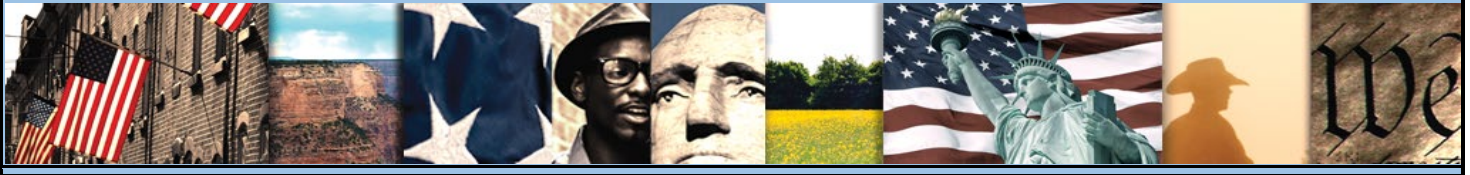




The Office for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties (CRCL) supports the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) as it secures the nation while preserving individual liberty, fairness, and equality under the law.



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>.

Statement of Secretary Mayorkas on Successful Reunification of More Than 600 Families

Secretary of Homeland Security Alejandro N. Mayorkas released the following statement on February 2, 2023 regarding the Family Reunification Task Force’s ongoing progress:

“Today is the second anniversary of the Family Reunification Task Force that President Biden established soon after he assumed office. Thanks to the tireless work of public servants across the federal government and the critical partnership of non-governmental organizations, the Department of Homeland Security and the Task Force it leads has thus far reunited more than 600 children who were separated from their families under the prior administration’s “zero-tolerance” policy.

“Today we recognize the dedication of those who have helped reunite these families, and we reaffirm our commitment to work relentlessly to reunite the other families who suffered because of the prior cruel and inhumane policy – a policy that did not reflect the values of our nation.

“We understand that our critical work is not finished. There are 148 children who are currently in the process of being reunited with their families. Task Force continues to coordinate outreach to families who were separated to ensure they are afforded the opportunity to reunite in the United States and receive critically needed behavioral health services to address the trauma they suffered.

“We remain steadfast in our commitment to fulfill President Biden’s pledge to reunify all children who were separated from their families under the “zero-tolerance” policy to the greatest extent possible, and we continue to work diligently to incorporate the foundational principle of family unity in our policies and operations.”

For more information on the progress of the Family Reunification Task Force, visit our new [Fact Sheet](#).

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DHS Center for Countering Human Trafficking Releases FY 2022 Annual Report

DHS has released the second [Center for Countering Human Trafficking \(CCHT\) Annual Report](#), outlining the Department's achievements in combatting human trafficking during the previous fiscal year. As a global leader in the fight against human trafficking, DHS works to end sex trafficking and forced labor through a wide range of efforts including victim identification and assistance, criminal investigations, civil enforcement actions, intelligence and analysis, training and public education, and external outreach.

In FY 2022, DHS agencies developed implementation plans tailored to incorporate a victim-centered approach into all relevant policies and programs; assisted 765 human trafficking victims; granted immigration protections to more than 22,500 victims and their families; and made 3,655 trafficking-related arrests. DHS personnel supported over 1,000 trafficking-related indictments and 600 prosecutions, and trained more than 200,000 DHS employees and private-sector personnel in recognizing and reporting suspected cases of human trafficking.

“DHS employees work tirelessly every day to combat human trafficking – crimes of exploitation with nearly 30 million sex trafficking and forced labor victims around the globe,” said Secretary of Homeland Security Alejandro N. Mayorkas. “I am proud of the tremendous achievements outlined in this report, awed by the dedicated public servants who do this vital work every day, and grateful to the innumerable partners who work alongside us to end these heinous crimes.”

“This report is a testament to the commitment and compassion of the DHS workforce and our invaluable partners,” said CCHT Director Cardell T. Morant. “Human trafficking is a complex global issue that requires a comprehensive strategy using every conceivable tool available to government, industry, and communities to fight it – it is this philosophy that guides the CCHT as we seek to advance efforts to combat human trafficking and the importation of goods produced with forced labor.” Read more about the [annual report highlights](#).

Launched in 2020, the DHS [CCHT](#) was recently codified in the [Countering Human Trafficking Act of 2022](#). The CCHT coordinates the efforts of 16 DHS offices and agencies to combat human trafficking through law enforcement operations, victim protection and support, intelligence and analysis, and public education and training programs.

Anyone who suspects human trafficking is encouraged to report it to law enforcement – tips can be submitted anonymously [online](#) or by calling [866-347-2423](#). Individuals can also contact the National Human Trafficking Hotline at [888-373-7888](#).

DHS Updates Use of Force Policy to Advance Law Enforcement, Strengthen Public Safety

Secretary of Homeland Security Alejandro N. Mayorkas has announced updates to the DHS Use of Force Policy as required by President Biden's [Executive Order to Advance Effective, Accountable Policing and Strengthen Public Safety](#) to meet or exceed the Department of Justice guidance on use of force. This policy was crafted as a result of discussions with stakeholders across the Department as well as major national labor organizations to ensure the safety of law enforcement personnel and the communities we serve. This is the first update of the Department's Use of Force policies since 2018.

“Our ability to secure the homeland rests on public trust, which is built by accountability, transparency, and effectiveness in our law enforcement practices. This policy announcement is designed to advance those essential values,” said **Secretary Alejandro N. Mayorkas**. “At the beginning of the Biden-Harris Administration, I announced the first Law Enforcement Coordination Council at DHS, designed to improve the ways we listen to and support our law enforcement agents and officers, the largest force in the federal government. Through the Council, law enforcement leaders from across the Department carefully crafted these updates to ensure we are living up to our values. Law enforcement agents and officers have profound responsibilities in their noble profession. We are grateful for the sacrifices they make every day and are confident that, working together, we can build safer and fairer processes to enforce our laws.”

