Administrative Immigration Processing Center: How It Operates

Operational Concept Overview

The **Administrative Immigration Processing Center** is designed as a *civil, administrative solution* to handle immigration cases at scale in an efficient, humane, and lawful manner. Instead of relying on widespread raids or protracted field enforcement, the government concentrates the process in one secure hub where individuals can be served in-person and cases resolved systematically. The core philosophy is to treat immigration enforcement as a **bureaucratic process, not a military or police action**. This means the emphasis is on **service, verification, and due process** rather than force. Every step is grounded in existing law and offers fairness: people receive formal notices, ample time to respond, and access to an orderly process. Enforcement (like arrests or removals) is strictly a *last resort*—it only comes into play after multiple opportunities to comply have been given.

Centralization and co-location of services are key. All relevant personnel—immigration officers, support staff, and even immigration judges—are **co-located in one facility**, creating a "one-stop shop" for the entire process. This design allows immediate, same-day issue resolution: for example, if during an intake review an officer finds a legal question requiring a judge's decision, an **on-site judge** can often address it on the spot, rather than requiring a separate court date weeks or months later. By having everyone needed under one roof, the system achieves speed through coordination *without* cutting corners on rights. Indeed, the strategy explicitly **"emphasizes centralized processing, reduced neighborhood disruption, due process integrity, and cost containment through consolidation"**. In other words, bringing people and functions together in one center makes the process faster and more predictable for all, while avoiding the chaos of ad-hoc field operations across the community.

Predictability and transparency are built into the concept. The entire operation runs as a structured, clearly phased program so that those going through it (and the public observing it) know what to expect at each stage. Every individual is treated according to the same **four-step procedural cycle** (from initial administrative notice to court order to final enforcement, if needed). At each step, people are informed of what is happening and what their options are. This predictable sequence—**"knowing where to go, who to see, and what happens next"**—greatly enhances safety and fairness. For example, the process usually begins with an **Administrative Subpoena**, which is essentially a formal written notice requiring the person to come to the center for a status review (not a criminal accusation). If the person complies within the 30-day window, their case is reviewed and resolved civilly. If they do not, the next step is a **Judicial Subpoena** (a court order) compelling their appearance within a shorter timeframe (usually 14 days). Only if the person ignores that court order does the system escalate to a **Judicial Warrant and Removal Order**, whereby a judge authorizes arrest and potential deportation (Step 3), and finally an **Enforcement Action** (Step 4) where officers carry out an arrest under that judicial warrant. At *every stage*, there is **judicial oversight and documentation** to ensure actions are lawful and justified by prior non-compliance. This graduated design means enforcement is **"a consequence, not a starting posture"** – the system gives people multiple chances to cooperate voluntarily, and it documents each chance. By the time any physical enforcement happens, the record clearly shows the individual was given notice and opportunities to resolve their case peacefully. This approach not only upholds due process, it also bolsters the legitimacy of the program in the eyes of the public and the courts (since it's evident that the government tried the least coercive measures first).

Importantly, the Processing Center operates under a **civil administrative mandate**, not as a jail or punitive camp. People who come in for processing are not treated as criminals by default – there is no automatic detention or handcuffing for simply receiving a notice. The atmosphere is meant to be like a service center or large-scale bureaucratic office. The goal is to **help individuals get their status sorted out correctly**. If someone is in the country legally or has a fixable issue, the process will confirm their status and let them walk out freely with updated records. If someone is *not* entitled to remain, the center handles that in an orderly way as well – ideally by arranging a voluntary departure or a scheduled removal that respects the person's dignity (allowing them to settle affairs, transport belongings, etc.), rather than through surprise raids. By centralizing everything at a dedicated facility, authorities can carry out the law **faithfully but humanely**, at high volume, and under careful oversight. In fact, this Minnesota pilot program was designed to handle up to **500,000 cases in a 120-day surge** period (an average capacity of about **8,000 individuals per day**) by using this streamlined, centralized model. Such scale is made possible only by the kind of meticulous planning and structure described in the sections below.

The result is a model that treats immigration enforcement as *"an administrative, process-driven challenge rather than a combat operation,"* executed with **"ruthless efficiency"** (efficient throughput) **and unwavering adherence to due process**. In the following sections, we break down how the center is laid out, how it functions, who runs it, and how it maintains throughput, fairness, and accountability from start to finish.

Physical Layout & Functional Zoning

The Processing Center is organized into distinct **physical zones**, each dedicated to a key function in the overall process. This **functional separation** of spaces and activities is deliberate: it keeps the operation orderly by preventing different procedures from bottlenecking or interfering with each other. Below are the major zones and their purposes, as established in the Minnesota State Fairgrounds site plan (which serves as the prototype facility):

- **Intake Zone:** A large reception and **initial processing hall** where individuals first arrive and check in. This area is set up with many parallel **intake lines or stations** to handle a high volume of arrivals in an orderly queue. For example, planners estimated space for on the order of **100–150 intake stations**, typically two staff per station, allowing around **300 staff** to register and screen people as they come in. The Intake zone is akin to the front desk of a very large service center – it's where identification is verified, basic questions are asked, and case files are opened. By having a high number of stations and a clear queuing system, the design avoids long waits and confusion. People have a predictable line to stand in and clear instructions, which contributes to a sense of fairness and calm even when thousands of people may be processed per day.

- **Processing Zone (Biometrics & Document Processing):** After initial intake, individuals move to a separate area for more detailed processing – things like **fingerprinting, photographs, background checks, and paperwork issuance**. This zone is organized in an assembly-line fashion as well, with roughly another **150 processing stations** staffed by around **300 personnel** (two per station) working in parallel. By dedicating a spacious hall to this purpose, the center ensures that administrative tasks like data entry, form filling, and biometric capture can be done quickly and in bulk. The layout resembles that of a large DMV or passport office, but scaled up significantly. Having a dedicated biometric and document processing area means that once people have checked in at Intake, they aren't kept milling around in the same spot; instead, they flow to the next stage in a controlled way. This **prevents congestion** in any one area and keeps each step focused. It also enables specialists (like fingerprint technicians or document reviewers) to work efficiently in their own section.

- **Interview/Hearing Zone:** This is a quieter section of the facility partitioned into many small rooms or booths where **adjudication interviews and immigration hearings** take place. Importantly, immigration **judges are on site**, and this zone effectively serves as a temporary courthouse within the center. The facility blueprint provided for roughly **120 such hearing rooms** (often by subdividing existing large rooms into smaller private spaces). Each room is modest – about 12x12 feet (roughly 144 sq. ft.) which is enough for a judge's bench or table, and space for the individual and their attorney/representative if needed. This satisfies due process needs in a compact way. By having **many hearing rooms operating at once** (up to 120 simultaneous proceedings in this model), the center can rapidly address cases that need a judge's decision. The co-location of these hearing rooms right next to the intake and processing areas is a huge advantage: rather than scheduling someone for a court date weeks later at an off-site court, the person can often see a judge **the same day or within days** at the center. The design ensures that the moment a legal determination is required, it can happen on-site without transferring the person elsewhere. This functional zone is kept separate from the noisy intake halls to maintain a courtroom-like atmosphere of concentration and to uphold the dignity of proceedings. Judges and legal staff have their own workspaces here, and cases are routed in a **predictable pipeline** from intake -> processing -> hearing as needed.

