

ICE FLIGHT MONITOR

September 2025 Monthly Report



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Executive Summary

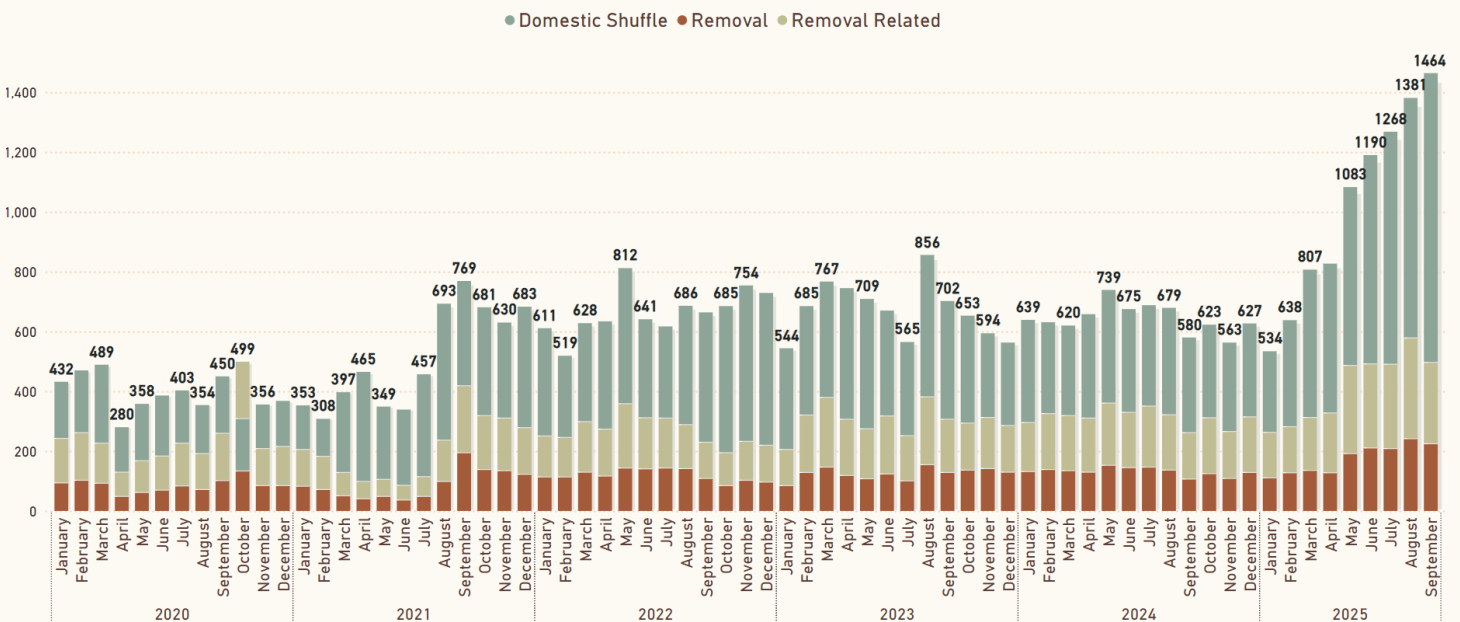
Since taking office on January 20, 2025, the Trump administration has pursued an unprecedented mass deportation agenda. U.S. officials have adopted a range of new tactics to achieve this objective, including expanding the use of expedited removal, sending people from the United States to offshore detention facilities in the U.S. Naval Base in Guantanamo, terminating protected legal statuses, disappearing people without due process – including to a high security prison in El Salvador, and forcibly transferring individuals to other countries of which they are not citizens. These actions, many of which have been determined to be unlawful by federal courts, have been carried out with little to no transparency, while thousands of peoples' lives are uprooted from communities across the country, families separated, and their rights are systematically violated.

[ICE Flight Monitor](#) responds to this lawlessness and lack of information by using publicly available aviation data to monitor and document flights conducted by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), including deportation flights and domestic transfers between U.S. detention centers and deportation staging facilities. The methodology is grounded in Tom Cartwright's nearly six years of independent work that tracked tens of thousands of ICE flights. To ensure the accuracy and integrity of the findings, ICE Flight Monitor cross-references flight data with public records, media reports, and observations from trusted partner organizations. The project also tracks other relevant air operations—such as military planes involved in immigration enforcement and Mexican and Panamanian government deportation flights. ICE routinely carries out a small number of additional removals on commercial flights, which ICE Flight Monitor is unable to track.

The ICE Flight Monitor reports the following top findings for September 2025:

- Record Number of Total U.S. Immigration Enforcement Flights Under the Trump Administration.** U.S. immigration enforcement flights continue to increase significantly under the second Trump administration. From January 20 to September 30, 2025, the administration conducted at least 8,877 total U.S. immigration enforcement flights. These include removal flights, removal-related flights, and domestic transfer ("shuffle") flights. The majority of these flights are carried out by ICE Air charter planes, but a small number are carried out on Air Force cargo planes, Coast Guard aircraft, or airline carriers operated by other countries. The 8,877 total is the largest number of immigration enforcement flights for the period of January 20 - September 30 since tracking began in 2020 and constitutes a 61 percent increase over the same time period in 2024 (see *Figure 1*).

Figure 1: Total U.S. Immigration Enforcement Flights (2020-2025)



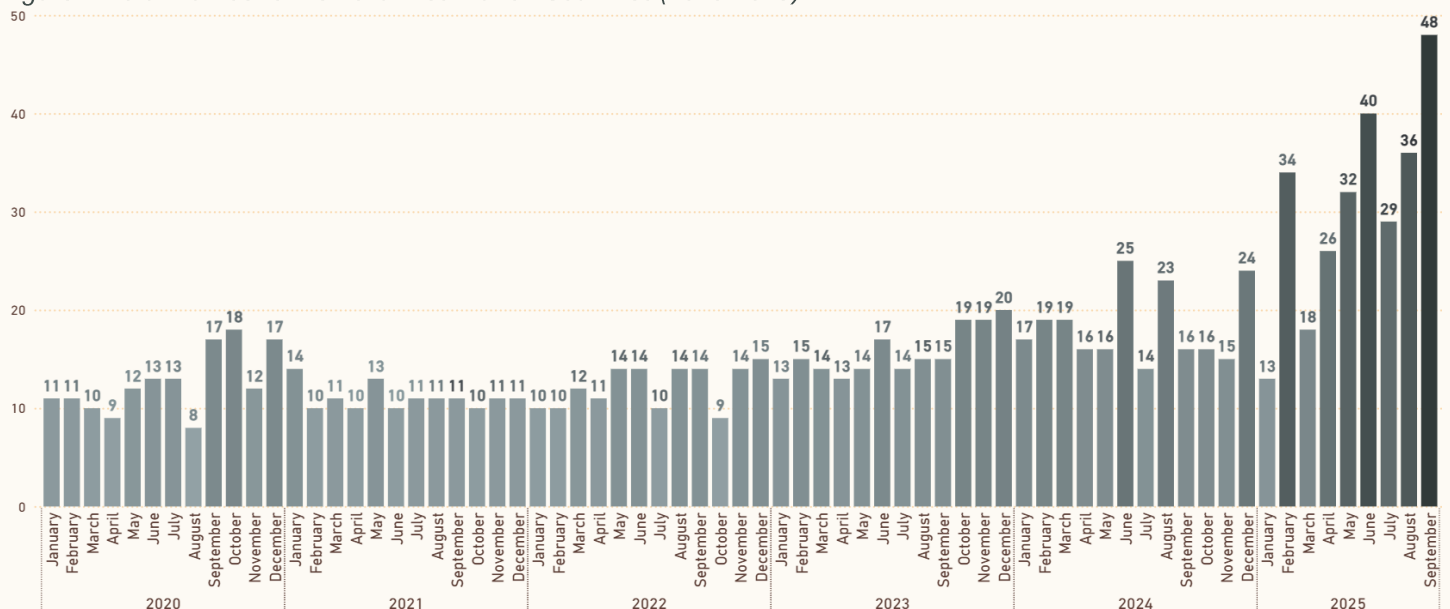
Source: ICE Flight Monitor



In September 2025 alone, ICE Flight Monitor recorded at least 1,464 U.S. immigration enforcement flights—the highest monthly total to date, averaging 49 flights per day. As Trump escalates his deportation campaign, the number of these related enforcement flights continues to surge, raising significant due process concerns regarding the underlying legality of these mass enforcement actions. During the first three months of his administration (January 20 to April 20), there was a monthly average of 723 flights. This contrasts sharply with the recent average of 1,371 flights per month between July and September 2025. On U.S. immigration enforcement flights, individuals are nearly always restrained by handcuffs, waist chains and leg irons, including during any layovers and fuel stops. The harsh conditions during enforcement flights raise serious human rights concerns.

