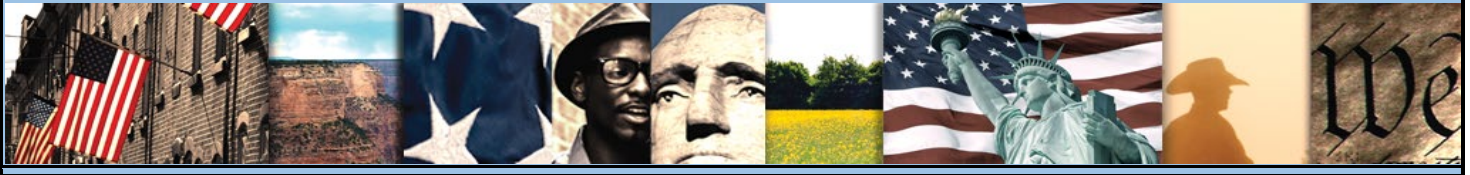




The Office for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties (CRCL) supports the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) as it secures the nation while preserving individual liberty, fairness, and equality under the law.



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 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>.

DHS Releases 2022 Women, Peace, and Security Annual Report to Congress

This month, DHS [released its second annual report](#) to Congress on implementation of the [Women, Peace, and Security \(WPS\) initiative](#). The annual report details the diverse roles that women play as change agents to prevent and resolve conflict, counter terrorism and violent extremism, and build post-conflict peace and stability across the globe. The Department’s report is included in the [combined federal interagency full report on WPS](#).

To highlight its release, a civil society event titled “Current State of Play: U.S. Efforts to Advance Women, Peace, and Security,” was convened at the U.S. Capitol. Co-chairmen of the WPS Congressional Caucus, U.S. Representatives Lois Frankel and Michael Waltz gave opening remarks.

The event featured a fireside chat with senior officials from the four WPS implementing agencies: DHS, U.S. Department of Defense, U.S. Department of State, and U.S. Agency for International Development. Senior Official Peter Mina represented DHS on the panel. In his remarks, Mr. Mina noted several key Department accomplishments in the WPS report, which included:

- the Federal Law Enforcement Training Centers trained 8,458 women in both basic and advanced law enforcement programs;
- the launch of Initiative 30x23, our commitment to ensure women make up 30 percent of DHS law enforcement by 2023; and
- the safe welcome of more than 79,000 Afghans through Operation Allies Welcome, including women leaders and human rights activists.

CRCL leads the Department’s implementation of the U.S. WPS strategy and initiative across the agency. For more information on DHS’ efforts, visit: [U.S. Strategy on Women, Peace, and Security | Homeland Security](#).

Inside

[DHS 2022 Women, Peace, and Security Annual Report](#)

[DHS Update on Border Wall Remediation Efforts](#)

[CRCL Hosts Engagement Event on Migrant Deaths in San Antonio](#)

[DHS Celebrates 32nd Anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act](#)

[CRCL on the Road](#)

[Contact Us](#)

Statement by Secretary Mayorkas on Shooting in Highland Park, IL

Secretary of Homeland Security Alejandro N. Mayorkas released the following statement regarding the mass shooting in Highland Park, Illinois:

“Yesterday’s celebration of our nation was punctured by tragedy, with yet another mass shooting. In Highland Park, Illinois, families gathered for a patriotic Fourth of July parade fell victim to gunfire and profound loss. We commend the exceptional work of law enforcement to respond to this violence. The security of our homeland requires more; it requires all of us, together, to address the epidemic of targeted gun violence, including the development and implementation of new community-based models of prevention and intervention. The Department of Homeland Security will redouble its work in this critical area and help lead the effort to prevent violence in communities across our country.”

DHS Update on Border Wall Remediation Efforts

The Department has announced that U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) will prioritize remaining prior year border barrier funding for environmental remediation and mitigation, as well as for installing updates – such as lighting, cameras, and detection technology – in places with previously built barrier.