- **Immigration Offices (Case Management Zone):** In addition to the front-end processing areas, the center includes substantial office space for **case officers, analysts, and support staff** from various agencies to do behind-the-scenes work. In the Minnesota design, several existing buildings on an adjacent university campus were repurposed into office space, yielding about **1,000 office workstations (cubicles)** – enough for roughly **2,000 personnel** (working in shifts or together) handling paperwork, investigations, and coordination. These offices are where files are reviewed in depth, databases are updated, and interagency checks (like verifying

someone's benefit usage or any criminal flags) are coordinated. Having a dedicated office zone ensures that the more detailed casework can happen away from the crowded intake floor, yet still within walking distance. In practice, an individual might never see these back offices, but the work done there directly affects the outcome – e.g. confirming a person's eligibility for relief or checking if they have any outstanding legal issues. The layout separated high-volume public areas from these quieter office areas to both increase efficiency (staff can focus without the noise of large crowds) and protect privacy/sensitivity of records. This **functional zoning** upholds the principle of *"right task, right place."* As noted in site analysis, the university campus offices provided an ideal environment for detailed work like fraud detection and data analysis, which benefitted from being *"far from the busy intake lines"* but still tightly integrated into the operation.

- **Housing and Dormitory Zones:** Because the center's operation is continuous and involves many personnel (and potentially some individuals who are in transitional status), there are lodging facilities on-site. One part of this is **Staff Dormitories** – in the example case, an existing dormitory building (Bailey Hall on campus) plus temporary bunks allowed housing for on the order of **800 staff members on-site**. Providing on-site accommodation for staff serves multiple purposes: it supports **shift sustainability** (staff working long or odd hours have a place to rest and sleep without commuting) and it enables surge capacity (extra personnel can be brought in from out of town and housed at the center). Another housing area is **Barracks-style lodging**, which in the Fairgrounds model involved converting large exhibition halls or barns into open dormitory space with rows of bunks. This was calculated to yield **several thousand beds** (approximately 5,000+ bunks) primarily for any *temporary populations* that might need short-term holding or for additional support staff. It's important to clarify: the use of barracks is mostly for **logistical flexibility** – for example, if a large number of people are taken into custody at once pending removal, they can be humanely sheltered overnight; or if thousands of National Guard troops are deployed to assist, they have a place to sleep. These are not prison cells, but open dormitories, more like what you'd see in disaster relief operations or military basic training camps. By planning ample sleeping space, the center can avoid overcrowding and ensure **basic needs (rest, hygiene)** are met for anyone on site, whether workers or individuals awaiting next steps. There are also **Sustainment facilities** like kitchens and dining halls integrated into the layout. Existing cafeterias (at the fairgrounds and campus) were leveraged to provide meal service capable of **tens of thousands of meals per day**. For instance, the fairgrounds' cafeteria alone handled roughly 3,300 meals per day during fairs, and combined with campus dining, the plan was to comfortably feed all personnel and any housed individuals without strain. This is crucial for maintaining health and morale during a high-tempo operation.

- **Medical Zone:** On-site **medical facilities** are established to handle first aid, health screenings, and any medical issues that arise among both staff and participants in the process. In the Minnesota center, an existing large animal veterinary clinic was refitted for human medical use, providing roughly **300 treatment beds or exam stations** for triage and care. This essentially creates a field hospital within the center. It ensures that if someone is ill or injured, medical attention is immediately available. It also allows for required medical screening (for communicable diseases, for example) as part of intake. Serious cases can still be transferred to local hospitals, but having on-site medical capability prevents small issues from becoming big emergencies and adds a layer of humanitarian care. From a design perspective, dedicating ~43,000 square feet to medical space was an investment in safety for all involved. This again reflects the philosophy of treating the operation as an organized civil emergency response (not unlike a disaster response center) – you anticipate that among tens of thousands of people processed, some will need medical help, and you plan for it.

- **Transportation & Departure Zones:** The end of the process for many will involve transportation, either back to the community (if they are cleared or released) or out of the country (if they are being removed). To handle this, the center has extensive **Ground Departure** areas where buses and transport vehicles can be staged and loaded. The fairgrounds' large parking lots and roads were allocated for this purpose, with space for on the order of **100 buses at a time** to queue up for orderly loading. This means when groups of individuals have to be transported (whether to the airport for deportation flights, or to other facilities, or even released in an organized way), there is a **safe, controlled buffer area** to do that – away from public streets and with proper supervision. In addition, the site took advantage of an **adjacent rail spur** by designating a **Railyard Zone** that could handle train cars. In fact, about 50 railcars worth of space was set aside so that if needed, trains could be used to move large groups or equipment efficiently (this could be helpful for moving hundreds of people at once to distant detention centers or

ports of exit). While rail transport might not be commonly used, the inclusion of that option shows the planners' emphasis on **multiple transport modes** to prevent any bottleneck in outbound logistics. Finally, the **Staging Areas** for vehicles and personnel are a significant physical component: over **3,000 vehicle spaces** were identified across the fairgrounds lots for staging incoming buses, official vehicles, and parking for staff. A large operation means lots of movement, and these staging zones keep that movement organized. For instance, the **Grandstand** (a big open arena) was repurposed as a muster and briefing area where groups scheduled for removal could be gathered and oriented, and where staff units could assemble for roll-call. Clearly separating intake areas from departure areas (different sides of the grounds, etc.) ensures flows of people are not crisscrossing in chaotic ways. It's essentially the principle of *forward movement*: each group moves from one zone to the next in a single direction – from intake, to processing, to adjudication, to either an exit back to the community or to the departures area for removal. This physical layout underpins that orderly flow.

To summarize, the center's layout repurposes a large public venue into a **high-throughput processing machine**, with each part of the machine in its proper place. The fairgrounds portion (the core public-facing hub) in the Minnesota plan accounted for about **7,100 "cubicle equivalents" of space** – a way of saying enough area for thousands of workers and processes running in parallel. The adjacent campus portion provided another **1,800 units** of space focused on administrative support and housing. In total, this integrated site offers on the order of **9,000+ functional units of space**, which translated into capacity for **thousands of staff and many thousands of daily case throughputs**. Every zone is sized and equipped based on data and standard planning factors (for example, how many square feet per person for a dorm, or per courtroom, etc., drawn from known benchmarks). This meticulous planning was done so that **physical capacity would match the mission goals**, preventing overload. Each functional area contributes to a scalable and fair system: **separating functions** means that people move logically from one step to the next without backtracking or confusion, and each team of staff can focus on doing their job well in their designated space. This also contributes to **accountability and oversight** – observers or managers can tell which part of the process a person is in by their location, and it's clear which officials are responsible for which stage. In essence, the layout creates an **"assembly line" for immigration processing**, but one that treats people with dignity and keeps their cases moving steadily. The physical environment sends a message: this is a **well-organized administrative operation** – not a haphazard roundup.

Organizational Structure & Command Relationships

Running a facility of this scale and complexity requires a very clear organizational structure with defined command relationships. The Administrative Processing Center is operated under a **unified command** model that brings together multiple agencies and jurisdictions into one cohesive task force. This means there is **one overall commander** or leadership team directing the operation, even though personnel come from various federal (and sometimes state/local) agencies. The unified command ensures that everyone on site follows the same game plan and there are no conflicting orders.

At the top, the plan calls for a **Unified Command Task Force**, led by a designated federal commander (for example, a senior Department of Homeland Security official, potentially alongside a military deputy). This central commander has ultimate authority over the Processing Center's operations day-to-day. All major agencies involved have representation in the command team. By organizing this way, the operation avoids the pitfalls of inter-agency rivalries or siloed efforts – instead, **"all directives get filtered through a single structure."** In practice, this means if an issue arises (say a need to adjust how many people are being bussed in each day), the unified command can make a quick decision and all components will implement it, rather than different agencies doing their own thing.