- As ICE Air Continues to Expand Its Operations, Domestic Transfer Flights Hit Record in September, Alongside Heightened Interior Enforcement and Detention Rates.** A significant portion of U.S. immigration enforcement flights include domestic transfer (or “shuffle”) flights, which move individuals between detention centers and deportation staging facilities across the United States. The Trump administration has sharply increased domestic transfer flights as part of ramped-up interior enforcement—a shift from the Biden administration’s focus on removing individuals who recently crossed the U.S.-Mexico border. From January 20 to September 30, 2025, the administration has carried out 5,322 shuffle flights—a 53 percent increase from the same period in 2024—including a record 969 flights in September. Notably, there was a monthly average of 851 shuffle flights between July and September 2025, compared to a monthly average of 437 flights during the first three months of the Trump administration (January 20 to April 20)—an increase of 95 percent. The rise in flights in September is enabled by ICE Air expanding its operations by adding a new subcontracted charter carrier and beginning to use new planes through existing carriers—such as Avelo Airlines and Eastern Airlines—starting in mid-September.
- September Marks Monthly Record Number of Removal Destination Countries.** In September, removal flights remained high, with at least 223 flights to 48 countries—the highest number of destination countries recorded in a single month (See Figure 2). Flights to Mexico dropped sharply to just nine in September, down from a record high of 72 in August, an outlier month when flights to Mexico accounted for 30 percent of the 240 total removal flights for the month. Removal flights to countries other than Mexico reached a record 214 in September—up from 168 in August—reflecting a 27 percent surge in flights. This had to do with an increase in multi-country routes, where a single flight carries out removals to various countries. Within Latin America, this included 55 flights to Guatemala, 55 flights to Honduras (a record high), and 10 to Nicaragua (another record high). In addition, there were an unprecedented high number of flights to Sub-Saharan Africa (18 flights) and East, Central, and South Asian countries (11 flights). In contrast, military removal flights dropped significantly from 17 in August to just three in September, indicating greater reliance on ICE Air aircraft for removals.

Figure 2: Total Number of Removal Destination Countries (2020-2025)



Source: ICE Flight Monitor



- **First Removal Flight to Iran Via Transfer in Qatar Marks Expansion of Effort to Carry Out “Layover Transfer” Removal Flights to Countries with Strained Diplomatic Ties.** On September 30, ICE Flight Monitor tracked an ICE Air removal flight [reportedly](#) carrying 55 Iranians to Qatar, where they were transferred by authorities to the custody of Iranian authorities. They were then put on a chartered Qatar Air flight—also monitored by ICE Flight Monitor—and subsequently deported to Iran. The flight is [said to be part of a broader U.S.-Iran agreement](#) to deport up to 400 Iranian nationals in the coming months. The agreement reflects a growing effort by the Trump administration to facilitate removal flights to countries where the United States lacks diplomatic relations and where serious human rights concerns persist. The group of individuals on this deportation flight was [reported](#) to include political dissidents, a Christian convert, and others who had sought and been either denied or prevented from seeking asylum in the United States due to the range of asylum restrictions implemented by the Trump administration.

ICE Flight Monitor also tracked two flights in June and August 2025 that involved the transfer of detained Russian nationals from the U.S. government to Egyptian government custody in Cairo, Egypt. Recent reports indicate that Russian nationals aboard those two flights [were subsequently forcibly returned by Egyptian authorities to Russia](#), including individuals who had been detained in the United States for over a year after seeking asylum. In addition, from February to August, ICE Flight Monitor has also tracked 20 U.S. removal flights to Venezuela that included a transfer to a Venezuelan carrier in Honduras, which accounted for 40 percent of total removal flights to Venezuela in that period.

- **Forced Third-Country Transfers Continue with First Flight Carrying non-Ghanaians to Ghana.** On September 5, ICE Flight Monitor tracked the first third-country removal flight to Ghana—which took place on a C-17 military cargo plane. This flight occurred due to a [bilateral agreement in which Ghana agreed to accept third-country nationals—primarily West Africans—removed from the United States](#). This is part of the Trump administration’s effort to pursue agreements with countries to facilitate forced third-country transfers—which send individuals to countries of which they are not citizens and often have no ties. In previous months, third-country removal flights were carried out to Rwanda, Eswatini, South Sudan, Uzbekistan, El Salvador, Panama, and Costa Rica¹. The legality of these transfers—particularly without notice or an opportunity to contest the transfer based on fear of persecution—is currently being challenged in U.S. federal courts.
- **As of October 1st, No Migrants or Asylum Seekers Remain Detained at Guantanamo Bay Naval Base Offshore Detention Facilities.** Notably, as of October 1, 2025, no migrants and asylum seekers remain at the offshore detention facilities at Guantanamo Bay Naval Base (GTMO), where the Trump administration first began to transfer individuals from detention centers in U.S. territory in February 2025. Since then, there have been a total of 89 flights to GTMO, with a number of them continuing on to removal destinations while other flights transferred individuals to and from U.S. territory. In the past two months, there has been a decreasing number of migrants and asylum seekers detained at the base, which is reflected in the flight patterns. Only six flights took place in August and five flights in September, a significant decrease from the record high of 19 flights that occurred in July, which all carried individuals from U.S. territory-based detention centers to be detained at GTMO. A flight on October 1 returned the final remaining 18 individuals to the Alexandria, Louisiana ICE hub.

These findings make clear that the Trump administration’s current deportation campaign is unprecedented and dangerous—not only to the rights of those it targets, but also to our democracy. ICE Flight Monitor delivers accessible and reliable data to strengthen public accountability and uphold transparency. The following sections detail ICE Flight Monitor’s tracking from September 2025, including: 1) All U.S. immigration enforcement by air; 2) U.S. removal flights; 3) flights to and from the U.S. Guantanamo Bay Naval Base; 4) domestic shuffle flights; and 5) Mexican and Panamanian governments’ deportation flights.

¹ Third-country expulsions and removals to Mexico are understood to generally take place over the U.S.-Mexico land border.



All U.S Immigration Enforcement by Air

The vast majority of U.S. immigration enforcement flights are carried out by ICE Air Operations (IAO). IAO does not own planes but rather contracts its operations through the airline broker CSI Aviation, which in turn subcontracts to several airline carriers. These include GlobalX, Eastern Air Express, Avelo Airlines, World Atlantic (Caribbean Sun), Eastern Air, OMNI Air, Kaiser, and Key Lime Air (which began its operations with ICE Air in mid-September 2025). ICE also utilizes small charter planes operated by Gryphon Air (ATS) and Journey Aviation. *See appendix for the breakdown of flights by carrier.*

IAO conducts routine removal flights to countries in Latin America and the Caribbean, with an average cost of [\\$8,577 per flight hour](#). It also operates special high-risk charter flights to destinations in Europe, Asia, and Africa, where costs can range from \$6,929 to \$26,795 per flight hour, depending on the type of aircraft and specific operational requirements.

In addition to ICE Air subcontracted carriers, U.S. immigration enforcement flights are also carried out on U.S. Air Force and Coast Guard planes. International carriers are sometimes used for U.S. removal flights, such as Colombia’s Airforce and the Venezuelan carrier Conviasa.

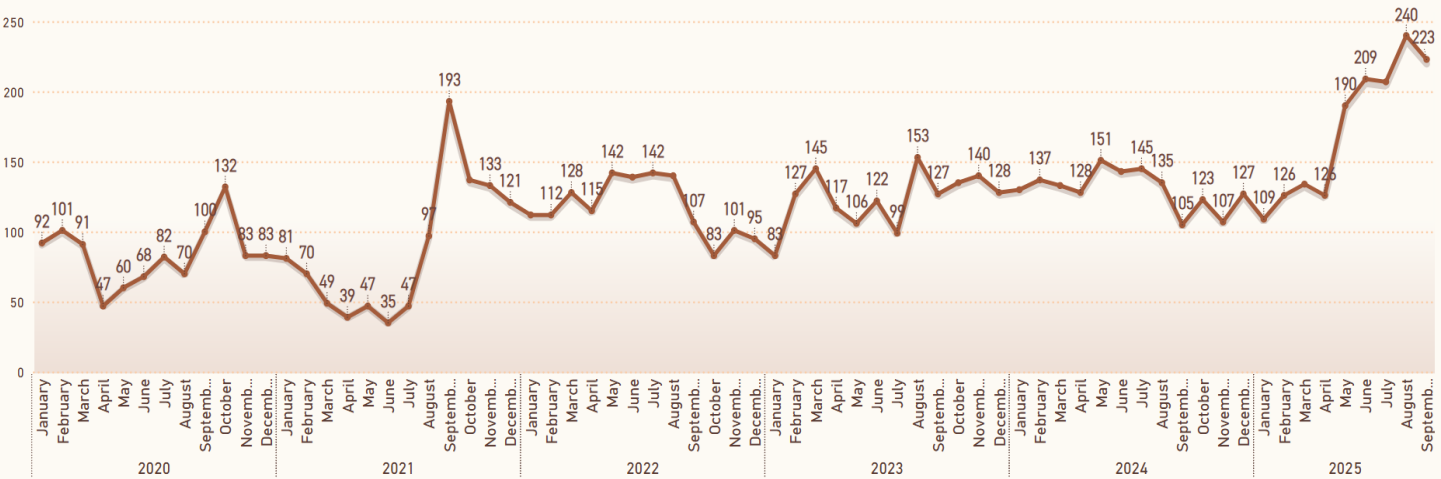
Deportation (“Removal”) Flights

I. Overview

The project defines removal flights as instances in which individuals are flown from the United States to international destinations by ICE-chartered planes, military planes collaborating with ICE to carry out immigration enforcement operations, or in limited cases, international carriers. These removals often do not comply with U.S. immigration law, constitutional law, and international human rights and refugee law. Many of the people removed on these flights do not have deportation (“removal”) orders under U.S. law. The administration has carried out removals of people whose immigration case had not yet been decided by a judge, people who arrived to seek asylum and were expelled without even a screening of their claims, and people who ostensibly accepted "voluntary" departure or return—often under coercion, threats by immigration agents, or pressure stemming from abusive and prolonged detention conditions.

