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TAHIRIH CONDEMNS ONGOING FAMILY SEPARATION DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

As the number of [confirmed cases of COVID-19](#) in detention centers climbs, Tahirih condemns the administration's ongoing attempts to separate families. One way the administration has done this is through "binary choice"—after families are detained together for 20 days, parents must either stay in detention indefinitely with their children until their immigration case is closed, or send their child to a government shelter and wait until someone else seeks custody of them.

"Family separation is shameful under any circumstance," said Archi Pyati, Tahirih Chief of Policy and Communications. "It is unconscionable that the administration would attempt to tear families apart during the pandemic. Parents are presented with a false choice between indefinite family detention and family separation—both of which are harmful to families, including the survivors of violence who are among those applying for asylum. With the extremely high risk of contracting COVID-19 while in detention, it's hardly a choice at all."

Separation of children from their families causes both short and long-term physical and psychological harm, and under no circumstances, especially during a pandemic, should this measure be seen as an appropriate avenue to deter immigration. We cannot forsake our values as a nation to justify arbitrary ends, especially when the means are inhumane and violate human rights.

Archi Pyati is available for comment on this topic. Please contact rachelp@tahirih.org to arrange an interview.

About the Tahirih Justice Center

The Tahirih Justice Center is a national, nonprofit organization that serves immigrant women and girls seeking safety and justice. We amplify the voices of survivors in communities, courts, and Congress to create a world where women and girls enjoy equality and live in safety and with dignity.