

## Current Issue:

# REMAIN IN MEXICO POLICY

### What is asylum?

Protections for people fleeing violence have been written into domestic law and included in treaties signed by the U.S. government. For decades, people seeking protection from violence in their home countries have entered the asylum process in the U.S. Either from a detention center within the U.S. or while living with friends and families in U.S. communities, they have attended immigration court in the U.S. and presented evidence of the threats they face in their home communities. In the end, an immigration judge has decided whether they qualify to stay in the U.S. or whether they will be deported to the country where they were born.

### What is the Remain in Mexico policy?

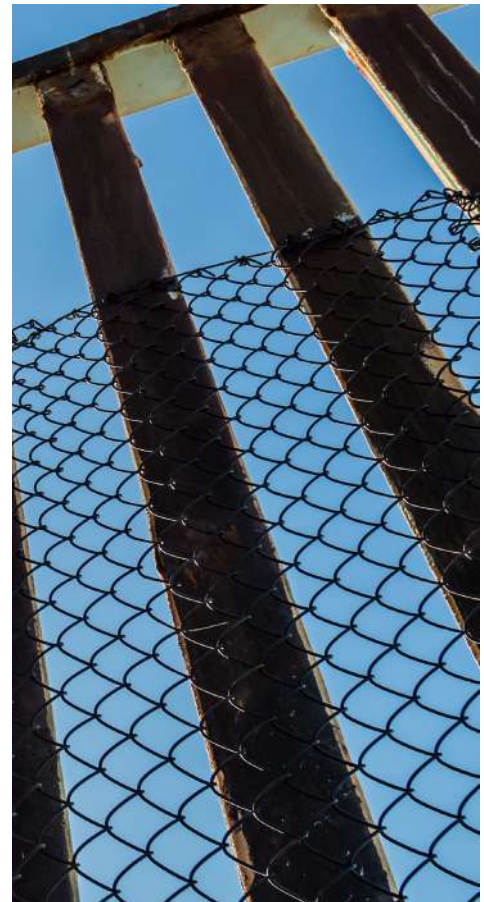
Starting at the end of January 2019, the U.S. government implemented Remain in Mexico.<sup>1</sup> Under that policy, instead of living in the U.S. with relatives, friends, and churches eager to support them as they go through the asylum process, people who have fled violence in Central America are forcibly returned to Mexico and stranded for months or years. While they attend immigration court in



U.S. border cities and await judges' decisions, they are left stranded with essentially no way to care for themselves.

### What impact does Remain in Mexico have?

From January to May 2019, 8,835 people were stranded in Mexico through this policy.<sup>2</sup> If they were in cities throughout the U.S., they could find immigration attorneys to support them with their court case, but since there aren't U.S. immigration attorneys in Mexico, 86% of people subjected to Remain in Mexico do not have legal representation in court.<sup>3</sup> The U.S. communities that were looking forward to welcoming them are deprived of their presence, and instead shelters





ABOVE: McAllen, TX/U.S. - April 16, 2019: Central American migrants seeking asylum from poverty and gang violence line up at the bus station to get tickets to stay with sponsors until their hearings. Under the Remain in Mexico policy, this practice is no longer allowed, and migrants are instead forcibly returned indefinitely to Northern Mexico.

that are already strained in Mexico do their best to offer a place to stay. Many individuals end up homeless and three quarters say they are afraid of being in Mexico. The asylum process is already quite challenging while living in the United States, but now Central Americans have to devote so much attention to basic subsistence and safety that they are even less likely to secure legal protection and are highly likely to be deported back to danger and death.

## WHAT CAN I DO?

- Ask your **Congresspersons** to defund the Remain in Mexico program
  - Take action at [\*\*igsol.net/rim\*\*](https://igsol.net/rim)

<sup>1</sup> Officially known as Migration Protection Protocol, but since it does not actually provide any protection for migrants, it is better not to use this misleading name.  
<sup>2</sup> According to Hope Border Institute  
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