Throughout this year, the number of removal flights has steadily increased (see Figure 3). In September, there were at least 223 total removal flights. Each removal flight refers to a single removal stop. Some flights go to a single destination, while other removal flights are part of multi-country routes that include multiple removal stops.

Figure 3: Number of U.S. Removal Flights by Month (2020 to 2025)



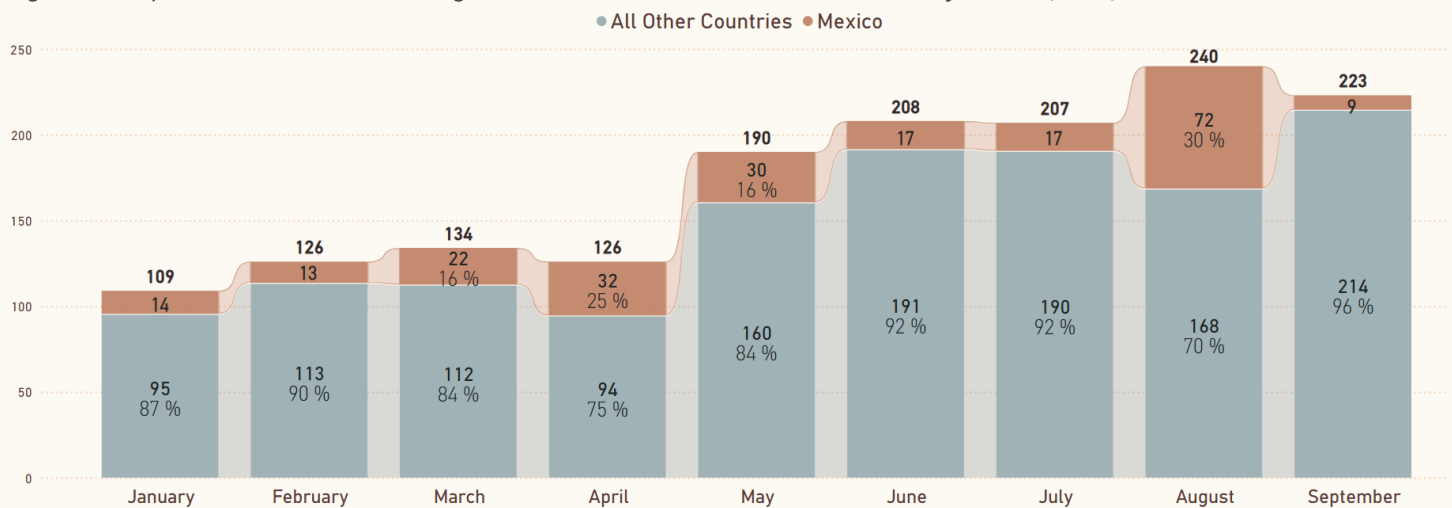
Source: ICE Flight Monitor



September saw 223 removal flights—an 8 percent decrease from the previous month’s record of 240. However, August’s total was largely driven by a dramatic spike in removals to Mexico, which accounted for 30 percent of that month’s removal flights (see Figure 4). Excluding removal flights to Mexico from the last two months, removal flight activity actually increased by 27 percent in September, rising to 214 flights from the 168 flights recorded in the previous month. This increase is enabled by a rise in multi-country removal routes, where a single flight carries out multiple removals within a region. These routes result in long flight times where individuals remain shackled throughout the entire journey.

As flights to Mexico dropped to just nine in September, removals to countries other than Mexico increased. Within Latin America, this included 55 flights to Guatemala (a near-record high), 55 to Honduras (a record high), and 10 to Nicaragua (a record high). In addition, there were a record 18 flights to Sub-Saharan African countries and a record 11 flights to Central, South, and East Asian countries. A large percentage of these removals were carried out on multi-country removal routes this month. In particular, these routes accounted for 51 and 55 percent of removal flights to Guatemala and Honduras and 78 percent of removals to Sub-Saharan Africa.

Figure 4: Proportion of U.S. Removal Flights to Mexico versus All Other Countries by Month (2025)



Source: ICE Flight Monitor

Removal flights in September reached a record 48 countries, a 33 percent increase from August’s 36 countries, and a 17 percent increase over the previous record of 41 countries in June. September also saw first-time removal flights to Saint Kitts and Nevis, Mozambique, and Iran. See Appendix for a full breakdown of country-specific removals.

September included the first removal flight to Iran via a transfer on a Qatari charter plane. The flight is part of a broader [U.S.-Iran agreement to remove around 400 Iranian nationals](#) from the United States. ICE Flight Monitor tracked an ICE Air flight that left the [ICE hub in Alexandria, Louisiana](#) on the evening of September 29 and stopped in Puerto Rico (to pick up individuals) and Egypt (to refuel), and finally landed in Doha, Qatar. The [reported 55 Iranians](#) on the ICE Air flight were subsequently transferred on a chartered Qatar Air flight that ICE Flight Monitor tracked landing in Tehran in the early morning of October 1.

II. Use of Military Aircrafts for Removal Flights

The Trump administration has used U.S. military planes to carry out a total of 88 removal flights since January 2025. On January 20th, President Trump signed an [executive order](#) authorizing U.S. military involvement in border enforcement. Weeks later, his administration began using military aircraft, primarily C-17 Air Force cargo planes, to carry out ICE removal flights. These planes are significantly more expensive than standard ICE Air charter operations, reportedly [costing \\$28,500 an hour](#). While C-17 Air

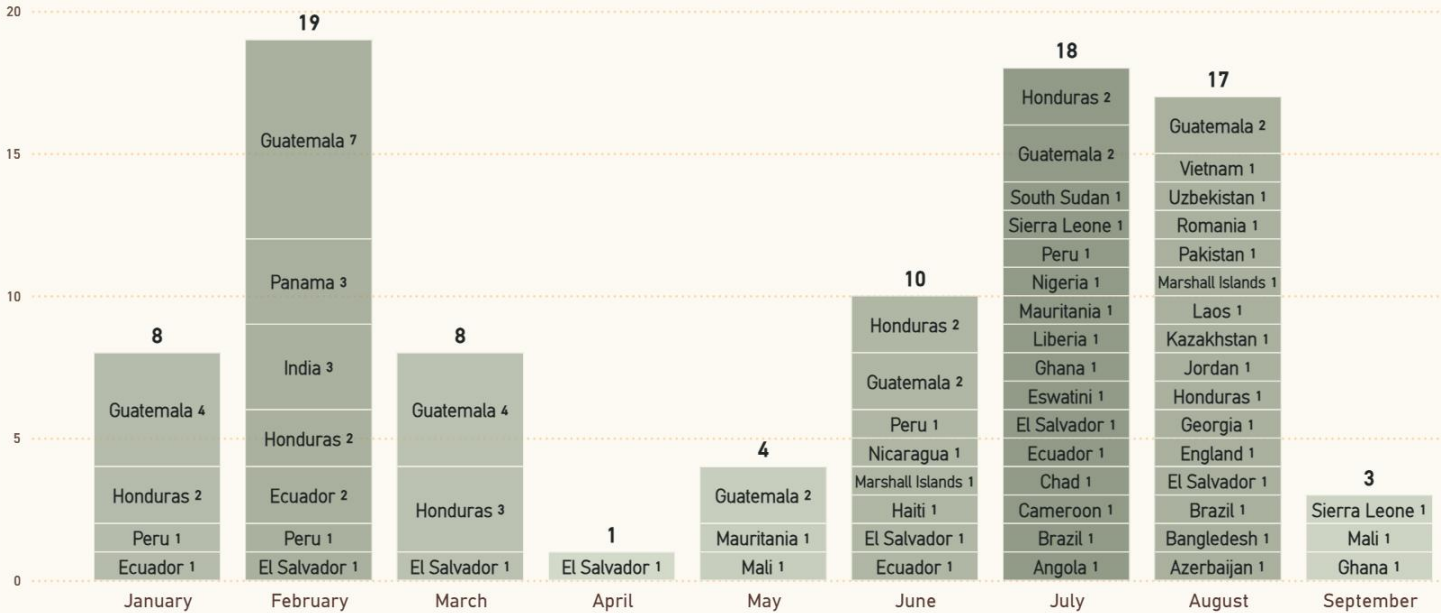


Force cargo planes have the capacity to carry up to 134 individuals, deportation flights have often only averaged around 80 individuals on board. There is a lack of transparency about the conditions on these military flights, a topic that ICE Flight Monitor aims to shed light on in future reports.

