

*CBS Mornings*

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7:00:57 a.m. [TEASE]

10 seconds

[ON-SCREEN HEADLINE: Shocking ICE Facility Conditions]

VLADIMIR DUTHIERS: A married Irish national held by ICE for months compares his detention center to a concentration camp.

TIFFANY SMITH: He — he has lost a lot of weight. You know, it's tough to see him like that.

(...)

7:10:54 a.m.

2 minutes and 25 seconds

[ON-SCREEN HEADLINE: Irish National Describes Immigration Detention]

DUTHIERS: Reports of shocking conditions inside an ICE detention center from a man who's being detained there. Seamus Culleton was pulled over and arrested by ICE last fall. The Irish national has been in the United States for 17 and was in the process of trying to obtain a green card. His wife is a U.S. citizen. Now, he spent months at a facility in Fort Bliss, Texas. Shanelle Kaul has more on his case and the interview he gave to Irish national radio.

SEAMUS CULLETON: The best way I could describe it is probably like a modern-day concentration camp.

SHANELLE KAUL: Speaking from an immigration detention facility in El Paso, Texas earlier this week, Irish national Seamus Culleton described kid's-size meals, filthy facilities, rampant sickness, and limited time outdoors. The Department of Homeland Security has called any claim of substandard conditions at ICE facilities false.

CULLETON: I have been detained now for five months, locked in the same room for four-and-a-half of those months. It's just — it's just a torture. I don't know how much more I can take.

KAUL: ICE agents apprehended Culleton on September 9 for overstaying a visa. He had been in the U.S. since 2009, ran a local plastering business in the Boston area, and had no criminal record. At the time of his detention, he was awaiting a green card interview and living with his wife, Tiffany Smith, a U.S. citizen. She spoke to CBS Boston earlier this week.

SMITH: I hope he can be released, so we can finish what we started. We did it the right way. So, at least let us finish that.

KAUL: In a statement, DHS said in part “a pending green card application and work authorization does not give someone legal status to be in our country,” and suggested that Culleton’s detention was the consequence of a choice, not to self-deport. Culleton said this about the process of being transferred to El Paso.

CULLETON: Cuffed, sham willed, we had waist bracelets on, we had ankle bracelets on. We’re shuttled on to a plane in the middle of the night and you don’t know where you’re going. The fear and the, the anxiety and the depression, it’s just — it’s just crazy. It’s just unbelievable.

KAUL: *The Irish Daily Mail* is reporting that Culleton faced outstanding drug charges there dating back to 2008. Now, under U.S. law, Homeland Security can deport people with pending immigration applications, even if they haven’t been convicted of crimes, Nate.

NATE BURLESON: Shanelle, thank you.