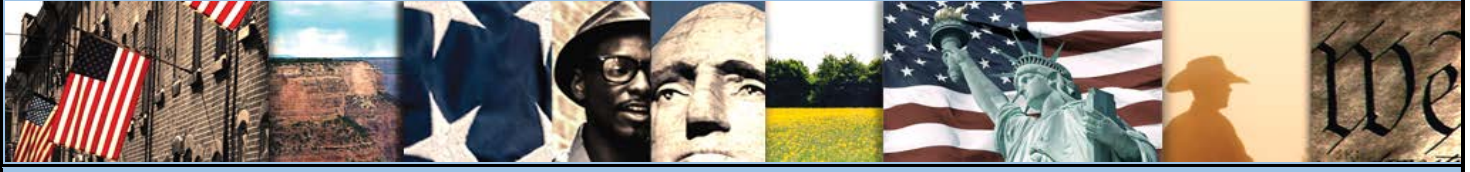




Homeland Security

Office for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties Newsletter Vol. 10, #6 | March 2020

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>.

DHS Response to COVID-19 (Coronavirus)

As you can appreciate, March has been dominated by efforts to respond to the evolving issues and direction related to COVID-19, which has required CRCL, as well as all of you, our stakeholder groups and others with whom we work, to swiftly pivot and change both how we work and how we conduct our daily lives. And many things originally planned, such as our Community Engagement Roundtables, had to quickly be postponed in order to encourage social distancing to keep both our staff and you, our stakeholders safe. The Department’s efforts in preparedness and readiness have facilitated a speedy, whole-of-government response in confronting COVID-19, keeping Americans safe, and helping detect and slow the spread of the virus.

As part of Department-wide, layered response, U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP), the DHS Countering Weapons of Mass Destruction Office (CWMD), U.S. Coast Guard (USCG), Transportation Security Administration (TSA), Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), the Science and Technology Directorate, the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA), U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE)), and others are actively working to protect the nation.

While some offices, including CRCL, are teleworking, because of the nature of much of the work at DHS, only approximately 25 percent of the overall DHS workforce is teleworking. We hope you will join us in saluting DHS front line workers unable to telework, who are doing their part to keep all of us safe, such as the TSA screeners, CBP screeners of arriving passengers from overseas, and the men and women of the USCG who are continuing to put themselves at risk to save lives every day, as well as many DHS employees, such as FEMA staff, who are supporting the whole of government response, while also continuing to support communities still recovering from disasters, often far from home.

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CBP and CWMD, which houses the Department's Chief Medical Officer, are providing direct support to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) efforts by conducting enhanced health screenings at 13 major airports. At and between all air, land and sea ports of entry, CBP officers and Border Patrol agents continue to identify and refer individuals with symptoms of COVID-19 or a travel history to China, Iran, or certain European countries in the past 14 days to CDC or local public health officials for enhanced health screening.

CRCL is supporting response efforts by participating in DHS and federal agency coordination, coordinating with interagency civil rights offices, and engaging with stakeholders. For more information and resources on the Department's response to COVID-19, please visit: dhs.gov/coronavirus.

- *Message from the Acting Secretary:* dhs.gov/message-acting-secretary
- *CWMD's Early Engagement in the COVID-19 Screening Process:* dhs.gov/early-engagement
- *Protecting Air Travelers and the American Public:* dhs.gov/protecting-air-travelers-and-american-public
- *Directly Supporting HHS and CDC:* dhs.gov/directly-supporting-hhs-and-cdc
- *Keeping Threats Out of the Country:* dhs.gov/keeping-threats-out-country

FEMA Coronavirus Rumor Control

FEMA's [Coronavirus Rumor Control webpage](#) helps the public distinguish between rumors and facts regarding the response to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. False rumors can easily circulate within communities during a crisis. You can also visit the webpage for updates on the federal response.

You can help to dispel rumors by always going to trusted sources of information such as coronavirus.gov, which links to US Government agencies for information on many different issues and aspects of COVID-19, as well as your state and local government's official websites or trusted social media accounts for instructions and information specific to your community.

When in doubt, be sure to follow state and local officials for instructions and information specific to your community. Like natural disasters, response to COVID-19 is locally directed, state managed, and federally supported.

Important DHS Resources and Guidance for Communities on COVID-19

Both U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) and ICE have issued important public guidance on COVID 19.

- USCIS's [COVID-19 webpage](#) has information on USCIS office closings, appointments and rescheduling, naturalization and oath ceremonies, and special situations. USCIS will continue to update this page.
- ICE has confirmed that it will not conduct immigration enforcement at medical facilities, except under extraordinary circumstances. ICE's [COVID-19 webpage](#) also provides information on removals, detentions, visitations, and nonimmigrant students.
- FEMA's [Best Practices webpage](#) allows communities to share their experiences and suggestions to support the COVID-19 response.

Please remember that education and precautions are the strongest tools against infection. You can also stay informed by visiting the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's [COVID-19 website](#). If you have any questions or concerns for the Community Engagement team, contact us at communityengagement@hq.dhs.gov.

