



The Office for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties (CRCL) supports the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) as it secures the nation while preserving individual liberty, fairness, and equality under the law.



CRCL Operations During COVID-19 Response

Per guidance from the U.S. Office of Personnel Management in response to COVID-19, CRCL is operating under telework flexibilities while continuing to serve and support the public. As a result, mail operations may be impacted and our response to mailed letters may be delayed. If you wish to file a civil rights complaint, the best method of submission at this time is via email to: CRCLCompliance@hq.dhs.gov. CRCL staff will continue to monitor this email address, and our toll-free hotline for your questions at: 1-866-644-8360, TTY: 1-866-644-8361. For additional details on how to file a civil rights complaint, visit: <https://www.dhs.gov/file-civil-rights-complaint>.

CRCL Supports Operation Allies Welcome



CRCL has continued to support Operation Allies Welcome (OAW), the government-wide effort to support and resettle vulnerable Afghans across the United States. Last week, OAW announced the resettlement of the last group of Afghan nationals from Fort Lee, Virginia, the first of eight Department of Defense (DOD) installations established to temporarily house vulnerable Afghans. To date, more than 25,000 Afghan evacuees have been resettled in communities across our country. These resettlement efforts are led by the Department of State in close coordination with more than 200 local resettlement affiliates across the country.

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Since OAW’s inception, CRCL has been involved in efforts to ensure the integration of civil rights and civil liberties protections into OAW’s operational phases. Several CRCL staff members have joined the OAW workforce through work details, while many other employees have visited base installations, developed technical support and resource materials, and contributed to developing guidance and plans to protect vulnerable populations throughout resettlement operations. Highlights of CRCL’s recent activities include:

Gender and Vulnerable Population Protection Advisory Group: CRCL’s Deputy Officer Peter Mina is currently leading OAW’s Gender and Vulnerable Population Protection (GVPP) Advisory Group, which includes co-chairs from DHS and Health and Human Services (HHS), along with a number of partners and advisors from across the Federal Government. The GVPP is ensuring policies are in place to help protect Afghans against gender-based violence (GBV), abuse and neglect of children and vulnerable adults, human trafficking, assistance for persons with disabilities, older persons and others at risk, and behavioral health crises.

CRCL Visits Camp Upshur and Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst: CRCL Officer Katherine Culliton-González, along with several members of CRCL's staff, visited Quantico Marine Corps Base Camp Upshur in Virginia and Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst in New Jersey to tour the bases and observe operations to support resettlement efforts. Following the visits, CRCL provided recommendations to OAW leadership on ensuring civil rights protections for Afghans in all base operations.



CRCL staff meet with leadership at Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst

Training/Orientation Materials on Interacting with and Serving Afghans with Disabilities: CRCL developed orientation materials for staff and volunteers that explains OAW's commitment to providing a safe environment for persons with disabilities and basic principles to help in their interactions with persons with disabilities.

CRCL will continue to support the critical work of OAW as our Afghan allies resettle in communities across the United States. For more information on how you can help, please visit www.welcome.us. Welcome.US is a national non-profit initiative to welcome and support Afghan nationals as they rebuild their lives in communities across America.

CRCL Participates in Women, Peace, and Security Consultation with Civil Society

This month, CRCL Officer Katherine Culliton-González and staff took part in the Women, Peace, and Security (WPS) Principal-Level Interagency Civil Society Consultation. The two-day event was convened to discuss the overall implementation of WPS, the lines of effort detailed in the U.S. Strategy on WPS, and progress following the release of the WPS Congressional Report in July 2021.

On the first day of the event, Officer Culliton-González spoke on a panel along with WPS principals across the interagency, where she shared the Department's programs and activities focused on WPS. On the second day, CRCL senior advisors participated in break-out sessions with civil society members and U.S. government representatives on topics that included: progress in ensuring women's participation in peace processes around the world, protection from gender-based violence, internal capabilities to increase engagement, and the importance of collaborative partner support.

DHS Updates NTAS Bulletin

DHS has issued an updated National Terrorism Advisory System (NTAS) Bulletin regarding the current heightened threat environment across the United States. The Homeland continues to face a diverse and challenging threat environment as it approaches several religious holidays and associated mass gatherings that in the past have served as potential targets for acts of violence. These threats include those posed by individuals and small groups engaged in violence, including domestic violent extremists (DVEs) and those inspired or motivated by foreign terrorists and other malign foreign influences. These actors continue to exploit online forums to influence and spread violent extremist narratives and promote violent activity. The ongoing global pandemic continues to exacerbate these threats, in part due to perceived government overreach in implementation of public health safety measures. Further, foreign terrorist organizations and DVEs continue to attempt to inspire potential followers to conduct attacks in the United States, including by exploiting recent events in Afghanistan. As of November 10, 2021, DHS is not aware of an imminent and credible threat to a specific location in the United States.

- [Read this Bulletin translated into various languages](#)
- [Subscribe to NTAS Advisories via Email](#)

DHS Quadrennial Homeland Security Review

The Department is in the process of conducting a strategic review of the threat environment and DHS essential mission functions to inform the development of the *2022 Quadrennial Homeland Security Review* and the *2022-2026 DHS Strategic Plan*. As part of this review, DHS is inviting external stakeholders to provide input and ideas to help secure our Nation against current and emerging threats, through the QHSR IdeaScale site: <https://qhsr.ideascale.com>

The Department's Office of Strategy, Policy, and Plans staff will moderate and contribute to the QHSR IdeaScale discussion. Your input will ensure that the DHS review is more thoroughly informed by the many stakeholders across the Homeland Security enterprise.

