

**U.S. IMMIGRATION AND CUSTOMS ENFORCEMENT
ENFORCEMENT AND REMOVAL OPERATIONS
ICE HEALTH SERVICE CORPS**

IHSC SPECIAL OPERATIONS

IHSC Directive: 01-49

ERO Directive Number: 11800.9

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Effective: February 15, 2023

**By Order of the Assistant Director
Dr. Stewart D. Smith, DHSc, FACHE**

STEWART D SMITH Digitally signed by STEWART D SMITH
Date: 2021.01.14 08:32:46 -0500

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1. **PURPOSE:** The purpose of this directive is to set forth the policies and procedures that govern U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) Health Service Corps (IHSC) Special Operations Unit (ISOU) in support of ICE air, sea, and land operations. This directive defines the roles and responsibilities of each party during these operations and references ISOU guidelines for further details.
 2. **APPLICABILITY:** This directive applies to all U.S. Public Health Service (PHS) officers, the IHSC Special Operations Unit, and Special Operations Reserve (SOR).
 3. **AUTHORITIES AND REFERENCES:**
 - 3-1. ICE. (2009). ICE Memorandum 10001.1 Worksite Enforcement Strategy, located in *ICE Policy Manual*.
 - 3-2. ICE Enforcement and Removal Operations (ERO). (2020). High-Profile Removal Program, ERO Field Guide, located in *ERO Policy Library*.
 - 3-3. ERO. (2015). ICE Air Operations Handbook, located in *ERO Policy Library*.
 - 3-4. IHSC. (2017). Operations Memorandum (OM)16-009 Intra-System Transfer Process of Detainees/Residents in Continuous ICE Custody, located in the *IHSC Policy Library*.
 - 3-5. IHSC (2016). OM 16-022 Health Information Management, located in the *IHSC Policy Library*.
 - 3-6. Department of Air Force. (2020). Air Force Instruction 48-307 Volume 1, En Route Care and Aeromedical Evacuation Medical Operations.

- 3-7. United States Coast Guard (USCG). (2017). Commandant Change Notice 6000, CH-1 to the Coast Guard Medical Manual. (b)(6),(b)(7)(C)
- 3-8. USCG. (2017). Coast Guard Concept of Operations for Offshore Assets.
- 3-9. Commission on Accreditation of Medical Transport Systems (CAMTS). (2018). Eleventh Edition Accreditation Standards of the Commission on Accreditation of Medical Transport Systems.

4. **POLICY:** ISOU advises on health matters, provides direct medical services in support of ICE special operations, and liaises with ICE operational and support personnel to promote detained noncitizen safety and medical continuity of care. ISOU provides medical support during mass apprehensions, detainment, and/or movement scenarios, such as mass migration events, work-site enforcement, and fugitive operations. IHSC Special Operations Reserve officers can augment as needed.

- 4-1. The ISOU Medical Air Operations Program collaborates with ICE Air Operations to provide in-flight medical services for individuals in ICE custody during domestic transfers and international removals. ISOU provides medical support through detailed and collaborative mission planning and preparation with ICE Air, and direct in-flight medical care of detained noncitizens during all medical air operations. Medical air operations include commercial medical escorts, domestic charters, and international special high-risk charters.
- 4-2. ISOU officers advise ICE regarding detained noncitizens health issues during all ICE special operations. ISOU officers may elevate medical concerns to the ISOU medical consultant if necessary.
- 4-3. When requested, ISOU provides medical support for the ERO Operations and Intelligence Coordination Unit during ICE ground operations, including high profile removals and extraditions. ISOU supports ICE field offices and ground operations throughout the U.S. and territories. ISOU provides humanitarian and medical escort screening, fitness for travel screening, and direct care to detained noncitizens apprehended by ERO during ground operations.
- 4-4. ISOU supports USCG noncitizen migrant interdiction operations (MIO) by providing PHS advanced practice providers (APPs), who deliver medical care to migrants interdicted or rescued at sea. IHSC supports these sea-based missions through a memorandum of understanding (MOU) between ICE/ERO and USCG; the MOU specifies only PHS APPs can support these missions. IHSC PHS APPs deliver acute, chronic, and emergency care while on USCG vessels during MIO missions.

