



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>.

2022 in Review: DHS Responds to Threats and Challenges, Builds Capacity for the Future

In 2022, [challenges of unprecedented breadth confronted the United States](#): unrelenting ransomware and other cyberattacks, a rise in targeted violence, Russia’s unprovoked assault against Ukraine, China’s violations of international norms, increased levels of migration in our hemisphere, natural disasters of increasing gravity and frequency, and much more. The Department responded to this dynamic threat landscape with leadership, new programs and capabilities, cross-component collaboration, and unflinching dedication to mission.

In April, Secretary Alejandro N. Mayorkas outlined [twelve mission-specific and organizational](#) priorities to better prepare for, prevent, and respond to these diverse threats and challenges. Through strategic investments and the dedication of the DHS workforce, the Department made significant progress on these priorities throughout the year. It also led the federal government in several of the most significant multi-department and multi-agency efforts. Through its leadership of [Operation Allies Welcome](#), DHS coordinated the resettlement of more than 88,000 vulnerable Afghan nationals. In our national response to Russia’s unprovoked war of aggression, [DHS oversaw federal efforts](#) to prepare for and respond to the conflict’s impacts on the Homeland. Through Uniting for Ukraine, DHS [streamlined the processing of more than 85,000 Ukrainian citizens](#) fleeing their country and reaching safety in the United States.

Read more on [the Department’s progress](#) to better respond to the complex challenges and threats facing the nation in the areas of: combatting terrorism and targeted violence, mitigating and building resilience to cyber threats, strengthening our borders and modernizing ports of entry, ensuring a more fair and orderly immigration system, preparing for and responding to natural disasters, and strengthening the Department’s capacity to deliver for the American people.

Inside

[2022 Year in Review: DHS Responds to Threats and Challenges, Builds Capacity for the Future](#)

[DHS Continues to Prepare for End of Title 42; Announces New Border Enforcement Measures](#)

[Case Management Pilot Program Meets with Partners in Houston](#)

[CRCL Conducts Investigation on U.S. Coast Guard Cutter](#)

[Virtual Discussion on DHS Efforts to Support Enforcement of Labor and Employment Laws](#)

[CRCL Hosts Stakeholder Meetings in San Diego and Miami](#)

[Reminder for DHS Recipients](#)

[January is Human Trafficking Prevention Month](#)

[CRCL on the Road](#)

[Contact Us](#)

New Rule Proposes Restoring Protections for Beneficiaries of Federally Funded Services

On January 12, DHS joined eight other federal agencies to advance the call for religious freedom and equity for all through a [new rule to restore religious protections for beneficiaries of federally funded services](#), such as job training and job search assistance, academic enrichment opportunities, and housing services. The agencies encourage members of the public to comment on the [proposed rule](#) during the 60-day comment period and look forward to reviewing the comments, developing final rules, and continuing the long bipartisan tradition of partnering with faith-based and secular organizations to serve people in need.

DHS Prepares for End of Title 42; Announces New Border Enforcement Measures

DHS continues to prepare for the end of the Title 42 public health order, which is currently the subject of multiple court orders, and a return to processing all noncitizens under the Department's Title 8 immigration authorities. To that end, DHS announced new border enforcement measures to improve border security, limit irregular migration, and create additional safe and orderly processes for people fleeing humanitarian crises to lawfully come to the United States. These measures, taken together, are concrete steps to enhance the security of our border while the Title 42 public health order is in place, and that DHS will continue to build on in preparation for the Title 42 order being lifted.

- DHS is establishing new parole processes for Cubans, Haitians, and Nicaraguans, modeled on the successful processes for Venezuelans and Ukrainians, which combine safe, orderly, and lawful pathways to the United States, including authorization to work, with significant consequences for those who fail to use those pathways. We are also continuing the process with respect to Venezuelans.
- Through the CBP One app, we are also providing a new mechanism for noncitizens to schedule appointments to present themselves at ports of entry, facilitating safe and orderly arrivals. Initially this will be used for those seeking an exception from the Title 42 public health order. Once the Title 42 order is no longer in place, CBP One will be used to help ensure safe and orderly processing at ports of entry.
- DHS is increasing and enhancing the use of expedited removal under Title 8 authorities for those who cannot be processed under the Title 42 public health order. These efforts include surging personnel and resources and enrolling individuals under the asylum processing interim final rule published in March 2022.
- As a complement to these efforts, and in response to the unprecedented surge in migration across the hemisphere and to reduce encounters at our border, DHS and the Department of Justice intend to shortly issue a proposed rule that will, subject to public comment, incentivize the use of the new and existing lawful processes available in the United States and partner nations, and place certain conditions on asylum eligibility for those who fail to do so.

