# British woman detained by US immigration in concerning conditions



A British woman from Monmouthshire, Wales, named Rebecca Burke, is currently detained by U.S. immigration officials under what her family describes as concerning conditions. The 28-year-old graphic artist has been held at the Tacoma Northwest Detention Facility in Washington State for 12 days following an unsuccessful attempt to cross into Canada.

Rebecca, who embarked on a four-month backpacking trip across North America, had initially arrived in New York at the beginning of the year. Her journey included plans to stay with host families in return for performing light domestic chores, a practice that was acceptable during her previous stays in Portland, Oregon, and elsewhere. However, when she attempted to cross the border into Canada on February 26, she was informed that her tourist visa did not permit her to partake in such arrangements. Following this, Canadian authorities advised her to fill out new paperwork before attempting to re-enter the United States.

Upon returning to the U.S. border, Rebecca found herself denied re-entry and labelled as an "illegal alien." Her father, Paul Burke, detailed the distressing circumstances of her detention, reporting that she was handcuffed and taken to the detention centre, where she has experienced numerous restrictions. According to Mr Burke, her basic needs are not being met; as a vegan, she has been provided with a diet of cold rice, potatoes, and beans, and her communication with the outside world is severely limited, consisting of monitored phone calls and constrained visiting policies.

Catherine Fookes, the Labour MP for Monmouthshire, expressed deep concern over the situation, stating, “I am deeply concerned about my constituent’s welfare and the distress this situation is causing her and her family." She indicated that her office has been in regular contact with the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) and other relevant authorities to expedite a resolution. "We have relayed the family’s request for voluntary departure and continue to push for clear answers on the next steps to get her home as soon as possible," Fookes remarked.

The excessive length of time Rebecca has spent in detention without a clear timeline for release raises apprehensions regarding her treatment. Reports suggest that the immigration facility is experiencing a backlog due to a crackdown on immigration, a policy shift that has generated concern over the treatment of detainees. The spokesperson for Ms Fookes acknowledged these “welfare concerns,” highlighting that detainees have limited access to exercise and a sparse diet.

Paul Burke lamented the circumstances that have transformed his daughter’s anticipated journey into a distressing ordeal, describing them as a “nightmare” that has left the family in a state of uncertainty. He and his wife, Andrea, are actively seeking assistance, having contacted multiple authorities, including the British consulate and the FCDO. In light of their daughter’s predicament, the Burkes are advocating for an achievable pathway for her to return home voluntarily, a process that is now entwined with the complexities of U.S. immigration law.

The FCDO has acknowledged the situation, assuring that they are in contact with local authorities regarding the detention of the British national. There is ongoing uncertainty about the timeframe for resolving her case, and the family continues to seek legal guidance in hopes of facilitating Rebecca's return to the UK.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## References

* <https://www.theforester.co.uk/news/adventure-turns-into-nightmare-as-portskewett-woman-detained-in-us-after-visa-mix-up-772907> - This article corroborates Rebecca Burke's detention at the Tacoma Northwest Detention Facility due to a visa mix-up and her family's concerns about her conditions.
* <https://www.abergavennychronicle.com/news/adventure-turns-into-nightmare-as-monmouthshire-woman-detained-in-us-after-visa-mix-up-772903> - This article supports the details of Rebecca Burke's detention and the circumstances surrounding her attempt to cross into Canada.
* <https://www.comicsbeat.com/cartoonist-r-e-burke-detained-by-ice-on-backpacking-trip/> - This article provides additional information about Rebecca Burke's background as a cartoonist and her detention by ICE.
* <https://www.theforester.co.uk/news/adventure-turns-into-nightmare-as-portskewett-woman-detained-in-us-after-visa-mix-up-772907> - This article highlights the involvement of the British Consulate and the family's efforts to secure Rebecca's release.
* <https://www.abergavennychronicle.com/news/adventure-turns-into-nightmare-as-monmouthshire-woman-detained-in-us-after-visa-mix-up-772903> - This article mentions the concerns about the immigration crackdown and its impact on detainees like Rebecca Burke.
* <https://www.comicsbeat.com/cartoonist-r-e-burke-detained-by-ice-on-backpacking-trip/> - This article discusses the potential implications of Rebecca's situation on her future travel to the U.S. and the complexities of immigration law.
* <https://www.walesonline.co.uk/news/wales-news/becky-burke-usa-illegal-alien-31166324> - Please view link - unable to able to access data