

Mexico to close massive migrant facility on the Texas border

by [Anna Giaritelli](#)

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Mexican officials say the government will soon close a federally operated migrant shelter located just miles from the border with Texas to prevent additional caravans from traveling to the region.

Claudio Bres, the mayor of Mexican border town Piedras Negras, told reporters the factory-turned-shelter will shut down in two to three weeks. The roughly 1,600 people who arrived as part of a caravan earlier this month will be moved to smaller shelters, [according to](#) a Texas media report.

A U.S. law enforcement official stationed in a border county confirmed the news.



"In two weeks, they're going to release everyone to another state in Mexico and they're going to take some back to Honduras," Maverick County Sheriff Tom Schmerber told the *Washington Examiner* Friday. Schmerber was informed of the forthcoming moves by officials in Piedras Negras.

Central Americans who have been at the facility for 11 days and are waiting to see if the Mexican government will approve their requests to remain in the country and work.

So far, 100 migrants have been approved, but about 1,200 others have applications for work permits that are still pending.

Another caravan of 700 people is expected to arrive in the state of Coahuila in the next week despite the governor's warnings that non-Mexicans should not travel to the region.

The Mexican government has already begun moving people to other parts of the country. Late last week, 140 migrants in Piedras Negras were transferred to Saltillo, 270 miles south of the border. In addition, 150 migrants were sent 270 miles east to Reynosa, which is located on the U.S.-Mexico border.

Officials said northern cities like Monterrey and Hermosillo will also welcome smaller numbers of people, [according to](#) a U.S. report.

Around 1,600 Central American migrants primarily from Guatemala and Honduras are being held in an old factory in the Mexican border town of Piedras Negras, just over the river from Eagle Pass, Texas.

Mexican officials say their attempts to house, feed, and look after the large group for the past 11 days is too big a burden to bear, and that they cannot continue helping.

Alonso de Hoyos, president of Mexico's national chamber of commerce, [said](#) over the weekend that Mexico was working on a plan to prevent people from getting to Mexico's northern border.

"We are not against immigration we are against illegal immigration. We all know that it's costing us — our taxpayers — a lot because there's a lot of people that have come into the city ... It's expensive," said de Hoyos.

Coahuila Gov. Miguel Angel Riquelme [said](#) Wednesday the state is planning to close all roads into the area if more migrants traveling in large groups try to enter the area from surrounding states.

"We are going to divert the roads," Riquelme told reporters. "The reality is that someone is sending them here."

For the past few years, Mexico has dealt with thousands of Central Americans traveling each week through the country with the intent of getting to the U.S.

In April, a handful of caravans, or groups of more than 1,000 people traveling together, began making the treks. One such group arrived in Tijuana, Baja California, in November and created a chaotic situation for city and state officials who did not know how to handle the thousands of homeless people in the city.

A group of 2,000 who left Honduras on Jan. 15 arrived on buses in Piedras Negras, Coahuila, on Feb. 4. The Coahuila government knew the group was heading its way and planned to house the migrants in an abandoned factory, thanks to funds from the federal government.

Hundreds of Mexican federal police were called in to make sure the site remained orderly and to keep people from trying to break out and go a couple miles north to the U.S. border at Eagle Pass, where they could attempt to illegally enter.