DHS will continue to monitor developments on the southwest border and will accelerate or implement additional measures, as needed, consistent with applicable court orders. Read the [full announcement](#), which is available in Spanish and Haitian Creole.

Case Management Pilot Program Meets with Partners in Houston

CRCL staff recently traveled to Houston, Texas to meet with local Case Management Pilot Program (CMPP) service provider, BakerRipley, and the local ICE Field Office to discuss the launch of the CMPP. CRCL staff were enthusiastic to meet local partners who will directly implement the pilot program in Houston. Initial CMPP sites are located in Houston and New York City.

The CMPP, created by Congress in 2021, will provide voluntary case management and other needed services to noncitizens in immigration removal proceedings. The program is managed by a National Board chaired by the DHS Officer for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties and comprised of nonprofits with experience providing and evaluating case management programs for noncitizens, asylees and refugees.

CRCL Conducts Investigation on U.S. Coast Guard Cutter

This month, CRCL conducted an onsite investigation aboard a U.S. Coast Guard cutter located in southern Florida waters. The investigation was conducted based on allegations that CRCL received related to the interdiction of maritime migrants, and the protection screening, processing, and custody of the migrants in the Caribbean. In relation to this investigation, a team will conduct a follow-up visit to the Migrant Operation Center in Guantanamo Naval Base Bay in February.

CRCL reviews and investigates civil rights and civil liberties complaints filed by the public DHS policies and activities. These can involve a [range of alleged civil rights and civil liberties abuses](#), such as: discrimination in several forms, violations of rights in immigration detention, violations of due process rights, violations of confidentiality provisions of the Violence Against Women Act, and many others (click here for the [full list](#)).



Virtual Discussion on DHS Efforts to Support Enforcement of Labor/Employment Laws

This month, DHS announced that noncitizen workers who are victims of, or witnesses to, the violation of labor rights, [can now access a streamlined and expedited deferred action request process](#). Deferred action protects noncitizen workers from threats of immigration-related retaliation from exploitive employers. Effective immediately, this process will improve DHS's longstanding practice of using its discretionary authority to consider labor and employment agency-related requests for deferred action on a case-by-case basis. Workers will be able to visit [DHS.gov](#) for additional information in English and Spanish on how to submit requests. These improvements advance the Biden-Harris Administration's commitment to empowering workers and improving workplace conditions by enabling all workers, including noncitizens, to assert their legal rights.

Under this process, DHS will continue to use its existing discretionary authority to consider requests for deferred action on a case-by-case basis. This process will enable DHS to efficiently review these time-sensitive requests, more robustly support the mission of labor agencies, and provide protections to eligible workers.

As part of the Department's efforts to establish this centralized process for noncitizens to request deferred action, CRCL and other DHS partners recently hosted a virtual engagement with nongovernmental organizations to provide an overview of the new initiative and process. The event also provided a forum for advocacy and community leaders to ask questions about the process.

CRCL Senior Official Peter Mina gave opening remarks, where he discussed CRCL's role in the new process, and their work with Components to ensure the process is carried out effectively and efficiently. Officials from the DHS Office of the Secretary, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, and U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement delivered presentations discussed the new streamlined process and responded to questions. Nearly 80 community and advocacy leaders participated in the call and discussed topics that included: processing of deferred action requests for individuals in removal proceedings, the distinction between labor-based deferred action requests submitted through the new centralized process and parole in place requests submitted through existing channels, and how pending requests for deferred action based on a labor agency investigation will be managed.

CRCL and DHS Components will continue to engage and connect communities and state and local partner agencies to share best practices. For more information, contact CRCL at: CommunityEngagement@hq.dhs.gov.

