



MEMORANDUM

Date: March 26, 2020

To: The Honorable Chairman and Members
Pima County Board of Supervisors

From: C.H. Huckelberry
County Administrator

Re: **Casa Alitas Use Update**

In a previous memorandum, I indicated that we have been in close contact with Catholic Community Services (CCS) regarding their census at Casa Alitas. The purpose of our communication was to determine if the Casa Alitas function could be transferred from the Juvenile Justice Complex to a CCS location, given the declining census.

Unfortunately, on March 23, 2020, US Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) notified Casa Alitas that 16 individuals from India were being released in Tucson by the US Border Patrol. These individuals traveled through Madrid, Spain, a COVID-19 hotspot, before presenting at the Nogales Port of Entry.

The group was transported to Tucson and placed in the US Border Patrol Containment Center who then notified ICE that they should be released to a bus station if a shelter would not accept the individuals. Casa Alitas accepted these individuals. They were placed in isolation within the Casa Alitas Welcome Center and were to remain there for the recommended 14-day isolation period.

As of March 25, 2020, there were 32 individuals in Casa Alitas, including the 16 individuals now in quarantine. We now understand the 16 individuals were removed by ICE and placed in a detention center in Texas, but we do know Casa Alitas will be receiving 17 additional asylum seekers for processing. As of today, Casa Alitas has 17 individuals in shelter at the Welcome Center. At least 15 of these individuals have travel delays related to "shelter in place" orders in their destination communities, and will be unable to depart for up to another 21 days.

Had we been able to relocate the Casa Alitas function to a CCS-owned facility, we would have been able to potentially use the Juvenile Justice Complex's former detention pods for housing of homeless individuals who may be released from the Pima County Adult Detention Complex. At this time, this is no longer an option.

CHH/anc

c: Jan Leshar, Chief Deputy County Administrator
Francisco García, MD, MPH, Deputy County Administrator & Chief Medical Officer,
Health and Community Services
Marguerite Peg Harmon, CEO, Catholic Community Services of Southern Arizona, Inc.
Teresa Cavendish, Director of Operations, Catholic Community Services of Southern
Arizona, Inc.