U.S. Department of Justice Community Relations Service

Empowering Local Communities

To Collaboratively Identify & Address Conflicts

The United States Department of Justice Community Relations Service (CRS) helps local communities address conflicts through its City Site Problem Identification and Resolution of Issues Together (City-SPIRIT) program. The program helps communities address tension and conflict related to issues of race, color, national origin, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, or disability.

City-SPIRIT is a full-day (or two half-day) program that brings together leaders from local government, law enforcement, faith communities, civil rights groups, community-based organizations, youth groups, and others to identify and address critical issues impacting communities. The program is facilitated by CRS and local volunteers and helps communities develop and implement concrete solutions to address local problems.

Why should cities and communities consider City-SPIRIT?

Increases understanding and communication between leaders to resolve conflicts in their community

Provides the opportunity to include voices of key community stakeholders

Supports other community engagement and collaborative problem-solving efforts

Facilitates mutual agreement among the parties to draft and implement a solution-oriented action plan

Programs & Services

1. Issue Identification. Participants work in small groups to identify issues impacting their community, including what works well and what should be changed.

2. Issue Prioritization. Of the issues identified in the small groups, participants prioritize those concerns that are most important to address in their community.

3. Solutions Development. Participants develop solutions to the prioritized issues identified. They discuss the possible impact and consequences of each potential solution.

4. SPIRIT Council. The SPIRIT Council, a standing group of community leaders selected to implement the solutions, is created during the City-SPIRIT program.

5. SPIRIT Report and Convening. CRS consolidates the feedback and information collected during the program to generate a report. CRS then convenes the SPIRIT Council to review the report and develop and implement concrete action steps to address the issues contributing to the conflicts discussed during the program.

About CRS

Established by Title X of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and expanded by the Matthew Shepard and James Byrd, Jr., Hate Crimes Prevention Act of 2009, CRS serves as "America's Peacemaker" for communities facing tension or conflict based on differences of race, color, national origin, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, and disability. CRS services aim to enhance the ability of local communities to independently and collaboratively prevent and resolve future conflicts through the use of problem solving, increased knowledge, and improved communication.

CRS Services and Programs

CRS provides an array of programs to communities experiencing tension, as a tool for cultivating understanding, improving collaboration, and preventing future disagreements. CRS staff are professional mediators, facilitators, trainers, and consultants experienced in bringing community members together to help enhance their ability to resolve existing conflict and prevent future conflicts.

Where We Work

CRS Headquarters

Washington, DC

CRS Regional Offices

New England
Boston, MA

Northeast
New York, NY

Mid-Atlantic
Philadelphia, PA

Southeast
Atlanta, GA

Midwest
Chicago, IL

Southwest
Dallas, TX

Central
Kansas City, MO

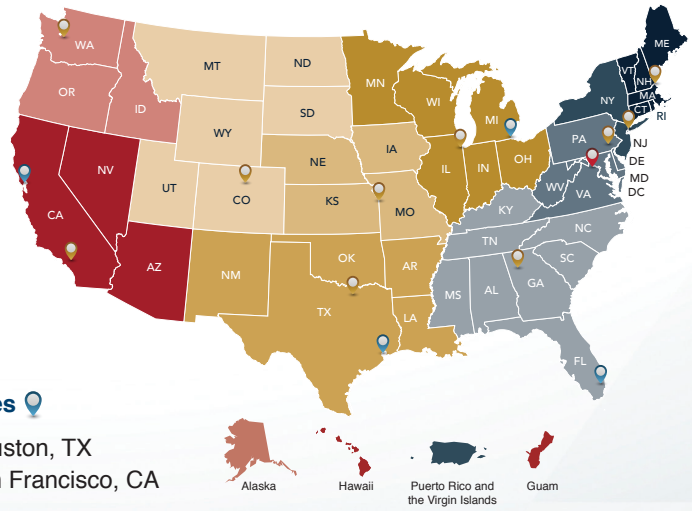
Rocky Mountain
Denver, CO

Western
Los Angeles, CA

Northwest
Seattle, WA

CRS Field Offices

Miami, FL
Detroit, MI
Houston, TX
San Francisco, CA



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For more information on this program or other CRS services, please contact your local CRS office:
https://www.justice.gov/crs/about-crs/regional-and-field-offices