



The Office for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties (CRCL) supports the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) as it secures the nation while preserving individual liberty, fairness, and equality under the law.



DHS Recognizes National Disability Employment Awareness Month

A Message from Megan H. Mack, Officer for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties

Each October we recognize [National Disability Employment Awareness Month](#) and the substantial talents and contributions of workers with disabilities. This year's theme, "*My disability is one part of who I am,*" reminds us of the many ways that individuals with disabilities enrich our workplace.

At DHS we promote an equal and inclusive environment for the more than 10,000 employees with disabilities who work to keep our nation safe and secure. Each day, these employees support critical functions – in border security, emergency management, cybersecurity, counterterrorism, and all areas of the homeland security mission.

The reality is that individuals with disabilities are severely underrepresented in the federal workforce. To help address this, President Obama issued [Executive Order 13548](#), which calls on federal agencies to increase hiring of individuals with disabilities. At DHS, here is how we are answering that call:

- Our long-standing training course on hiring and retaining individuals with disabilities was adapted by the U.S. Office of Personnel Management for use throughout the federal government. Much like our DHS course, "[A Roadmap to Success: Hiring, Retaining People with Disabilities](#)" is designed to provide hiring managers with basic information and resources to successfully hire, retain, and advance employees with disabilities.
- DHS has increased its trainings for managers and supervisors on reasonable accommodations - describing resources available to employees. A reasonable accommodation is any change to a job, the work environment, or the way things are usually done that allows an individual with a disability to apply for a job, perform job functions, or enjoy equal access to benefits available to others in the workplace. Due to greater awareness, the Department has significantly increased the number of accommodations provided to employees.
- DHS has increased its hiring of individuals with disabilities by leveraging [Schedule A hiring](#), a process which allows federal agencies to use a special authority to hire persons with disabilities.
- DHS is participating in the [Workforce Recruitment Program](#) (WRP) which connects federal employers with highly motivated students and recent college graduates with disabilities. Since 1995, over 6,000 students and recent graduates have received temporary and permanent employment opportunities through the WRP.

These are but a few examples of the efforts DHS is leading to break down barriers that prevent our employees

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from participating equally with their colleagues. I encourage you to learn more about [National Disability Employment Awareness Month](#) and to learn more about the Department's work and progress by visiting our [Disability Access webpage](#).

Statement by Secretary Jeh C. Johnson on DHS' New Office for Community Partnerships

Release Date: September 28, 2015

Violent extremism - that which is inspired by foreign terrorist groups and that which is rooted in a range of domestic-based radical ideologies - pose a persistent and unpredictable threat to our homeland. Countering violent extremism has become a key focus of DHS's work to secure the homeland. Last year I appointed a Department-wide coordinator for our efforts to counter violent extremism. As Secretary of Homeland Security, I am also personally committed to this mission, having traveled to Boston, Chicago, Columbus, Houston, Los Angeles, Minneapolis, New York City, northern Virginia and suburban Maryland to meet with community leaders as part of this effort. We heard many strongly-held views, generated conversations, and built some bridges.

It is now time to take our efforts to the next level.

Today I announce the creation of the DHS Office for Community Partnerships. This Office will be dedicated to the mission of countering violent extremism, but its ultimate mission is as its name suggests - community partnerships. My charge to this Office, to be set forth in a more detailed plan, is to continue to build relationships and promote trust, and, in addition, find innovative ways to support communities that seek to discourage violent extremism and undercut terrorist narratives.

In this new Office, we will consolidate and reassign key personnel who are dedicated to countering violent extremism, but who are presently working in various different components of this Department. Longer term, we intend to call upon DHS personnel in field offices across the country to take part in our efforts at building community partnerships, under the coordination of this Office. The Office will coordinate its efforts with other departments and agencies in the federal government, and with similar efforts at the state and local government level.

For the Director of the Office for Community Partnerships, I am appointing Mr. George Selim. Since January 2012, George has been the Director for Community Partnerships for the National Security Council. George was a senior policy advisor in DHS's CRCL, and has also served at the Department of Justice at the Community Relations Service.

