

Guatemalan migrants deported from the U.S.



Guatemala City, May 6 (RHC)-- U.S. migration authorities have resumed the deportation of Guatemalan nationals, amid a pandemic. Extradition restarted after a two week ban when 40 deportees tested COVID positive.

U.S. functionaries also reviewed Guatemalan health procedures in airports and other facilities for receiving migrant groups. Guatemala's Foreign Affairs Ministry indicated that next week it is expected to receive three flights with about 75 people each. Before returning flights stopped for two weeks, the passenger number was over 100. More flights are now being scheduled.

Guatemalan authorities agreed on the relocation of migrants under the basis of testing them before deporting them from the United States. Most deportees were expelled from the most affected U.S. states, like California and Texas. Both states registered 54,937 and 32,332 COVID positive cases, respectively.

In April, the Donald Trump administration instructed the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) personnel to evaluate Guatemalan migrants testing for the virus. This measure increased after the Guatemalan government demanded safe migration process.

According to U.S. news media, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement had been conducting basic health screenings on the deportees but was not regularly testing them for the coronavirus.

As Guatemalan officials stated the nationals deported from the U.S. account for more than 15% of all infections in the Center American country. On Monday, 76 Guatemalans were repatriated upon arrival after a flight from Houston and immediately underwent medical examinations.

According to local media, the government has taken measures to contain the possible importation of positive cases since the virus outbreak. Among the preventive actions is screening at airports upon arrival of flights. However, these are still not safe for an asymptomatic case.

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