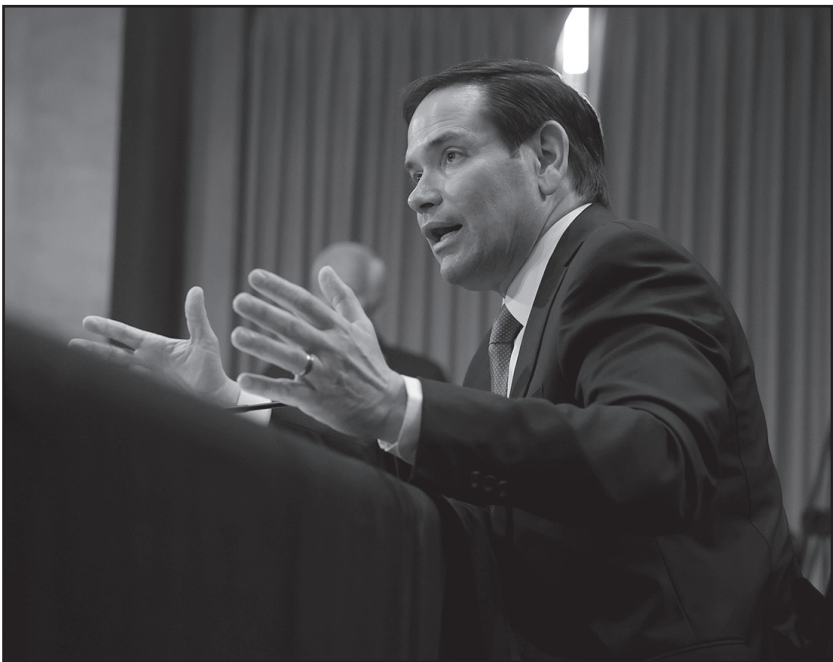


# State & World News

## US will no longer issue visas for individuals from Gaza

JULIANE RODUST AND KHANG MISCHKE

dpa (TNS)



U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio attends a Senate Foreign Relations Committee hearing in the Dirksen Senate Office Building on May 20, 2025, in Washington, D.C. (Anna Moneymaker/Getty Images/TNS)

WASHINGTON — The United States has halted entry via visitor visas for individuals from the Gaza Strip until further notice because some organizations involved in obtaining the visas had close ties with Hamas, U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio said.

“We will not enter into partnerships with groups that have connections to Hamas or sympathize with it,” Rubio told the television channel CBS News on Sunday.

The State Department, in a post on X on Saturday, said that “all visitor visas for individuals from Gaza are being stopped while we conduct a full and thorough review of the process and procedures used to issue a small number of temporary medical-humanitarian visas in recent days.”

The reporter asked Rubio why the government would halt visas for sick children who she said were coming to US hospitals for treatment via this visa program.

“It’s not just kids,” Rubio said. “It’s a bunch of adults that are accompanying them.” He added that “there was just a small num-

ber of them issued to children.” He said multiple congressional offices contacted his office about the people coming in.

“There is evidence, it’s been presented to us by numerous congressional offices, that some of the organizations bragging about and involved in acquiring

these visas have strong links to terrorist groups like Hamas.” He did not elaborate.

The Palestinian Islamist Hamas and other groups attacked Israel on October 7, 2023, killing 1,200, taking 250 hostage and setting off the nearly 2-year-old Gaza war that has resulted in some

62,000 Palestinian deaths, according to the Hamas-controlled health authority.

Rubio did not say how many of these visas have been issued recently. It was also initially unclear whether the halt applies only to new visas or also to visas already granted.

According to the New York Times, the decision is based on statements by the ultra-right activist Laura Loomer, who has stirred sentiment against entries from the Gaza Strip on X.

Loomer, a supporter of U.S. President Donald Trump, published footage on X on Friday that purportedly shows Palestinians entering the U.S.

