EXCLUSIVE: Illegal immigrants make up rape and sex assault claims 'to stay in the U.S. longer'. Series of false accusations at detention centers are 'tactic to beat deportation'

In 2015, 273 immigrants set for deportation said they've been raped
Six of the alleged attacks in centers around the US involved children
But almost half the claims by detainees have not been proven
36 of the claims were unfounded, proving there was no attack, while 54 lacked enough evidence to prove incident even occurred
Only 30 of the complaints were proven and 104 decisions are pending
Has sparked allegations victims are making up stories to stay longer
It is the latest controversy involving the scandal-hit immigration system

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Illegal immigrants awaiting deportation are making up rape claims to stay in the country for longer, DailyMail.com can reveal.
Thirty-six claims were found to be false in just one year, according to figures released under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA).

The scale of the false allegations was described as a concern by a watchdog group, who said it raised questions over whether illegal immigrants were trying to delay or dodge deportation by making untrue rape or sexual assault claims.

The allegations proven to be false were all made to Immigration and Customs Enforcement by people held in their detention facilities.

They were part of 273 allegations of rape made in 2015.

Inside a detention center: Immigrants awaiting deportation at a center in Otay Mesa, California. DailyMail.com has obtained figures which suggest some are falsely claiming to be raped or sexually assaulted, possibly to avoid deportation.
One of the untrue reports: A detainee at the Otay Detention Facility near San Diego, California, (pictured) fabricated a claim a guard raped them
An investigation by DailyMail.com has found a sexual assault allegation is made in an immigration detention center every two days. One incident involved a boy complaining about a group of minors in Karnes County Residential Center in Texas (pictured) who inappropriately exposed themselves and tried to have him touch their genitals.

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**THE FALSE SEX-CLAIM FILES**

January 2, 2015: Detainee at the Otay Detention Facility near San Diego, California, told officials a guard raped them. An investigation later found the claim was fabricated.

February 1: Female detainee in Los Fresnos, Texas, lied about another detainee sexually assaulting her.

February 3: In Dilley, Texas, a woman falsely claimed a supervisor was making lewd comments to her.

March 3: Detainee in El Paso, Texas, claimed she was being harassed by Muslims. Officers later found she was lying.

March 31: Detainee in Bakersfield, California, claimed a guard inappropriately touched 17 women during a pat down after dinner. Investigators later found her claims were fabricated.
April 9: Woman falsely claimed a detainee in Bakersfield, California, was touching another female’s breast.

April 21: In Eloy, Arizona, a detainee reported that a woman was being sexually assaulted by guards because of a conversation he heard. His claim was later found to be false.

May 26: A detainee at the Houston Contract Detention Facility said they were raped by an unknown suspect. Investigators could not identify who it was so closed the investigation.

June 22: An illegal immigrant in the Adelanto Detention Center in San Bernardino, California, falsely claimed she was sexually harassed by another inmate.

July 10: An ICE detainee claimed he was touched on the buttocks while sleeping in his bunk.

July 30: A detainee claimed they were sexually assaulted by a Department for Homeland Security contractor in Sierra Blanca, Texas. Investigators later found the claim was fabricated.

August 7: In Calexico, California, a man falsely claimed she was receiving threats of violence from a fellow detainee to perform sex acts.

On August 25, 2015, a male detainee at the South Texas Detention Complex said a contracted officer inappropriately stared at him while he was using the toilet.

September 29: An immigration officer at the Yuba County Jail in California sent an email to senior officials saying a detainee had been involved in an inappropriate relationship with a contract officer. The claim was found to be false.

October 1: An officer reported rumors a contractor engaged in a sex act with another staff member at the Otay Detention Facility near San Diego, California. The report was later found to be untrue.

December 11: A senior ICE official reported an allegation that a guard had sexually assaulted a detainee in San Bernardino, California. Investigators found the incident did not take place.
A breakdown of the rape allegations shows that 90 were unsubstantiated, meaning there was not sufficient evidence to prove the incident occurred.

There was evidence proving the attack did not take place in 36 of the cases.

Only 30 of the claims were substantiated by ICE officials, while decisions are still pending in 104 cases. Five of the substantiated claims were attacks on children.

None of 31 allegations against guards or contractors have been substantiated. Five were found to be false.

Thirteen were 'referred to management'. The records would not elaborate on what that meant.

The allegations proven to be false included claims by a detainee at Otay Detention Facility near San Diego, California, that a guard raped them.

A detainee in El Paso, Texas, claimed she was being harassed by Muslims. Officers later found she was lying, and a detainee in Bakersfield, California, claimed a guard inappropriately touched 17 women during a pat down after dinner.

Detainees are aware that they can postpone being sent home if they file a complaint - even if it might turn out to be a lie.

They are normally placed inside solitary confinement - or administrative segregation - for five days after they make a complaint, but some can chose to stay longer if they feel they may be at risk of further attacks.

A watchdog group warned that false accusations could be used by detainees to extend their stay in the U.S.

Jessica Vaughn from the Center for Immigration Studies told Daily Mail Online: 'Of course any allegations of misconduct or abuse in a detention center must be taken seriously, and investigated.