CRCL Meets with Community Stakeholders in Miami and San Diego

This month, CRCL's Community Engagement Section continued its re-launch of in-person community engagement efforts in Miami, Florida and San Diego, California. CRCL representatives are reconvening in-person meetings with CRCL's diverse stakeholders that were paused due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Over the course of several days in Miami and San Diego, CRCL representatives met with nearly 100 new and existing stakeholders including local DHS government partners, leaders from faith-based and advocacy organizations, local government representatives, and law enforcement entities to hear concerns regarding DHS programs and policies, share information on the Department's priorities, and provide information on avenues for redress and complaints.

Topics raised during the meetings included Title 42 and its impacts on DHS partners and community members, concerns with targeted violence and hate crimes, conditions of detention, the CBP One app, language access in DHS programs and activities, access to employment authorization and protections for workers that report labor violations, and building strong working relationships with local DHS offices, among others.

In the coming months, CRCL will continue to conduct similar outreach in several cities across the U.S. We want to hear from you! If you have questions or would like to learn more about CRCL's community engagement efforts, please reach out to communityengagement@hq.dhs.gov.

Important Reminder for Recipients of DHS Financial Assistance

When an organization receives a grant or other type of financial assistance from DHS, those recipient organizations cannot discriminate in their programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin (including language), disability, age, sex, or religion. CRCL assists recipients in understanding and meeting their requirements under federal civil rights laws and regulations by collecting information from recipients through the [DHS Civil Rights Evaluation Tool \(CRET\)](#).

Recipients of federal financial assistance from DHS or one of its awarding Component agencies (e.g., Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)) must complete and submit the CRET within 30 days of receipt of the Notice of Award as required by Section B.V. of the [DHS Standard Terms of Conditions of Award](#). CRCL and FEMA's Office of Equal Rights collaborate on the review of CRET submissions.

CRCL has developed a number of technical resources to assist recipients with completing the CRET:

- [FAQs: DHS Civil Rights Evaluation Tool](#)
- [How-to Guide on Completing Section 4 of the DHS Civil Rights Evaluation Tool](#)
- **Upcoming monthly webinars on the CRET.** If you would like to attend a session, please RSVP to CivilRightsEvaluation@hq.dhs.gov. If you require a reasonable accommodation to participate in this webinar (for example, an ASL interpreter, captioning, etc.) please contact CRCL by email at CivilRightsEvaluation@hq.dhs.gov.
 - **February 1, 2023**, 10 a.m. – 11 a.m. EST, 12p.m – 1 p.m. EST, and 2 p.m. – 3 p.m. EST
 - **February 16, 2023**, 10 a.m. – 11 a.m. EST, 12p.m – 1 p.m. EST, and 2 p.m. – 3 p.m. EST
 - **February 23, 2023**, 10 a.m. – 11 a.m. EST, 12p.m – 1 p.m. EST, and 2 p.m. – 3 p.m. EST
- [Civil Rights Resources for Recipients of DHS Financial Assistance](#)
- [Quarterly Resource Emails](#)

If you are a recipient of DHS financial assistance and you have questions about the CRET, please contact the DHS Office for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties (CRCL) at CivilRightsEvaluation@hq.dhs.gov.

January is Human Trafficking Prevention Month

Every year since 2010, The President has designated January as National Human Trafficking Prevention Month. Since then, the month has become a time to raise awareness about how we all can prevent this crime by learning how to identify and report human trafficking. One great way to raise awareness is by participating in the national public awareness [DHS Blue Campaign](#). The campaign is designed to educate everyone on how to recognize and respond to possible human trafficking cases.

Human trafficking involves the use of force, fraud, or coercion to obtain some type of forced labor including domestic servitude or commercial sex acts. It's important to understand that by law, any person under the age of 18 involved in a commercial sex act is considered a victim of human trafficking.

On January 11, CRCL employees joined the Department and the public in recognizing National Human Trafficking Awareness Day by participating in **#WearBlueDay** to raise awareness of human trafficking on social media.

You can help play a role in ending human trafficking by learning key indicators of the crime, raising awareness of human trafficking within your community or industry, and reporting suspected trafficking incidents. You can also download or order the free [Blue Campaign indicator card](#), which lists common signs of trafficking and how to report the crime.



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 meeting 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.

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