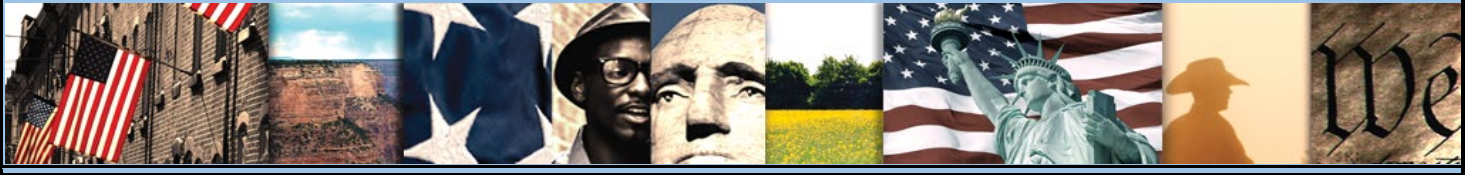




The Office for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties (CRCL) supports the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) as it secures the nation while preserving individual liberty, fairness, and equality under the law.



Five New Federal Agencies Pledge to Enforce Civil Rights Laws in Artificial Intelligence

Release Date: April 4, 2024

The Justice Department [announced](#) that five new cabinet-level federal agencies have joined a pledge to uphold America’s commitment to core principles of fairness, equality and justice as new technologies like artificial intelligence (AI) become more common in daily life.

“Federal agencies are sending a clear message: we will use our collective authority and power to protect individual rights in the wake of increased reliance on artificial intelligence in various aspects of American life,” said Assistant Attorney General Kristen Clarke of the Justice Department’s Civil Rights Division. “As social media platforms, banks, landlords, employers and other businesses choose to rely on artificial intelligence, algorithms and automated systems to conduct business, we stand ready to hold accountable those entities that fail to address the unfair and discriminatory outcomes that may result. We are mounting a whole-of-government approach to enforcing civil rights and related laws when it comes to automated systems, including AI.”

The joint statement, [first announced](#) in April 2023, now includes the Department of Education, Department of Health and Human Services, Department of Homeland Security, Department of Housing and Urban Development and Department of Labor. The Consumer Protection Branch of the Justice Department’s Civil Division also joined the pledge. Additionally, the updated statement highlights recent agency accomplishments, including policy guidance and enforcement actions involving automated systems.

Assistant Attorney General Clarke also announced that the Civil Rights Division has launched a public-facing [webpage](#) to centralize content related to the Division’s work on AI and civil rights. This resource will help the public more easily access information about how advanced technologies can result in unlawful discrimination and what the division can do to assist victims of discrimination.

These announcements follow the April 3 convening, which brought together directors of civil rights offices and senior officials across the federal government to foster AI and civil rights coordination. This was the second such convening hosted by the Civil Rights Division following President Biden’s [Executive Order on the Safe, Secure and Trustworthy Development and Use of Artificial Intelligence](#), which directs federal agencies to use their authorities to prevent and address unlawful discrimination and other harms that result from the use of AI in programs and benefits, while preserving the potential social, medical and other advances AI may spur.

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Meeting participants heard from the Justice Department’s Chief AI Officer, who discussed the department’s efforts under the [Office of Management and Budget’s March 28 Memorandum](#), which includes the requirement that agencies assess and mitigate technology risks, including AI-enabled discrimination, in their operations. During the convening, agency representatives discussed strategies to enhance enforcement, coordination, external engagement and public awareness about AI’s potential discriminatory uses and effects. Participants also gave updates on agency obligations under the Executive Order, including guidance, best practices, and other resources, some of which may be released as early as the end of April.

Officials from the following agencies participated in the April 3 Civil Rights Division convening: Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, Department of Agriculture, Department of Commerce, Department of Education, Department of Health and Human Services, Department of Homeland Security, Department of Housing and Urban Development, Department of the Interior, Department of Labor, Department of Transportation, Department of the Treasury, Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, Federal Trade Commission and Social Security Administration.

