

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Healthcare Workers to Protest [Oct. 30](#) at Immigrant Detention Center in San Diego; Demand Government Administer Flu Shots**

*Following Three Flu-Related Deaths of Children in Other Facilities, Caregivers to Protest Government Inaction by Making Flu Prevention Packages Available for Detainees Being Denied Flu Shots*

SAN DIEGO – Following the three flu-related deaths of children being held at immigrant detention centers this year, healthcare workers will converge [at 11 A.M. on Wed., Oct. 30, 2019](#) at the U.S. Border Patrol Station, [311 Athey Ave. in San Ysidro](#), to protest the federal government’s refusal to vaccinate migrants by making flu prevention packages available for detainees being denied flu shots.

A similar action will be held at a detention center run by the federal government in Phoenix. The San Diego protest is being organized by three unions: SEIU Local 721; SEIU-United Service Workers West; and SEIU-United Healthcare Workers West.

“The crisis at the border is not going away, but as healthcare workers we have the training and compassion to prevent any more children and vulnerable adults from dying of something as preventable as the flu,” said Rosie Martinez, a long-time healthcare worker from Los Angeles who will be joining the [Oct. 30](#) protest. “If the government won’t take responsibility for protecting the families being held, we have no choice but to attempt to do it ourselves.”

The U.S. Customs and Border Patrol said in August 2019 that it [would not vaccinate migrants](#) being held at federal immigrant detention facilities, claiming children and adults don’t typically stay long enough to justify the cost.

Earlier that month, doctors from Harvard University and Johns Hopkins University [urged Congress](#) to investigate the deaths of three children at detention facilities along the United States’ southern border – an influenza death rate three times higher than the general population. In the physicians’ letter, they recommended all people entering the detention centers be tested immediately upon intake for influenza.

**WHAT:** Healthcare workers will protest at a federal immigration detention center in San Diego following the recent flu-related deaths of children at similar facilities elsewhere in the country by making flu prevention packages available for detainees being denied flu shots.

**WHEN:** [Wed., Oct. 30, 2019](#)  
[11 A.M.](#)

**WHERE:** U.S. Border Patrol Station  
[311 Athey Ave.](#)  
[San Ysidro, CA 92173](#)

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*SEIU 721 is the largest public sector union in Southern California with 95,000 members. SEIU-United Healthcare Workers West (SEIU-UHW) is one of the largest unions of hospital workers in the United States with 95,000 members. SEIU-United Service Workers West represents more than 45,000 janitors, security officers, airport service workers, and other property service workers across California.*