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**Family Detention - Advisory Committee Report and Recommendations**

**San Francisco, CA (October 3, 2016)** – The detention of Central American families – mothers with their children – has been a controversial issue since it was adopted broadly as a policy in 2014 by the Obama Administration in response to increased numbers of families seeking protection in the United States.

As a result of the controversy over the practice of detaining families the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) established an [Advisory Committee](#) (officially named the Advisory Committee on Family Residential Centers, ACFRC) in 2015. The Committee is comprised of experts from a number of fields, including law, health, and education, and its task is to provide “advice and recommendations” to the Secretary of DHS on a range of issues related to family detention. UC Hastings Professor and CGRS Director Karen Musalo serves on the Committee.

Members of the Committee visited the two main family detention centers in Texas in March 2016, as well as a third detention center in Pennsylvania in June 2016. Drawing on their expertise, the site visits, information provided by DHS, and other credible sources of reporting, the Committee prepared an extensive report and recommendations, available [online](#).

Among its many recommendations, is recommendation 1-1 which states in relevant part:

DHS’s immigration enforcement practices should operationalize the presumption that detention is generally neither appropriate nor necessary for families – and that detention or the separation of families for purposes of immigration enforcement or management, or detention is never in the best interest of children. DHS should discontinue the general use of family detention, reserving it for rare cases when necessary following an individualized assessment of the need to detain because of danger or flight risk that cannot be mitigated by conditions of release.

The Committee will meet in Washington, D.C. on October 7 where they will discuss their report and recommendations; members of the public will be able to participate in person or telephonically to comment on the Committee’s work and its recommendations regarding family detention. For information about participating, go to the [Committee website](#) (see tab on ACFRC meetings).

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