Homeland Secretary Alejandro N. Mayorkas approved an [amendment to DHS’s Plan for Use of Border Barrier Funds](#) (the Plan) that will allow for additional uses of prior year border barrier system appropriations. The Amendment also sets forth policy guidance as to how to prioritize the use of this funding going forward.

Since the release of the Plan, and through continued assessment, DHS has found significant life, safety, and environmental hazards from incomplete border barrier construction projects under the prior Administration. This Amendment will allow DHS to utilize border barrier system funding from Fiscal Year 2020 to continue to prioritize remediation activities for the border barrier projects previously executed by the Department of Defense. DHS will also continue to work with the Department of Interior and other interagency partners on long-term environmental remediation and mitigation.

Additionally, CBP will use prior year border barrier system funds to complete the installation of border barrier system attributes (lighting, cameras, and detection technology), as previously planned and funded, in locations where physical barrier has already been constructed. This is consistent with the purpose of prior year appropriations from Fiscal Years 2018–2021 as well as the principles of the Plan and will enhance the functionality of previously constructed barrier. This may include installing lighting, cameras, and detection technology, in areas where physical barrier has already been constructed. Barrier system attributes provide operational capabilities like domain awareness for Border Patrol agents and awareness when breaching activity is detected.

As set forth in the Plan Amendment, going forward DHS intends to prioritize the expenditure of previously appropriated barrier system funding on remediation, mitigation, and completing the installation of barrier system attributes. DHS expects that it will continue the environmental planning process that has been initiated for new barrier system in the U.S. Border Patrol’s (USBP) Rio Grande Valley Sector, which is funded by the Fiscal Year 2018 and 2019 appropriations, while it examines how to allocate available funding in light of the priorities outlined in the Plan Amendment. Additionally, due to higher-than-expected remediation costs, DHS will take action to terminate the environmental planning process that was initiated for new barrier system in the USBP Laredo Sector and funded by the Fiscal Year 2020 funding.

This Plan Amendment supports DHS priorities to deploy modern, effective border security measures along the Southwest Border.

CRCL FY 2020 Annual Report to Congress

CRCL is pleased to announce the release of its [Fiscal Year \(FY\) 2020 Annual Report to Congress](#). In accordance with 6 U.S.C. § 345 and 42 U.S.C. § 2000ee-1, the report highlights CRCL's activities and accomplishments, which include:

- response to and operational shift during the COVID-19 pandemic
- launching the Department's Women, Peace, and Security initiative
- hosting a series of national conversations on social and racial justice

These efforts continue to reflect the Department's dedication to securing the country while protecting our freedoms and safeguarding our core civil rights and civil liberties values of liberty, fairness, and equality under the law. *Read the full report here:* [Civil Rights and Civil Liberties Results and Reports | Homeland Security](#).

CRCL Hosts Stakeholder Engagement Event on Migrant Deaths in San Antonio

This month, CRCL hosted an engagement event with community stakeholders to provide resources for those affected by the recent tragedy where dozens of migrant individuals were discovered in an abandoned tractor-trailer in San Antonio. In all, 53 migrants were found dead, and 16 others were taken to nearby hospitals, in what has been labeled as the deadliest human smuggling incident in recent U.S. history. As a result, several individuals have been arrested and charged in an investigation led U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) Homeland Security Investigations and prosecuted by the U.S. Attorney's Office of the Western District of Texas.

During the event, speakers provided resources focused on immigration flexibilities, victim assistance, and updates on the Federal Government's efforts to investigate and prosecute human smuggling incidents.

Senior Official Peter Mina gave opening remarks where he offered his deepest condolences to everyone affected, and shared sentiments from President Biden and Secretary Mayorkas. He further noted CRCL's priority to promote protections for migrants at risk, both when they are coming to the U.S. border and when they are returned to Mexico under policies enacted by the prior administration, including Title 42. CRCL also continues to promote exemptions for the most vulnerable, and to ensure that programs incorporate safety measures to lessen risks for migrants in Mexico.