CRCL Takes on Los Angeles with Multiple Community Stakeholder Engagements

This month, CRCL coordinated and hosted a series of nearly 10 community engagements and events in the Los Angeles area with local stakeholders, government partners, and advocacy groups. These events were designed to raise CRCL’s profile among stakeholders and discuss a range of cross-cutting topics and issues, including:

Language Access: CRCL met with representatives of the Mexican and Guatemalan Consulates and other stakeholders to discuss the DHS Indigenous Language Plan. CRCL also held a listening session with advocacy organizations to receive feedback and share information on the DHS Language Access Plan and DHS Indigenous Languages Plan; representatives from 12 organizations attended, along with U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) and the DHS Office of Immigration Detention and Ombudsman.



Case Management Pilot Program: The DHS Case Management Pilot Program (CMPP) team hosted an informational briefing at the Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights, Los Angeles (CHIRLA) to educate local stakeholders on CMPP, which is a Congressionally appropriated program that provides voluntary case management and services to noncitizens enrolled in U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement Alternatives to Detention programs. The event was attended by more than 15 local stakeholders including immigration legal service providers, city and county government officials, and organizations providing mental health services and housing assistance to immigrants.

Immigration Support: Early in the trip, CRCL staff met with the Los Angeles Mayor’s Office of Immigration. Following this event, CRCL participated in a stakeholder meeting hosted by USCIC at CHIRLA’s offices. The collaborative meeting was held to raise awareness of CRCL’s work among local immigrant organizations. USCIS discussed its humanitarian work, efforts to hire more refugee and asylum officers in response to the growing need around the world and domestically, and work to increase access to labor pathways and enforcing labor and employment laws. CRCL staff highlighted its role in protecting federal nondiscrimination laws and its work in language access and to educate stakeholders on the centralized process for deferred action.

CRCL, by invitation of USCIS, attended the opening of the Afghan Support Center in Anaheim. These support centers, managed by USCIS, provide access to critical services including in-person inquiries of USCIS staff and government partner agencies, connection with legal service providers, public wellness and benefits, and mental health resources to support Afghan allies who arrived under Operation Allies Welcome. Following the opening, CRCL participated in an engagement at the Anaheim center, led USCIS; and a community fair where more than 60 service providers participated along with federal partners from the U.S. Department of State and U.S. Housing and Urban Development.

CRCL Officer Joins in Fireside Chat on Artificial Intelligence at Morgan State University

This month, CRCL Officer Shoba Sivaprasad Wadhia joined with DHS Assistant Secretary for Partnership and Engagement Fayrouz Saad for a fireside chat on national security and equity concerning artificial intelligence (AI) at Morgan State University in Baltimore. The event was hosted by the University's Center for Equitable AI & Machine Learning Systems (CEAMLS), as part of its first National Symposium on Equitable AI with the theme, "Elevate Equity: Reimagining AI's Potential." The conversation was moderated by Dr. Kofi Nyarko, associate professor at Morgan State University.



Officer Wadhia and Assistant Secretary Saad shared the Department's forward leaning posture in efforts to safely and responsibly use AI to protect our homeland and increase our workforce's efficiency. To ensure the Department's responsible use of AI, DHS maintains a clear set of principles and robust governance that prioritizes the protection of privacy, civil rights, and civil liberties. Officer Wadhia also discussed the Department's role at the intersection of equity and AI. DHS is committed to ensuring that its use of AI:

- is responsible and trustworthy;
- is rigorously tested to be effective;
- safeguards privacy, civil rights, and civil liberties;
- avoids inappropriate biases;
- and is transparent and explainable to our workforce and to those we serve.

The DHS CRCL Officer serves as the Vice-Chair for Responsible Use on the AI Taskforce through which she chairs an internal AI Responsible Use Group, which provides guidance, risk assessment, mitigation strategies, and oversight for the protection of individual rights in AI projects. In addition to championing the safe, secure, and trustworthy deployment of AI to further the homeland security missions, DHS is focusing on countering the use of AI by adversaries. Malicious actors can use AI to threaten cybersecurity and critical infrastructure, develop weapons of mass destruction, spread sexual abuse material, and drive divisions and weaken our democracy through malign influence campaigns.