A crucial aspect of the command structure is the role of **FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency)** as the lead coordinator for support functions. An emergency declaration (under the Stafford Act) is used to activate FEMA's involvement, explicitly framing the situation as a *civil emergency* that requires federal coordination. FEMA is not a law enforcement body; instead, it specializes in disaster and emergency logistics, which is exactly how the Processing Center is managed – like a massive emergency response operation. **FEMA handles logistics, infrastructure, and support:** managing the facility, providing meals, arranging medical services, transportation coordination, communications, and general administrative support. Importantly, FEMA's presence helps maintain a **"clear separation between emergency management and law enforcement authority."** Law enforcement agents (like ICE officers) focus on immigration processing and enforcement decisions, while FEMA personnel ensure those agents have what they need (electricity,

computers, food, etc.) to do their jobs efficiently. This separation is healthy for accountability – it prevents the law enforcement side from overstepping, because FEMA is essentially there to say, "We're running this facility as a civilian operation." FEMA also brings experience in making sure large-scale operations are **time-limited, transparent, and properly documented**. As the plan states, FEMA's coordination **"ensures that all activities remain time-limited, transparent, and accountable until facilities are restored and returned to state control."** In other words, part of FEMA's job is to plan for the end (demobilization) from the beginning, and to track everything in the meantime.

The primary agency responsible for the immigration enforcement mission is **ICE (Immigration and Customs Enforcement)**, particularly through its Enforcement and Removal Operations (ERO) arm. **ICE officers** form the core staff of the Processing Center – they are the ones who interview individuals, review cases, prepare any necessary charging documents or removal paperwork, and coordinate actual removal logistics. These are *civilian law enforcement officers* trained in immigration law. Alongside ICE ERO, other DHS components contribute: for instance, **HSI (Homeland Security Investigations)** agents might be involved, especially in later phases when investigating employers or conducting targeted raids outside the center. Additionally, **USCIS (Citizenship and Immigration Services)** might provide staff who are experts in verifying visa statuses or reviewing claims (since they handle applications and benefits in the normal system). All these immigration personnel are **co-located on site** in the office spaces mentioned earlier. By having them together, the plan fosters *"daily face-to-face coordination rather than stovepiped offices."* So, an ICE officer can walk over to a USCIS analyst to clarify a person's paperwork, instead of sending an email to an off-site office and waiting days. This tight coordination under one roof speeds up the processing and avoids miscommunication.

On the **judicial side**, the Department of Justice's Executive Office for Immigration Review (EOIR) assigns a team of **Immigration Judges** to the center. These judges (and their courtroom staff and interpreters) effectively set up a **temporary court** at the facility – for example, using a nearby university building or a dedicated area for courtrooms. The presence of DOJ immigration judges is crucial for due process: they conduct formal hearings and have the authority to issue orders (like removal orders, or grants of relief) on cases that need judicial ruling. The plan envisions enough judges to handle the caseload rapidly – possibly even using video links to bring in additional judges remotely if needed, but primarily **on-site judges to ensure speed**. There are also attorneys from ICE's legal arm (sometimes called OPLA) and possibly **Assistant U.S. Attorneys** involved, especially if there are any criminal proceedings (for example, if during the operation someone is charged with a crime, or if there are legal actions against those obstructing the process). Embedding the judicial function in the operation means an individual could be processed by ICE officers and see a judge in the **same day or same week**, rather than waiting the usual months for a court date. This tight integration of judges ensures that the legal review keeps pace with the enforcement—maintaining a lawful check on the process and providing timely resolutions. It demonstrates to participants and observers that this is **not** a kangaroo court or extra-legal system; it's literally the regular immigration court operating in a more accessible way.

The **Minnesota National Guard (and possibly other military support)** plays a significant role in security and support, under strict rules. Once **federalized (activated under federal authority)**, National Guard units are used to provide manpower for **site security, traffic control, and general support tasks**. Guard members might staff the perimeter checkpoints, ensuring only authorized individuals enter the facility; they direct the flow of buses and vehicles; they help run the meal services and lodging, etc. Essentially, they act as the **logistics and security backbone** of the site – analogous to how they might be used in a natural disaster to secure an area and assist with relief efforts. Importantly, military personnel remain under a military chain of command (up to a Deputy Commander in the unified command who is from the Department of Defense). The plan clearly states rules of engagement for them: the **military guards do not perform immigration law enforcement outside the facility**. This means you won't see National Guard soldiers out in the city arresting immigrants; their role is confined to supporting the operation's infrastructure and safety. They can, however, protect the facility and its occupants, and provide force protection if, say, there were a threat to the site. They can also accompany ICE agents on particularly **high-risk enforcement actions** as a security detail (for example, if ICE is conducting an operation to arrest a known violent offender, Guard members might go along to provide backup). But even then, the core arrest authority remains with the ICE agents or U.S. Marshals. The presence of the Guard frees up the civilian agents to focus on processing people rather than, say, guarding perimeters or directing traffic. It also sends a message of a well-supported, serious operation (a deterrence to anyone who might consider interfering), but done within legal bounds. Augmenting the Guard, a few **active-duty military units** were mentioned: for instance, a Military Police company to advise on detention operations, an Army engineering unit to help build any temporary structures or

fortifications, and possibly a military medical unit to bolster the clinic. All military involvement is carefully scoped to avoid *Posse Comitatus* issues (the ban on using Army/Air Force for domestic law enforcement). By keeping their duties to facility security and support, the operation remains legally sound while benefiting from the disciplined manpower the military provides.

Coordination with **Local Law Enforcement** is also part of the structure, though local police are not running the show. Each local agency (city police departments, county sheriffs) is invited to contribute **liaison officers** who are present at the center's coordination hub. These liaisons share information and help deconflict operations. For example, if federal teams will be operating in a certain city area to serve warrants (during the later enforcement phase), the local police liaison from that city will be informed so they can assist with area knowledge or ensure 911 operators know that a federal operation is happening (preventing friendly-fire incidents or confusion). Local police might also help in a limited support role, such as providing perimeter security on an operation or handling the booking process if individuals need to be held briefly in local jails. However, because the state of Minnesota (in this scenario) was not actively cooperating in enforcement, the plan doesn't depend on local police to enforce immigration laws. Instead, they are looped in to maintain public safety and avoid misunderstandings. The center has a **Law Enforcement Coordination Center** where these liaisons from state and local agencies can meet daily with federal commanders. This fosters transparency – locals know what the feds are doing – and helps the federal task force operate smoothly within the community's normal policing environment.

Furthermore, the operation involves numerous **support personnel** in non-enforcement roles, and these are integrated through a support structure. This includes **interpreters** for myriad languages, **clerical staff and data entry clerks** to handle the paperwork, **IT staff** to maintain computer systems and networks, **drivers** to shuttle people and supplies, **medical staff**, and **facility maintenance crews** to keep the place clean and functional. These individuals may come from various agencies or be contracted workers. For instance, ICE might bring contract data analysts, the Department of Defense might provide communications specialists to set up secure radios, etc.. To manage all of these moving parts, a **Joint Support Operations Center** is established on site. Think of this as the equivalent of the back-end operations room that makes sure everything from toilets to telecoms is working. If a computer breaks at an intake station, the IT specialist from this support center fixes it immediately. If the generators are running low on fuel, the logistics folks handle it. This level of support coordination is often overlooked, but it's vital: it **prevents small hiccups from growing into major delays**. In a continuous 24/7 operation, even a short outage or a translation delay could create a big backlog, so the structure is in place to troubleshoot in real-time.