'Unfortunately, it happens occasionally, despite efforts to prevent it. ICE has very detailed protocols and regulations to follow, and the agency
appears to make every effort to ensure that its contractors also operate with the appropriate standards and safeguards.

'It is important to remember that not all allegations against detention officers or fellow detainees are true.

'I don't wish to downplay the seriousness of this issue, but one has to acknowledge that detainees have some strong incentives to file frivolous allegations.

'I have been told by different sources that these allegations have increased lately because the detainees know that they can avoid or postpone deportation by accusing an ICE deportation officer or detention center guard of abusive behavior.'

There is, however, little doubt that a series of sex attacks have taken place in the detention centers.

Among the cases revealed to DailyMail.com was one at the The South Texas Family Residential Center in Dilley, where a 14-year-old boy from El Salvador attacked a helpless girl from Honduras as she lay in her bed.

The complaint was substantiated, but it's not known what action was taken against the youngster.

Another boy complained that a group of minors in Karne County Residential Center inappropriately exposed themselves and tried to have him touch their genitals.

That claim was substantiated after an investigation.

On the April 29, 2015, a detainee from Guatemala was arrested after 'inappropriately touching' another immigrant in Cameron, Texas.

He was then processed in local courts, but he has not been identified.

In Orange County, California, a group of detainees were found to have been involved in sexual abuse.
A substantiated incident involved a shocking case at the The South Texas Family Residential Center Dilley, Texas, (pictured) where a 14-year-old boy from El Salvador attacked a helpless girl from Honduras as she lay in her bed.

And in Karnes, Texas, an underage girl was found to have a sexually transmitted disease.

When border officers conducted a medical exam, they also found 'vaginal scarring', prompting suggestions she was sexually assaulted.

However the allegation was 'unfounded', but the girl and her father were put on 'expedited removal proceedings' for their own safety.

On October 23, 2015, a Management and Training Cooperation officer sexually harassed a detainee in Otero, Minnesota.

Jesse Lerner-Kinglake, the Communications Director at Just Detention International, told DailyMail.com that there was a 'major problem' about sexual assault in detention centers.

'I think it's important to draw a distinction between sexual abuse allegations that are unfounded and those that are unsubstantiated,' she said.
'Unfounded reports have been proven false, whereas unsubstantiated reports lack sufficient evidence to show definitively that the assault occurred.

'In other words, when a rape allegation is unsubstantiated, that does not mean it was made up.

*Immigration detainees have many reasons not to come forward to report sexual assault. Detainees who speak out often face retaliation — including being placed in solitary confinement*

Jesse Lerner-Kinglake, the Communications Director at Just Detention International

'Further, false rape allegations are incredibly rare in any setting and, besides, immigration detainees have little incentive to lie about abuse.

'To the contrary, immigration detainees have many reasons not to come forward to report sexual assault. Detainees who speak out often face retaliation — including being placed in solitary confinement, a practice that is known to have a devastating psychological impact.

'Official reports of sexual abuse in immigration detention almost certainly represent just a fraction of the true number of assaults.

'That's because many detainees who have been sexually abused haven't been told how to file a report and that it is their right to do so; others are afraid of being punished, and with good reason.

'But, even if we were to take the numbers of official reports at face value, it would still show evidence of a major problem.

'Any incident of sexual abuse is unacceptable and utterly preventable.'

A spokesman for ICE told Daily Mail Online: 'ICE is committed to ensuring all individuals in the agency's custody are treated in a safe, secure and humane manner.

'Accusations of alleged unlawful conduct are investigated thoroughly and appropriate action is taken to ensure the safety and security of those involved and the others in ICE custody.'
Of the 273 allegations made by foreigners awaiting deportation, six involved suspected attacks on children. Five of these cases were substantiated. Neither of the children pictured in this center in Dilley, Texas, are believed to have been harmed.

It is the latest controversy involving ICE. The agency which oversees the detention and deportation of illegal immigrants has an annual budget of $989 million.

In April, Daily Mail Online revealed that American taxpayers are forking out more than $300,000 every day to deport illegal immigrants on commercial flights and even on private jets, Daily Mail Online can exclusively reveal.

The government agency spent $116m in 2015 to transport 235,413 people in the United States illegally back to their home countries.

More than 40 per cent of those who had violated visa restrictions were convicted criminals while more than 1,000 were identified as gang members.

The ICE revealed to Daily Mail Online that the average cost of every immigrant in 2015 was $12,213.
The cost includes identifying the immigrant, apprehending them, placing them in a detention center, their process through immigration court and their subsequent removal.

In July 2015, Daily Mail Online revealed that a night's stay for an illegal immigrant in the country's largest taxpayer-funded detention center costs more than a room at the nearest Hilton Hotel.

The government shells out $231 every 24 hours to house just one of the 2,105 foreign detainees at The South Texas Family Residential Center in Dilley.

That is more than a double room at the four-star Hilton Palacio del Rio 70 miles away in San Antonio, which costs $169.

It is also higher than the rate ($199) of a luxury King Suite at the four-star Hotel Cantessa - which boasts a rooftop pool and a gym.