- 4-5. The IHSC Special Operations Reserve (SOR) may support operations as needed. SOR comprises a select group of specially trained and qualified PHS registered nurses (RNs) and APPs from IHSC facilities and ICE field offices. They augment ISOU staff and serve as medical aircrew members (MAMs) as needed.
 - 4-6. ISOU coordinates or directly provides training for all unit and SOR staff. The training prepares these staff to perform within a variety of special operations environments and maintain a high level of readiness to deploy as the mission requires.
 - 4-7. ISOU implements measures during noncitizen apprehension, removal, and transit to mitigate the spread of infectious diseases and minimize the impact on operations and the community.
 - 4-8. ISOU team members must maintain communication through secure channels using government-issued equipment, while observing operations security measures, when outside the clinic or office setting, and throughout special operations missions.
- 5. RESPONSIBILITIES:** ISOU serves as the health program advisor and medical service provider to support ICE objectives on land, air, and sea, domestically and internationally.
- 5-1. ISOU Chief:**
- 5-1.1 Oversees all ISOU programs and staff, in addition to SOR officers when activated to support special operations missions.
 - 5-1.2 Administers, coordinates, plans, and schedules unit operations; develops ISOU individual program objectives (i.e., medical air operations, MIO-medical, medical equipment, and safety); and establishes and maintains unit policies and procedures.
 - 5-1.3 Liaises with other IHSC components to ensure cooperation and fulfillment of agency mission.
 - 5-1.4 Drafts required MOUs (i.e., USCG MIO MOU), related to ISOU medical services, for IHSC HQ leadership review and approval.
 - 5-1.5 Liaises with DHS, ICE, USCG or other federal agencies who request medical support for detained noncitizens outside of detention facilities.
Provides medical assistance as ICE federal emergency response official.
 - 5-1.6 Liaises with federal and civilian agencies that provide ISOU training.
 - 5-1.7 Reviews ISOU medical support requests and reports to direct chain of

command.

5-1.8 Coordinates all requests for commercial medical escort services with ISOU medical consultant.

5-1.9 Coordinates all requests for charter flight medical support through the mission support specialist (MSS).

5-1.10 Coordinates with IHSC principal stakeholders and supervisors of SOR officers for medical assistance and augmentation of ISOU mission.

5-1.11 Participates and provides patient care during specified operations, as needed.

5-1.12 Serves as the lead ICE medical planner for interagency Homeland Security Task Force Southeast (HSTF-SE), (b)(7)(E). The HSTF-SE is a longstanding collaboration between federal, state, and local agencies in southeast Florida to prepare for, respond to, and mitigate threats from mass migration events.

5-2. ISOU Medical Consultant: Provides medical guidance for all ISOU missions. The IHSC Medical Services Unit designates a physician to serve in this role as a collateral duty.

5-2.1 Approves requests for commercial medical escort services.

5-2.2 Functions as on-call contact for all ISOU/SOR officers in need of consultation for detainee medical issues. Provides medical guidance during pre-flight preparation.

5-3. Mission Support Specialist (MSS): Oversees the unit's administrative, scheduling, planning, travel, purchasing, recordkeeping, and other responsibilities as assigned by the ISOU chief.

5-4. Special Operations Reserve Officers:

5-4.1 Augment ISOU staff and serve as medical air crewmembers as needed.

5-4.2 Receive medical aircrew training and remain ready to serve in support of ICE Air Operations commercial medical escorts, special high-risk charters, and ICE field operations.

5-4.3 Support USCG MIO missions, as needed (APP only).

5-4.4 ISOU MSS requests SOR support from approving supervisor.

5-4.5 Approving supervisor contacts requested SOR officer for availability and confirms availability to ISOU MSS.

5-5. Ground Medical Support Officer: Manages all aspects of the Ground Medical Support Program. Refer to Section 6-1 for additional information.

