

White House CVE Summit

- Countering violent extremism (CVE) has been a centerpiece of this Administration's counterterrorism strategy. Our CVE approach is premised on the principle that local partners, including local law enforcement and communities, are at the forefront of preventing violent radicalization and recruitment both online and person-to-person. Indeed, protecting the American people from violent extremism is not the work of government alone; our communities are often best positioned to take the lead.
- The threat posed by violent extremism is neither constrained by international borders nor limited to any single ideology. Groups and individuals inspired by a range of religious, political, or other ideological beliefs have promoted and used violence against individuals worldwide.
- Local partners also need support from government—they need to know this is a priority for government action.
- Finally, communities and government are concerned about the efforts of groups like ISIS to recruit people from the United States. The time for partnership is now.
- In order to underscore these points, this fall the White House will host a CVE summit to showcase efforts by Federal and local officials, as well as civic and faith leaders, from several cities across the United States. These innovators have developed a comprehensive approach to the threat of violent extremism within our communities, and the summit will provide an opportunity to spur additional efforts both at home and abroad.
- This summit also will highlight non-traditional, holistic approaches to violence prevention, conflict resolution, and countering violent extremism, as well as community-led initiatives.
- This summit will come on the heels of the President's stewardship of a UN Security Council session on foreign terrorist fighters. Given the ability of foreign terrorist groups to recruit Americans, the time for action to protect our communities from recruitment and prevent future flows is now.
- We will share additional details of the summit as it approaches.

What is this CVE pilot program that AG Holder announced on Monday 9/15?

- The CVE pilot program is a whole of government effort to partner and empower communities to lead on CVE initiatives.

- These programs will bring together community representatives, public safety officials, religious leaders, social service providers, and United States Attorneys, and FBI leadership to improve local engagement; to counter violent extremism; and – ultimately – to build a broad network of community partnerships to keep our nation safe.
- Current initiatives largely focus on engagement between public safety and community leaders. These new pilot strategies will complement and supplement existing efforts by engaging the resources and expertise available from a wide range of social service providers. These include education administrators, mental health professionals, and religious leaders, who—in this context and more broadly— are on the front lines everyday providing robust support and help facilitating community-led interventions.
- These pilot programs will also bring in expertise from the private sector, including creative and communications industries who can help communities build capacity to challenge violent extremist propaganda.
- The hope is that lessons learned in those cities can be adopted, as appropriate, throughout the country. We work closely with state, local, and community leaders in the field and offer our expertise where appropriate.

How is the interagency working together to counter violent extremism?

Who has the lead?

- The U.S. Government uses a multi-pronged approach to countering violent extremism in the Homeland. The National Security Council provides policy guidance for these efforts. Departments and agencies have different yet complementary implementation roles and responsibilities, as outlined in the strategic implementation plan.
- For the past three years FBI, DHS, DOJ and NCTC have been working collaboratively to implement our domestic CVE strategy. Senior staff from these agencies meet weekly to discuss projects of common interest and ensure transparency among agencies regarding our CVE work. This group has implemented activities that incorporate all agencies' distinct missions. More importantly, this group draws on the programs and initiatives developed by our state and local partners, in cities across the United States.
- To help people understand how to prevent violent extremism, they first need to understand the problem. Therefore, we in government need to continue building public awareness about what the indicators are for someone who might be on that path.
- FBI, DHS, DOJ and NCTC have conducted outreach in select cities where we speak with law enforcement, public safety officials, and communities about the threat of violent extremism and terrorist recruitment. When we do, we have historically used the Community Awareness Briefing, as well as the Community Resilience Exercise.

- The Community Awareness Briefing (CAB) is a presentation designed to educate communities and law enforcement about violent extremist recruitment tactics – including recruitment of foreign fighters -- and to explore ways to prevent such public safety threats at the local level. This briefing has been given in cities across the country, and government is redesigning it so that it can reach more people.
- The Community Resilience Exercise (CREX) is a half-day table-top exercise designed to improve trust between law enforcement and communities and to share ideas on how best to build community resilience. The CREX involves an unfolding scenario of possible violent extremist activity and asks participants to create a collaborative plan to respond. The exercise has been implemented in cities across the United States.
- The US government has given this briefing and conducted these exercises throughout the country in places like Chicago, Boston, LA, Minneapolis, Seattle, Austin, TX, Houston, and Baltimore, MD. But as you can see, with a limited number of staff, we are only able to travel to a small number of cities.

What are examples of CVE successes?

- Examples of CVE best practices in action are the United States Attorneys around the country who have hosted or attended more than 1,000 engagement-related events and meetings where they build relationships with communities, dispel myths and misperceptions, and develop locally-based partnerships. Similarly, DHS Office for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties hosts quarterly roundtables in 13 cities. When communities feel comfortable approaching federal officials for information and assistance, and conversely sharing information from federal officials with other community members, these are signs that community engagement is building trust. Evidence of this is anecdotal only and may be difficult to measure in a systematic way, but capturing some examples will help indicate progress.
- Similarly, law enforcement in cities like Minneapolis, Los Angeles, and Dearborn have developed robust outreach programs for communities and training programs for law enforcement, leading to trusting relationships with communities on everything from civil rights to radicalization.
- Community groups have created very promising intervention programs, such as those lead by WORDE and MPAC. And community leaders are active online. Motivated by the atrocities of ISIL, community groups are working to counter that recruitment narrative on social media sites. Community leaders in Minneapolis have created documentaries like “Broken Dreams” to highlight the misleading narrative of groups like Al-Shabaab.

- In Minnesota, during trials that involved members of the Somali-American community, members of the Young Somali-American Advisory Council (established by the U.S. Attorney's office), often emailed press releases from the U.S. Attorney to educate community members. This helped diminish potential mistrust and misperception in the community.
- Another example is the exchanges with European government officials and community leaders from the United Kingdom, Germany, and Scandinavia, sponsored by DHS and the Department of State. These meetings provided an opportunity for communities who are targeted by violent extremists to (1) better understand the threat that similar communities face; and (2) develop a better understanding of the role that government officials, including law enforcement, can play in addressing it.