

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

ROBERT F. KENNEDY HUMAN RIGHTS;
SOUTHERN BORDER COMMUNITIES
COALITION; URBAN JUSTICE CENTER,

Plaintiffs,

v.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND
SECURITY; KRISTI NOEM, in her official
capacity as Secretary of Homeland Security,

Defendants.

CASE NO. 1:25-cv-01270-ACR

**DECLARATION OF RONALD J.
SARTINI**

DECLARATION OF RONALD J. SARTINI

I, Ronald J. Sartini, based upon my personal knowledge and information made known to me in the course of my official employment hereby declare, to the best of my knowledge, information, and belief, as follows relating to the above-captioned matter:

1. I am the Citizenship and Immigration Services (CIS) Ombudsman at the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS). Established by section 452 of the Homeland Security Act of 2002, the CIS Ombudsman is an independent, impartial, and confidential office. It is part of DHS headquarters and not a part of U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS). Prior to becoming the CIS Ombudsman, I was the Acting Chief of Staff for the Office of the General Counsel (OGC). Before joining DHS OGC, I was employed at USCIS as the Acting Chief of Staff of the Identity and Information Management Division, Immigration Records and Identity Services Directorate. I have personal knowledge regarding the reductions in force at the Office of the CIS

Ombudsman (CISOMB), the DHS Office for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties (CRCL), and the DHS Office of the Immigration Detention Ombudsman (OIDO, and together, the Offices).

2. The hiring process at each Office continues to move forward. Each Office is moving as expeditiously as possible to staff up and ensure the statutory duties are and will be fully performed. Each Office is moving much faster than the normal hiring process and is exempt from the hiring freeze. There have been no barriers to seeking out new employees or refocusing on the statutory duties. Each Office has also publicly posted that the Offices remain open and will continue to perform their statutory duties.

3. The following has occurred for CRCL:

- Troup Hemenway has been appointed Acting CRCL Officer and designated full authority to hire and carry out the statutory duties.
- I am the Acting Deputy CRCL Officer in order to help quickly and efficiently implement the plan that I laid out.
- Detail solicitations have been posted for the Office since last week.
- A Job Announcement by which CRCL will be appropriately re-staffed has been posted. I expect to select the first candidates no more than three weeks from today.
- CRCL maintains a number of active contracts, including assistance on reviewing EEO complaints, other complaints, and handling medical issues. These contracts have been scaled up along with significant additional funds applied to exercise surge contract line items.
- Approximately 15 contractors are actively intaking and logging cases, conducting counseling and investigations, and drafting Final Agency Decisions, starting today.

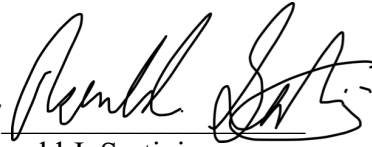
- CRCL federal staff have resumed issuing decisions, including on a complaint concerning compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, 29 U.S.C. § 794, brought by Plaintiff (CR-015046).
 - Lawyers in the Office of the General Counsel continue to assist with review and triage of complaints and refer the most urgent ones to federal staff or contractors to be worked.
 - The Office will continue to carry out all of its statutory functions.
4. The following has occurred for OIDO:
- Joseph Guy has been appointed Acting OIDO Ombudsman and designated full authority to hire and carry out the statutory duties.
 - Mr. Guy has been briefed on my plan for the Office and has agreed to implement it.
 - I am the Acting Deputy OIDO Ombudsman in order to help quickly and efficiently implement the plan that I laid out.
 - Detail solicitations have been posted for the Office since last week.
 - A Job Announcement by which OIDO will be appropriately re-staffed has been posted. I expect to select the first candidates no more than three weeks from today.
 - DHS maintains a number of active contracts, including assistance on reviewing complaints and handling medical issues. These contracts can be scaled up as needed.
 - I am actively reviewing contracts for placing people within detention facilities, as the existing contracts were rife with issues.
 - The Office will continue to carry out all of its statutory functions.

5. The following has occurred for CISOMB:

- I am the CIS Ombudsman with full authority to hire and carry out the statutory duties.
- Detail solicitations have been posted for the Office and three individuals began details today.
- A Job Announcement for the Deputy CIS Ombudsman has been posted. I expect to select a candidate no more than three weeks from today.
- I expect a Job Announcement by which CISOMB will be appropriately re-staffed will be posted in the coming weeks.
- DHS maintains a number of contracts for complaint work that can be scaled up as needed.
- I have already held three discussions with USCIS leadership on trends, problem areas, outstanding RFIs, and how to handle Ombudsman case processing going forward.
- The Office has reviewed several hundred complaints since the March notice was issued and responded to trend-related inquiries from law firms and advocacy groups. Approximately 20 cases have been referred to USCIS. Given trends, I expect the overall number of complaints and general workload of CISOMB to decrease by half this year as compared to the unusually high volumes seen over the last four years.
- Approximately 40% of the CISOMB annual congressional report has been drafted.
- The Office will continue to carry out all of its statutory functions.

Pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1746, I declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct to the best of my knowledge.

Executed this 2nd day of June, 2025.

/s/ 

Ronald J. Sartini
Office of Citizenship and Immigration
Services (CIS) Ombudsman
U.S. Department of Homeland Security