For Deputy Director of the Office, I am appointing Mr. David Gersten, the current Coordinator of the Department's efforts to counter violent extremism. Prior to that, David, like George, had extensive experience at CRCL.

Both George and David are well known within the CVE community.

Finally, CRCL has been integral in our efforts at engaging communities, and they will continue to be. Civil rights and civil liberties are invariably part of the discussion when this Department engages communities. CRCL will therefore participate with the Office for Community Partnerships when we engage communities. More specifically, as we enter this new phase of our efforts, CRCL will, in consultation with the Office for Community Partnerships, continue to lead, improve and expand this Department's community engagements, including Community Engagement Roundtables, Town Hall Meetings, and Youth Forums across the country.

Given the evolution of threats to the homeland, I am convinced that efforts to counter violent extremism here at home are vital. I am determined that we make real progress in this area.

CRCL Hosts Community Engagement Roundtable in Dearborn

CRCL recently hosted a community engagement roundtable in Dearborn, Michigan - one of the cities in which we meet with community members on a quarterly basis. The meeting brought together DHS senior leadership and a host of state and local government partners to dialogue with community members. DHS Assistant Secretary for Intergovernmental Affairs Phil McNamara attended the meeting and thanked community leaders for their long-standing partnership and engagement with DHS



and underscored the Department's mission to ensure that the privacy, civil rights, and civil liberties of persons are not diminished by DHS programs aimed at securing the homeland. Also in attendance was Dearborn Police Chief Ronald Haddad, who has significant ties with the American Arab community in Dearborn, who spoke about the community's diversity and its resiliency in facing security issues ranging from radicalization to violence, unlawful discrimination, to the proliferation of synthetic drugs. Barbara McQuade, U.S. Attorney for the Eastern District of Michigan, and Dearborn Mayor John O'Reilly also attended the meeting where community members discussed issues involving travel and screening as well as refugee processing, among other topics.

October is National Cyber Security Awareness Month

Every day, tens of millions of Americans shop, bank, and stay in touch with friends and family online. Our nation's critical infrastructure systems – power grids, financial systems, and transportation systems – all rely on the Internet. This increased connectivity brings many conveniences and advantages; however, it also creates increased threats and risks to our security.



Throughout National Cyber Security Awareness Month

2015, the Department is highlighting ways cybersecurity impacts Americans in all aspects of their lives, including in their use of personal technologies and in their workplaces. Everyone has a role to play in cybersecurity, whether it's protecting their families from identity theft, protecting their workplaces from cyber attacks, or protecting their communities from cyber predators. Here are some tips to stay safe online:

- Set strong passwords and don't share them with anyone;
- Keep your operating system, browser, and other critical software optimized by installing updates;
- Maintain an open dialogue with your family, friends, and community about Internet safety;
- Limit the amount of personal information you post online and use privacy settings to avoid sharing information widely;
- Be cautious about what you receive or read online—if it sounds too good to be true, it probably is; and
- Visit www.DHS.gov/StopThinkConnect to learn more about how you can help strengthen America's cybersecurity.

CRCL Attends U.S.-Mexico Bilateral Human Rights Dialogue

CRCL Deputy Officer Tamara Kessler recently represented DHS at the U.S.-Mexico Bilateral Human Rights Dialogue in Washington, D.C., hosted by the U.S. Department of State. Participants from both governments addressed important cross-border topics including actions to prevent torture, forced disappearances, transparency, and police practices. Ms. Kessler's presentation concerned use of force by DHS law enforcement personnel, noting substantial recent achievements by CBP in providing greater transparency, policy guidance, and oversight for the use of force.

CRCL on the Road, October

October 8 – Boston, Massachusetts

CRCL attended the quarterly community engagement roundtable with diverse ethnic and community-based organizations.

October 21-24 – Phoenix, Arizona

CRCL attended community engagement meetings with diverse ethnic and community-based stakeholders.

October 29 – Houston, Texas

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

October 15 – Dearborn, Michigan

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

October 29 – Chicago, Illinois

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.

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