



Homeland
Security

February 8, 2021

Via Electronic Mail

Aman George
Counsel and Director of Legal Policy
Democracy Forward Foundation
ageorge@democracyforward.org

Re: Contact-DHS-20-1853

Dear Mr. George:

On May 11, 2020, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Office for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties (CRCL) received correspondence from you alleging that personnel in the DHS Office of Public Affairs improperly disclosed personally identifiable information (“PII”) to media outlets. The information allegedly disseminated to the media included individuals’ citizenship status, immigration status, and immigration and criminal histories.

Under 6 U.S.C. § 345 and 42 U.S.C. § 2000ee-1, CRCL reviews and assesses information concerning abuses of civil rights, civil liberties, and profiling on the basis of race, ethnicity, or religion, by employees and officials of DHS. CRCL also reviews allegations that DHS employees, programs, or activities failed to accommodate an individual’s disability under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, 29 U.S.C. § 794.

The individuals named in your correspondence are no longer employees of the Department. That said, the issues you raise are concerning and indicate possible privacy and civil rights violations. To proactively address these issues, CRCL is working to develop training to enhance DHS employees’ awareness of privacy and civil rights protections.

In addition to carefully reviewing the information you provided, and taking the steps outlined above, CRCL has recorded this matter in our database. This will allow us to track the issues you raised to identify potential patterns of civil rights or civil liberties allegations within our jurisdiction.

Please be advised that CRCL does not provide individuals with legal rights or remedies. Accordingly, CRCL is not able to obtain any legal remedies or damages on an individual’s behalf. Instead, we use information in correspondence like yours to find and address problems in DHS policy and its implementation. If someone you know believes their rights have been violated, you may wish to consult an attorney. There may be time limitations that govern how quickly they need to act to protect their interests.

For more information about CRCL's roles and responsibilities, please visit our website at www.dhs.gov/crcl.

To learn more about how the public can submit complaints or concerns regarding DHS employees, programs or activities; alleged violations of civil rights or civil liberties; immigration filings; travel redress; and other types of grievances, visit www.dhs.gov/how-do-i/provide-feedback-dhs.

Please note that Federal law forbids retaliation or reprisal by any Federal employee against a person who makes a complaint or discloses information to CRCL. 42 U.S.C. § 2000ee-1(e). If you believe that you or someone else is a victim of such a reprisal, please contact us immediately.

Thank you again for contacting CRCL. In the future, please contact CRCL if you have a civil rights and civil liberties complaint involving DHS.

Sincerely,

Office for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties
U.S. Department of Homeland Security