



U.S. Department of Justice


Office of the Deputy Attorney General

The Deputy Attorney General

Washington, D.C. 20530

March 20, 2012

MEMORANDUM FOR HEADS OF COMPONENTS AND UNITED STATES ATTORNEYS

FROM: James M. Cole 
Deputy Attorney General

SUBJECT: Training Guiding Principles

As the nation's principal law enforcement agency, the Department of Justice is responsible for keeping America safe and ensuring the fair and impartial administration of justice. This responsibility demands that Department representatives perform their duties consistent with the Constitution and Department values, at the highest level of professionalism, and in a manner that conveys respect for all. Training conducted or funded by the Department plays an important role in assisting the Department in fulfilling this responsibility.¹

On September 28, 2011, I issued a memorandum to all heads of components and United States Attorneys to "carefully review all training material and presentations provided by their personnel, particularly training related to combating terrorism, countering violent extremism, and other training that may relate to ongoing outreach efforts in Arab, Muslim, Sikh, South Asian and other communities."²

Following my memorandum, a working group on training issues chaired by the Civil Rights Division was constituted within the Attorney General's Arab-Muslim Engagement Advisory Group and included representatives from each relevant component and U.S. Attorney's Office. To balance the imperatives of articulating Department-wide standards and ensuring flexibility for components in conducting their reviews of training materials, the working group drafted and unanimously submitted to my office a set of overarching principles to guide the Department's training and to ensure that all the communities we serve are respected.

I, hereby, approve the following guiding principles and direct that all training conducted or funded by the Department of Justice adhere to these principles:

- 1. Training must be consistent with the Constitution and Department values.** Training must promote, and never undermine, our fundamental principles of equal justice and

¹ Training includes instructor-led, computer-based, or video courses or presentations, and accompanying written or recorded materials, designed to further the Department's mission by imparting relevant knowledge or skills to Department employees or other individuals, such as state, local, and tribal law enforcement officers and officials or other members of the community.

² Memorandum from James Cole, Deputy Attorney General, for Heads of Components and United States Attorneys (September 28, 2011).

opportunity for all, freedom of speech, freedom of religion, and our other core national values. Trainings must not disparage groups or individuals based on their race, religion, national origin, ethnicity, gender, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, economic condition, political affiliation or other similar characteristics.

2. **The content of trainings and training materials must be accurate, appropriately tailored, and focused.** The content of training programs must be accurate, useful to those being trained, and well-matched to the program's stated objectives. Training materials used or distributed at trainings must be accurate, relevant, and consistent with these Guiding Principles.
3. **Trainers must be well-qualified in the subject area and skilled in presenting it.** Trainers must possess the subject-matter knowledge and the subject-specific training experience necessary to meet the objectives of the training. In selecting or retaining a trainer, Department components should consider, among other things, the trainer's resume and written materials, interviews with the trainer, observation of other trainings conducted by the trainer, feedback from other agencies with which the trainer has worked, training participant feedback and evaluations, and the general reputation of the trainer.
4. **Trainers must demonstrate the highest standards of professionalism.** Trainers must be mindful that they represent the Department of Justice and must comport themselves with the professionalism rightly expected of the Department. While trainings will necessarily entail varying teaching styles, techniques, and degrees of formality, as appropriate to the particular training goal, professionalism demands that trainers instruct in the manner that best communicates the subject matter while conveying respect for all.
5. **Training must meet Department standards.** Department components are responsible for ensuring that these Guiding Principles are followed when Department personnel deliver any training, and for requiring Department contractors and grantees to adhere to these Guiding Principles when developing or delivering Department-funded training or training materials.

To ensure consistency across the Department in addressing training issues, components and United States Attorney's Offices should expressly incorporate this memorandum into, or cite to it in issuing, any additional and more tailored guidance on training.

Thank you for your work and vigilance in this area as we continue to respectfully engage with the diverse communities that we have the privilege to serve.

For additional questions about this memorandum, please contact my Deputy Chief of Staff and Senior Counsel, Mónica M. Ramírez, at (202) 514-5705 or via email at monica.ramirez@usdoj.gov, or Special Counsel for Religious Discrimination, Eric Treene, in the Civil Rights Division at (202) 514-2228 or eric.treene@usdoj.gov.