CRCL Officer Participates in ABA Administrative Law Conference

This month, CRCL Officer Katherine Culliton-González participated in a virtual panel discussion at the American Bar Association's (ABA) 2021 Administrative Law Conference. During the panel, "Understanding Immigration Law as Administrative Law/Understanding Immigration Law Challenges," Officer Culliton-González provided an overview of CRCL's mission and role and discussed CRCL's recent work in supporting the Biden Administration's Executive Orders on equity. She also discussed our ongoing efforts to provide proactive policy advice on how DHS can strengthen and further incorporate principles of civil rights and racial justice into its immigration policies and procedures. She then highlighted several recent immigration-related activities across the Department including establishing the Interagency Task Force on the Reunification of Families, which continues to reunify children and parents who were separated at the border; issuing new DHS Guidelines for the Enforcement of Civil Immigration Laws stating that the Department will not take enforcement actions based solely on an individual's undocumented status or based on a noncitizen's race, religion, gender, sexual orientation or gender identity, national origin, political associations, or exercise of First Amendment rights; and issuing a new DHS policy to limit DHS enforcement actions in or near protected areas, among others.

DHS Recognizes National Native American Heritage Month

Each November, DHS joins the nation and celebrates National Native American Heritage Month, commonly referenced as American Indian and Alaska Native Heritage Month. The theme this year is "Grounded in Tradition, Resilient in Spirit." DHS is proud to observe National American Indian and Alaska Native Heritage Month.

Native Americans' unique distinction as the nation's first inhabitants is a chronicle that profoundly shapes American history. As President Biden stated in his October 8, 2021 Proclamation on Indigenous Peoples Day: "The contributions that Indigenous peoples have made throughout history — in public service, entrepreneurship, scholarship, the arts, and countless other fields — are integral to our Nation, our culture, and our society." American Indian and Alaska Native people continue to demonstrate leadership and perseverance; a momentous milestone is Secretary Deb Haaland becoming the nation's first Native American to serve as cabinet secretary, leading the U.S. Department of the Interior. DHS acknowledges the contributions of the American Indian and Alaska Native community to our country and our workforce. The community of people provides America with timeless inspiration for present and future generations.

This month, CRCL was pleased to host a Department-wide Native American Heritage Month virtual event, where Mr. Shawn Walker from the Federal Law Enforcement Training Centers provided keynote remarks. Mr. Walker is a member of the Prairie Band Potawatomi Nation and he shared his inspiring story on rising to leadership after serving in the Kansas Army National Guard and spending over 20 years in law enforcement, including serving as the Chief of Police.

CRCL Officer Participates in FEMA Civil Rights Summit – 2.0 Equity

CRCL Officer Katherine Culliton-González recently participated in FEMA’s virtual Civil Rights Summit – 2.0 Equity, a day-long event designed to foster dialogue and partnerships between FEMA leadership and civil rights organizations across the country. The summit featured welcome remarks from FEMA Administrator Deanne Criswell followed by several panels on topics including “Climate Adaptation and Equity,” “Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities,” and “Environmental Justice Efforts.” CRCL Officer Culliton-González participated in the “Listening Session with Civil Rights Organizations and Senior Leaders,” where she joined several leaders from FEMA and nongovernmental and advocacy organizations. Summit participants shared their experiences and discussed what has gone well and where challenges remain with access to FEMA’s programs and services. The perspectives and feedback offered from the public will help to ensure a more equitable response and recovery to disasters, helping FEMA effectively prepare and serve all communities before, during, and after disasters.

CRCL on the Road, November*

Houston, Texas

On November 3, 2021, CRCL hosted a virtual regular roundtable meeting with diverse community leaders in the Houston area.

Denver, Colorado

On November 1, 2021, CRCL Officer Katherine Culliton-González traveled to Denver to participate in a roundtable meeting on Domestic Violent Extremism hosted by DHS, Center for Prevention Programs and Partnerships (CP3).

Additional information, and contacting us

The goal of this periodic newsletter is to inform members of the public and other government partners about the activities of the DHS Office for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties, including: how to file complaints; ongoing and upcoming projects; opportunities to offer comments and feedback; etc. We distribute our newsletters via our stakeholder email list and make them available to community groups for redistribution. Issues of the newsletter can be accessed online at: www.dhs.gov/crcl-newsletter.

If you would like to receive this newsletter via email, want to request back issues, or have other comments or questions, please let us know by emailing crcloutreach@dhs.gov. For more information, including how to make a civil rights or civil liberties complaint about DHS activities, visit: www.dhs.gov/crcl.

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 **Follow the Office for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties on Facebook at: facebook.com/CivilRightsandCivilLiberties.**

*Following guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to exercise social distancing, our Community Engagement team will continue to carry out our mission using various virtual and telephonic tools during this national public health emergency. While our team maintains constant communication with federal, state, local, and civil society stakeholders across the country, we encourage anyone who needs to contact us to do so via email to: CommunityEngagement@hq.dhs.gov. Thank you for your flexibility and understanding during this time.