- 5-6. Medical Air Operations Officer:** Manages all aspects of the Medical Air Operations Program. Refer to Section 6-2 for additional information.
- 5-7. Medical Aircrew Members (MAM):** Flight registered nurses based in ICE detention facility medical clinics throughout the country. They primarily support ERO missions to transport, relocate, and remove detained noncitizens globally. When not supporting medical air operations, these officers serve as program managers and assist with ICE field operations.
- 5-8. Migrant Interdiction Operations-Medical (MIO-M) Officer:**
- 5-8.1 ISOU APPs deliver acute, chronic, and emergency care to migrants while onboard USCG vessels.
- 5-8.2 ISOU maintains a minimum of two PHS APPs to serve as medical providers to staff USCG MIO missions.
- 5-8.3 When not supporting MIO missions, these APP officers serve as program managers, medical aircrew members, and assist with ICE field operations. Refer to Section 6-3 for additional information.
- 5-9. ISOU Training Program Officer:** Manages, coordinates, develops, and maintains training opportunities to ensure a high state of mission readiness for all ISOU and SOR officers. ISOU officers operate in environments where they are isolated from the resources and support found in an IHSC facility. Training enhances their ability to function across a range of operations, in any environment, and support ICE operational objectives domestically and internationally. Refer to Section 6-4 for additional information.
- 5-10. Medical Equipment and Personnel Safety Officer:** Manages a program that obtains, maintains, and accounts for necessary medical equipment for detainee transport, as well as safety equipment for crew members. Refer to Section 6-5 for additional information.
- 5-11. Special Operations Reserve Program Officer:** Liaises with SOR officers and assigned SOR supervisors in coordination with ISOU MSS.
- 5-11.1 Serves as primary ISOU point of contact for all assigned SOR officers.
- 5-11.2 Coordinates with ISOU training officer to ensure assigned SOR officers complete all initial and recurring training requirements.
- 5-11.3 Coordinates with ISOU medical equipment and personal safety officer to ensure all SOR officers are issued approved medical equipment and personnel safety equipment for medical air operations.
- 5-12. Infection Control Officer:** MAM/MIO-M Officer is assigned by the ISOU

chief, under the advisement of the Public Health and Safety Preparedness Unit to oversee infection control operations during missions.

5-13. Medical Records Officer: Creates and maintains health records as necessary to comply with policy and procedures consistent with DHS, ICE/ERO, and IHSC requirements. The ISOU medical records officer manages this collateral responsibility, as assigned by the ISOU chief.

5-14. IHSC Facility Staff and Field Medical Coordinator (FMC):

5-14.1 The requesting IHSC field staff and/or FMC coordinates any detained noncitizen medical continuity of care requirements with the receiving facility or foreign government point of contact.

5-14.2 The requesting IHSC facility staff and/or FMC are responsible for providing any durable medical equipment required for a detained noncitizen. For commercial medical escorts, they must notify the airline when making travel reservations, that the detainee will have and utilize medical equipment in flight.

5-15. Medical Staff at Sending Facility: Must medically clear every detained noncitizen for flight prior to transport. Medical staff must document this clearance on a hardcopy transfer medical summary. The MAM assigned to the flight makes the final decision regarding medical clearance.

6. PROCEDURES:

6-1. Ground Medical Support: Refer to ISOU Support Guidelines for ICE Field Office Ground Operations, a detailed guide for ISOU-assigned RNs and APPs who provide medical support for ICE ground operations.

6-2. Medical Air Operations: Refer to ISOU Medical Air Operations Guide, a detailed manual for ISOU-assigned RNs and APPs who provide medical air operations support on charter missions, special high-risk charter missions, and medical escort missions.

6-3. Migrant Interdiction Operations-Medical (MIO-M): Refer to MIO-Medical Guide, a detailed resource for ISOU-assigned APPs who provide medical support for USCG MIO; and USCG Medical Manual, Commandant's Instruction (b)(6),(b)(7)(C)

6-4. ISOU Training Program: Refer to ISOU Training Program Guide, a detailed document that outlines training requirements that allow ISOU SOR personnel to meet the operational demands of caring for IHSC's unique population outside a facility environment.