“Why are any Islamic invaders coming into the U.S. under the Trump admin?” she asked. In her sights is the organization Heal Palestine, based in Ohio, which, according to the New York Times, helps families from Gaza bring wounded and sick children to the U.S. for medical care.

In further posts on X, Loomer described the entries as a “national security threat” and insisted that there are enough Muslim countries that could afford to take in those in need of treatment.

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### Helpful Tips

#### Did you know?

A 2023 meta-analysis published in the journal Reviews on Environmental Health found that excessive screen exposure may be a significant contributor to the development of attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) in children. The report analyzed nine studies that examined more than 81,000 children, including nearly 29,000 who had been diagnosed with ADHD. The analysis found that children exposed to more than two hours of screen time each day had significantly higher rates of ADHD than youngsters whose daily screen time was limited to two hours or less. Researchers behind the analysis ultimately concluded reducing children's screen time could prevent the occurrence of ADHD.

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## Kansas opens criminal investigation into college athlete collapse during practice

BY SAM ZEFF

Kansas Reflector

The family of a Kansas college cross country runner has set up a Go Fund Me page after she was found unconscious in a field during practice last week.

Delia Montes, a freshman at Dodge City Community College, is in critical condition at a Wichita hospital, according to the Kansas Bureau of Investigation. The Ford County Sheriff's Office called in the KBI after Montes was discovered last week.

This is the first criminal investigation into a heat related incident at a Kansas community college. Despite calls from the families, criminal investigations were not launched into the deaths of football players at Garden City Community College and Fort Scott Community College.

Montes' uncle is with her in the hospital. "Her road to recovery is a long one and my

uncle is the only parent she has so he's having to miss work to be by her side," the page said.

The money will be used to help pay his expenses.

Montes was taken to Catherine Hospital-Dodge City and then airlifted to Wesley Medical Center in Wichita.

The college, citing privacy laws, has provided scant information. It did say in a statement that the practice was "monitored according to the Heat Policy put in place by the Kansas Jayhawk Community College Conference. As such, the practice was well within the established guidelines of this policy."

Coaches and trainers must know both the air temperature and humidity, according to the guidelines.

"The higher the humidity the harder it is for student athletes to cool their body temperatures," the document said.

The college did not provide specific weather data. Online records show the high last Thursday in Dodge City was 101 degrees.

ket in 2026.

"Making contact with artists at a young age can help connect them to resources and opportunities that help them develop," said Callie Chunestudy, cultural programs and events project manager. "There's nothing like the Cherokee art community coming together to celebrate youth talent and foster their growth. I look forward to seeing these names in our formal

shows and competitions in future years."

All participating artists must be citizens of a federally recognized tribe and submit their work online by Sept. 26. Only one submission per artist.

For more information, including a full list of rules and regulations, go to [www.CherokeeArtMarket.com/youth](http://www.CherokeeArtMarket.com/youth).

## Cherokee Art Market Youth Competition seeks submissions

Native students in grades 6-12 are encouraged to submit their artwork for consideration in this year's Cherokee Art Market Youth Competition, held virtually.

Artists will compete for \$2,500 within two categories: 2D and 3D works, split into three grade levels.

"Youth artists play such a crucial role in the preservation and promotion of Native artforms, and this competition gives us the plat-

form to recognize their commitment to being the next generation of culture keepers," said Cherokee Nation First Lady January Hoskin. "This year, we decided to go virtual in hopes of engaging even more Native youth."

Winners will be announced on or before Oct. 6. The artist who receives the Best of Show recognition will be eligible for a free booth at the 21st Annual Cherokee Art Mar-

## Colorado wildfires: Elk fire fully contained, Lee fire continues to burn

LAUREN PENINGTON

The Denver Post (TNS)

While afternoon thunderstorms on Saturday helped firefighters contain one blaze burning on the Western Slope, another nearby fire is close to becoming the fourth-largest on record in Colorado.

As of Saturday night, the Lee fire was burning on 137,453 acres between Meeker and Rifle in Rio Blanco County.

