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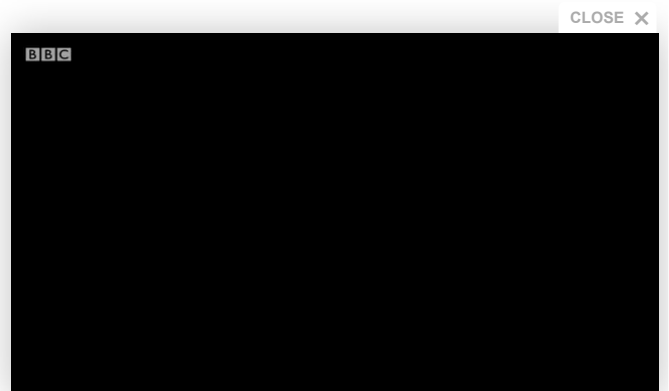
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Former ICE Detainee Sues CoreCivic Over Alleged Rape Resulting in Pregnancy. Lawyer Says Child Is 'Living Proof'

BY **CHANTAL DA SILVA** ON 5/28/20 AT 12:50 PM EDT

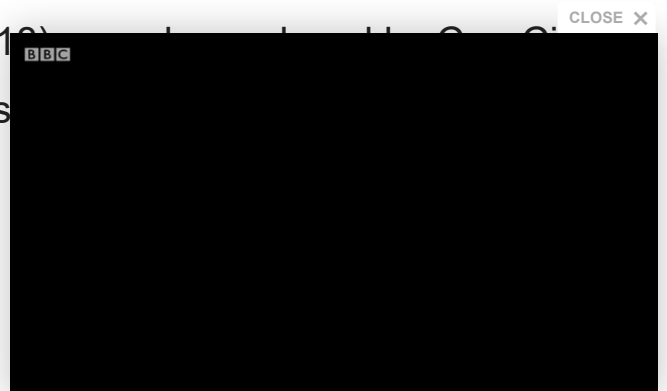


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A woman who was deported from the U.S. in 2018 is suing private detention company CoreCivic, alleging that she was raped by a guard on the night before her deportation, with the attack resulting in pregnancy.

In a [lawsuit filed on Wednesday, May 27](#), in the Houston Division of the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Texas, the woman—identified only as "Jane Doe"—alleges that she had been held under the custody of the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agency for around three months in 2018.

According to the lawsuit, which was first reported on by BuzzFeed News, on the eve of her scheduled deportation (June 1, 2018), she and two other women were separated her and two other women into an is Processing Center.



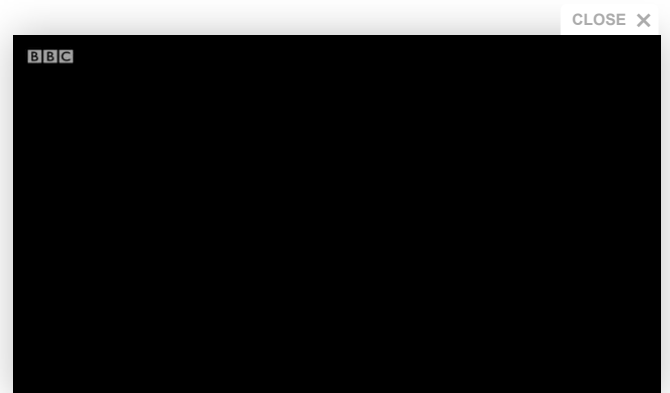
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The lawsuit alleges that around midnight, guards entered the cell and assaulted the three women. It states that one guard physically assaulted Doe until she stopped resisting, before raping her.

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Hours later, it alleges, guards ordered the women to change their clothes, without giving them any chance to shower, before forcing them to get on a bus and be deported to Mexico.

When Doe returned home, she realized that she was pregnant, the lawsuit claims. In early 2019, she gave birth to a child she alleges was conceived in the assault.