CRCL Officer Wadhia also noted that DHS is looking for the best and brightest to work on hard problems – as the Department recently launched its first-ever hiring spring to recruit 50 AI technology experts as part of the DHS AI Corps.

Commitment to Transparency in Civil Rights Investigations

CRCL reviews and investigates allegations of [civil rights and civil liberties complaints](#) submitted by the public involving DHS policies, activities, and personnel. At the close of an investigation, CRCL issues recommendations to the relevant DHS agency aimed at addressing any civil rights or civil liberties concerns identified as part of its investigation. Its recommendations are typically conveyed in a memo style document. CRCL strives to maintain transparency in its investigations processes and developed a publicly available [online collection](#) of memos and other documents related to CRCL investigations. Last month, CRCL published nearly 30 new memos and other documents related to investigations. This brings the total number of documents published to more than 200 since the launch of the online transparency library in 2019. CRCL remains committed to transparency and will continue to add new documents to its online transparency library.

CRCL Participates in National Fusion Center Association Training Event and Awards

In late March, CRCL Officer Shoba Sivaprasad Wadhia, joined by CRCL staff, presented the Fusion Center Privacy/Civil Liberties Awards for Excellence and Innovation at the National Fusion Center Association's (NFCA) annual Training Event in Washington, DC. The award recipients were (pictured on the right):



- Ayn Crawley, senior advisor for DHS CRCL, for her role in developing many of the partnerships, programs, and materials CRCL uses to provide specialized training (per statutory mandate) for all DHS officers/intelligence analysts deployed to state and major urban fusion centers and to support the training of all fusion center personnel.
- Dan Mahoney, with the Northern California Regional Intelligence Center, for his contributions to protecting civil rights and civil liberties and helping to establish the NFCA's Privacy, Civil Rights and Civil Liberties Subcommittee.

CRCL, in partnership with the DHS Privacy Office, also delivered training during the three-day conference that focused on civil rights and privacy issues, which was attended by representatives from 43 state and local fusion centers across the country.

Targeted Violence and Terrorism Prevention Program **FY 2024 Notice of Funding Opportunity**

The DHS Center for Prevention Programs and Partnerships has released a [Notice of Funding Opportunity \(NOFO\)](#) for the Fiscal Year 2024 Targeted Violence and Terrorism Prevention (TVTP) Grant Program. Prospective applicants are encouraged to use this NOFO to complete their application.

The TVTP Grant Program seeks to fund eligible entities to design and implement sustainable, multidisciplinary projects that enhance targeted violence and terrorism prevention capabilities.

The FY 2024 grant program identifies the following priorities:

- Enhancing Recidivism Reduction and Reintegration Capabilities
- Advancing Equity in Awards and Engaging Underserved Communities in Prevention
- Addressing Online Aspects of Targeted Violence and Terrorism
- Preventing Domestic Violent Extremism

The application deadline is **Friday, May 17 at 5:00 pm EDT**.

Interested applicants can find helpful resources at: <https://www.dhs.gov/targeted-violence-and-terrorism-prevention-grant-program-resources>. For more information, email: TerrorismPrevention@hq.dhs.gov.

CRCL on the Road, April

April 11-19 – Los Angeles, California

CRCL hosted and coordinated a series of stakeholder engagements and events in the greater Los Angeles area.

April 14-19 – Arizona and New Mexico

CRCL met with local stakeholders in Phoenix, Tucson, and Albuquerque per their regular engagement schedule.

April 15-17 – Lombard, Illinois

CRCL met with Chicago-area government partners and stakeholders to present an overview of CRCL's work at the local "DHS Day."

April 19 – Minneapolis, Minnesota

CRCL delivered training on civil rights/civil liberties and privacy topics to personnel at the Minnesota Fusion Center.

*CRCL's Community Engagement team conducts in-person, virtual, and hybrid engagements 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.

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.

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