All personnel across agencies receive **common training and briefing** before and during the operation to ensure unity of purpose and understanding of rules. They are instructed on the overall mission, the phased approach, and especially the **rules of engagement and use-of-force** appropriate to their role. For example, ICE agents are reminded of exactly when they can use force or must seek a judge's authorization; Guard members are trained on how to handle any disruptive situations with minimal force and defer to civilian law enforcement for actual arrests. Everyone is trained on handling sensitive scenarios, like if a family comes in or someone claims asylum or medical distress – clear protocols are set so those cases are referred to the right officers promptly. The mantra of this training is **professionalism and restraint** – acknowledging that "the whole world is watching," the operation's success hinges on disciplined, respectful conduct by all involved. By doing joint training, the operation builds a *"one team"* mentality despite the different uniforms. A Border Patrol agent, an Army National Guard soldier, and a FEMA coordinator might normally have very different cultures, but here they operate side by side with a common understanding of the process and each other's roles. This unity is reinforced constantly by leadership.

In summary, the organization of the Processing Center is like a **well-oiled task force** comprising various components: **a unified command** providing singular direction, **DHS/ICE** personnel executing the immigration mission, **DOJ judges** ensuring legal adjudication, **FEMA** and civilian agencies handling logistics and life support, **National Guard** and security units ensuring safety and order, and **locals and support staff** integrating the effort with the community and keeping the machinery running. This integrated approach *"breaks down silos"* that often hamper large operations, as noted in the strategic plan. Instead of each agency guarding its turf, everyone's efforts are marshalled toward the collective goal. The result is not only efficient (decisions get made faster, resources are allocated where needed without bureaucratic fights) but also **presentationally powerful**: it shows the public that the government is organized and working together on this, which can increase confidence. By having clear command relationships, accountability is also improved – it's always known who is in charge of what, so if problems arise, they can be pinpointed and fixed. This

structure is indeed novel for immigration enforcement, which traditionally might involve separate offices and long communication chains. Here, it's one unified effort, operating in sync.

Throughput & Capacity Logic

From the outset, the Processing Center was conceived to handle an **extremely high throughput** of cases – meaning it can process a large number of individuals per day – while maintaining orderly operations and due process for each person. The capacity and flow logic are akin to an assembly line or a large-scale service center, optimized for both speed and accuracy.

Quantitatively, the goal set in the strategic plan was to process on the order of **8,000 people per day** on average, with the potential to scale up further if needed. Over a four-month window, this would allow the center to handle up to roughly **500,000 cases**. These numbers are enormous, and achieving them required careful planning of each step to avoid chokepoints. The facility's capacity analysis translated every functional area into how many individuals per hour or per day it could handle. For example, having ~150 intake stations means hundreds of people can be checked in *simultaneously*; if each station takes, say, 15–20 minutes per person, then in one hour a single station might handle 3–4 people, so 150 stations could handle ~450–600 people per hour. Multiply that over a 10-12 hour operational day (or longer, if running in shifts around the clock) and you're in the several thousands just at intake. Similar calculations were applied to the processing lines and hearing rooms, etc., to ensure the "back end" could keep up with the "front end."

A core strategy to achieve high throughput is the use of **parallel processing and multiple, redundant lines**. Rather than one central queue or one mega-courtroom that would become a funnel, the center uses many smaller parallel channels. As described in internal planning, the fairgrounds' **"Northern Sector buildings"** were set up as multiple intake and processing **districts**, each operating like a mini field office. By having, say, four or five different large buildings each receiving and processing people, the operation acts like several offices running side by side. This **"assembly-line throughput"** design allows *thousands of cases per day without congestion*. It's the same logic as a supermarket opening multiple checkout lanes. Importantly, the flow is balanced so that one part doesn't outpace another: there's little point in intaking 10,000 people a day if you only have capacity to complete hearings for 1,000 a day – that would create a huge backlog inside the facility. Thus, the number of judges and hearing rooms was scaled such that, in theory, the adjudication throughput (with ~120 hearing rooms, possibly handling dozens of cases per judge per day in brief hearings) matches the intake rate. The **staffing levels** in each area are also matched to the task – e.g., thousands of ICE staff and support personnel are on hand to prepare cases and keep the paperwork flowing so that judges aren't idle and people don't sit waiting unnecessarily.

Another concept is **"gating"** the input based on capacity. The operation doesn't simply open the floodgates; it carefully manages how many people are summoned to the center in a given time period to avoid overloading the system. For instance, the program could schedule (via the subpoenas) a certain number of people to appear each day or week. The strategic plan explicitly notes that **daily metrics on capacity will be monitored** and the phasing of notices can be adjusted – *"not issuing the next wave of subpoenas until the center clears the current load,"* if necessary. This means if 50,000 people were given notices to appear over a month, not all 50,000 are expected on Day 1; they would be staggered perhaps alphabetically, by region, or by visa status in waves. If one week sees unexpected slowdowns (maybe a winter storm disrupts travel, or a legal challenge pauses some activity), the command can delay sending new notices so the folks already in the pipeline get properly processed. This adaptive management is akin to an appointment system or metered entry, ensuring **throughput remains smooth and queues don't spiral out of control**. It's much easier to dial up or down the flow than to deal with massive backlogs. In Phase 1 of the operation, they even tested the system with a smaller, low-risk population (legal visa holders) precisely to validate how many cases per day the setup can comfortably handle without "devolving into a humanitarian crisis" of overcrowding. Those early tests informed later throughput – if something wasn't working, they could fix it in real time.

The physical **capacity (space and resources)** is closely tied to throughput. For example, the capacity analysis used a unit called a *Cubicle Equivalent (CE)* (144 sq ft) to quantify how many people or workstations can fit in each zone. The total ~9,000 CEs of space translates to a certain number of processing stations, beds, etc. By knowing these numbers, planners could set realistic throughput targets. If you have 150 intake stations and each can handle ~X per hour, that sets one limit. If you have 120 court rooms and each judge can adjudicate Y cases per day, that's another limit. The idea is to balance all

parts so the flow is continuous. This is similar to how factories balance production lines or hospitals balance patient intake with available beds. The **functional separation** also means that if one area hits a snag, others can continue. For instance, if an interview room is tied up with a complex case, that doesn't halt intake of others – those can go to a different judge or wait in a scheduled manner without clogging the intake lobby.

Additionally, the center uses **technology and standardized workflows** to speed things along. All data from each step is entered into centralized systems that all teams can access. So when someone goes from intake to the hearing, the judge can already see the digital file prepared moments before by the intake officer. They don't have to start from scratch. The process is standardized: each person gets a case number, a file is created, and a checklist of steps is followed. **"Clear timelines"** are established for each stage (30 days to comply with first notice, 14 days for second, etc.), which not only gives individuals a fair chance but also keeps the machine moving on a schedule. By having a predictable pipeline, the operation avoids the common pitfall of cases lingering in limbo. As one document summarized, *"co-located teams, standardized workflows, and clear timelines allow cases to move quickly without sacrificing procedural integrity."* In short, coordination replaces chaos as the means to go fast.

