



**U.S. Department of Justice
Community Relations Service (CRS)**



Programs and Services

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We have no hope of solving our problems
without harnessing the diversity, the energy,
and the creativity of all our people.
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ROGER WILKINS,
FORMER CRS DIRECTOR AND CIVIL RIGHTS LEADER

CRS Services

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Since 1964, CRS has served as a force for conciliation and peace in communities fraught with racial tension and discord.

Over the years, the scope of CRS' work has expanded to address discrimination and hate crimes based on race, religion, national origin, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation and disability. Our approach, though adaptive to the changing times, remains rooted in our core mission: to build trust, increase capacity and foster lasting relationships. By doing so, we aim to create a nation resilient in the face of hate and discrimination.



As America's Peacemaker, CRS provides facilitation, mediation, training and consultation services to communities in conflict. We provide services both in-person and virtually via secure, web-based platforms. All CRS services are free of charge, confidential and provided on a voluntary basis.

■ **Facilitated Dialogue** CRS helps facilitate the development of viable, mutual understandings and agreements as alternatives to coercion, violence or litigation. Conciliation specialists provide facilitated dialogue services to help open lines of communication among diverse groups, allowing them to learn about each other's perspectives and the underlying issues of the conflict.



These dialogues often include various local agencies, institutions, and community members. Topics of discussion may cover racial tensions, police-community relations, perceived hate crimes, tribal conflicts, and protests and demonstrations. Our facilitated dialogues not only improve relationships — they also help stakeholder groups develop action plans that improve communication and promote partnerships.

■ **Mediation** Conciliation specialists serve as impartial third-party mediators to help diverse stakeholders resolve community-based conflicts. Mediation is a structured process that helps communities address misunderstandings, establish mutual trust, and independently prevent and resolve future conflicts. Mediation sessions are confidential, allowing for candid discussion of issues, interests, values and ultimately, sustainable solutions.

■ **Training** CRS conducts trainings and helps develop locally based long-term mechanisms that communities can use to deescalate community tensions, address conflicts, and prevent or respond to violent hate crimes. Our training programs provide knowledge and skills that increase understanding and improve collaboration between diverse stakeholders.

■ **Consultation** Conciliation specialists offer consultation services to help educate and empower communities — helping them refine conflict resolution strategies and address underlying issues. CRS consultation services inform stakeholders about best practices and resources to help address tensions and prevent future conflict.

CRS Programs

Training Programs

■ Engaging and Building Relationships with Transgender Communities

This program gives law enforcement and government officials important definitions and recommended language related to the transgender community. It also discusses the impacts of hate crimes against transgender people and provides outreach strategies to effectively engage with the transgender community. This program is available as an in-person or virtual session, as well as a web-based, self-paced program.



■ Engaging and Building Partnerships with Muslim and Sikh Americans

These two programs have three key aims. First, to increase public awareness of civil rights-related issues that impact Muslim and Sikh Americans. Second, to deepen understanding of beliefs and religious practices of Muslim and Sikh Americans, which will improve communication and enhance public safety for all community members. Finally, to provide best practices for collaboration with Muslim and Sikh American communities.



■ Contingency Planning: Reducing Risk During Public Events

This program increases participants' knowledge of how to plan for a safe public event, such as demonstrations or rallies, in order to decrease the potential for violence. It also includes time for participants to begin developing an appropriate plan to prepare for and hold an event and assess and address potential issues for maintaining public safety during the event.

■ Event Marshals: Supporting Safety During Public Events

Event marshals are volunteers designated to support a safe and successful event by being the primary point of contact with event participants. The goal of this program is to explain the expectations of the event marshal, as well as the importance of the marshal's role in maintaining public safety during an event.



■ Facilitating Meetings Around Community Conflict (FMACC)

The FMACC training program provides community leaders with skills and tools to facilitate meetings in communities where tensions and conflict are present. This program enhances community leaders' effectiveness as facilitators; expands community leaders' listening and observation skills; and provides resources to prepare for, conduct and follow up after meetings aimed at resolving community conflict.

CRS Programs

Facilitated Dialogue Programs

■ Strengthening Police and Community Partnerships (SPCP)

SPCP convenes law enforcement and diverse community leaders in problem-solving discussions. These discussions aim to improve public safety by fostering trust and building partnerships. The program is designed to boost local capacity and develop solutions to improve police-community relations.



■ Dialogue on Race

The Dialogue on Race program brings together diverse community members to share information, personal stories, viewpoints and experiences, fostering understanding. Through the dialogue process, participants can identify commonalities and strategies to improve community relations. For step-by-step instructions for planning and implementing a Dialogue on Race program, please see CRS' Dialogue on Race Program Guide.



■ **School-Student Problem Identification and Resolution of Issues Together (School-SPIRIT)**

The School-SPIRIT program engages student leaders, school administrators and other school community members in identifying issues impacting their school — and developing solutions to resolve those issues. A similar program, called Campus-Site Problem Identification and Resolution of Issues Together (Campus-SPIRIT), is available for college or university settings.

■ **City-Site Problem Identification and Resolution of Issues Together (City-SPIRIT)**

The City-SPIRIT program brings together diverse community stakeholders — such as public officials, law enforcement, members of the faith-based community and community groups — to identify issues impacting their community. Participants develop solutions to reduce conflict, improve communication and minimize the potential for future conflict.



■ **Campus Problem Identification and Resolution of Issues Together (Campus-SPIRIT)**

The Campus-SPIRIT is a program for college and university communities that helps diverse student leaders, campus administrators, faculty, staff, campus law enforcement and external community leaders identify issues impacting their community — and develop solutions to address those issues.

■ **Bias Incidents and Hate Crimes Forum**

The Bias Incidents and Hate Crimes Forum educates community members and law enforcement about the Matthew Shepard and James Byrd, Jr. Hate Crimes Prevention Act, as well as state and local hate crimes laws. This program engages local and federal law enforcement, district attorneys, civil rights organizations and community organizations in discussions. The goal of this forum is to share information on strategies to effectively address and respond to bias incidents and hate crimes.



For step-by-step instructions for planning and implementing a Bias Incidents and Hate Crimes Forum, see CRS' [Bias Incidents and Hate Crimes Forum Facilitator Guide for Community Leaders](#).



■ **Protecting Places of Worship Forum**

The Protecting Places of Worship Forum provides effective strategies for communities to safeguard their places of worship against potential threats. CRS convenes experts from federal, state and local law enforcement agencies, along with faith-based organizations. These experts offer information and resources related to hate crime laws, handling active shooter situations and ensuring physical security at religious buildings.

For step-by-step instructions to plan and implement a Protecting Places of Worship forum, use CRS' [Protecting Places of Worship Forum Facilitator Guide for Community Leaders](#).

Peace is a journey of a thousand miles
and it must be taken one step at a time.

LYNDON B. JOHNSON

About CRS

The Community Relations Service (CRS) is a component of the Department of Justice. CRS works to resolve conflict by engaging communities in difficult conversations through peaceful dialogue.

[Title X of the Civil Rights Act of 1964](#) authorized CRS to assist communities facing disputes, disagreements or difficulties relating to allegations of discriminatory practices based on race, color or national origin.

CRS's mandate expanded in 2009 under the [Matthew Shepard and James Byrd, Jr., Hate Crimes Prevention Act](#) to include working with communities to prevent and respond to alleged hate crimes based on actual or perceived race, color, national origin, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion or disability.

CRS is the only federal agency dedicated to assisting state and local units of government, private and public organizations, law enforcement, and community groups to resolve conflicts based on these aspects of identity.



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