



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.



DHS Leaders Join CRCL Workforce Meeting

This month, CRCL Officer Shoba Sivaprasad Wadhia and the entire CRCL team were pleased to welcome two distinguished guests at CRCL’s Workforce Meeting. DHS Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas provided opening remarks and thanked CRCL employees for their tireless service and dedication to the CRCL and DHS mission. He noted recent CRCL accomplishments and underscored the importance of ensuring civil rights and civil liberties practices are embedded into all the Department’s activities. Secretary Mayorkas then took questions from CRCL employees and shared his thoughts on leadership and how employees can lead from every level and contribute to the success of the Department.



DHS Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas pictured with CRCL Officer Shoba Sivaprasad Wadhia and CRCL workforce

CRCL also welcomed U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) Director Ur M. Jaddou, who joined CRCL Officer Wadhia for a fireside chat. Director Jaddou shared her story as a daughter of immigrants and how her background shaped her personally and professionally, leading her to the top post at USCIS. Director Jaddou discussed the importance of embedding the principles of diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility into all aspects of the USCIS mission, stating that when people of all backgrounds are valued, heard, and respected in an inclusive manner, the nation reaps the rewards. USCIS oversees lawful immigration to the U.S. and in FY 2023 welcomed more than 878,000 new citizens during naturalization ceremonies across the country.

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USCIS Director Ur M. Jaddou with CRCL Officer Shoba Sivaprasad Wadhia during a fireside chat

CRCL Officer Delivers Remarks at Naturalization Ceremony

This month, CRCL Officer Shoba Sivaprasad Wadhia delivered remarks at a Naturalization Ceremony in Hartford, Connecticut where twenty-nine citizenship candidates from nineteen countries took the Oath of Allegiance and became U.S. citizens. During her remarks, Officer Sivaprasad Wadhia shared her personal experience as a daughter of Indian immigrants, an immigration attorney, and a scholar. She congratulated the new U.S. citizens and encouraged them to make a positive contribution to our country. “Register to vote and exercise this important right. Get involved in your children’s school, in your local community, service in the armed forces, operate a business, or run for public office,” said Officer Wadhia. “Dream big—and explore all the limitless opportunities that are America for you, your children, and your grandchildren.”



CRCL Officer Shoba Sivaprasad Wadhia addresses citizenship candidates at Naturalization Ceremony in Hartford, CT

National Board Announces Subrecipient Solicitation for Case Management Pilot Program

The Case Management Pilot Program (CMPP) National Board issued a [public solicitation](#) on July 8, 2024, seeking subrecipients to implement the Case Management Pilot Program, inviting community-based service providers from across the country to apply for funding to deliver voluntary case management and associated trauma-informed services to eligible noncitizens. The CMPP National Board will distribute funds via subawards to eligible local governments and nonprofits.

CMPP services include, among others, mental health services; trafficking screening; legal orientation; cultural orientation; referrals to other services identified by participants as priorities, such as health care, school enrollment, legal services, transportation, job training, and translation; and departure planning and/or reintegration services for individuals returning to their home countries.

The CMPP National Board is chaired by the Department of Homeland Security Officer for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties and includes Church World Service, Catholic Charities USA, and The Center for Migration Studies of New York. Church World Service serves as the National Board Secretariat and Fiscal Agent.

Completed applications are due by August 8, 2024, by 11:59pm EST. Applications received after that date will not be considered. The solicitation is available at www.CMPP.org.

DHS Leaders Meet with Civil Society Stakeholders on Artificial Intelligence

DHS plays a critical role in ensuring artificial intelligence (AI) safety and security nationwide. The Department uses AI responsibly to advance its homeland security mission while protecting the privacy and individual rights of the American public. Earlier this year, the Department published the [DHS AI Roadmap](#), which outlines AI initiatives and the technology’s potential across the homeland security enterprise. The plan directs DHS’s efforts to fully realize AI’s potential to protect the American people and our homeland while steadfastly protecting privacy, civil rights, and civil liberties.

