

1. Nhon Ngoc Nguyen

Who was Nhon Ngoc Nguyen? Nhon was a 55-year-old Vietnamese refugee who came to the U.S. in 1983 as a 12-year-old and was granted status as a legal U.S. resident as part of the Refugee Act of 1980. Nhon spent the last 8 years of his life in Albuquerque, New Mexico, where he was well-known among his neighbors for his commitment to his family and passion for soccer.

How did Nhon Ngoc Nguyen end up in ICE detention? On February 24, 2025, Nhon was taken into custody by ICE at a routine check-in appointment in Albuquerque. According to ICE's own statement, their intake assessment could not be finished two days after he arrived at the El Paso Processing Center because he was too disoriented to respond to any questions and he was unable to walk normally.

How did Nhon Ngoc Nguyen die? Rather than being released to the care of his family, Nhon was moved back and forth between the hospital and the detention facility over the course of seven weeks. His family in Dallas was kept ignorant of his location from mid-February until ICE told them in late March that he was ready for release but required round-the-clock medical attention. On April 16, 2025, he passed away. According to an autopsy he died of severe pneumonia with dementia as a secondary cause. After Nhon's death a lawyer for the family told reporters, "I think there are a lot of questions that need to be answered in how ICE treats people who are sick."

What happened after Nhon's death? After the deaths of Nhon Ngoc Nguyen and of Tien Xuan Phan (another Vietnamese immigrant in ICE custody), the Vietnamese American Organization of San Jose wrote: "In public statements ICE emphasized . . . decades old criminal convictions but failed to acknowledge their rehabilitation, contributions to their communities, and years of peaceful life in the U.S. These men were refugees of a war the United States helped create and then abandoned—now being abandoned again by the very country that once offered them refuge."

At a rally denouncing Nhon's death in ICE custody his nephew Duke Nguyen spoke of Nhon and his affection for his nieces, who remained in Vietnam. "With this, I say we remember Nhon as someone who will be deeply missed but never forgotten — for the person he was and the impact he had on those around him."

Sources:

<https://cripjustice.org/nhon-ngoc-nguyen/>

[Vietnamese national in ICE custody dies in El Paso long-term acute care hospital — ICE, April 21, 2025](#)

[Vietnamese man living in Albuquerque dies months after being taken into ICE custody — Albuquerque Journal, May 1, 2025](#)

[Family Says Vietnamese Refugee with Dementia Died of Medical Neglect After Arrest by ICE — Democracy Now!, May 2, 2025](#)

[Vietnamese American Organization Condemns ICE After Second Vietnamese Death in Custody — VAUSA, July 24, 2025](#)

[Vietnamese refugee suffering from dementia dies in ICE custody in Texas — NextShark/Yahoo News, May 7, 2025](#)

