

Civilians Sue CDC and NIH in Landmark Lawsuit: Demand Equal Diagnostic Guidance and Care for Havana Syndrome/AHI Victims

Civilian plaintiffs sue in Florida federal court to compel CDC to issue the same diagnostic guidance already provided to federal employees.

TAMPA, FL, UNITED STATES, July 3, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Seven individual civilian plaintiffs



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Len Ber MD

together with Targeted Justice, Inc., a 501(c)(3) nonprofit representing civilian victims of [Anomalous Health Incidents](#) (AHI), also known as [Havana Syndrome](#), today filed a federal lawsuit under the Administrative Procedure Act (APA) in the U.S. District Court for the Middle District of Florida against the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention ([CDC](#)), the National Institutes of Health (NIH), and Jay Bhattacharya, M.D., in his official capacity as Director of NIH and Acting Director of CDC.

The complaint filed on June 23, 2026 (case number 8:26cv1822) alleges that the agencies have unlawfully

withheld and unreasonably delayed their mandatory public-health duties by refusing to recognize, surveil, or issue diagnostic guidance and care protocols for civilians diagnosed with AHI/Havana Syndrome on U.S. soil—despite having done so for federal employees and their families for years. Plaintiffs seek declaratory and injunctive relief compelling the agencies to fulfill their statutory obligations under the APA.

“This lawsuit shatters the persistent misunderstanding that federal employees and military personnel are the only Americans diagnosed with Havana Syndrome or AHI,” said Len Ber, M.D., Medical Director of Targeted Justice, Inc. and plaintiff who maintains the Civilian Registry for Diagnosed Havana Syndrome Patients. “We filed formal petitions with the CDC and NIH in September 2025, requesting recognition of civilian cases, national surveillance, and diagnostic guidance mirroring what already exists for government employees. It has now been nine months with no action. Many civilians are asking why their doctors have no official guidance on how to diagnose or treat this condition. We are asking the court to order the agencies to act consistent with the APA and Congress’s clear mandate to investigate novel health threats in the U.S. population.”

The lawsuit seeks a court order compelling the agencies to:

1. Recognize AHI/Havana Syndrome as a reportable condition among the U.S. civilian population;
2. Issue and disseminate official diagnostic guidance and a standardized case definition for physicians;
3. Establish a national civilian surveillance and reporting system;
4. Provide civilians equal access to NIH research programs and clinical protocols; and
5. Issue Health Alert Network bulletins and training for public health officials and clinicians.

Ana Toledo, Esq., counsel for the plaintiffs, stated: "The agencies have a clear, non-discretionary duty under the APA and the Public Health Service Act to address emerging public health threats. They have developed comprehensive diagnostic tools and protocols for federal employees and military personnel, yet they have completely failed to extend those same protections to civilians. This two-tiered system leaves everyday Americans without recognition, reporting pathways, or standardized care while suffering the same neurological injuries. The court should compel the agencies to do what Congress and the law require."

"Without federal diagnostic guidance, civilian victims face medical gaslighting, insurance denials, lost jobs, and worsening neurological harm while new cases on American soil go unaddressed," the complaint states.

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