the new facility would be an expansion to a currently existing facility that is already one of the busiest deportation hubs in the country. In June of 2025, as deportation flights climbed to a five-year high, Alexandria ranked first among the country's busiest deportation hubs, with an average of 14 flights a day for all of 2025. Additionally, the existing facility on the airpark has a documented pattern of health emergencies and a consistent pattern of due process violations, with roughly 20% of the 28,000 people detained there being held longer than the 72-hour limit.

Because this is a former military air base, the ground underneath the proposed facility is one of the most contaminated sites in the United States. Per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) concentrations found in the ground are roughly 575,000 times higher than the federal limit for groundwater. In addition, there is also a presence of the contaminant trichloroethylene (TCE), which has been linked to serious health conditions, including cancer and liver damage.

The American Academy of Pediatrics has found that any detention, even for a brief period of time, has long-term consequences for children, including post-traumatic stress disorder, anxiety, depression, and suicidal ideation.

The facility also raises due process concerns. In the United States, unaccompanied children are placed under the custody of the Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR). However, ORR is not involved in the current plan, instead placing them under the custody of ICE. The shift in case is causing concern, as there are strict federal guidelines and rights afforded to unaccompanied children in ORR custody. A child detained by ICE outside of the typical process might not have the same guarantee of legal protections that prevent children from being forcibly removed from the country. Furthermore, ICE is already in violation of the Flores Settlement Agreement, a 1997 consent decree that established minimum standards governing the treatment, placement, and release of children in immigration custody in the United States.

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

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

NAME AND PRONOUN: Migrant children and families (they/them)