Another factor in throughput is **prioritization**. The program sequences which groups are processed first in order to optimize resources and demonstrate progress. For example, early on, those with legal visas or more straightforward cases were invited first ("low-risk, high-value population"). These cases are easier to verify and typically compliant, so they can be processed quickly and with positive outcomes (their records get updated and they leave). This accomplishes two things: it tests the system under relatively manageable conditions, and it gets a large chunk of the law-abiding population through the system, *refreshing the data* on them which helps later phases. It was noted that focusing on legally present individuals first provides *"a high-confidence verification layer"* and yields clean data that can be cross-checked with state records, thereby strengthening the integrity of later enforcement. From a throughput standpoint, this means the initial days of the center's operation likely saw high volumes of compliance check-ins (people coming in willingly) which the center could handle swiftly. Later, as the focus shifts to those who ignored notices (and thus enforcement actions), the volume might drop, but the intensity of work per case might increase (because those might involve arrests or escorts). The system is phased so that it can **"absorb volume through administrative resolution"** first, reducing the number of tough enforcement cases left for the end. This gradient makes the workload more manageable overall – many cases get resolved in the easy stages, and only the more intractable ones move to the hard stage.

To ensure capacity isn't exceeded, the center also has built-in **contingencies and buffers**. Large overflow tents or additional spaces can be activated if unexpectedly high numbers of people arrive on a given day (for instance, extra cots if holding areas start to fill up). The planning even accounted for things like *what if a lot of families with children show up?* They would have child-friendly waiting areas and a process to handle minors carefully (like referring them to social services or ensuring they stay with parents). In terms of transport capacity, the inclusion of rail and having 100+ buses on standby means even if a very large number of people need to be moved in a short time (say the final day sees a big push of removals), the vehicles are there to do it efficiently. The **grandstand staging** for departures mentioned earlier allows for assembling large groups so that, for example, three planes' worth of individuals can depart in one day in a coordinated convoy of buses. All these measures speak to a throughput logic of *avoiding single points of failure.* There isn't just one bus, one line, or one judge – there are many, and everything is scalable.

It's also worth highlighting **throughput vs. rights**: The design consciously refuses to trade fairness for speed. Instead, it finds speed *through* good design. A quote from the plan encapsulates this: *"The program achieves speed by coordination, not by curtailing rights."* All individuals still get notices, hearings, and chances to appeal or seek relief; those steps are simply organized to happen much faster than in the normal disjointed system, courtesy of the co-location and focus of resources. Thus, efficiency comes from eliminating downtime (like waiting months for a court date) and eliminating redundancy (like multiple agencies separately calling the same person in, when one combined process can do it). It does **not** come from skipping any steps of due process. In fact, maintaining due process is seen as essential to the throughput logic because it means decisions are **final and defensible** – there's less chance of legal challenges halting the whole operation if each case was handled with the proper procedure. By getting **"cases right the first time"** through comprehensive checks and immediate corrections of records, the center avoids re-work or repeated tries, which ultimately improves throughput as well. An error-prone process might seem fast initially but then bog down in appeals or protests; this one aims to be **fast and correct**.

The result of this meticulous throughput planning is that the fairgrounds plus campus infrastructure could **"accommodate tens of thousands of daily interactions"** across intake, interviews, adjudications, and transport coordination. This doesn't mean tens of thousands of people are deported each day, but rather every touchpoint (each form checked, each person transported, each inquiry answered) counts as an interaction. It underscores the volume of activity the system can sustain. The capacity to **scale up** or down is also built-in. If political or practical needs required expanding the operation, the model can be copied to other sites (the plan explicitly considered it a pilot for regional hubs). If the load drops, parts of the site can be stood down early.

In essence, the throughput and capacity logic of the Processing Center ensures that it can **process large volumes efficiently while remaining fair and calm**. It does this through **parallelization of processes, careful balancing of resources, continuous monitoring and adjustment of input, phased focus on easier cases first, and robust contingency plans**. This level of throughput is unprecedented in immigration operations, which is why so much emphasis was placed on calculating capacities and thinking through workflow. By treating it almost like a factory or disaster response center, the designers could plan for clear throughputs: how many per hour, per day at each stage. And by treating it as a **public-facing service center**, they ensured that throughput would not come at the expense of dignity or order (people are not being herded chaotically; they are lining up at designated stations, moving through a known sequence). The **"predictable intake lines"** concept fits here: people know which line to go to and what will happen next, so they cooperate, which in turn makes the process even faster. Overall, the Processing Center's throughput capacity proves that with the right infrastructure, the government can dramatically accelerate immigration case processing – achieving in a day what used to take weeks – while **keeping the process legal, transparent, and humane**.

Staffing, Workflow Design & Shift Sustainability

The human element – the staffing and workflow design – is as important as the physical setup in making the Processing Center run effectively over an extended period. Thousands of personnel are involved, and they must work in concert, often around the clock, without burning out or causing lapses. The plan addresses this through smart workflow design, shift management, and on-site support for staff.

Firstly, the **workflow is highly standardized and team-based**. From the moment a case file is opened at intake, there is a clear sequence of steps and responsible roles at each step. Staff are organized into **functional teams** (intake team, processing team, legal review team, etc.), and each team has specific duties and checklists to follow. This specialization means each staff member can become very proficient at their task, whether it's checking documents or entering data, rather than juggling everything. It also means the hand-offs between teams are well-defined: for example, an intake officer knows once she's done her part, the file goes to a processing clerk next – and it's that clerk's job to maybe do fingerprints and photos, etc. The standard operating procedures are documented so that everyone is literally "on the same page" about how to process a case. This reduces errors and confusion. An immigrant going through the center will notice that each official they meet has a clear role and information – they're not fumbling or asking redundant questions because the workflow was designed to avoid that. One guiding principle from the plan is that **professional, predictable workflows** allow speed without sacrificing fairness. Each person gets the same structured opportunity to present info, have it checked, and get an outcome. From the staff perspective, this predictability lowers stress because they know *exactly* what they're supposed to do and what their colleagues before and after them are doing. The plan explicitly said that officers get to work **"within known procedures, during known hours, with immediate access to adjudication and records support,"** which *"lowers stress for both officers and the public."*. So workflow design here isn't just about efficiency; it's also about creating a stable, almost routine environment even in a massive operation.

To keep the machine running, **staffing levels are robust and rotations are used**. The plan called for on the order of **several thousand personnel** to staff the center, drawn from various agencies as described earlier. This includes the enforcement officers, the administrative support, the translators, the security teams, etc. With such numbers, they can implement **shift work** to cover long hours. The center likely operates extended hours each day, if not 24/7 in some functions. For example, intake might operate 16 hours a day in two shifts, while security and holding areas operate 24 hours a day in three shifts. Having enough people means no one person or team has to work non-stop. **Shift scheduling** is arranged to ensure overlap and continuity – e.g., a second shift of intake officers will overlap slightly with the first shift to do a smooth turnover, passing along any important info about pending cases.

A critical factor enabling shift work is the provision of **on-site facilities for staff rest and sustenance**. The center has **staff dormitories and rest areas** where employees can sleep, shower, and recharge between shifts. For instance, Bailey Hall on the campus offered around 500 permanent beds normally, expanded to ~800 in emergency bunk style. These are used primarily by personnel who are deployed from out of town (many federal agents and support staff came from across the country) so they don't have to commute to hotels, and also for anyone who might finish a late shift and need to catch some sleep before perhaps a short turnaround. This on-site lodging greatly increases **shift sustainability** – it cuts down travel time for staff, reduces fatigue, and allows scheduling flexibility. If an agent knows they can sleep in a secure dorm and eat on-site, they can more easily do a 12-hour shift and then rest, as opposed to adding a commute and other daily hassles. Additionally, **meal services** are provided in abundance (recall, tens of thousands of meals capacity), meaning staff don't have to go offsite to eat. There are likely break areas with refreshments near every major work zone. By taking care of basic needs (food, rest, hygiene), the operation keeps morale up and prevents burnout.

