

Under 6 U.S.C. § 345 and 42 U.S.C. § 2000ee-1, the Office for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties 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 the Department of Homeland Security. The Office also ensures that all federally-assisted and federally-conducted programs or activities of the Department comply with the provisions of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended; Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, as amended; the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended; the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, as amended; and related Executive Orders. The Office investigates complaints in areas such as: abuse of authority or color of the law; discrimination; profiling; violations of the confidentiality provisions of the Violence Against Women Act; conditions of detention; treatment; due process; and watch lists.

How to File a Complaint with the Office for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties

The Office for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties at the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) recommends that complaints include, at minimum, the following information:

Contact information. Full name, date of birth, A-number if applicable, phone number, mailing address, and e-mail address if available.

A written description of the specific circumstances of the alleged violation. This should include date, time and location; name(s) and contact information of any witness(es); and name and agency or component of the individual(s) alleged to have committed the violation, if available.

Relevant documents. Copies of any paperwork related to the complaint or its circumstances.

A summary of other steps taken, if any, to resolve this complaint. For example, steps could include e-mail communications with a DHS component agency regarding your complaint, or letters written to the DHS Office of the Inspector General.

Complaints filed on behalf of a third party. If you are writing on behalf of someone else and wish to receive information which relates to them or their complaint, you must provide express written consent from that individual authorizing DHS to share information with you about the complaint. You must also provide your name, organization (if any), and contact information.

Complaints alleging a violation of an individual's civil rights or civil liberties by a DHS employee should be submitted in writing via letter, fax or e-mail to:

U.S. Department of Homeland Security
Office for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties
Review and Compliance
245 Murray Lane, SW
Building 410, Mail Stop #0800
Washington, DC 20528

Phone: (202) 401-1474
Toll Free: (866) 644-8360
Email: civil.liberties@dhs.gov
Fax: (202) 401-4708
Local TTY: (202) 401-0470
Toll Free TTY: (866) 644-8361

Complaints are accepted in languages other than English. Complaints filed with the Office for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties are forwarded to the DHS Office of the Inspector General, and may be forwarded to other Department components or to other government agencies, such as the Department of Justice, as appropriate. Regardless of how your complaint is routed, it will be carefully reviewed and resolved in accordance with applicable laws and policies. For additional information, you may call us or visit our website at <http://www.dhs.gov/civilliberties>.

Privacy Act Statement: The information you provide will be used in accordance with 5 U.S.C. § 552 (Freedom of Information Act), 5 U.S.C. § 552a (Privacy Act), 6 U.S.C. § 345 (Homeland Security Act), 44 U.S.C. § 3101 (Federal Records Act), and other relevant federal laws. While we will seek to prevent unnecessary disclosure of the information you provide, we may need to share some of this information with relevant persons. Also, we may be required by law or government policy to release information, in whole or in part, to other government agencies, Congress, and other private individuals. Such disclosures may be mandatory under the Privacy Act, the Freedom of Information Act, the Federal Records Act, and other statutes or regulations. When disclosures are made, personal information will be redacted to the extent permissible. A discussion of your rights under the Freedom of Information Act and the Privacy Act can be found at <http://www.pueblo.gsa.gov/call/foia.htm>.