6-5. Medical Equipment and Personnel Safety: Refer to ISOU Medical Equipment and Safety Guide, a detailed manual that explains procedures for

caring for and utilizing ISOU medical equipment and personnel safety equipment.

6-6. Medical Records: IHSC staff manually document information during operations using the (b)(7)(E) format. All health record documents and forms should include, at minimum, the name, date of birth, and noncitizen number. Staff may either handprint or type this information. ISOU utilizes standard forms for patient care documentation. The forms are available on the (b)(7)(E) page. Once scanned and placed in the ISOU SharePoint site, ISOU staff shred the paper copies.

6-7. Communications:

6-7.1 ISOU and SOR members must use equipment issued by the IHSC Resource Management Unit (RMU). Refer to agency procedures for procurement of communication devices (e.g., laptop, cellphones).

6-7.2 Government issued cellphones, laptops, and/or tablets approved by RMU are the primary means of communication between the ISOU team member and their ICE counterparts when outside of an office or clinic setting. Government-issued cellphones must always have hotspot and international call and text capabilities.

7. HISTORICAL NOTES: This directive replaces IHSC Directive 01-49, *IHSC Special Operations*, dated January 13, 2021.

7-1. Summary of Changes:

7-1.1. Updated language alignment from detainee to detained noncitizen and patient.

8. DEFINITIONS: See definitions for this policy in the IHSC Glossary located in the [IHSC Policy Library](#).

9. APPLICABLE STANDARDS:

9-1. 2020 Family Residential Standards: Part 4: Care; 4.3 Health Care; BB.Health Care Records; 4. Transfer and Release of Residents.

9-2. Performance Based National Detention Standards (PBNDS) 2011, revised Dec. 2016:

9-2.1 Part 4: Care; 4.3 Medical Care; BB. Medical Records; 4. Transfer and Release of Detainees.

9-2.2 7.4. Detainee Transfers.

9-2.3 1.3. Transportation (by land).

9-3. 2019 National Detention Standards:

9-3.1. Part 4: Care; 4.3 Medical Care; Q. Transfer and Release of Detainees.

9-4. National Commission on Correctional Health Care (NCCHC): Standards for Health Services in Jails 2018;

9-4.1. J-E-03 Transfer Screening

10. PRIVACY AND RECORDKEEPING. IHSC uses detainee health records and information maintained in accordance with the DHS/ICE-013 Alien Health Records System of Records to provide for the care and safety of detainees. IHSC limits access to detainee health records and information to those individuals who need to know the information for the performance of their official duties, and who have appropriate clearances or permissions. IHSC secures paper records in a locked cabinet or room when not under the direct control of an officer or employee with a need for the paper record to perform their duties.

10-1. IHSC staff complete annual training on the protection of patient health information and Sensitive Personally identifiable information.

10-2. IHSC staff reference the Department of Homeland Security Handbook for Safeguarding Sensitive PII (Handbook) at DHS Handbook for Safeguarding Sensitive PII for additional information concerning safeguarding sensitive PII.\

10-3. All relevant documents produced or provided in accordance with this Directive must be maintained in accordance with an applicable National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) General Records Schedule (GRS) or a NARA-approved agency-specific records control schedule. If the records are not subject to a records schedule, they must be maintained indefinitely by the agency. In the event the records are subject to a litigation hold, they may not be disposed of under a records schedule until further notification. Prior to the disposition of any records referenced in this directive, ICE Records Officer approval must be obtained.

11. NO PRIVATE RIGHT STATEMENT. This directive in an internal policy statement of IHSC. It is not intended to, and does not create any rights, privileges, or benefits, substantive or procedural, enforceable against the United States; its departments, agencies, or other entities; its officers or employees; or any other person.

12. POINT OF CONTACT: Chief, IHSC Special Operations Unit.