Furthermore, **FEMA's coordination role** includes making sure staff have these life support services. FEMA set up the base camp, so to speak: the housing, catering, laundry, medical care for staff, etc., are all running in the background so that the law enforcement officers and clerks can focus on their jobs. The result is akin to a military base or disaster response camp where everything you need is there. This level of support means that even if the operation runs non-stop for 120 days, it's sustainable because teams rotate in and out. Some might work a few weeks on, then be rotated out for a break as fresh personnel rotate in (especially for federal agents who might not stay the whole time). The **National Guard** presence also helps fill any gaps – they have additional personnel to take over certain posts if someone needs rest or if one team's shift ends.

On the workflow side, another element that helps staff and efficiency is the integration of **behind-the-scenes checks** into the process so staff don't have to do everything manually or sequentially. For example, the system automatically cross-checks an individual's data with various databases (criminal records, benefit usage, etc.) once their info is entered at intake. The center also hosts **other federal teams** (like fraud detection units, benefits auditors) who work in parallel to verify things. As noted, *"the center coordinates with other federal teams behind the scenes,"* so if an intake officer flags a question about public benefits eligibility, there's literally someone on site who can start looking into that while the person is still there. This means front-line staff aren't waiting days for responses from other agencies – they can often get answers within hours, which makes their workflow smoother and reduces backlog. It also takes some burden off the front-line staff; they don't individually have to be experts in every possible issue, because they can call on the specialist teams on site.

Training and workflow design also cover how to handle **exceptional cases** without derailing the whole process. For instance, if someone comes in with a complex asylum claim, or a family with minor children appears, there are protocols: maybe they get referred to a specialized unit or scheduled for a separate handling so that the main line keeps moving. Staff are trained to identify such cases and trigger the appropriate sub-process (like involving child welfare officials or asylum officers) rather than getting stuck. This way, one unusual case does not hold up the dozens of others in line. Essentially, the workflows include **contingency paths** for various scenarios (medical emergency, someone becomes uncooperative, missing paperwork, etc.), and staff know how to react quickly thanks to drills and briefings.

In terms of numbers and sustaining operations: The center can tap a **surge reserve of personnel** if needed. Because it's run in an emergency mode, additional agents or officers could be flown in if volume spiked. The flexible workspaces (like large exhibition halls converted to offices) mean they can add more desks and teams without building new infrastructure – this was a conscious choice so that staffing could scale. For example, *"flexible floor plans support modular teams and surge staffing without constructing temporary structures."*. This is beneficial for sustainability because if processing is going slower than expected, they can simply assign more people to certain tasks to catch up, rather than extending hours and overworking the existing staff.

The **culture of the operation** as instilled by leadership is also about measured pace and avoiding burnout. They want efficiency but not at the cost of mistakes or mistreatment. The messaging to staff is to treat this as a **marathon, not a sprint** – a 120-day (or longer) campaign where consistency is key. That's why *shift lengths* and *days off* are undoubtedly built into the schedule. Many staff likely work something like 10 days on, 4 days off, or other rotations, especially for those in stressful roles. And because the mission is finite (they know it will ramp down after a few months), agencies can

cycle their people in and out. For example, one ICE field office might send 50 officers for the first month, then rotate in a fresh 50 later. The ample on-site accommodations make such rotations feasible.

Accountability of work is maintained by documentation and supervision. Each shift likely has briefings at the start and end (a standard practice in such operations) to pass information, set goals, and check any issues. Supervisors monitor throughput metrics constantly – e.g., how many cases were completed today versus target – and if there's a shortfall, they analyze why. Perhaps a particular step is understaffed or someone needed more training; they can fix that next shift. There might be friendly competition between processing "districts" on site to motivate teams to keep up productivity (while still doing things right). But overall, the tone is professional and steady: they don't want sloppy rush, they want **"ruthless efficiency" achieved through good process**.

Communication among staff is facilitated by co-location and regular updates. Being in one big complex means if something changes (say a law or policy update during the operation, or a new country's situation requires special handling), they can gather everyone or disseminate info quickly in person. There's likely a daily joint meeting of team leads and a system of incident reporting to catch any problems (like if someone encounters an obstacle in the workflow, they report it and the process can be tweaked). This responsiveness keeps the workflow design flexible and staff empowered to suggest improvements as they go.

Lastly, **staff wellness** is not ignored. The presence of medical facilities means staff too can get care if they get sick or injured. There may be counseling or chaplain services given the stressful nature of enforcement work – many law enforcement agencies provide that to their officers in operations. Considering the public scrutiny, staff are reminded to stay professional but also have support if they feel overwhelmed. All these measures ensure that the workforce can sustain the operation at high tempo for the required duration. The proof of this design is that by the end, the operation reported having managed the surge without major incidents of staff exhaustion or indiscipline, thanks to proper rest cycles and support.

In summary, the Processing Center's staffing and workflow design prioritize **clarity, specialization, and care for personnel**. Workflows are **clearly mapped and standardized**, making the process efficient and reducing ambiguity for both staff and participants. **Shift systems and on-site facilities** provide the backbone for a sustained operation, ensuring that the people running the center can do their jobs effectively day after day. By investing in staff comfort and defining their tasks sharply, the center maintains a high level of performance and avoids the burnout or chaos that could derail such a massive effort. This human-centric approach is a big reason the center can scale its service without "cutting corners" – instead of expecting a few people to work miracles, it brings in a multitude and **organizes them like a disciplined army of bureaucrats** to accomplish an extraordinary throughput with consistency.

Accountability, Documentation & Oversight

A system of this magnitude, exercising significant power, must have robust accountability and oversight mechanisms to ensure it operates fairly and within the law at all times. The Administrative Immigration Processing Center was explicitly designed with **transparency, documentation, and multi-layered oversight** from start to finish, to build public trust and to safeguard individuals' rights.

Judicial Oversight at Every Stage: One of the strongest oversight features is the built-in role of immigration judges and the courts throughout the process. Unlike some enforcement operations that rely solely on agency decisions, here every crucial escalation requires a judge's sign-off. For example, an individual who doesn't respond to the administrative subpoena can only be compelled by a **judicial subpoena** (Step 2) – a judge issues that order, not ICE alone. If there's further non-compliance, any warrant for arrest or removal order is similarly issued by an immigration judge (Step 3). And ultimately, any arrest (Step 4) is executed **under the authority of that judicial warrant**. This means that at each major juncture, a neutral arbiter (the judge) is reviewing the situation. The judge ensures that due process has been followed – e.g., was the person properly served notice? Did they get enough time? Only if satisfied will they authorize the next step. This oversight mechanism protects against arbitrary enforcement. It also creates a **clear record**: the judge's orders and findings are documented in the case file, so anyone reviewing later (an appeals court, Congress, the media) can see that enforcement was based on legal justifications and not whim. The plan highlighted that **judicial oversight at every stage** makes the enforcement framework *"legally durable, procedurally fair, and resilient to judicial scrutiny."* In other words,

because judges were involved throughout, the whole operation is more likely to withstand any external legal challenges. It's essentially pre-vetting enforcement with judicial approval.

Complete Documentation and Record-Keeping: Every interaction and decision in the center is documented. When a subpoena is issued (administrative or judicial), there's a copy of it in the person's file and a record of service. When someone appears at intake, their information updates and responses are logged. If a judge holds a hearing, it's on the record (many likely have transcripts or at least written orders). If someone is given a removal order, that order is in writing. This creates an **"administrative record of progressive escalation"** showing that the person was given notices and chances in sequence. Such documentation is crucial if there is later any question about how a case was handled. For example, if a deportation is carried out, the record can show that the person ignored an administrative notice and a court order, establishing that due process was afforded. This level of documentation also enables oversight bodies (like inspectors general or courts) to audit cases after the fact. The strategic plan noted that by **"documenting an administrative record of progressive escalation (demonstrating that less severe methods were applied first),"** the operation would be in a strong position to legally defend its actions.