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This update includes:

- Clear use of force standards including prohibitions on the use of deadly force against a person whose actions are only a threat to themselves or property,
- Updated requirements to collect and report use of force data,
- Prohibitions on the use of chokeholds and carotid restraints unless deadly force is otherwise authorized,
- Limitations on the use of no-knock entries,
- Provision of wellness resources for law enforcement officers involved in use of force incidents, and
- Changes to law enforcement training in key areas including deadly force, less than lethal force, de-escalation techniques, the duty to intervene, and implicit bias and profiling.

[Read more](#) about the new policy.

DHS Resources for LGBTQI+ Organizations and Service Providers

DHS stands in solidarity with the LGBTQI+ community and transgender individuals across the country who have experienced violence or threats in response to their sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression. CRCL works to uphold the Department's commitment to countering domestic violent extremism, including bias-motivated violent extremism, and to ensuring civil rights and civil liberties protections for all persons. Threats of violence against LGBTQI+ individuals interfere with Constitutionally-protected rights to freedom of speech and freedom of expression, and CRCL works with partners across DHS to ensure the continued preservation of First Amendment and other individual rights.

As LGBTQI+ communities across the country reflect on the mass shooting at Club Q in Colorado Springs on November 20, 2022, and other recent acts of violence targeting LGBTQI+ community members, CRCL is re-sharing the list of [DHS resources to prevent or respond to targeted violence](#). This January 2023 resource list includes significant updates on available DHS training, resources, and grant opportunities since the prior DHS list was provided to LGBTQI+ community participants following the June 2022 listening session of the DHS Council on Combating Gender-Based Violence (CCGBV), co-chaired by CRCL, the DHS Office of Partnership and Engagement, and U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services.

As CRCL continues to coordinate efforts across the Department to address bias-motivated violence, advance equality for LGBTQI+ individuals, and prevent and combat discrimination on the basis of gender identity or sexual orientation, we want to hear any concerns you may be receiving from those affected by incidents of domestic violent extremism and targeted violence.

DHS Continues the Fight to End Female Genital Mutilation

On the International Day of Zero Tolerance for Female Genital Mutilation, DHS and its Components joined together to call for the eradication of Female Genital Mutilation or Cutting (FGM/C) domestically and abroad. On this day, and every day, we stand together to protect the health and well-being of all individuals and uphold their human rights.

Each year on February 6, the international community observes Zero Tolerance Day to raise awareness of the significant harm that FGM/C causes women and girls around the world. The United Nations reports that more than 200 million women and girls alive today — most between infancy and age 15 — have undergone some form of FGM/C. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimates that more than half a million girls in the United States could have experienced FGM/C or are at risk of having FGM/C performed on them.

FGM/C occurs domestically and in many countries across numerous religious, ethnic and socioeconomic groups. DHS works closely with other government agencies, nongovernmental partners and local communities to share strategies to eliminate this practice and provide resources to people who have suffered or are at risk of FGM/C.

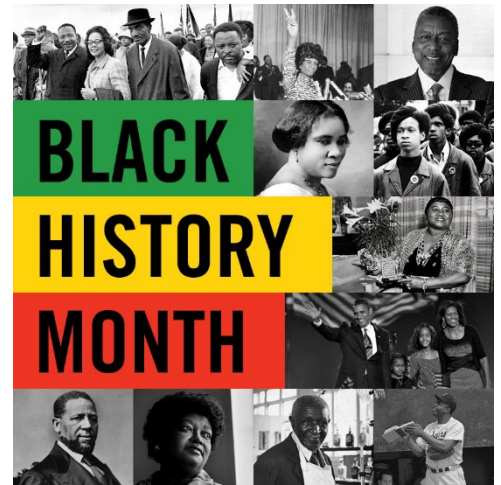
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DHS is committed to supporting victims of FGM/C through a victim-centered approach and is taking steps to combat this grave abuse of human rights by conducting outreach to diverse stakeholders, including community leaders and victim advocacy organizations, and by collaborating with the medical community. The DHS Council on Combating Gender-Based Violence has also partnered with the new DHS Office of Health Security on efforts related to combatting FGM/C.

The United States treats FGM/C as a serious crime and a form of child abuse. Those suspected of committing FGM/C, including sending girls overseas for this purpose, may be investigated and prosecuted accordingly. Anyone who has information about an individual who is suspected of assisting in this crime may submit an anonymous tip by contacting your local law enforcement agency, completing this [online tip form](#) or by calling the toll-free tip line at [866-347-2423](tel:866-347-2423).

DHS Celebrates Black History Month

CRCL hosted the Department-wide commemoration to celebrate Black History Month. The hybrid event featured a panel of African American senior officials across DHS Headquarters and Components, which included: Senior Official Performing the Duties of the Director Tae Johnson, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement; Regional Director Mary Leftridge Byrd, Transportation Security Administration; Deputy Director Faron Paramore, U.S. Secret Service; and Executive Director Karinda Washington, DHS Office of Partnership and Engagement. The panelists discussed topics aligned with this year's theme, "Black Resistance," which focused on the many forms that African Americans have used to combat oppression and advocate for equal access to education, healthcare, economic opportunity, and voting rights. More than 700 DHS employees attended the event, which included approximately 675 through livestream and 40 in-person.



CRCL on the Road

* CRCL's Community Engagement team is resuming in-person engagement with diverse communities. We are now conducting virtual, hybrid, and in-person meetings with federal, state, local, and civil society stakeholders across the country. We remain available to respond to any stakeholder questions or concerns via email at: CommunityEngagement@hq.dhs.gov. Thank you for your continued flexibility and partnership 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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