Removals on military aircraft decreased significantly in September 2025 to just three removal stops on 2 routes—an 82 percent decrease from military removal flight stops in August (See Figure 5). In September, a military plane carried out a removal of third-country nationals to Ghana, and another military plane carried out removals to Sierra Leone and Mali.

In addition, Colombian Air Force planes have been used to conduct removals of Colombian nationals to Colombia, following objections from the Colombian government regarding the treatment of its citizens on ICE Air removal flights. There were three such removals to Colombia in September, the same number as in August.

Figure 5: U.S. Military Removal Flight Stops and Destinations (2025)



Source: ICE Flight Monitor

III. Removals to Central, South, and East Asian Countries

ICE Air flights to Central, South, and East Asian countries also increased in September, with a record 11 removal stops—bringing the total removals to 40 in 2025. These removals have largely taken place as part of multi-country removal routes, where a single flight stops in several countries within a region. These removals often result in excruciatingly long flight times with layovers and fuel stops, where individuals often remain shackled by the wrists, waist, and ankles for the whole journey. Notably, on September 3, an ICE Air flight departed Phoenix, AZ and stopped in Romania and Qatar to refuel before continuing on to removal stops in Pakistan, Nepal, Bangladesh, Cambodia, Laos, and Vietnam. Overall, [the flight](#) lasted roughly 50 hours with individuals on board inhumanely shackled throughout the entire journey. Other removals to this region in September included India, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Uzbekistan.

On September 7, an ICE Air flight to Uzbekistan returned [39 Uzbek nationals](#). Later in the month, on September 25, [ICE Flight Monitor tracked](#) an Uzbek-chartered plane carrying out a likely third-country removal from the United States. While not yet confirmed—and therefore not yet included in the project’s data—this flight had similar characteristics to an April removal flight on another Uzbek charter that carried 131 Central Asians, including citizens from Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Uzbekistan.

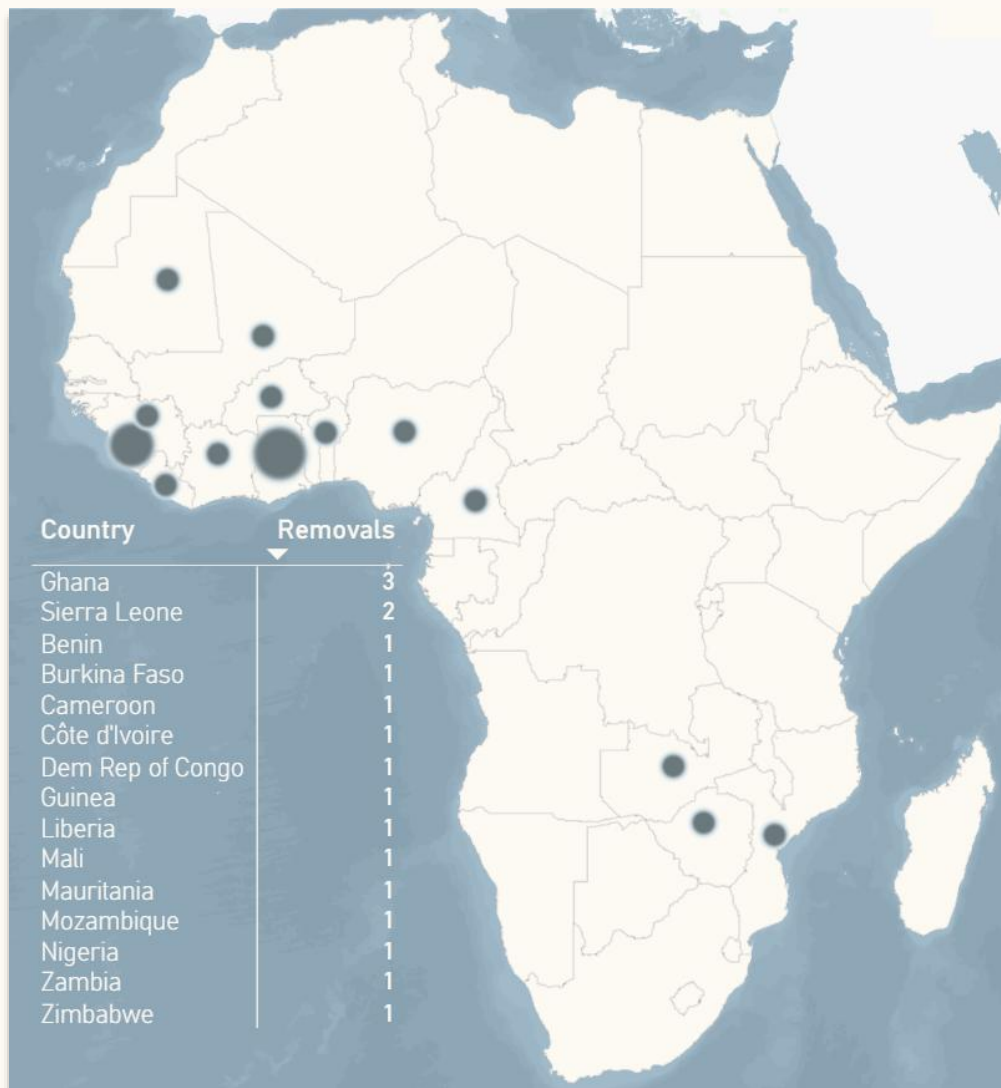


IV. Removals to Sub-Saharan African Countries

The Trump administration mass deportation campaign has included a broader geographical reach to regions where removal flights were historically low. Since January 20, 2025, the administration has carried out 81 removals to Sub-Saharan Africa countries—a 212 percent increase from the same period in 2024 when there were 26 removals to the region. There were a record 18 removals to Sub-Saharan African countries in September alone (see *Figure 6*). This was an increase of 125 percent from August and 38 percent from the previous high in July 2025. Removals to this region largely took place on multi-country removal routes—where a single flight carries out deportations to several countries within a region.

September also saw the first third-country removal flight to Ghana as part of a [bilateral agreement](#) in which Ghana agreed to accept West Africans deported from the United States. The flight took place on a C-17 Air Force plane that left Alexandria, LA on the morning of September 5 and landed in Ghana that night following a fuel stop in Saint Croix. The 14 non-Ghanaians on board [did not find out until mid-flight where they were headed](#), and some were held in straitjacket-like restraints [like the WRAP](#) for 16 hours. There were two other additional removal flights to Ghana in September, which likely carried Ghanaian nationals, as had been the case with three prior flights earlier in 2025.

Figure 6: U.S. Removal Stops in Sub-Saharan Africa (September 2025)



Source: ICE Flight Monitor

V. Removals to Latin America and the Caribbean

Removal flights were carried out to at least 17 countries across Latin America and the Caribbean and have increasingly involved long flight times on multi-country deportation missions—where a single flight carries out deportations to several countries in the region. Destinations included: Guatemala (55) and Honduras (55), followed by El Salvador (13), Nicaragua (10), Mexico (9), and Ecuador (9). Additional flights included Venezuela (7), Colombia (6), Dominican Republic (5), Peru (4), Brazil (4), Argentina (3), Costa Rica (3), Bahamas (2), Jamaica (2), and one flight each to Cuba, Haiti, Chile, and Saint Kitts and Nevis. The following section includes notable country-specific highlights from across Latin America and the Caribbean.

VI. U.S. Removals to Latin America and the Caribbean: Country Specific Highlights from September

The vast majority (86 percent) of U.S. removals continue to be carried out to Latin America and the Caribbean—44 percent of which were carried out on multi-country removal routes. Below are country-specific highlights; this is not a comprehensive list of all removal flights to the region. For a complete breakdown by country, see the table in the appendix U.S. Immigration Removal Flights by Country (YTD 2025).

Mexico: U.S. removal flights to Mexico are understood to only carry Mexican nationals, while third-country nationals continue to be returned to Mexico solely via the U.S.-Mexico land border. Removal flights to Mexico dropped sharply in September 2025, with only nine flights recorded—down from 72 in August and 17 in July 2025. Deportation flights abruptly halted on August 28, following a record number in the first 28 days of August. The pause is believed to be linked to the Trump administration's resumption of deportations at the U.S.-Mexico land border. Flights resumed on September 12. Of the eight flights to Mexico in September, seven were directed to Tapachula and one to Villahermosa.