The center also implemented strict **data integrity measures**. One reason for the in-person review was to **correct and update all records** with the individual present. That means the government's databases become more accurate (eliminating outdated addresses, noting any new info provided, resolving identity confusion). Accurate data is a form of accountability: it ensures decisions (like who gets a subpoena or who might be targeted for enforcement) are based on solid information, not errors. It also protects individuals from being wrongfully caught up due to bad data. All these updates are part of the documentation – if John Doe comes in and proves he actually already got a green card, the system updates that and so any future enforcement would exclude him. The emphasis on *"setting the record straight"* is not just administrative housekeeping; it's to ensure **fair outcomes** and that no one is removed or sanctioned due to clerical mistakes.

Internal Oversight and Incident Reporting: Within the operation, there are layers of supervision. Every team has supervisors, and the unified command monitors activities closely. If something goes wrong – say an allegation of mistreatment or a procedural error – there are mechanisms to address it. Being under an emergency/official mission, it's likely that **DHS's Office of Professional Responsibility** or similar internal affairs units have a presence to investigate any misconduct. The transparency of having multiple agencies on site can also act as a check: for instance, DOJ attorneys are around and they would raise concerns if they saw ICE officers doing something improper, and vice versa. Additionally, **the U.S. Marshals Service** (not previously detailed, but they might be involved in security for judges or high-risk custody) brings their own standards. The inter-agency nature means no single group can hide issues easily; everything is in the open.

Public and External Oversight: Recognizing the controversial nature of large-scale immigration enforcement, the plan called for a **proactive public communication strategy** and openness to observers where feasible. While the facility is secure, certain areas might be opened to vetted observers (like human rights liaisons or media pools) to witness the process. In Phase 1, media were allowed to see and report on the orderly intake of legal workers, which helped build public confidence that this was not a brutal roundup. The operation managers wanted to *"showcase… routine check-ins without disruption,"* using visuals to prove the process was calm and fair. This kind of transparency – letting cameras see the intake lines and the courteous interactions – serves as a public oversight mechanism: it's hard to hide misconduct if the press has been periodically invited. Of course, sensitive proceedings (like individual hearings) might be closed to protect privacy, but overall the narrative was tightly managed to emphasize legality and respect.

Another form of oversight came from the **legal framework** under which the operation took place. The use of a **National Emergency declaration** and potentially the **Insurrection Act** (since they federalized the Guard) actually triggers additional oversight. For instance, a National Emergency requires periodic reporting to Congress. It was mentioned that the emergency declaration *"activates oversight, reporting, and accountability mechanisms"* while empowering the federal process. So DHS and FEMA would be reporting up the chain on progress and conduct. The Insurrection Act invocation (if used) also tends to draw intense scrutiny – the military would document their orders and actions carefully to ensure they stayed within legal bounds (since misuse of military domestically is a serious matter).

Accountability to the Local Community and Elected Officials: The operation, though federally led, had to coordinate with state and local authorities to some extent. By making the operation transparent and showing it was temporary, it aimed to be accountable to local concerns. The plan specifically included a final phase of **demobilization and returning authority to local control**, signaling accountability that the feds wouldn't just occupy a state facility indefinitely. Also, efforts like audits of local government cooperation and financial incentives (withholding funds for non-cooperation, etc.) were done through legal channels, ensuring that any pressure on local authorities was grounded in lawful mechanisms (like federal funding conditions). This was overseen by DOJ and others to avoid abuse.

One cannot ignore oversight by the **courts external to the operation** as well. Because everything is by the book, any person who feels wronged still has the right to appeal or file habeas corpus, etc. The operation's structure intended that if such court challenges arose, the government could present a strong record that the person had due process. Indeed, by having judges involved, many decisions are already judicial, so appeals would go through the normal immigration appeals process (the Board of Immigration Appeals, then federal courts), not as emergency lawsuits stopping the whole operation. This is a form of legal accountability: the operation was built to be **"resilient to judicial scrutiny,"** meaning it would stand up in court because it rigorously followed the law and documented that fact.

Transparency of Process and Fair Treatment: Another accountability measure is ensuring **non-discrimination and uniform application** of the rules. The program made it a point that *everyone* (minus green card holders) was subject to the same initial step, irrespective of nationality or other factors. There was no singling out of specific ethnic groups or neighborhoods; it was broad and status-based. This uniform approach protects against accusations of bias and is itself a form of fairness oversight. Additionally, communications were provided in multiple languages and plain language so people understood their rights and obligations. By eliminating confusion and keeping people informed (for example, what to bring, where to go, consequences of non-compliance clearly spelled out on the notice), the program makes sure that if someone doesn't show up or doesn't comply, it's not because they didn't know – it's a willful choice. That clarity is documented (the subpoena forms, the public info campaign materials) and serves as evidence that the government did everything reasonable to encourage voluntary compliance before taking enforcement action.

Continuous Monitoring and Adjustments: Oversight is also real-time. The unified command likely had a monitoring center tracking every aspect – number of people processed, any incidents, any use of force occurrences, etc., on a daily basis. If a trend was worrying (e.g., too many complaints about a certain process), they could intervene immediately. The presence of FEMA and other support also means there were **safety officers and inspectors** walking around: e.g., health inspectors ensuring sanitary conditions in barracks, or safety officers checking that crowd control is done properly. These might sound minor, but they feed into accountability that the operation is being run professionally and humanely, not cutting safety corners.

Finally, on a high level, the entire mission is accountable to political leadership and the public narrative. It was understood that if anything egregious happened (like abuse of detainees, or wrongful deportations), it could derail the mission politically. Therefore, the organizers set a tone of *"zero tolerance for misconduct"* and *"the whole world is watching us, we must get this right."* This culture encourages personnel to self-police as well. Many participants likely took pride in showing that enforcement can be done *"by the book."*

In conclusion, the Processing Center operates under a **dense framework of oversight and documentation** that ensures actions are transparent, justified, and reviewable. Key safeguards include: **judicial involvement at each step** (providing external oversight and legal legitimacy); **meticulous documentation** of notices, decisions, and outcomes (creating a paper trail for each case); **internal accountability** via unified command, inter-agency checks and training on rules of engagement; and **public transparency** measures, from media access to clear public communication, to demonstrate fairness. These mechanisms work together to answer the fundamental question: *"Who watches the watchers?"* – In this model, the **judges, the multi-agency leadership, the public (through transparency), and the law itself** all watch the operation. This multi-faceted oversight is what makes the center not just efficient, but **legitimate and worthy of public trust**.

Demobilization & Mission Closure

From the beginning, the Administrative Immigration Processing Center was conceived as a **temporary, mission-specific operation**, not a permanent institution. A clear end-state and exit strategy were built into the plan to ensure that after accomplishing its objectives, the federal presence would draw down and normal governance would resume. This approach to demobilization was crucial for public acceptance – it reassures the community that this is an emergency measure with an *expiration date*, not a continuous federal occupation or a new permanent detention camp.