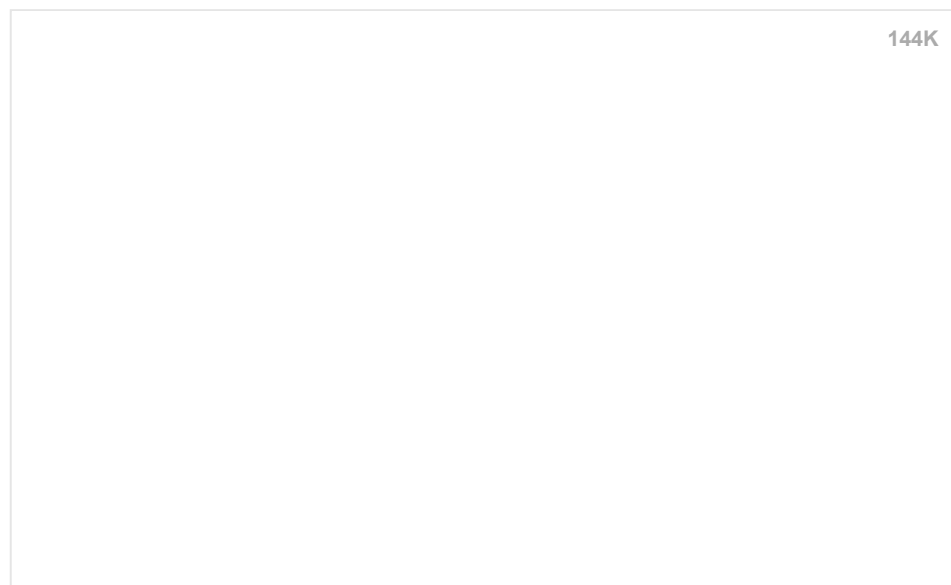


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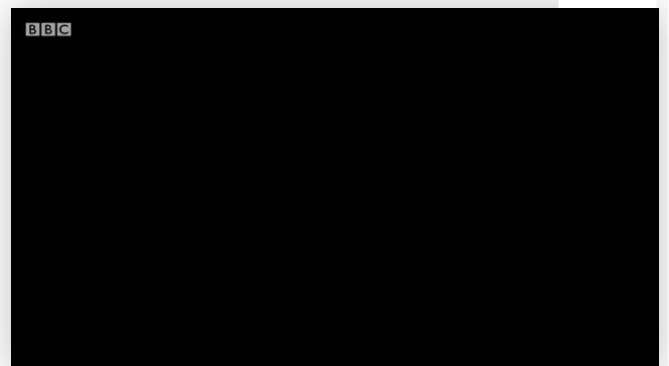
said in a statement provided by her lawyers. "This nightmare has caused me great harm and stress."

"I hope the United States government and the directors of these private jails prevent this violence from happening to others," she said. Her statement can be heard in Spanish below.

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Interview with victim in CoreCivic Inc. sexual assault lawsuit



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In an interview with *Newsweek* on Thursday, Michelle Simpson Tuegel, the Dallas-based attorney representing Doe, said that while her client's account is difficult to hear, she believes cases like hers happen more often than the public may think.

"I think the regularity with which it happens is greatly underreported and that there are a lot of women with stories like this client who have not had any outlet or ability to have their voices heard," Simpson Tuegel said.

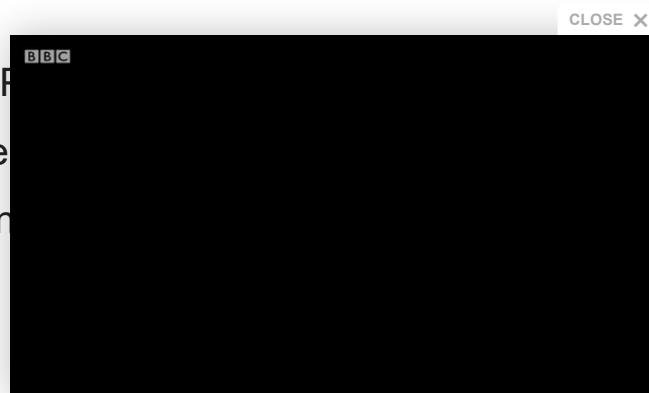
In this case, Simpson Tuegel said she believed that Doe's child "is going to be living proof."

"I think that the evidence will bear out what happened as we proceed with the legal process," she said.

In a statement provided to *Newsweek*, Ryan Gustin, a spokesperson for CoreCivic, said the company had yet to be served with the complaint and as a matter of policy does not comment on pending litigation.

"More broadly, we are committed to the safety and dignity of every detainee entrusted to our care. We have a zero-tolerance policy for all forms of sexual abuse and sexual harassment," Gustin said.

"To ensure we are in full compliance with the Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA), all staff receive pre-service and in-service training, and detainees receive PREA education and training."



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harassment, including detainees, staff or third parties," he added. "There are multiple options to report allegations including (but not limited to) calling the National Sexual Assault Hotline, notifying a staff member either verbally or in writing, writing the facility warden, using the PREA hotline numbers posted in facilities and contacting CoreCivic's Ethics and Compliance hotline and website."

In a separate statement a Timothy Oberle, a spokesperson for ICE said the agency does not comment on pending litigation.

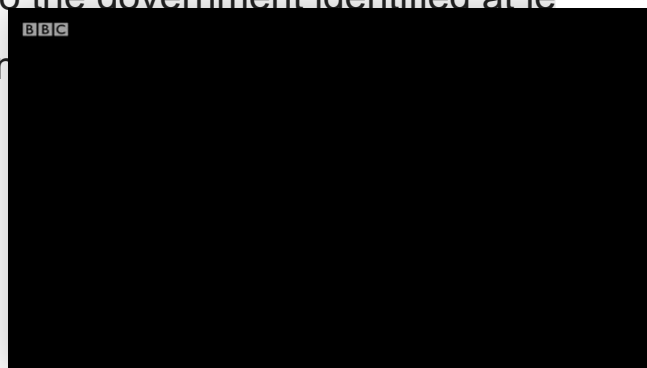
"However, lack of comment should not be construed as agreement with or stipulation to any of the allegations," he said.

"ICE employees and contractors are held to the highest standard of professional and ethical conduct. Incidents of misconduct are treated with the utmost seriousness and investigated thoroughly. When substantiated, appropriate action is taken," Oberle said.

In Doe's case, Simpson Tuegel said, filing a complaint would have been difficult, given that she was deported the morning after the alleged incident unfolded.

"That's a very convenient time for the perpetrators of the abuse because [the women] are gone and they have no resources, no process, no time to report," she said.

A report drafted by CoreCivic and submitted to the government identified at least eight allegations of sexual assault made against a detainee at the CoreCivic Processing Center in 2017.



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unfounded, Simpson Tuegel said Americans should question how those determinations were made.

"I think there's a long history of private prisons disregarding the rights of human beings in their care," she said.

Now, she said, her client continues to suffer with the memory of what she alleges unfolded, as she also struggles to also raise a child she had not planned for.

"I know from speaking to her and hearing her describe walking through this and having this child and coming home and having to deal with the shame of communicating to her family what happened...she is a woman who has been through a lot," Simpson Tuegel said.

Her client, she said, "had come to this country for a better life and more opportunity and that's not really what happened...She got the opposite and was instead victimized and deported."

