



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 Officer Cameron Quinn Speaks at 2019 AILA Annual Conference

This month, CRCL Officer Cameron Quinn traveled to Orlando, Florida to speak at the 2019 American Immigration Lawyers Association (AILA) annual conference. The AILA annual conference is an in-depth symposium on immigration law and brings together over 3,500 attorneys.

Officer Quinn led a discussion and provided an overview of CRCL’s statutory authority and mission, and discussed CRCL’s work on immigration-related complaints and policy.



Officer Quinn shared information about CRCL’s role in immigration oversight in raising civil rights and civil liberties concerns in formal policies, and its work in developing and implementing Department-wide guidance and instructions. She also discussed CRCL’s work related to current events taking place on the southern border, from our review and investigation of various immigration-related civil rights and civil liberties complaints, to working with Component partners on developing training for DHS volunteers who have deployed to support DHS efforts at the southern border, and providing meaningful access for individuals who are limited English proficient. Finally, Officer Quinn participated in an open discussion with session participants who raised a number of questions involving immigration enforcement, and conditions of detention in U.S. Customs and Border Protection and U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement custody.

Inside

[CRCL Officer Speaks at AILA Annual Conference](#)

[CRCL Publishes 2018 No FEAR Act Report](#)

[DHS Celebrates LGBT Pride Month](#)

[CRCL Hosts Community Meetings in Denver](#)

[Prepare Today for 2019 Hurricane Season](#)

[CRCL Participates in NCD Community Forum](#)

[USCIS Expands FIRST](#)

[CRCL on the Road](#)

[Contact Us](#)

CRCL Publishes 2018 No FEAR Act Report

CRCL is pleased to release the [Department’s Notification and Federal Employee Anti-discrimination and Retaliation Act of 2002 \(No FEAR Act\) Annual Report for Fiscal Year 2018](#). The No FEAR Act, Public Law 107-174, requires that federal agencies be publicly accountable for violations of anti-discrimination laws and policies. This report summarizes the most significant accomplishments within the Department’s EEO program in implementing the No FEAR Act, focusing primarily on EEO complaint processing. The report shows the Department’s strong commitment in supporting merit system principles, providing protection from prohibited personnel practices, and promoting leadership accountability.

DHS Celebrates LGBT Pride Month

DHS joins the nation in observing Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) Pride Month. Each June we take this time to reflect on the contributions and accomplishments of the LGBT community at DHS and across the federal government.

This month, CRCL and DHS Pride, the employee association representing the Department's proudly serving LGBT personnel, hosted the DHS LGBT Pride Month Program: "Millions of Moments of Pride." The program featured guest speaker Diego Sanchez, APR, Director of Advocacy, Policy and Partnerships, PFLAG. Mr. Sanchez, a renowned LGBT advocate, shared his personal and professional experiences advocating for the LGBT community.



CRCL Hosts Roundtable and Meetings with Diverse Communities in Denver

CRCL convened its quarterly roundtable in Denver this month along with additional engagement meetings with advocacy groups and law enforcement. The roundtable was an opportunity for Peter Mina, CRCL's new deputy officer for programs and compliance, to meet with Denver stakeholders for the first time.

CRCL first met with the Denver Police Department which has been a critical partner in facilitating terrorism prevention and community engagement work. Lt. Robert Wyckoff shared examples of how CRCL's roundtable, as well as a DHS terrorism prevention grant they received, has helped their department's engagement efforts. He also credited CRCL's training for community relations officers, through the community awareness briefings, as an important resource in their ability to effectively engage communities.



The next meeting took place with community and advocacy groups, including the Rocky Mountain Immigrant Advocacy Network (RMIAN), the local chapter of the NAACP, and the University of Denver Law School. The discussion centered on challenges that communities face, and resources available to address race-related issues, access issues at the detention facility in Colorado, and CRCL's complaint process.

CRCL then met with the U.S. Attorney's Office (USAO) for the District of Colorado and the DHS regional coordinator for strategic engagement. They discussed the many partnerships between the USAO and DHS, particularly involving training on houses of worship, civil rights redress for communities, campaigns to address bullying in Sikh and Muslim communities, and community awareness and law enforcement awareness briefings and training.

Concluding the trip, CRCL hosted a roundtable meeting, which drew more than 40 stakeholders from the community, local and federal law enforcement, and Congressional offices. Deputy Officer Mina spoke on CRCL's work and engagement opportunities available to communities. Michael Dougherty, district attorney for the county of Boulder, presented information on their hate crime campaign and focus on ensuring that communities have access to local resources and services. Additional discussion topics included detention issues including access to legal care and medical and mental health care. CRCL will continue to follow-up with stakeholders to address these issues.

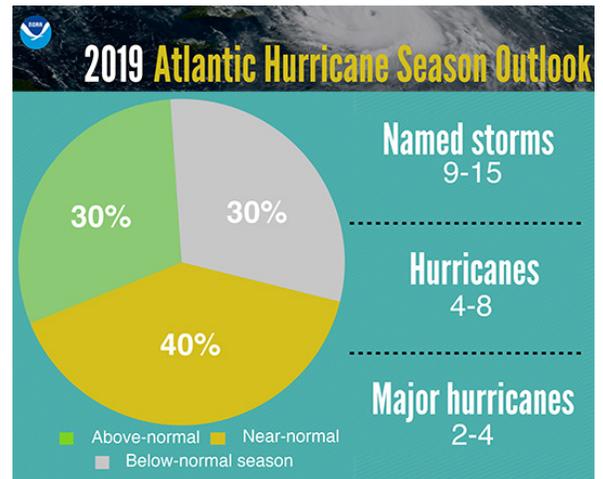
Prepare Today for the 2019 Hurricane Season

Everyone should know their risk for hurricanes and take steps to prepare. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) predicts a near-normal 2019 Atlantic Hurricane Season which started June 1. However, it only takes one hurricane or tropical storm to have a major impact on a community. Pay attention to the forecast tracks for hurricanes and take steps to prepare even if you're outside the cone, because hurricanes and tropical storms can have impacts beyond the cone.

