

Collecting DNA samples from migrant detainees opens door to enhanced government surveillance

[T]he United States government will begin collecting DNA samples from thousands of people detained by immigration officials, including minors, and will add that genetic data to a massive FBI database used to investigate violent crimes.

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First proposed by the Trump administration [in October](#) as a way to enforce immigration laws, the effort represents a major expansion of DNA collection in the United States. ... Anyone who is subject to fingerprinting — including U.S. citizens, green card holders, and those held temporarily — could be forced to submit a cheek-swab sample, according to a [privacy impact assessment](#) posted [January 6] by the DHS.

Privacy experts and human rights advocates say that this creates privacy risks for detainees and their families and raises concerns that genetic information could be misused, including for surveillance purposes.

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Individuals who refuse to submit a [DNA sample](#) can be charged with a misdemeanor. The few exemptions to DNA collection include people being processed for lawful admission into the United States, individuals with mental impairments, and people being transported for medical reasons.

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Some worry that if the government holds onto this DNA data indefinitely, it could open the door for future misuse against vulnerable and marginalized groups.

Read full, original post: [The U.S. Government's Mass Collection of Immigrant DNA Hints at Surveillance Future](#)