Guatemala: In September 2025, U.S. officials removed 4,784 individuals to Guatemala on 55 flights, compared to the 4,298 Guatemalans removed on 43 flights in August. September marks a 2025 record for both the number of flights and individuals removed. The prior high was in February 2024 when there were 58 removal flights. September's removal flights carried an average of 87 Guatemalans, compared to an average of 102 per flight in August and an average of 80 per flight in July. This decline was likely due to the increase of multi-country flights to Guatemala, which totaled 51 percent of total flights in September. While the number of flights to Guatemala increased by 25 percent from August (43), the number of Guatemalans returned increased only by eight percent. Compared to September 2024, the number of flights and Guatemalans returned increased by 45 and 24 percent, respectively².

Honduras: In September 2025, U.S. officials removed 2,928 individuals to Honduras on 55 flights—totaling an average of 53 Hondurans returned per flight. This compares to the 3,158 Hondurans removed on 39 flights in August. September marks a decline from an average of 85 individuals per flight in August 2025 and 115 per flight in September 2024. Although September 2025 saw the highest number of monthly removal flights to Honduras since tracking began in 2020—surpassing the previous record of 51 flights in August 2023—the total number of Hondurans removed actually declined compared to recent months. This reflects a significantly lower average number of individuals per flight. Approximately 55 percent of the flights to Honduras were multi-country flights, which accounts for the increase in flight numbers without a corresponding rise in the number of Hondurans deported³.

² The Guatemalan government maintains a record of returned individuals. These numbers are referenced against the number of flights tracked to Guatemala. [Source.](#)

³ The Honduran government maintains a record of returned individuals. These numbers are referenced against the number of flights tracked to Honduras. [Source.](#)



El Salvador: U.S. officials conducted 13 flights to El Salvador in September, totaling 132 flights in 2025. September's removal flights increased by one from the 12 flights in August, but represent a 41 percent decrease from June and July, when 22 flights took place each month. Prior to this year, the record number of removal flights to El Salvador was in August 2022 at 32 flights.

Nicaragua: ICE Air carried out a record ten removal flights to Nicaragua in September—double the five removal flights in August and a 40 percent increase from the previous record of six removal flights in July 2025—bringing the 2025 total to 40. Nicaragua does not publish statistics about deported Nicaraguans, though [media reports](#) show that 4,200 Nicaraguans were returned on 35 flights between January 9th and September 13th (an average of 120 Nicaraguans per flight). The increase in removal flights comes after DHS [began issuing termination notices](#) in June 2025 to Cubans, Nicaraguans, Venezuelans, and Haitians who entered the United States during the Biden administration through the CHNV parole program. Over 96,000 Nicaraguans had benefited from CHNV parole. While flights to Nicaragua have increased, in contrast, flights to Venezuela remain bi-weekly and flights to both Cuba and Haiti continue to take place once a month.

Ecuador: U.S. officials conducted nine removal flights to Ecuador in September, bringing the 2025 total to 69 flights. Since June of this year, flights to Ecuador have occurred biweekly—typically on Tuesdays and Thursdays—keeping the monthly removal average at a consistent nine for the past four months. Prior to this year, the highest number of monthly removal flights to Ecuador was in March 2023 at 31 flights—which occurred amid elevated encounters of Ecuadorians at the U.S.-Mexico border.

Venezuela: There were seven removal flights to Venezuela by the United States in September 2025, removing 1,109 Venezuelans—a decrease of 37 percent compared to August when 1,755 individuals were removed on nine flights. This decrease can be attributed to a regularly scheduled [removal flight to Venezuela that rerouted and returned to United States after a plane crash occurred at the Venezuelan airport](#). Since February 2025, the United States has carried out 55 removal flights to Venezuela, returning 9,699 Venezuelans, including families and children. Removal flights to Venezuela typically occur biweekly—on Wednesdays and Fridays—via a direct flight from the United States. Prior to September, some of the removal flights to Venezuela were carried out via a transfer at the U.S. Soto Cana military base in Honduras.

Argentina: The United States carried out three removal flights to Argentina in September, removing at [least 32 Argentinians](#). In June 2025, there were two removal flights to Argentina, while there were no prior removal flights to the country since at least 2020 when flight tracking began.

Costa Rica: U.S. officials conducted three removal flights to Costa Rica, bringing the 2025 total to 11. Previously there were three flights in August, one in July, two in June, and two in February. The February flights carried [200 third-country nationals](#) expelled by the United States. Prior to 2025, there had been no removal flights to Costa Rica since at least 2020 when flight tracking began.

Chile: U.S. officials carried out one removal flight to Chile in September, removing at least 31 Chilean nationals. There has been a total of six removal flights to Chile under the second Trump administration, with two in August, two in June, and one flight in May 2025. According to local reports, [176 Chileans have been removed](#) on these flights. Prior to 2025, there had been no removal flights to Chile since at least 2020 when flight tracking began.

Guantanamo Bay Naval Base: Hub for Shuffle and Removal Flights

In February 2025, the Trump administration began to transfer migrants and asylum seekers—many of whom were previously in immigration detention on U.S. soil—to the U.S. Naval Base at Guantanamo Bay (GTMO). Since then, the Trump administration has conducted at least 89 flights to GTMO. 39 of these flights have continued on to removal destinations after stopping at the naval base, while others have returned to the United States, serving as shuffle flights (see *Figure 7*).

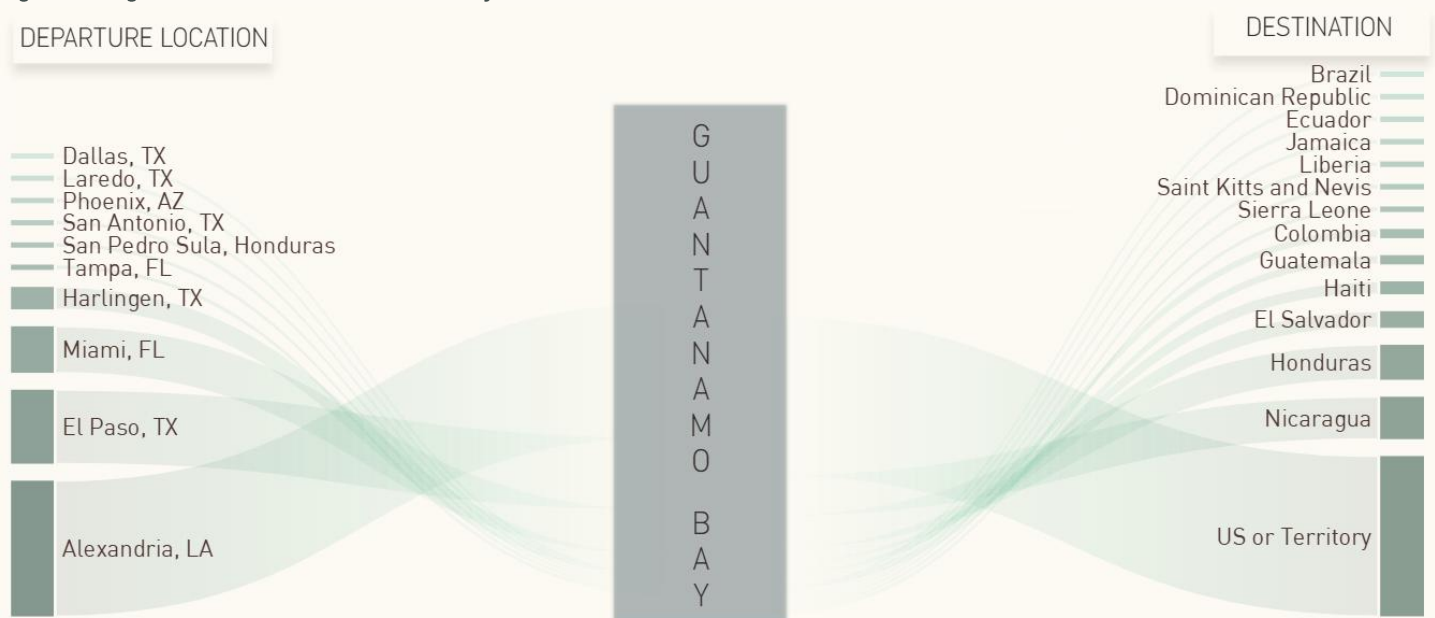


In September 2025, ICE Flight Monitor documented a total of five flights that stopped at GTMO. Two of these flights transferred individuals to detention centers within U.S. soil, while the remaining three continued to carry out removals using U.S. military aircraft and standard ICE Air charters. Following the retrieval of individuals at GTMO, one flight conducted a first-time removal stop in Saint Kitts and Nevis. Another carried out removals to Sierra Leone and Mali, while a third completed a multi-country removal operation with stops in Mauritania, Nigeria, Ghana, Cameroon, the Democratic Republic of Congo, and Guinea.