You can take action now to prepare for hurricanes:

- Know your risk of hurricanes and prepare in advance.
- Plan ahead – know what you'll do if a hurricane could impact your area, how to contact your family, and any community emergency plans.
- Sign up for your [community's warning system](#). The Emergency Alert System and NOAA Weather Radio also provide emergency alerts.
- Stay tuned for the latest information. Follow the guidance of your local officials and check media and weather reports via official sources, including social media.
- Consider purchasing flood insurance to protect your property from potential flood damage.
 - Most homeowner's policies do not cover flood damage.
 - Flood insurance takes 30 days to become effective – don't wait until the last minute!
 - Visit [Floodsmart.gov](#) for more information.
- Based on your location and community plans, make your own plans for evacuation or sheltering in place.
 - Become familiar with your evacuation zone, the evacuation route and shelter locations.

Find more information on how to prepare at [Ready.gov/hurricanes](#), and through the National Weather Service at [weather.gov/safety/hurricane](#).



CRCL Participates in Panel Discussion at NCD Community Forum



A CRCL representative recently participated in the National Council on Disability business meeting and community forum of the National Council on Disability (NCD) in San Juan, Puerto Rico. During the meeting panelists offered their perspectives relating to a recent report published by NCD, "[Preserving Our Freedom: Ending Institutionalization of People with Disabilities During and After Disasters.](#)" The report examined data from several major storms and disasters and found that people with disabilities are frequently institutionalized during and after disasters due to conflicting federal guidance, a lack of equal access to emergency and

disaster-related programs and services, and a lack of compliance with federal law. As a result of unnecessary institutionalizations during and after disasters, people with disabilities often go unaccounted for, families are separated from loved ones, working individuals with disabilities often become unemployed, and students with disabilities are often excluded from returning to school with their peers.

During the panel discussion, the CRCL representative discussed [issues that were raised during several listening sessions](#) CRCL and FEMA hosted across the country to hear about concerns and experiences related to the impact of disaster on individuals with disabilities. CRCL also discussed federal agency guidance regarding integration and sheltering, and CRCL recommendations for emergency managers on improving the delivery of disaster assistance to disaster survivors with disabilities.

USCIS Expands FIRST: A Fully Digital FOIA System

June 25, 2019 – U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) is announcing the expansion of its digital Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) Immigration Records System (FIRST). FIRST is the only system in the U.S. government that allows users to submit and track FOIA requests and receive documents digitally. This process will save time, improve efficiency, and reduce potential errors that can occur with manually handling paper.

Starting today, FOIA requestors with a USCIS online account can submit requests online for their own records. Soon, they will be able to submit online requests for non-A-File material (policies, communications, etc.) Later this year USCIS online account holders can make requests on behalf of another person.

“As USCIS continues to move the nation’s legal immigration system away from paper-based services to an electronic future, I am excited to implement the first fully digital FOIA system, and the benefits it will bring for FOIA requestors who take advantage of this service,” said Kenneth Cuccinelli, acting director of USCIS. “FIRST brings the antiquated FOIA process into the 21st century and makes it a more efficient and easy process.”

In May 2018, USCIS announced the initial rollout of FIRST, which allowed requestors to create a USCIS online account to receive requested documents digitally. This enabled requestors to login to their account, track requests, and download documents. Since the initial rollout of FIRST’s capabilities, users have created more than 77,000 USCIS online accounts to manage and receive FOIA responses.

To establish a USCIS online account to take advantage of FIRST, please visit first.uscis.gov. For more information on USCIS and our programs, please visit uscis.gov or follow us on Twitter ([@uscis](https://twitter.com/uscis)), Instagram ([/uscis](https://www.instagram.com/uscis)), YouTube ([/uscis](https://www.youtube.com/uscis)), and Facebook ([/uscis](https://www.facebook.com/uscis)).

CRCL on the Road, June 2019

June 25 – Boston, Massachusetts

CRCL conducted a series of meetings with diverse ethnic and community-based organizations.

June 25 – Seattle, Washington

CRCL convened its quarterly community engagement roundtable with diverse ethnic and community-based organizations.

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

DISCLAIMER: The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) provides links to non-government websites for convenience and informational purposes only. These websites may contain information that is copyrighted with restrictions on reuse. Permission to use copyrighted materials must be obtained from the original source and cannot be obtained from DHS. DHS is not responsible for the content of external websites linked to or referenced from the DHS web server. DHS neither endorses the information or content of external websites, nor guarantees the accuracy of the information contained on external websites. When you select a link to an external website, you are leaving the DHS site.

Follow the Office for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties on Facebook at: [facebook.com/CivilRightsandCivilLiberties](https://www.facebook.com/CivilRightsandCivilLiberties).