

DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) has a vital mission: to secure the nation from the many threats we face. This requires the dedication of more than 240,000 employees in jobs that range from aviation and border security to emergency response, from cybersecurity analyst to chemical facility inspector. Our duties are wide-ranging, but our goal is clear - keeping America safe.

A safe and secure homeland means we must also ensure that the rights and liberties of all are assured, privacy is protected, and the means by which we interchange with the world - through travel, lawful immigration, trade, commerce, and exchange - are secured.

CRCL Mission

The Department of Homeland Security Office for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties (CRCL) supports the Department's mission to secure the Nation while preserving individual liberty, fairness, and equality under the law.

CRCL integrates civil rights and civil liberties into all the Department's activities:

- Promoting respect for civil rights and civil liberties in policy creation and implementation by advising Department leadership and personnel, and state and local partners.
- Communicating with individuals and communities whose civil rights and civil liberties may be affected by Department activities, informing them about policies and avenues of redress, and promoting appropriate attention within the Department to their experiences and concerns.
- Investigating and resolving civil rights and civil liberties complaints filed by the public regarding Department policies or activities, or actions taken by Department personnel.
- Leading the Department's equal employment opportunity programs and promoting workforce diversity and merit system principles.

The statutory authority for the Office is described in 6 U.S.C. § 345 and 42 U.S.C. § 2000ee-1.



CRCL Supports Community Engagement

For more information, please contact us at:

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**U.S. Department of
Homeland Security
Office for Civil Rights
and Civil Liberties**

**Community
Engagement
Section**

Homeland Security





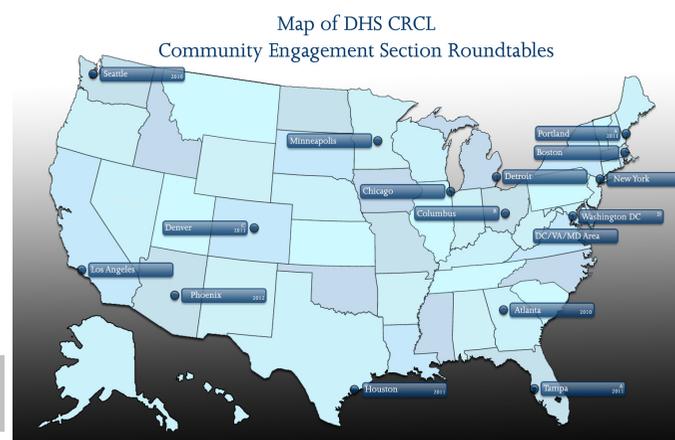
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Public engagement with diverse American communities whose civil rights may be affected by DHS activities is a priority for the Office for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties (CRCL). Our Community

Engagement Section responds to community concerns and provides information on DHS programs, activities, and issues. The goals of our program are: to communicate reliable information about Federal programs and policies, including avenues for redress and complaints; to obtain feedback about community concerns and on-the-ground impacts of DHS activities, and incorporate community ideas and issues relating to civil rights and civil liberties into the policymaking process; and to deepen channels of communication between communities and Federal officials in order to facilitate solution of problems. CRCL's major outreach and engagement initiatives include:

Community Roundtables – The Community Engagement Section is active in 14 metropolitan areas with 14 regularly held roundtable meetings in: Phoenix, AZ; Los Angeles, CA; Denver, CO; Washington, D.C.; Tampa/Orlando, FL; Atlanta, GA; Chicago, IL; Boston, MA; Detroit, MI; Minneapolis, MN; New York City, NY; Columbus, OH; Houston, TX; and Seattle, WA. The majority of this activity consists of leading or playing a significant role in regular roundtable meetings among community leaders and Federal, State, and local government officials. Most roundtables bring together American Arab, Muslim, South Asian, Middle Eastern, Somali, Sikh, Latino, Jewish, and Asian/Asian Pacific Islander communities with government representatives. Our work also includes dozens of other community events, in these and other locations.

Cultural competency training - CRCL leads efforts to improve the cultural competency of DHS personnel and has developed training resources on Sikh, Arab, and Muslim cultures, including the use of religious garments and articles. CRCL also leads a training program for Federal, State, and local law enforcement, which aims to improve communication, build trust, and encourage collaboration between officers and the communities they serve and protect. Training topics include effective policing without the use of ethnic or racial profiling, and best practices in community outreach.



