



Memo: Hunger Strikes in Detention, a National Trend

Since March of 2020 there have been at least 49 confirmed hunger strikes across the country in facilities that detain immigrants. This is a nationwide trend as people in immigration detention are protesting their incarceration demanding to be released as COVID-19 infections in detention continue to rise. People are bravely speaking out the only way they can — by refusing meals, knowingly weakening their immune systems. These are organized protests to demonstrate the urgent need for people in detention to be released now.

Hunger Strikes by the Numbers since March 2020

**This data is collected through Detention Watch Network's local members across the country who are regularly in communication with people in detention and through media reports.*

Hunger Strike Facility and State	Approximate Dates	Peak Amount of Strikers <i>*Throughout the course of a hunger strike some people may stop their strike or join later on</i>
WASHINGTON		
Northwest Detention Center, WA 5 strikes have occurred <i>*ICE facility</i>	1st strike: 3/27/20-4/3/20 2nd strike: 4/3/20-4/6/20 3rd strike: 4/15/20-4/20/20 4th strike: 6/1/20-6/3/20 5th strike: 11/20/20 (Hunger strike)	1st strike: Over 300 people (men's unit) 2nd strike: Over 60 people (women's unit) 3rd strike: Approximately 50 people 4th strike: unknown 5th strike: at least eight
CALIFORNIA		
Adelanto Detention Center, CA 2 strikes have occurred <i>*ICE facility</i>	1st strike: 4/10/20-4/21/20 2nd strike: Started 4/28/20-5/14/20	1st strike: Approximately 25 2nd strike: Over 43 women

Mesa Verde Detention Center, CA 4 strikes have occurred <i>*ICE facility</i>	1st strike: Started 4/10, exact end date unknown 2nd strike: 4/4/20-4/8/20 3rd strike: 6/4/20-6/8/20 (in solidarity with BLM movement) 4th strike: 7/3/20	1st strike: Began with 100 2nd strike: Over 80 3rd strike: Over 70 4th strike: All units
Otay Mesa Detention Center, CA <i>*ICE facility</i>	Multiple strikes; first strike began around 4/4/20	Over 100 individuals estimated to have participated over various strikes
Yuba County jail 2 strikes have occurred <i>*ICE facility</i>	1st strike: 7/23/20-ended 2nd strike: 8/19/20-unclear if still active	2nd strike: over 20 people
TEXAS		
South Texas Detention Complex, TX <i>*ICE facility</i>	Around late March/early April	At least 4 individuals
Port Isabel Processing Center, TX At least 3 collective strikes and 2 individual hunger strikes have occurred <i>*ICE facility</i>	Collective strikes: 3/28/20-3/31/20 6/5/20-end date unclear 6/7/20-6/10/20 Individual strikes: 5/29/20-6/15/20 5/29/20-6/1/20	Collective strikes: 1st strike: Over 50 people 2nd strike: Over 80 people 3rd strike: 41 people
LOUISIANA		
Richwood Correctional Center, LA <i>*ICE facility</i>	3/23/20-3/26/20	Approximately 60 people
La Salle Facility, LA <i>*ICE facility</i>	Started around 11/1/20, exact end date unknown	2 men
Pine Prairie ICE Processing <i>*ICE facility</i>	1st strike: Started around 3/1/20	1st strike: Approximately 43 Cameroonians

At least 3 strikes have occurred	2nd strike: Started around 7/19/20 (Juneteenth) 3rd strike: Started around 8/10/20	2nd strike: Approximately 40 people, including Cameroonians 3rd strike: Over 40 people, including Cameroonians
GEORGIA		
Stewart Detention Center, GA <i>*ICE facility</i>	Started around 3/24/20, exact end date unknown	Approximately 350 people
Irwin County Detention Center, GA <i>*ICE facility</i>	Around 4/13	Unknown
FLORIDA		
Glades County Detention Center, FL At least 2 strikes have occurred <i>*ICE facility</i>	1st strike: According to media, started around 3/21/20, exact end date unknown 2nd strike: 12/28/20-unknown if still active	1st strike: Approximately 100 people 2nd strike: Estimated over 100 people
Monroe County Detention Center, FL <i>*ICE facility</i>	According to media, started around 3/31/20, exact end date unknown	At least a dozen individuals
ARIZONA		
La Palma Correctional Center, AZ <i>*ICE facility</i>	According to media, started around 4/10/20, exact end date unknown	Unknown
Florence Correctional Center <i>*ICE facility</i>	Started around 5/20/20, exact end date unknown	At least 14
VIRGINIA		
Farmville Detention Center, VA <i>*ICE facility</i>	3/31/20-4/3/20	Over 100 people

PENNSYLVANIA		
York County Prison, PA <i>*ICE facility</i>	3/28/20-4/4/20	Over 180 people
NEW JERSEY		
Elizabeth Detention Center, NJ <i>*ICE facility</i>	According to media, started around 3/20/20, exact end date unknown	Approximately 40, according to media
Hudson County Correctional, NJ At least 2 strikes have occurred <i>*ICE facility</i>	First strike: 3/19/20-3/22/20 Second strike: Started 12/28/20	First strike: Approximately 100 Second strike: At least 60
Essex County Correctional, NJ At least 2 strikes have occurred <i>*ICE facility</i>	First strike: 3/16/20-3/23/20 Second strike: Started 12/28/20	First strike: Over 400 Second strike: At least 86
Bergen County Jail, NJ <i>*ICE facility</i>	Started around 11/10/20	Unknown
RHODE ISLAND		
Donald W. Wyatt Detention Facility, RI <i>*ICE facility</i>	4/4/20-4/7/20	Approximately 60 people
MICHIGAN		
North Lake Correctional, MI 6 strikes have occurred <i>*BOP facility</i>	1st strike: 4/5/20-4/10/20 2nd strike: 4/18/20-4/21/20 3rd strike: 5/8/20-5/13/20 4th strike: 5/15/20-5/18/20 5th strike: 7/21/20-7/29/20 6th strike: 8/5/20-unclear if still active	1st strike: Approximately 10 people 2nd strike: Approximately 5 people 3rd strike: Estimated around 100 people 4th strike: Approximately 10 people 5th strike: Approximately 9 people 6th strike: Approximately 2

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NEW MEXICO		
Torrance County Detention Facility <i>*ICE Facility</i>	Around 5/14	Unknown
COLORADO		
Teller County Jail, CO	8/10/20-no longer active	Approximately 8 individuals

Typical Length of a Hunger Strike

Hunger strikes typically last less than a week, however it is ultimately dependent on the people striking and the level of retaliation they face from agencies like Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) — which often includes abusive treatment, transfers to other detention facilities, deportation, force-feeding and solitary confinement. We have also seen long-term strikes, like the one at the LaSalle Facility in Louisiana by two men who went over 130 days without eating.

Types of Retaliation Strikers Commonly Face from ICE

- Abusive treatment
- Transfers to other detention facilities
- Deportation
- Force-feeding
- Solitary confinement