CRCL Hosts City Pair Exchange Program with Belgium Delegation

CRCL recently completed the second leg of its City Pair Exchange program with a delegation from Antwerp and Brussels, Belgium visiting civil society, law enforcement, and government officials in southern California (Los Angeles and San Diego). Highlights from the trip included the U.S. delegation sharing their coordination with the local U.S. Attorney's office as a best practice in developing resilient communities; and CRCL connecting the Antwerp Police Department with the San Diego Police Department to showcase the latter's new mobile app that provides officers real time information on demographics and background of local communities.

Started in 2011, the City Pair Exchange program, sponsored by the U.S. Department of State, connects delegations from U.S. cities with those in European cities to share best practices on community engagement and its benefits to preventing terrorism. CRCL serves as the implementing partner in this program and has coordinated exchanges with several countries that include France, the Netherlands, Sweden, and Germany.

CRCL Hosts Virtual Roundtable with Seattle Stakeholders

This month, per guidance to exercise social distancing in response to COVID-19, CRCL held its first ever virtual roundtable with community stakeholders in Seattle. The meeting was well attended by local community leaders, and representatives from the University of Washington Center for Human Rights, Washington State Commission on Asian Pacific American Affairs, InterIM CDA, Northwest Immigrant Rights Project, Asian Counseling Referral Service; as well as staff of Congressional members Rick Larsen, Suzan DelBene, and Pramila Jayapal, and Senators Maria Cantwell and Patty Murray. Discussion topics included: vulnerable populations in immigration detention as it relates to COVID-19, concerns with screening at the Blaine (Washington) port of entry, and continued community engagement with the local USCIS office, among others. CRCL will consider whether virtual meetings will continue during the current public health emergency, and welcomes any comments for feedback on this idea at communityengagement@hq.dhs.gov.

Department of Justice Announces Nomination Period for Fourth Annual Attorney General's Award for Distinguished Service in Policing

The [Attorney General's Award](#) recognizes individual state, local or tribal sworn, rank-and-file police officers and deputies for exceptional efforts in community policing. The awarded officer(s), deputy(ies) or trooper(s) will have demonstrated active engagement with the community in one of three areas: criminal investigations, field operations or innovations in policing. Within each category, an award will be given to law enforcement agencies serving small, medium, and large jurisdictions:

- Small: Agencies serving populations of fewer than 50,000
- Medium: Agencies serving populations of 50,000 to 250,000
- Large: Agencies serving populations of more than 250,000

For more information about the Attorney General's Award and to submit an application for nominees, visit: justice.gov/ag/policing-award.

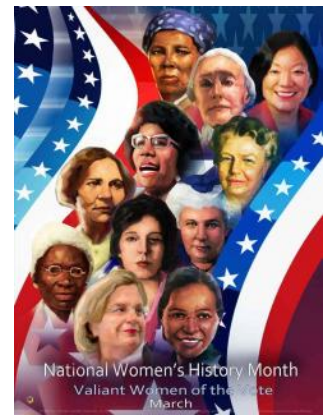
CRCL Presents at 2020 Regional Domestic Terrorism Summit

This month, CRCL presented at the two-day Regional Domestic Terrorism Summit, sponsored by the Central Florida Information Exchange fusion center, on the topic of Civil Liberties and Civil Rights Considerations in Intelligence Reporting on Movements and Groups. This "For Official Use Only" briefing was delivered to more than 120 intelligence analysts, law enforcement partners, and private sector liaison officers, as well as representatives from major companies with a presence in central Florida, such as the Disney Corporation and SpaceX.

The session was very well received with a number of the participants requesting follow-up technical assistance. In addition, the CRCL was also asked to circulate its training materials after the session. Due to the importance and the strong interest in the topic, especially among the private sector homeland security partners, the CRCL plans to partner with the National Fusion Center Association and the regional representatives of the 80-member fusion center network to create a training module on this topic that can be shared nationally by the fusion center civil liberties privacy officers.

Women's History Month, Valiant Women of the Vote

Each March, we celebrate Women's History Month, recognizing the exceptional accomplishments of women in our society. This year, the United States celebrates the 100th anniversary of the 19th Amendment and women's constitutional right to vote. This year's national theme, "Valiant Women of the Vote," honors and celebrates the women of the suffragist movement who fought for a woman's right to vote. Gaining the inalienable right to vote was a major step for women in the U.S. toward achieving all the liberties afforded to male citizens.



Elections play a vital role in a free and fair society and are a cornerstone of American democracy. DHS employees are proud to serve this country and protect the tenets of freedom that our ancestors fought for, including the right to vote. work collaboratively with those on the front lines of elections – state and local government, election officials, federal partners, and vendors to manage risks to the election infrastructure in this country.

CRCL on the Road, March

Following guidance from the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) to exercise social distancing, our Community Engagement team will continue to carry out our mission using various virtual and telephonic tools during this national public health emergency. While our team maintains constant communication with federal, state, local, and civil society stakeholders across the country, we encourage anyone who needs to contact us to do so via email to: CommunityEngagement@hq.dhs.gov. Thank you for your flexibility and understanding 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.

CRCL Phone: 202-401-1474 • Toll Free: 866-644-8360 • TTY: 202-401-0470 • Toll Free TTY: 866-644-8361

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