At GTMO, individuals have often been held by military guards, with no access to in-person legal counsel, and under punitive conditions that raise significant human rights concerns. With a reported capacity of approximately 200 individuals and a deployment of around 670 personnel—most of them uniformed officials—the financial cost of detention at GTMO is estimated at \$100,000 per person, per day. Since February, a total of 690 people has been transferred to the naval base. Despite the extensive personnel, fewer than 40 people have been detained at GTMO at any given time over the past two months.

The last transfer of individuals from detention centers within domestic U.S. territory to be detained at GTMO occurred in late July, bringing the total number held across the facilities at the naval base to 61. Since then, a total of 16 flights (including one on October 1 carrying the remaining 18 people) have transported detained individuals out of GTMO either through removal flights or on domestic shuffles to bring them back to detention centers within U.S. soil. As of October 1, 2025, no migrants or asylum seekers remained at the naval base.

Figure 7: Flights to the U.S. Guantanamo Bay Naval Base



Source: ICE Flight Monitor

Domestic Transfer (“Shuffle”) Flights

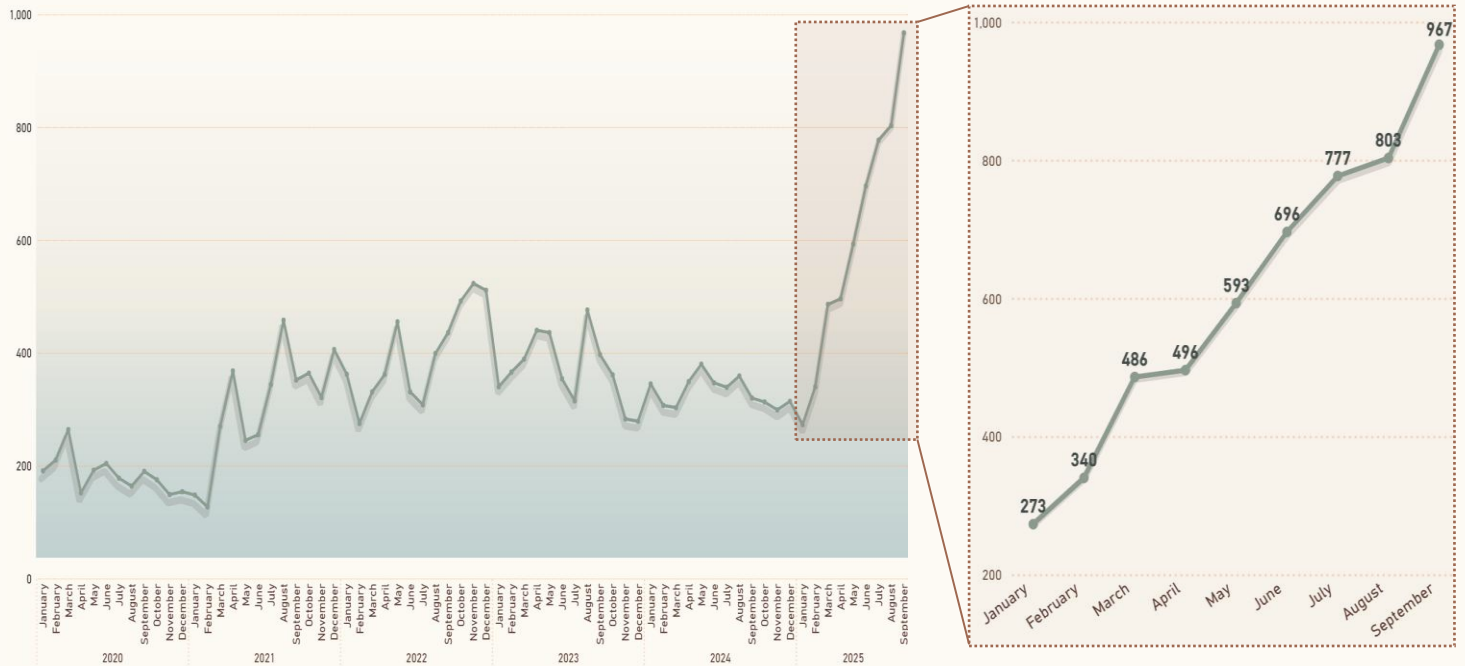
I. Overview

The Trump administration's mass deportation campaign has driven a dramatic increase in detention and interior enforcement operations. Over the past nine months, this escalation has resulted in a sharp rise in both the scale and reach of domestic transfer flights (“shuffles”). Between January 20 and September 30, there were a staggering 5,322 shuffle flights, a 53 percent increase over the 2,827 flights in the same period in 2024. This includes a record 969 flights in September 2025 (see Figure 8). This report defines domestic transfers as the transportation by air of individuals between U.S. detention centers, including to Puerto Rico or the U.S. Guantanamo Bay Naval Base, and staging facilities, which are located in Mesa, Arizona; Alexandria, Louisiana; San Antonio and Harlingen, Texas. These flights are not directly tied to a same-day removal flight.



The increase in domestic shuffle flights under the second Trump administration raises serious concerns as individuals are frequently moved far from their families and legal representation, often isolated in facilities with harsh conditions. The top domestic transfer flight locations in September included Alexandria, Louisiana; Harlingen, Texas; El Paso, Texas; Miami, Florida; and Phoenix, Arizona.

Figure 8: Domestic Shuffle Flights by Month (2020-2025)



Source: ICE Flight Monitor

A key factor behind the rise of domestic shuffle flights this month is an increase in the number of aircrafts used by ICE for shuffle flights. The increase was largely enabled by the use of additional planes under existing ICE Air subcontracted carriers and the addition of a new carrier subcontracted under CSI Aviation. Key Lime Air began conducting ICE Air flights beginning on September 14, carrying out small-scale domestic shuffles between interior enforcement locations and ICE hubs.

II. Coast Guard Aircraft for Shuffle Flights

In September, at least 61 flights were carried out on U.S. Coast Guard planes—a practice DHS expanded to facilitate small-scale domestic transfers between detention centers—including locations where interior enforcement takes place—and deportation staging facilities (primarily Alexandria, Louisiana, and Harlingen, Texas). Coast Guard aircraft typically have a passenger capacity of 27. An additional 62 U.S. Coast Guard-related flights were carried out to facilitate these transfers—for example, when an empty plane flies to a location to pick up individuals and transfer them to an ICE hub or deportation staging location. So far in 2025, there has been a total of at least 324 Coast Guard flights diverted from the agency's core activities to support immigration enforcement. September's shuffle flights on Coast Guard planes marked a slight decrease from the prior month, when the U.S. Coast Guard carried out 67 shuffle flights and 69 related flights.

Mexican and Panamanian Governments' Deportation Flights

ICE Flight Monitor also tracks deportation flights from Mexico and Panama, both of which carry out routine flights that are relevant to the regional context of U.S. flights.

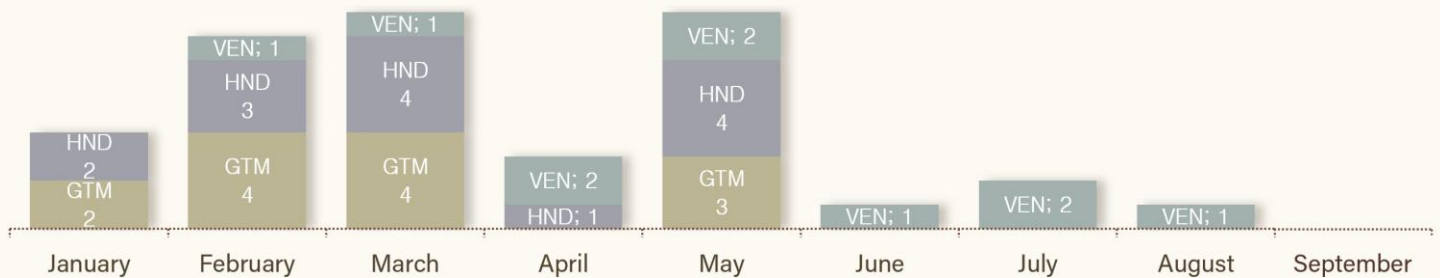


I. Mexican Government's Repatriation Flights

The Mexican government carries out removal flights (referred to as “repatriation” flights by the Mexican government, which include both forced removals and voluntary returns) to various countries in Latin America, currently operated by the airline VivaAerobus. Tracking of these flights began in mid-2021, and the scale and frequency of these operations have varied over time. In March 2023, a deadly fire at a detention center in Ciudad Juárez prompted the Mexican government to significantly reduce the number of repatriation flights. Prior to the incident, Mexico operated 30 to 40 flights per month to five countries. Since then, flight numbers have dropped to the single digits, with flights primarily carried out to Guatemala, Honduras, and Venezuela.