Consultation with Communities on CVE – In addition to Community Roundtables, CRCL reaches out to a broad range of communities on a regular basis. These consultations provide DHS the opportunity to share information, hear community concerns, and to receive feedback about the on-the-ground impacts of DHS policies and procedures. Consultation with communities is also central to CRCL's efforts to incorporate community ideas and issues relating to countering violent extremism. While DHS policies are influenced by many sources and considerations, CRCL has taken the lead on a number of initiatives that have increased DHS' capacity to empower local partners to prevent violent extremism in the US. **Past highlights include:**

- The Community Awareness Briefing (CAB), developed by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Office for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties (CRCL) and National Counterterrorism Center's Directorate for Strategic and Operational Planning (DSOP), has been conducted by CRCL in 12 U.S. cities over the past few years. It is designed to help communities and law enforcement develop the necessary understanding of al-Qa'ida and al-Qaida inspired recruitment tactics and explore ways to collectively and holistically address these threats before they become a challenge at the local level. Due to the increased number of Western-based fighters traveling to foreign war conflicts, such as Syria and Somalia, the Community Awareness Briefing now includes information relating to the foreign fighter recruitment narrative and the myths versus realities of the situation on the ground.
- The Community Resilience Exercise (CREX) is a half-day table-top exercise designed to improve communication between law enforcement and communities and to share ideas on how best to build community resilience against violent extremism. The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Office for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties (CRCL) and National Counterterrorism Center's Directorate for Strategic and Operational Planning (DSOP) have worked with local partners to implement this exercise in cities across the United States. CREXs focus on building trust and empowering communities to develop comprehensive violence prevention and intervention models.



Incident Community Coordination Team (ICCT) - The ICCT is the only tool of its kind available for rapid two-way communication between the Federal government and impacted communities who may have distinct civil rights and civil liberties concerns involving a homeland security incident (e.g., actual or potential terrorist attack or other emergencies). The ICCT is initiated only in certain circumstances and is chaired by the DHS Officer for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties. The goal of the ICCT is to provide timely information from the U.S. Government to community leaders across the country. The ICCT also allows the U.S. Government to receive information from community leaders including: civil rights concerns in the aftermath of incident; reactions or concerns to policies or actions taken by the U.S. Government; information about other concerns of these communities related to an incident and how the U.S. Government might be effective in investigating allegations or concerns. The ICCT comprises key DHS and Federal agencies, community leaders, and entities who work closely with Federal officials nationally and in the affected areas.

International Engagement – CRCL is a key member of two intergovernmental groups between the United States and European partners: the U.S.-UK Joint Contact Group (JCG) and the U.S.-Germany Security Contact Group. CRCL officials have also presented on the Department's engagement efforts at international conferences in Copenhagen, Denmark; Vienna and Salzburg, Austria; Warsaw, Poland; Almaty, Kazakhstan; Ottawa, Canada, Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and through State Department-sponsored public diplomacy trips to Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan; London, England; Berlin, Germany; Cairo, Egypt; Sweden, Norway, Kosovo, Qatar, and Spain, among others. CRCL has also spearheaded an annual community engagement on countering violent extremism exchange program since 2011; pairing community stakeholders and local law enforcement partners in US cities with their counterparts in Germany and Belgium.

Young Leaders and Campus Engagement - As part of a broader campus engagement strategy, CRCL has hosted five "Roundtables on Security and Liberty: Perspectives of Young Leaders Post-9/11" with representatives from the American Arab, Muslim, Sikh, South Asian, and Middle Eastern communities. These have taken place in Los Angeles, Houston, and Washington, D.C. The goal of the roundtables is to receive input on DHS policies and activities from a future generation of community leaders.

Policy Advice to DHS Officials is provided by CRCL's Community Engagement Section who serve as subject matter experts.

"We reject as false the choice between our safety and our ideals. Our Founding Fathers, faced with perils we can scarcely imagine, drafted a charter to assure the rule of law and the rights of man, a charter expanded by the blood of generations. Those ideal still light the world, and we will not give them up for expedience's sake." –President Barack Obama