

RUDY ALEXANDER VILLEDA-MEJIA — CASE SUMMARY FOR PRESS

A# 088-367-378 · Honduran national, 47 · Lynden, Washington resident · detained at ICE Aurora Contract Detention Facility, Aurora, CO since March 30, 2026 · removal believed imminent

Every fact below is drawn from government records or sworn filings; the source is noted in [brackets].

THE KIDNAPPING (2010)

In the summer of 2010, two armed men working with the Los Zetas cartel took Rudy Villeda-Mejia from near a bus station in Tamaulipas, Mexico. He was held for ransom in a desert compound with roughly fifteen other captives, stripped to their underwear, fed a can of beans every other day, and beaten when calls to his family went unanswered. His kidnappers told his sister by phone: **“We took him yesterday, and if you don’t pay, we’ll send him back in pieces!”** His family paid \$3,000 in three installments; the smugglers then drove him across the U.S. border themselves. [Sworn personal narrative in his filed T visa application (Form I-914), corroborated by signed declarations of the sister who took the ransom calls and the father who reported the calls to authorities.]

The U.S. government documented this at the time. A 2010 DHS/ICE record (attached), produced under FOIA, states: **“SUBJECT WAS VICTIM OF SMUGGLING TURNED KIDNAPPING... SMUGGLERS HELD SUBJECT HOSTAGE DEMANDING ADDITIONAL MONEY FOR HIS RELEASE... FEE PAID AND SUBJECT RELEASED.”** No government agency ever identified him as a trafficking victim, advised him of victim protections, or investigated. [ICE FOIA production 2015-ICFO-55355]

THE LIFE HE BUILT (2010–2026)

Sixteen years in Whatcom County: married to Mabel M. Shaffer, a U.S. citizen with an approved I-130 spousal petition, who is disabled (bilateral hip dysplasia) and depends on him as her sole caregiver. He owns and operates RVM All Metal, a metal-roofing business in Lynden — four permanent employees, commercial property, BBB-accredited since 2017, 4.3★ on Google. No criminal record. He attended every ICE check-in from August 2018 to April 2025. [Approved I-130; medical letter; business records; I-220 check-in log — all filed with USCIS]

THE RACE (2026)

Mar 30 — Detained by ICE at Denver International Airport; held at Aurora CDF since.

Jul 1 — Federal habeas petition denied; court order barring removal vacated (D. Colo. No. 1:26-cv-02084-RMR).

Jul 3 — T visa application (I-914, trafficking-victim protection) shipped to USCIS; same day, ICE denied his first stay-of-removal request.

Jul 6 — I-914 DELIVERED to USCIS lockbox, 9:41 AM, signed I.MERRILL (FedEx proof attached). Second stay request filed in person and stamped by ICE Denver — still pending.

Now — A federal injunction, *ICWC v. Noem* (C.D. Cal. No. 2:25-cv-09848, May 20, 2026), bars ICE’s “Blind Removal Policy”: removing crime-victim visa applicants without first obtaining USCIS’s read on the petition. Whether that process is followed here is the open question. His attorney is preparing a federal court stay motion.

WHY IT MATTERS

If a bona fide determination issues on the T visa, removal is automatically stayed by regulation (8 C.F.R. § 214.205). If he is removed first, the application is effectively destroyed. The question is whether ICE deports a man its own records call a victim before USCIS reads his application for the protection Congress created for people like him.

Family contacts: Genaro Shaffer (stepson) 360-389-6616, gshaffer123@gmail.com · Mabel M. Shaffer (wife) 206-465-4429

Attorney of record: Henry D. Hollithron, Hollithron Advocates P.C., Denver — (303) 954-9989

For ICE comment: Denver Field Office 720-873-2899 · Supervisory DDO Mark Kinsey 303-361-6612

Also available on request: the complete 113-page filed I-914 packet (19 exhibits), ICE stay-denial letter, court filings, interviews.