Since the launch of the AI Roadmap, CRCL and other DHS offices have met with civil rights and civil society stakeholders to gain insight and feedback on the AI Roadmap. This month, DHS Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas joined CRCL Officer Shoba Sivaprasad Wadhia, along with leadership from the DHS Office of Partnership and Engagement (OPE), the Chief Information Officer (OCIO), and the Privacy Office (PRIV) in a meeting with diverse leaders about the Department’s use of AI. During the engagement, civil society leaders had an opportunity to ask questions and learn about current activities taking place at DHS in the AI space.

CRCL Participates in DOJ Interagency Convening on Advancing Equity in Artificial Intelligence

This month, CRCL Officer Shoba Sivaprasad Wadhia joined leaders of federal civil rights offices at a convening on Artificial Intelligence and civil rights hosted by the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ). This was the third such convening following the issuance of Executive Order 14110, [Executive Order on the Safe, Secure, and Trustworthy Development and Use of Artificial Intelligence](#), which tasks federal agencies to prevent and address unlawful discrimination and other harms that may result from the use of AI in programs and benefits, while preserving the potential social, medica, and other advances AI may spur.



DOJ Assistant Attorney General Clarke meets with government officials to foster AI and civil rights coordination

Assistant Attorney General Kristen Clarke of DOJ’s Civil Rights Division provided opening remarks and highlighted the recent [announcement](#) that nine cabinet-level federal agencies, including DHS, have joined the pledge to enforce civil rights laws in AI as new technologies become more common in daily life.

Participants included CRCL Officer Wadhia, Chair Charlotte Burrows of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, Director Melanie Fontes Rainer of the Department of Health and Human Services’ Office of Civil Rights, and Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary Diane Shelley of the Department of Housing and Urban Development. Other senior agency officials also participated.

Attendees discussed their efforts to safeguard civil rights through robust enforcement, policy initiatives, rulemaking and ongoing education and outreach, including completing all 180-day actions in EO 14110 on schedule. All participants pledged to continue collaboration to protect the American public against any harm that might result from the increased use and reliance on AI, algorithms, and other advanced technologies. The agencies also agreed to partner on external stakeholder engagement around their collective efforts to advance equity and civil rights in AI.

DHS Statement on Safety and Enforcement – Public Health Response to HPAI

Release Date: July 17, 2024

The Department of Homeland Security is working with federal, state, local, and non-governmental partners in response activities related to Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI), including public health outreach among dairy/cattle farms and their workers.

In light of these circumstances, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) remind the public that testing and vaccination sites are considered [protected areas](#). To the fullest extent possible, ICE and CBP do not conduct immigration enforcement activities at protected areas where such medical or public health outreach is being conducted.

At the request of local and state authorities, ICE and CBP may help with public safety missions. ICE and CBP provide assistance to individuals regardless of their immigration status. DHS officials do not and will not pose as individuals providing medical or public health assistance as part of any enforcement activities.

DHS is committed to ensuring that every individual who seeks medical or public health aid, testing, or other assistance as part of the HPAI investigation efforts is able to do so regardless of their immigration status. DHS carries out its mission without discrimination on the basis of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, ethnicity, disability, or political associations, and in compliance with law and policy.

For information about filing a complaint with the DHS Office for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties about these matters, please visit the [Make a Civil Rights Complaint](#) page.

DHS Leads Consultations with Tribal Nations on DHS Environmental Justice Strategic Plan

DHS is revising its Environmental Justice (EJ) Strategy to meet Administration and Secretary goals and a requirement under Executive Order 14096, [Revitalizing Our Nation's Commitment to Environmental Justice for All](#). As part of this effort, CRCL and the Office of the Chief Readiness Support Officer (OCRSO) are leading public outreach and engagement efforts with diverse communities to solicit feedback on the current DHS EJ Strategy and discuss goals for its revision. In recent months, DHS has issued a Request for Information in the Federal Register, held three national listening sessions, and presented at two different national conferences to solicit feedback on the current EJ Strategy. DHS is committed to consulting with Federally recognized Tribal Nations in alignment with Executive Order 13175, [Consultation and Coordination with Indian Tribal Governments](#), Presidential [Memorandum on Tribal Consultation and Strengthening Nation-to-Nation Relationships](#), and per the DHS Tribal Consultation Directive and Instruction, the Department must consult with Federally recognized Tribes regarding rules, policies, and guidance with potential tribal implications.