In September 2025, Mexico did not carry out any repatriation flights, a decrease from one in August to Venezuela and two in July to Venezuela (See Figure 9). While the Mexican government has not conducted repatriation flights to Central America since May 2025, it continues to deport Central Americans by land.

Figure 9: Mexico Repatriation Flights & Their Destinations (2025)



Source: ICE Flight Monitor

II. Panamanian Government's Deportation Flights

The government of Panama conducts deportation flights under a [July 2024 Memorandum of Understanding with the United States](#)—the first known agreement in which the U.S. directly funds another country's removal operations. These flights are currently operated by Panama Air. Between August 2024 and September 2025, Panama carried out 56 U.S.-funded deportation flights (see Figure 10), primarily to Colombia and Ecuador, with a small number of flights to India (2), Vietnam (1), and Cameroon (1). The monthly pace of deportations ranged from a high of 12 flights in October 2024 to just one flight monthly in recent months. In September 2025, Panama carried out one flight to Colombia. This decline closely mirrors the sharp drop in irregular crossings through the Darién Gap, which fell from [16,603 in August 2024](#) to just [seven people in August 2025](#).

Figure 10: U.S. Funded Panama Deportation Flights by Month (August 2024-August 2025)



Source: ICE Flight Monitor



About Human Rights First

Human Rights First is a nonprofit, nonpartisan international human rights organization founded in 1978 to address the lack of legal protection for refugees and asylum seekers. We work alongside human rights defenders, hold human rights abusers accountable, fight for the conditions that uphold democracy, and provide tools that bring the power of AI and advanced technologies to justice and human rights movements.

Human Rights First is based in Los Angeles, New York, and Washington D.C.

Appendix

Methodology

Data is collected using several open-source flight tracking platforms that provide real-time and historical information about aircraft movements, allowing for the independent identification of flights potentially associated with immigration enforcement. Identifying flights involved with immigration enforcement requires a multi-layered process. ICE Flight Monitor analyzes aircraft information, recurring flight routes, and known ICE detention center and destination locations. To ensure the accuracy and integrity of the findings, ICE Flight Monitor cross-references flight data with public records, media reports, and observations from trusted partner organizations.

ICE Air contracts its operations through the airline broker CSI Aviation, which in turn subcontracts flights to several carriers. These include GlobalX, Eastern Air Express, Avelo Airlines, World Atlantic (Caribbean Sun), Eastern Air, OMNI Air, and Kaiser. ICE also utilizes small charter planes operated by Gryphon Air (ATS) and Journey. In addition, international carriers are sometimes used for U.S. removal flights, such as Colombia's Air Force planes and the Venezuelan carrier Conviasa.

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Data Tables

U.S Immigration Enforcement Flights by ICE Charter

Carrier	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September
Air Charter Express						5			
Avelo					116	214	238	291	318
Eastern Airlines			3	5		5	8	34	41
Eastern Air Express	70	80	199	225	264	192	293	277	256
GlobalX	421	418	539	549	644	703	610	621	610
Gryphon		24	2	13	16	3	3		
Journey							2	21	27
Key Lime									83
OMNI	2	2	3	7	17	38	21	25	56
World Atlantic	16		4			1			

Total U.S. Immigration Enforcement Flights by Month (2020-2025)

Date	Domestic Shuffle	Removal	Removal Related	Grand Total
2025	5478	1564	2150	9192
January	273	109	152	534
February	358	126	154	638
March	496	134	177	807
April	501	126	200	827
May	598	190	295	1083
June	700	209	281	1190
July	779	207	282	1268
August	804	240	337	1381
September	969	223	272	1464
2024	3975	1564	2183	7722
January	345	130	164	639
February	307	137	187	631
March	303	133	184	620
April	349	128	181	658
May	380	151	208	739
June	347	143	185	675
July	339	145	204	688
August	359	135	185	679
September	320	105	155	580
October	313	123	187	623
November	299	107	157	563
December	314	127	186	627
2023	4436	1482	2135	8053
January	340	83	121	544
February	366	127	192	685
March	389	145	233	767
April	440	117	188	745
May	436	106	167	709



Date	Domestic Shuffle	Removal	Removal Related	Grand Total
June	354	122	194	670
July	315	99	151	565
August	476	153	227	856
September	397	127	178	702
October	361	135	157	653
November	283	140	171	594
December	279	128	156	563
2022	4785	1416	1779	7980
January	362	112	137	611
February	275	112	132	519
March	331	128	169	628
April	362	115	157	634
May	455	142	215	812
June	331	139	171	641
July	308	142	167	617
August	399	140	147	686
September	436	107	121	664
October	492	83	110	685
November	523	101	130	754
December	511	95	123	729
2021	3659	1049	1416	6124
January	149	81	123	353
February	127	70	111	308
March	270	49	78	397
April	368	39	58	465
May	245	47	57	349
June	255	35	49	339
July	344	47	66	457
August	458	97	138	693
September	352	193	224	769
October	364	137	180	681
November	321	133	176	630
December	406	121	156	683
2020	2225	1009	1611	4845
January	191	92	149	432
February	210	101	159	470
March	264	91	134	489
April	152	47	81	280
May	192	60	106	358
June	204	68	114	386
July	178	82	143	403
August	164	70	120	354
September	192	100	158	450
October	175	132	192	499
November	149	83	124	356
December	154	83	131	368
Grand Total	24558	8084	11274	43916



U.S. Immigration Removal Flights by Country (January - August 2025)

Country	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	Grand Total
Guatemala	31	24	35	23	48	51	54	43	55	364
Honduras	24	22	33	16	35	43	49	37	55	314
Mexico	14	13	22	32	30	17	17	72	9	226
El Salvador	8	11	14	13	17	22	22	12	13	132
Ecuador	9	7	6	5	6	9	9	9	9	69
Colombia	12	7	6	5	5	5	9	7	6	62
Venezuela		3	3	6	10	8	9	9	7	55
Nicaragua	2	2	2	3	5	5	6	5	10	40
Dominican Republic	2	2	2	4	3	4	5	4	5	31
Peru	2	4	2	2	3	5	4	5	4	31
Brazil	2	2	2	2	2	2	4	4	4	24
Jamaica	1	1	1	1	1	2	2	2	2	13
Costa Rica		2				2	1	3	3	11
Haiti		1	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	9
Cuba	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	9
Mauritania		1		1	3	1	1	1	1	9
Bahamas					2	2	1	2	2	9
India		4	1	1				1	1	8
Senegal					3	1		3		7
Chile					1	2		2	1	6
Ghana						1	1	1	3	6
Argentina						2			3	5
Nigeria		1			1	1	1		1	5
Guinea		1		1		1	1		1	5
Liberia		1		1		1	1		1	5
Sierra Leone					1		1		2	4
Pakistan		1		1				1	1	4
Bangladesh				1		1		1	1	4
Cameroon		1				1	1		1	4
Angola		1			1	1	1			4
Kenya		1		1		1	1			4
Trinidad and Tobago			1		1	2				4
Uzbekistan				1	1			1	1	4
Nepal			1	1		1			1	4
Benin		1			1				1	3
Georgia		1						1	1	3
Chad		1			1		1			3
Egypt		1				1		1		3
Togo		1			1	1				3
Panama		3								3
Belize					1	2				3
Saint Lucia			1		1	1				3
Vietnam					1			1	1	3



Country	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	Grand Total
Mali		1			1				1	3
Laos					1			1	1	3
Rwanda								2		2
China	1					1				2
Kazakhstan								1	1	2
Gambia				1				1		2
Burkina Faso		1							1	2
Marshall Islands						1		1		2
Jordan		1						1		2
Azerbaijan								1	1	2
Dem Rep of Congo						1			1	2
Romania						1		1		2
Côte d'Ivoire									1	1
Tajikistan					1					1
Zimbabwe									1	1
Guyana						1				1
Cote d'Ivoire						1				1
Cambodia									1	1
Kosovo				1						1
Armenia									1	1
South Sudan							1			1
Kyrgyzstan									1	1
Equatorial Guinea							1			1
Mozambique									1	1
US or Territory						1				1
Saint Kitts and Nevis									1	1
Eswatini							1			1
Albania		1								1
Zambia									1	1
England								1		1
Greece				1						1
Iran									1	1
Grand Total	109	126	134	126	190	209	207	240	223	1564



U.S. Immigration Enforcement Flight Departure Cities (YTD 2025)

