



A rights group has urged US immigration authorities to end "retaliatory" measures against detainees as an estimated 500 female undocumented immigrants hold a hunger strike in a Texas for-profit detention centre, in protest against the facility's harsh conditions.

Texas United For Families (TUFF), an umbrella organisation of rights groups, called on US Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) to halt "retaliation against women on hunger strike and that all women on hunger strike are immediately released".

TUFF says that at least two hunger strikers have been transferred to other detention centres as a punitive measure, and six more are being prepared to be moved to other facilities.

At least one woman was temporarily put in isolation last week, the group adds.

The strike initially started with 27 women on October 27, says Grassroots Leadership, an Austin-based group that campaigns against for-profit detention centres.

The women are mostly from Central America - including Guatemala, El Salvador and Honduras - and are protesting harsh conditions in the T Don Hutto detention centre in Taylor, a town 56 kilometres south of the Texas capital.

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