This month, CRCL and OCRSO hosted two tribal consultations related to the Department's draft revised [EJ Strategy](#). The Department's Director of Tribal Affairs, Laurel Iron Cloud, moderated both sessions. During the first engagement, CRCL Officer Shoba Sivaprasad Wadhia and Chief Readiness Support Officer Trae Watkins welcomed attendees and thanked them for their participation in this important effort, noting that the voices and perspectives of Tribal Nations are crucial to better understand the challenges faced by Tribal Nations and identify potential solutions for addressing these challenges. During both consultations, participants had an opportunity to ask questions and raise concerns about DHS and DHS-funded programs and activities that may impact human health and the environment. All the comments were met receptively and will be taken into consideration as DHS completes its revision to the EJ Strategy.

CRCL Officer Attends Women, Peace, and Security Roundtable

This month, during the 75th Anniversary NATO Summit held in Washington, D.C., CRCL Officer Shoba Sivaprasad Wadhia attended a Women, Peace, and Security (WPS) Roundtable hosted by the U.S. Department of State. Ambassador Geeta Rao Gupta of the Secretary's Office of Global Women's Issues (S/GWI) led the roundtable titled "Turning Vision into Action: Women, Peace and Security Across the Alliance." Several international partners participated including Canada, the United Kingdom, and Finland, sharing key WPS initiatives within their countries during this event.

The roundtable was followed by a WPS reception hosted by State Department Secretary Antony Blinken. During his remarks, Secretary Blinken emphasized the importance of having women in leadership positions throughout NATO and around the world.

"As we know, the evidence shows that when women enjoy greater physical security, when their rights are respected, when societies have higher levels of gender equality, entire countries are more stable. They're more prosperous; they're more peaceful," said Secretary Blinken. "And when women are meaningfully involved in making and keeping the peace, it is more likely to endure."

Other key guests included the NATO Secretary General's Special Representative for Women, Peace and Security Irene Fellin and U.S. Senator Jeanne Shaheen, author of the bipartisan "Women, Peace and Security Act of 2017," which added DHS as one of the four implementing departments for WPS, along with the Departments of State and Defense and the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID). The reception served as an opportunity for NATO Ministerial Allies and partners, U.S. Government senior leaders, civil society representatives, and academia to network and explore opportunities for collaboration in our shared commitments on WPS within the NATO alliance.



U.S. Department of State Secretary Antony Blinken provides remarks at WPS reception

DHS Announces New Resources to Combat Gender-Based Violence

The DHS Council on Combating Gender-Based Violence (CCGBV) has two announcements to share. Building on DHS's commitment to improving how we support survivors of gender-based violence, in November 2023, the CCGBV finalized a DHS management directive and an instruction that address gender-based violence through a victim-centered approach. We have also launched a [Combating Gender-Based Violence](#) webpage.



Resources for DHS Employees on Combating Gender-Based Violence

In November 2023, the CCGBV finalized *Directive 002-03* and *Instruction 002-03-001* to advance DHS's efforts to address gender-based violence by using a victim-centered approach. The instruction includes:

- The development of a new mandatory training on gender-based violence (GBV) and the victim-centered approach for employees and contractors who interact with survivors of GBV.
- A new requirement that DHS components and offices that meet the definition of a T visa or U visa certifying agency provide copies of their certification policies to the CCGBV.
- Informational resources provided to DHS personnel on GBV and secondary (vicarious) trauma to equip them with the knowledge and resources to effectively serve survivors of gender-based violence.

Combating Gender-Based Violence Webpage

This new page is an online hub for information and resources related to gender-based violence and outlines what GBV is, where it can occur, who is affected, and how and where to seek help if you or someone you know is experiencing any form of GBV. The webpage houses public education materials and provides information on DHS resources for survivors of human trafficking and other forms of GBV. It also links to trainings for law enforcement and the public, and information on immigration options available to survivors of human trafficking, domestic violence and other crimes.

