U.S. Department of Justice Community Relations Service

Building Trust

Through Police and Community Partnerships

The U.S. Department of Justice Community Relation Service's (CRS) in-person facilitated program, Strengthening Police and Community Partnerships (SPCP), is designed to improve public safety by strengthening trust and developing partnerships between law enforcement professionals and the diverse communities they serve.

The one-day SPCP program engages local law enforcement and community leaders in a dialogue to identify issues and solve problems collaboratively. The SPCP program can be facilitated as a proactive effort or in response to a critical incident. The program can also help local leaders address longstanding community distrust and other historical barriers that hinder police-community partnerships. The outcome of the SPCP program is an action plan with tangible solutions implemented with the help of an SPCP Council formed as part of the program.

Why should communities consider SPCP?

SPCP is designed to increase local capacity, develop partnerships, and develop local solutions to local problems

SPCP supports local law enforcement's ongoing community outreach and engagement efforts

Program Overview

Step 1: Convene a diverse, local planning group
CRS convenes a planning group which consists of local law enforcement personnel and community leaders, who generate local support for the effort and perform important logistical tasks.

Step 2: Train local facilitators
CRS trains community members to facilitate small group discussion as part of the SPCP program. This training helps build local capacity by educating volunteer facilitators on conflict resolution and facilitating solutions between diverse stakeholders.

Step 3: Facilitate the SPCP process
Through facilitated breakout sessions, participants work to identify issues hindering trust between law enforcement and the community and collectively develop solutions to address those issues.

Step 4: Draft an SPCP Action Plan
The SPCP program produces an action plan that serves as a roadmap for the SPCP Council to implement the tangible solutions developed during the facilitated sessions.

Step 5: Identify and convene an SPCP Council
An SPCP Council is formed to further define and implement the solutions developed during the program. The Council acts in an advisory capacity and works with law enforcement leaders to implement the concrete action plan.

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

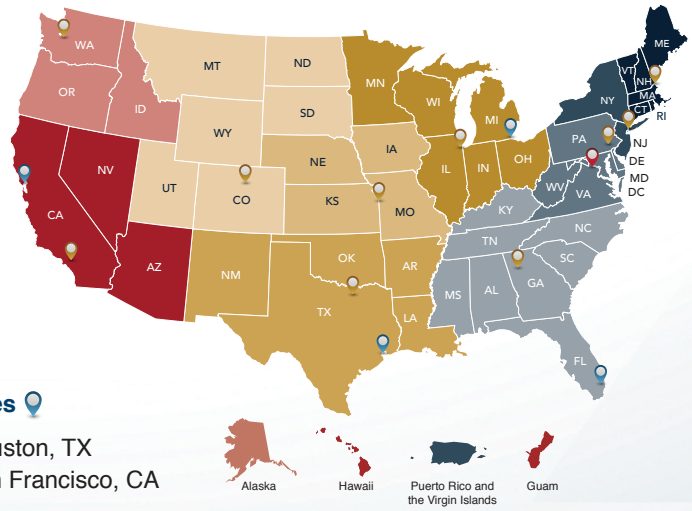
Rocky Mountain
Denver, CO

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:
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