Planned Phase-Out: The operation was divided into phases, and the final phase (Phase 5 in the strategic outline) is explicitly focused on **transition and closure**. Each phase had **completion criteria**, and once those were met, the phase would move to the next. By Phase 5, the surge of processing in Minnesota was largely complete, and attention shifted to wrapping up the effort and extracting lessons. This phased approach ensured there was a structured way to declare "mission accomplished" when appropriate. The plan states that the protocol is *"intentionally mission-limited. It is temporary, purpose-built, and designed to conclude."*. In practice, this means from day one they tracked progress (e.g., how many of the targeted population have been processed?) and began planning how to scale down operations as the numbers dwindled.

Restoration of Normal Facilities and Authority: A key part of demobilization is returning the site and responsibilities back to local control. The fairgrounds and campus that were used would be vacated and any temporary modifications removed. The plan notes that there was **formal documentation establishing the time-limited use** of facilities, with **explicit provisions that the site would be restored afterward**. This was to alleviate any local fears that the federal government might "take over" the State Fairgrounds permanently. By agreement, once the operation ended, the grounds would be cleaned up, any damages repaired (with federal reimbursement), and handed back to the state. The National Guard troops would be released back to state authority or to their normal duties; federal agents would return to their home offices. Essentially, the federal footprint would shrink back to normal. This was communicated clearly as part of the plan's transparency: the public was made aware that the operation had a **"clear end state of demobilization and withdrawal."** Highlighting that end state helped build confidence that this was not martial law or an indefinite campaign.

Time-Limited Legal Authorities: The legal mechanisms used, like the emergency declaration and any invocation of extraordinary authorities, were time-limited as well. For example, if the President invoked the Insurrection Act to federalize the Guard, that status would end once order was restored (which in this context means once the processing center's main work is done and any security concerns are resolved). The Stafford Act emergency (for FEMA support) also is not open-ended; it's typically reviewed and closed when the situation is stabilized. By design, all these powers had sunset clauses or would be terminated formally. The plan even mentioned that concern over any "permanence of facility control" is addressed by those formal limitations and by **"explicit civilian management under FEMA"** to avoid the sense of a military takeover.

Drawdown Process: As the operation winds down, staffing is reduced in stages. Perhaps new subpoenas stop being issued by a certain date (no new inputs), and the focus turns to resolving any remaining cases. Certain parts of the center can close earlier than others. For instance, if by the final weeks only a few hundred people remain to be processed or removed, they don't need 150 intake stations running – those might close and everything might consolidate to one building. The plan considered scenarios where if the operation needed to scale down quickly (due to political or practical reasons), it could **"shift into a low-profile monitoring phase... shutting down the large public-facing parts of the site"** and continuing minimal operations through regular ICE offices. In the best case, by the time of closure, the vast majority of targeted cases have been handled (either people self-deported, were removed, or were verified to be in compliance). Any remaining individuals who didn't get processed would revert to the normal system (ICE field offices would continue to monitor or pursue them as part of ongoing enforcement, but without the big center).

Oversight and After-Action: During demobilization, there is an emphasis on capturing **lessons learned and ensuring continuity of any positive outcomes**. The plan called for compiling *"all the data, protocols, and training from the operation into a national playbook or after-action report"*. This document would detail best practices, resource needs, and lessons, effectively serving as a guide for any future large-scale operation. In other words, the closure of the Minnesota center would yield a template for how to do this elsewhere or in the future, thereby not losing the knowledge gained. This

final report is itself an accountability document – it would likely be shared with DHS leadership, possibly Congress, to show what was done, how, and with what results.

Additionally, demobilization involves **public communication** about the end of the operation. The government would actively announce when the center ceases new processing and when all operations conclude, making it clear that the emergency phase is over. In Phase 5, the plan was to **"actively promote the Minnesota success story"** to bolster support for broader immigration reforms and potential future regional centers. Essentially, they wanted to frame the closure as "this mission was successful and is concluding as planned, leaving a legacy we can build on." For local communities, this helps turn the page – the fairgrounds go back to being fairgrounds, campus to being campus, and life goes on, hopefully with improved conditions (from their perspective, removal of those unlawfully present who were causing concern, etc., and demonstration that law was upheld). The operation's end is also timed with some policy changes (in the scenario, changes like end of birthright citizenship were on the horizon), so the narrative is that this intensive enforcement effort enabled or complemented those changes, and now the country moves into a new policy era with the immediate crisis dealt with.

Accountability in Closing: As part of closing out, there might be independent evaluations – for example, the DHS Inspector General or GAO might review the operation's conduct and effectiveness. Because everything was documented, they can audit how many people were processed, how many were removed vs. allowed to stay, how funds were used, etc. The temporary nature also means budgets were finite; once the operation is over, those extra funds and resources are pulled back. FEMA, for instance, will close out the books on the emergency spending, ensure contractors are paid, and handle any property disposition (like if temporary equipment was brought in, it's taken away). The clarity of a mission end helps prevent mission creep and indefinite expenditures.

Community Healing and Transition: On a softer side, demobilization includes addressing any community issues left. For example, if families were separated (some members removed, some left behind), the local social services or NGOs might step in, and the feds could provide info or support as needed as they exit. Any detainees still in custody at the end would be transferred to standard ICE detention if they couldn't be resolved by the closure date, meaning local ICE offices take over those cases. There's an effort to ensure no one just falls through the cracks in transition.

The plan's authors stressed that showing a *finite* operation improves **public confidence**, because one fear in any enforcement surge is that it becomes a permanent state of affairs or a never-ending dragnet. By **"the clear end state of demobilization and withdrawal,"** the public (including critics) could be assured that normal life will resume and that the rule of law was restored without permanently upending local governance. Indeed, the idea was that Minnesota's pilot would conclude and leave behind not chaos, but a **proof of concept** and perhaps a populace more trusting that immigration laws can be enforced humanely. Phase 5 in the plan speaks to using that credibility to possibly push for longer-term reforms (like tougher employer enforcement or new legal changes) once the emergency apparatus is gone. This indicates that mission closure is not seen as a vacuum, but a handoff to "the normal system" improved by what was achieved.

In practical terms, the **physical teardown** happens swiftly after operations cease. Temporary structures (tents, fencing, etc.) are removed. Any borrowed equipment is returned. The fairgrounds and campus are likely inspected with state officials to document any needed repairs, and those are done at federal expense as promised. The National Guard likely has a ceremony of colors coming down, symbolically ending the mission. What remains are the updated databases and case outcomes, which are handed off to the agencies that will follow up (for example, ICE's local office now has a much cleaner list of who is left unlawfully present, and perhaps that list is much shorter).

By the end, **all federal personnel withdraw** to their normal stations, and any extraordinary authorities (like troops on the streets) are terminated. The end of the operation is a return to peacetime, so to speak. The fairgrounds can hold the next State Fair without any sign it was once an ad-hoc immigration center, aside from maybe some after-action reports on government websites detailing the historic operation that took place.

In summary, **Demobilization & Mission Closure** for the Processing Center entails a **structured wind-down**, fulfilling the promise that this was a temporary surge. It ensures all temporary measures are rolled back: facilities returned, troops withdrawn, emergency authorities lifted. It also consolidates knowledge gained and formally reports on the outcomes for transparency. This closure strategy was vital to maintaining the legitimacy of the operation – it showed that the goal was

to solve a problem, not to permanently occupy or radically alter the community. By planning for demobilization from the start, the operation leaders kept themselves accountable to finishing the job and stepping back. As the plan put it, the protocol *"prioritizes safety, fairness, and accuracy,… and is designed to conclude."*. And conclude it does – leaving behind a model and a record, but ceasing its active presence, thus restoring normalcy and proving that the rule of law was upheld in a measured, not open-ended, way.