

1300 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20229



U.S. Customs and Border Protection

Commissioner

MEMORANDUM FOR: See Distribution

FROM: Troy A. Miller
Acting Commissioner

APR 20 2023

SUBJECT: Additional Guidance on Recordation, Linking, and Processing of Family Groups

The Department of Homeland Security remains committed to protecting the unity of families encountered at the border to the extent legally and operationally feasible. U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) likewise seeks to maintain the unity of family groups, as defined below, where legally and operationally feasible, through similar processing dispositions. To support this commitment, U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) recognizes the importance of properly recording and linking families within our systems for identification and tracking purposes.

In furtherance of our commitment to maintaining unity of families, CBP is issuing additional guidance on the documentation, recordation, linking, and processing of certain adults as family groups, based on particular familial relationships. The following guidance pertains specifically to those family groups comprised of the following individuals, if the relationship is known at the time of encounter or determined while the individuals are in CBP custody in the same CBP facility.

- Parents and/or legal guardian(s) with their unmarried adult children between the ages of 18-25.
- Grandparents with their unmarried adult grandchildren between the ages of 18-25.
- Spouses who are both age 18 and older.
- Unmarried siblings between the ages of 18-25.

Documentation of Family Relationship:

When CBP officers and agents encounter a group of individuals claiming to be comprised of one of the populations listed above, CBP officers and agents must consider any verifiable documentation in which a competent legal entity has granted or acknowledged the legal basis for the family relationships listed above. If the individual(s) cannot provide such documentation or otherwise establish the relationship, CBP officers and agents will not record or link the individuals as a family group and continue to process the individual(s) as a single adult, per CBP guidelines.

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Additional Guidance on Recordation, Linking, and Processing of Family Groups

Recordation and Linking:

When CBP officers and agents encounter a family group, documented or otherwise established as described in this guidance to be comprised of one of the family relationships listed above, CBP officers and agents must record and link all known members of the family group so that the name(s), date(s) of birth, A-number(s), and relationship for other members of the family group are accessible through the designated system of record.

In situations in which individuals could be categorized as members of both a family unit, which is defined in regulation as a group of two or more noncitizens consisting of a minor or minors accompanied by an adult parent(s) or legal guardian(s), and a family group, the individuals meeting the definition of a family unit must be recorded and processed as a family unit. Whenever operationally feasible, the family unit(s) should be processed with and recorded as part of the family group. When not operationally feasible, the processing and recordation of the family unit takes precedence over the family group.

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