Additional speakers included senior officials that shared information from the following agencies:

- **U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services** is accepting requests for expedited parole for individuals that need to enter the U.S. to attend funerals
- **ICE Homeland Security Investigations** as the principal investigative arm of DHS, their Victim Assistance Program provides support to victims in navigating the aftermath of a federal crime
- **U.S. Customs and Border Protection** outlined their multi-layered approach to protecting our borders

This engagement was CRCL's second virtual bilingual engagement (following a townhall with stakeholders following the Uvalde school shooting), as part of the Department's commitment to providing language access. Spanish language interpreters translated each speakers' remarks and the Q&A portion. A list of resources was also provided to participants in both English and Spanish. CRCL will also meet with other indigenous groups in Los Angeles to share information. For more information on available resources, visit: [Community Outreach and Training | Homeland Security \(dhs.gov\)](#).

DHS Statement on Supreme Court Decision on MPP

As Secretary Mayorkas [concluded](#) in October 2021 after a thorough review, the prior Administration's Migrant Protection Protocols (MPP) has endemic flaws, imposes unjustifiable human costs, and pulls resources and personnel away from other priority efforts to secure our border. We welcome the Supreme Court's decision affirming that the Secretary has the discretionary authority to terminate the program, and we will continue our efforts to terminate the program as soon as legally permissible.

The Department also continues to enforce our immigration laws at the border and administer consequences for those who enter unlawfully, and will continue the court-mandated enforcement of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Title 42 public health order.

DHS Celebrates the 32nd Anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act

On July 26, DHS joined the nation in celebrating the 32nd anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). This landmark civil rights law prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities in all areas of public life and guarantees equal access to public accommodations, employment, transportation, state and local government services, and telecommunication. The ADA builds upon the protections afforded by the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 which prohibits discrimination in federal employment as well as federally conducted and assisted activities. These laws have leveled the playing field, expanded opportunities, and unlocked doors to full inclusion for individuals with disabilities.

On behalf of DHS, CRCL is committed to supporting and promoting access, inclusion, and equal opportunity for individuals with disabilities and upholding the principles of the ADA. CRCL is committed to ensuring equal access in DHS and DHS-funded programs and activities and continuing engagements with members of the disability community. To recognize this anniversary, a list of the Department's recent accomplishments and resources for individuals with disabilities that would not have been possible without the ADA are included below:

- [Disability Access at the Department of Homeland Security](#)
- [Civil Rights Resources for Recipients of DHS Financial Assistance | Homeland Security](#)
- CRCL implemented a DHS Section 508 complaint and inquiry process to include the [DHS Technology Accessibility Issue Reporting Form](#)
- [DHS Instruction 259-01-001, Providing Reasonable Accommodations for Employees and Applicants with Disabilities and Personal Assistance Services for Employees with Targeted Disabilities](#)
- [Executive Order \(EO\) 14035, Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility in the Federal Workforce.](#)
- CRCL is redeveloping the training entitled, "Employment of People with Disabilities: A Roadmap to Success DHS" to include current and accurate information to further the Affirmative Employment Program for individuals with disabilities and targeted disabilities. The new training is scheduled to be deployed by August 2022.
- The second cohort of the DHS Disability Mentoring Program deployed in July 2021 with 31 participants, 16 mentees and 15 mentors. Of the 31 program participants, 61.29 percent self-identified as having a disability, with 29.03 percent self-identifying as having a targeted disability. Specifically, with respect to the 16 mentee participants 87.50 percent self-identified as having a disability while 37.50 percent self-identified as having a targeted disability.

CRCL on the Road

*Following continued 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.

Additional information, and contacting us

The goal of this periodic newsletter is to inform members of the public 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.

CRCL Phone: 202-401-1474 • Toll Free: 866-644-8360 • TTY: 202-401-0470 • Toll Free TTY: 866-644-8361

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