



**FEMA**

**Grant Programs Directorate Information Bulletin  
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**MEMORANDUM FOR:** All State Administrative Agency Heads  
All State Administrative Agency Points of Contact  
All State Homeland Security Directors  
All State Emergency Management Agency Directors  
All Tribal Nation Points of Contact  
All Eligible Regional Transit Agencies  
All Private Sector Transportation Security Partners  
All Public and Private Sector Port Security Partners  
All Urban Areas Security Initiative Points of Contact

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**SUBJECT:** Ensuring Training on Counter Terrorism and Countering Violent  
Extremism is Consistent with USG and DHS Policy

The purpose of this Information Bulletin (IB) is to emphasize the importance and heighten the awareness of ensuring that all training, presentations, and speakers used regarding Countering Violent Extremism (CVE) are consistent with US Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and US Government (USG) policy. Our approach to countering violent extremism emphasizes the *strength of local communities*. We begin with the premise that well-informed and - equipped families, communities, and local institutions represent the best defense against terrorist ideologies and violent extremists. While our primary purpose is to disrupt and deter terrorism and violent extremism, we also support strong and resilient communities as important ends in themselves.

We strongly encourage grantees to address how your investments in homeland security training or networking will accord with the USG approach, in particular by avoiding the use of hostile, stereotypical, or factually inaccurate information about Muslims and Islam or any community, and by emphasizing the importance of community engagement and interaction to promote communities as part of the solution rather than the problem needing solution. DHS recognizes that the threat posed by violent extremists is real and not limited to a single ideology. We know that foreign terrorist groups affiliated with al Qa'ida, and individual terrorist thought leaders, are actively seeking to recruit or inspire Westerners to carry out attacks against western and U.S. targets. They seek to recruit and/or inspire individuals living in communities within the U.S. via, but not limited to, print, video and social media as well as through personal interaction.

But, we also know that violence extremism is not a phenomenon restricted solely to one community and that any effort to counter violent extremism (CVE) must be applicable to all ideologically motivated violence.

Efforts to provide information and training regarding countering violent extremism should emphasize the *strength of local communities* approach, as outlined by the USG and DHS strategies.

The following are examples that demonstrate the integration of community engagement and countering violent extremism that reflect the *strength of local communities* approach:

- Training objectives should be clearly defined to meet specific countering violent extremism goals, such as community engagement, cultural awareness, community based policing, etc.
- Engaging diverse American communities to counter violent extremism may require working with local grassroots community organizations to develop engagement and outreach initiatives.
- Training programs should be sensitive to Constitutional values, such as protecting fundamental civil rights and civil liberties, and eschew notions of racial and ethnic profiling.
- It may be necessary to conduct vetting procedures for self selected CVE training experts who offer programs that may claim to counter violent extremism, but serve to demonize certain individuals or whole cross sections of a community.
- Training programs must adhere to USG standards and ethics, ensuring that the clearly defined objectives are in line with USG and DHS strategies to counter violent extremism.
- It may be necessary to provide a review process to determine if CVE training focuses on community engagement and outreach.
- Support may be needed for law enforcement to increase knowledge, skills, and abilities to increase engagement techniques with diverse American communities.
- Cultural awareness courses of diverse American communities may be necessary to ensure stakeholders are taught to work with communities and build trust, rather than feed existing misconceptions and stereotypes of people, culture, or religion.

Questions regarding this IB may be directed to your assigned Program Analyst or the Centralized Scheduling and Information Desk at [askcsid@fema.gov](mailto:askcsid@fema.gov) or 1-800-368-6498.

#### ATTACHMENTS:

1. National Strategy on “Empowering Local Partners to Prevent Violent Extremism in the United States” (August 2011).
2. US Department of Homeland Security Fact Sheet: Approach to Countering Violent Extremism.
3. Recommendations of the Countering Violent Extremist Working Group, Homeland Security Advisory Council (HSAC), Spring 2010.
4. US Department of Homeland Security, Office for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties: Countering Violent Extremism (CVE) Training Guidance and Best Practices (October 2011).