The wildfire is 307 acres smaller than Colorado's fourth-largest fire on record, the 137,760-acre Hayman fire that sparked in 2002. It's also just over 1,500 acres smaller than the 139,007-acre Pine Gulch fire from 2020, Colorado's third-largest wildfire.

A second wildfire burning to the east, the 14,518-acre Elk fire, was fully contained Saturday, fire officials said.

Lee and Elk fires near Meeker

The lightning-sparked Lee and Elk fires have been burning on opposite sides of Meeker in Rio Blanco County for more than two weeks, together consuming hundreds of square miles.

As of Saturday night, the 137,453-acre Lee fire was 42% contained.

It's currently the fifth-largest wildfire on record in Colorado, according to the state's Division of Fire Prevention and Control.

Saturday afternoon thunderstorms dropped between 1/4 and 1/2 inches of rain over the southern half of the Lee fire, the most significant rain the area has seen in a while, meteorologist Julie Malingowski said during a Saturday night community meeting in Meeker.

The northern perimeter of the fire saw less rain, about 1/10 of an inch, Malingowski said.

Heavy rain showers also fell over the southwestern portion of the 14,518-acre

Elk fire, helping bring it to full containment.

Sunday is expected to be warmer and drier, a trend forecast to continue throughout the week. Temperatures will peak in the 90s mid-week as relative humidities drop back into the single digits, Malingowski said.

There will be no precipitation or chance for thunderstorms from Monday through Wednesday, she said. Moisture will begin to return on Thursday, but rain showers aren't expected until Saturday.

Fire danger will remain high in the area until it gets roughly 3 more inches of rain, fire behavior analyst Béla Harrington said during the Saturday night meeting.

"This little bit of moisture has been nice, it's going to give us a little bit of a respite, but we're going right back into critical fire behavior and fire danger," Harrington said.

The Elk fire is fully contained, but wind could send embers over the fire line and create spot fires, he said. Crews remain "ever vigilant" as the interior of the fire burns itself out.

"We're not out of the woods yet," Harrington said.

Colorado 13 reopened Saturday for the first time since the fires started on Aug. 2, and some mandatory evacuations were lifted.

The wildfire burn areas are closed to the public, and multiple zones on the Lee fire's southern edge remain under mandatory evacuation orders. Previously evacuated areas surrounding both the Lee and Elk fires were moved back to pre-evacuation status, fire officials said.

The two wildfires have destroyed five homes and 14 outbuildings. Fire officials said the blazes were difficult to fight because of steep terrain, gusty winds, heat and extreme drought.

**Stoner Mesa fire, near Dolores**

A wildfire burning in the San Juan National Forest on Colorado's Western Slope consumed another 1,000 acres overnight, fire officials said Sunday morning.

The lightning-sparked Stoner Mesa fire is burning on 8,369 acres in Dolores County with no containment, up from 7,390 on Saturday, fire officials said.

Warmer temperatures, stronger winds and drier weather are forecast to start Sunday and continue throughout the week, bringing with it "increased fire activity," according to a Sunday morning update.

Flying embers have sparked multiple spot fires near the main burn area that firefighters are working to extinguish Sunday, according to the update.

The nearby town of Rico remains on pre-evacuation status, and parts of the national forest are closed to the public because of the fire.

Crosho fire near Yampa

More than 200 structures are threatened by a wildfire burning in western Colorado, but none have yet been destroyed, fire officials said.

The 2,002-acre Crosho fire burning on the border of Rio Blanco and Routt counties west of Yampa was reported Saturday at 2,200 acres, fire officials said. More accurate mapping revealed the fire's burn area was smaller than previously estimated, according to a Sunday morning update.

As of Sunday morning, the fire was 5% contained and mandatory evacuation orders remained in effect north of the blaze. The Medicine Bow-Routt National Forest also remains closed around the fire.

Multiple evacuation orders were canceled Sunday morning, moving areas south and east of the fire onto pre-evacuation status. Residents should be prepared to re-evacuate if fire activity escalates.