More Information

DHS is committed to combating all forms of GBV, including domestic violence, sexual violence, stalking, forced marriage, female genital mutilation or cutting, and more. Through the CCGBV, DHS ensures that policies combating gender-based violence are consistent Department-wide and that the Department takes a victim-centered approach to implementing all its programs and policies. Visit the [Combating Gender-Based Violence](#) page and follow DHS on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) and [X \(formerly known as Twitter\)](#) for updates on our work on GBV and other important issues.

DHS Celebrates Disability Pride Month and the 34th Anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act

As we celebrate Disability Pride Month this July, we also commemorate the 34th anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), signed into law on July 26, 1990. This landmark legislation has been instrumental in advancing the rights of individuals with disabilities, ensuring equal opportunities, and fostering an inclusive society. The ADA covers the following protections:



JULY
DISABILITY
PRIDE MONTH

- **Employment:** Title I requires employers to provide reasonable accommodations for applicants and employees with disabilities and prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability in all aspects of employment.

- **State and Local Government Services:** Title II requires that state and local governments must provide people with disabilities an equal opportunity to benefit from all of their programs, services, and activities.
- **Public Transit:** Title II Subtitle B requires that public transit systems must provide people with disabilities an equal opportunity to benefit from their services.
- **Businesses Open to the Public:** Title III requires that businesses and nonprofits that serve the public must provide people with disabilities an equal opportunity to access the goods or services they offer.
- **Telecommunications:** Title IV requires that phone companies must provide services to allow callers with hearing and speech disabilities to communicate.

Disability Pride Month is a time to recognize and honor the diversity and contributions of individuals with disabilities. It is an opportunity to reflect on the progress we have made, acknowledge the work that remains, and reaffirm our commitment to creating an environment where everyone can participate and thrive.

The ADA builds upon the protections afforded by the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 which prohibits discrimination based on disability in federal employment, as well as federally conducted and assisted programs and activities. These laws have transformed lives by breaking down barriers to employment, education, and public services and have helped to level the playing field to provide access and inclusion for individuals with disabilities. As we celebrate this milestone, let us remember the spirit of the ADA and continue to advocate for inclusion, accessibility, and equal opportunities for all.

DHS and CRCL are dedicated to supporting and promoting access, equity, inclusion, and equal opportunity for individuals with disabilities and upholding the principles of the ADA. CRCL is committed to ensuring equal access in DHS and DHS-funded programs and activities and continuing engagements with members of the disability community. In honor of Disability Pride and the ADA's 34th anniversary, below is a list of the Department's resources for individuals with disabilities that would not have been possible without the ADA:

- [Disability Access at the Department of Homeland Security](#)
- [Civil Rights Resources for Recipients of DHS Financial Assistance](#)
- [DHS Guide to Interacting with People Who Have Disabilities](#)
- CRCL implemented a DHS Section 508 complaint and inquiry process to include the [DHS Technology Accessibility Issue Reporting Form](#)
- [Reasonable Accommodations at DHS](#)
- [Affirmative Action Plan for the Recruitment, Hiring, Advancement, and Retention of Persons with Disabilities](#)
- [Employment and Hiring at DHS](#)

CRCL on the Road, July*

San Diego, California

On July 9, CRCL conducted an engagement with diverse stakeholders in San Diego, CA.

Augusta, Maine

On July 17, CRCL delivered training on civil rights/civil liberties and privacy matters to personnel at the Maine Information and Analysis Center.

Hartford, Connecticut

On July 22, CRCL conducted an engagement with diverse stakeholders in Hartford, CT.

Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

On July 10, CRCL delivered training on civil rights/civil liberties and privacy matters to personnel at the Oklahoma Counter Terrorism Intelligence Center.

Dallas, Texas

On July 27, CRCL conducted a virtual engagement with diverse stakeholders in Dallas, TX.

Colorado

On July 22, CRCL conducted a virtual engagement with diverse stakeholders in Colorado.

*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@hq.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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