

#### **44. Ismael Ayala-Urbe**

**Who was Ismael Ayala-Urbe?** Ismael Ayala-Urbe was a 39-year-old Mexican immigrant and longtime resident of Westminster, California, who came to the United States at age four and grew up in Orange County. He attended Westminster High School and worked for about 15 years at a Huntington Beach car wash. Neighbors and friends described him as kind, friendly, helpful, and “a beautiful soul.” Ismael received DACA protection but his DACA renewal was denied nearly a decade ago, after he was convicted of driving under the influence.

**How did Ismael end up in ICE custody?** Ismael Ayala-Urbe was detained by ICE in mid-August 2025, when agents raided the Fountain Valley Auto Wash.

**How did Ismael Ayala-Urbe die under ICE custody?** Ismael Ayala-Urbe was held for five weeks at the Adelanto ICE Processing Center run by the private prison group GEO Group, during which time he became pale, thin, feverish, and increasingly ill, per his family. According to family, Ismael had been pretty healthy when he entered Adelanto with blood pressure on the high side but no other medical problems of which they knew. “It started small with the cough, and then he started getting fevers,” according to Ismael’s brother Jose. “They only were giving him, like, Tylenol and really, nothing else.” As Ismael’s health declined, his family kept checking on his status, but ICE provided little information. “They wouldn’t tell us anything,” Jose said. “Eventually, we just got the word that he was in their infirmary, and that’s all they would tell us.” Ismael complained for weeks of pain in his abdominal and buttocks areas and was treated with pain medication. A fellow detainee called Ismael’s parents around midnight one day “saying that he (Ismael) started shaking really bad, and he was finally sent into the infirmary because they called the guards.” ICE said he was treated for pain and later transferred to a hospital for surgery on an abscess.

He died at Victor Valley Global Medical Center on September 22, 2025, while in ICE custody, prompting demands for investigation and accountability.

#### **Sources:**

<https://www.latimes.com/california/story/2025-09-23/former-daca-recipient-dies-in-ice-custody-after-being-hospitalized>