Departure City	# Outbound Flights
Alexandria, LA	1547
Harlingen, TX	1354
El Paso, TX	700
Phoenix, AZ	515
San Antonio, TX	415
Miami, FL	344
Youngstown, OH	249
San Diego, CA	209
Newark, NJ	132
Jacksonville, FL	132
Columbus, GA	108
Houston, TX	99
Denver, CO	95
Bedford, MA	92
Dallas, TX	91
Victorville, CA	90
Richmond, VA	89
Las Vegas, NV	84
Kansas City, MO	78
Guantanamo Bay, Cuba	77
Buffalo, NY	75
San Pedro Sula, Honduras	75
Gary, IN	73
Seattle, WA	72
Minneapolis, MN	62
Salt Lake City, UT	54
Omaha, NE	54
Baltimore, MD	53
Ypsilanti, MI	47
Harrisburg, PA	45
Guatemala City, Guatemala	42
Laredo, TX	42
San Juan, Puerto Rico	39
Mercer, NJ	38
Tampa, FL	31
Toledo, OH	28
Portsmouth, NH	27
Reno, NV	26
Abilene, TX	26
Ochopee, FL	26
Comayagua, Honduras	22
Diass, Senegal	21
Indianapolis, IN	18
Yuma, AZ	17
Killeen, TX	16
Albuquerque, NM	15
San Salvador, El Salvador	15
Springfield, MO	13
Bogotá, Colombia	13

Departure City	# Outbound Flights
Atlanta, GA	13
Guayaquil, Ecuador	12
Bakersfield, CA	12
Tucson, AZ	10
Knoxville, TN	10
Charlotte, NC	9
Yakima, WA	9
Nassau, Bahamas	7
Brownsville, TX	7
Callao, Peru	7
Lake City, FL	6
Mission, TX	6
Doha, Qatar	6
Tirana, Albania	6
Cincinnati, OH	6
Universal City, TX	6
Gadsden, AL	6
Los Angeles, CA	5
Nouakchott, Mauritania	5
Aguadilla, Puerto Rico	5
Orlando, FL	5
Accra, Ghana	5
Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic	4
Belo Horizonte, Brazil	4
New York, NY	4
Nsimalen, Cameroon	4
Bucharest, Romania	3
Cap-Haitien, Haiti	3
Piarco, Trinidad and Tobago	3
Conakry, Guinea	3
N'Djamena, Chad	3
Chaklala, Pakistan	3
Tallahassee, FL	3
Guam	3
Tashkent, Uzbekistan	3
Clearwater, FL	3
Oklahoma City, OK	3
Belize City, Belize	3
Monrovia, Liberia	3
Dhaka, Bangladesh	3
Vientiane, Laos	3
Cairo, Egypt	3
Ikeja, Nigeria	3
Saint Croix	3
Lungi, Sierra Leone	3
Anchorage, AK	2
Ambouli, Djibouti	2
Yerevan, Armenia	2



Departure City	# Outbound Flights
Lafayette, LA	2
Fortaleza, Brazil	2
Detroit, MI	2
San Jose, Costa Rica	2
Plattsburgh, NY	2
Simal, Azerbaijan	2
Portland, ME	2
Fort Worth, TX	2
Lome, Togo	2
Niagra Falls, NY	2
Saint Lucia	2
Villahermosa, Mexico	2
Maiquetia, Venezuela	2
Cancun, Mexico	2
Wrightstown, NJ	1
Topeka, KS	1
Nashville, TN	1
Phnom Penh, Cambodia	1
Raleigh, NC	1
Angola	1
Mobile, AL	1
Manuas, Brazil	1
Panama City, Panama	1
Marshall Islands	1
Pristina, Kosovo	1
Ontario, CA	1

Departure City	# Outbound Flights
Harare, Zimbabwe	1
Memphis, TN	1
Boston, MA	1
Charlotte Amalie, Virgin Islands	1
Ekibastuz, Kazakhstan	1
Kinshasa, Dem Rep of Congo	1
Tbilisi, Georgia	1
Santiago, Chile	1
Presque Isle, ME	1
Honolulu, Hawaii	1
Traverse City, MI	1
Hot Springs, AR	1
Kathmandu, Nepal	1
Shannon, Ireland	1
Banjul, Gambia	1
Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso	1
Warsaw, Poland	1
Dover, DE	1
Kingston, Jamaica	1
State College, PA	1
Suffolk, England	1
Cotonou, Benin	1
Mexico City, Mexico	1
Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire	1
Lusaka, Zambia	1
Grand Total	7892



U.S. Immigration Enforcement Flight Destination Cities (YTD 2025)

Destination City	# Inbound Flights
Alexandria, LA	1238
Harlingen, TX	951
El Paso, TX	661
Phoenix, AZ	421
Guatemala City, Guatemala	364
Miami, FL	332
San Pedro Sula, Honduras	315
Youngstown, OH	238
San Antonio, TX	229
San Diego, CA	200
San Salvador, El Salvador	132
Newark, NJ	132
Villahermosa, Mexico	111
Jacksonville, FL	110
Columbus, GA	104
Houston, TX	98
Denver, CO	95
Bedford, MA	91
Dallas, TX	90
Victorville, CA	90
Richmond, VA	89
Tapachula, Mexico	85
Guantanamo Bay, Cuba	85
Las Vegas, NV	84
Buffalo, NY	75
Gary, IN	75
Seattle, WA	72
Guayaquil, Ecuador	69
Kansas City, MO	62
Bogotá, Colombia	62
Minneapolis, MN	60
Maiquetia, Venezuela	55
Salt Lake City, UT	54
Omaha, NE	54
Harrisburg, PA	45
Managua, Nicaragua	40
Laredo, TX	39
Mercer, NJ	39
Ypsilanti, MI	39
Callao, Peru	31
Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic	31
Mexico City, Mexico	30
Toledo, OH	27
Reno, NV	26
Abilene, TX	25
Portsmouth, NH	24
Comayagua, Honduras	21
Baltimore, MD	18

Destination City	# Inbound Flights
Yuma, AZ	17
Indianapolis, IN	16
Albuquerque, NM	16
San Juan, Puerto Rico	16
Atlanta, GA	14
Kingston, Jamaica	13
Fortaleza, Brazil	13
Killeen, TX	12
Ochopee, FL	12
Bakersfield, CA	12
Detroit, MI	11
San Jose, Costa Rica	11
Springfield, MO	10
Tampa, FL	10
Belo Horizonte, Brazil	10
Charlotte, NC	9
Havana, Cuba	9
Nouakchott, Mauritania	9
Tucson, AZ	9
Yakima, WA	9
Nassau, Bahamas	9
Cap-Haitien, Haiti	8
Diass, Senegal	7
Accra, Ghana	6
Lake City, FL	6
Santiago, Chile	6
Buenos Aires, Argentina	5
Ikeja, Nigeria	5
Mission, TX	5
Monrovia, Liberia	5
Brownsville, TX	5
Knoxville, TN	5
Orlando, FL	4
Dhaka, Bangladesh	4
Piarco, Trinidad and Tobago	4
Kathmandu, Nepal	4
Angola	4
Chaklala, Pakistan	4
Conakry, Guinea	4
Nsimalen, Cameroon	4
Nairobi, Kenya	4
Delhi, India	4
Tashkent, Uzbekistan	4
Lungi, Sierra Leone	4
Panama Pacifico, Panama	3
Hanoi, Vietnam	3
Belize City, Belize	3
Cotonou, Benin	3
Wrightstown, NJ	3



Destination City	# Inbound Flights
N'Djamena, Chad	3
Lome, Togo	3
New York, NY	3
Tbilisi, Georgia	3
Bamako, Mali	3
Vientiane, Laos	3
Oklahoma City, OK	3
Amritsar, India	3
Cairo, Egypt	3
Saint Lucia	3
Amman, Jordan	2
Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso	2
Little Rock, AR	2
Niagra Falls, NY	2
Tallahassee, FL	2
Kigali, Rwanda	2
Aguadilla, Puerto Rico	2
Doha, Qatar	2
Bucharest, Romania	2
Plattsburgh, NY	2
Simal, Azerbaijan	2
Portland, ME	2
Marshall Islands	2
Kinshasa, Dem Rep of Congo	2
Banjul, Gambia	2
Lafayette, LA	2
Ekibastuz, Kazakhstan	2
Fuzhou, China	2
Yerevan, Armenia	1
Dushanbe, Tajikistan	1
Juba, South Sudan	1
Phnom Penh, Cambodia	1

Destination City	# Inbound Flights
Saint Croix	1
El Centro, CA	1
Port Bouet, Cote d'Ivoire	1
Basseterre, Saint Kitts and Nevis	1
Timehri, Guyana	1
Dover, DE	1
Bishkek, Kyrgystan	1
Presque Isle, ME	1
Ontario, CA	1
Athens, Greece	1
Port-au-Prince, Haiti	1
Pristina, Kosovo	1
Memphis, TN	1
Nashville, TN	1
Tehran, Iran	1
Charlotte Amalie, Virgin Islands	1
Tirana, Albania	1
Shannon, Ireland	1
Topeka, KS	1
Punta Europa, Equatorial Guinea	1
Boston, MA	1
Manuas, Brazil	1
Harare, Zimbabwe	1
State College, PA	1
Bissau, Guinea	1
Suffolk, England	1
Mswatini	1
Raleigh, NC	1
Maputo, Mozambique	1
Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire	1
Lusaka, Zambia	1
Grand Total	7892

