



Domestic Extremism and Mass Violence Task Force
DRAFT MEETING MINUTES
Friday, September 20, 2025

Full Task Force meeting & discussion can be watched on TVW at <https://twv.org/video/domestic-extremism-and-mass-violence-task-force-2025091040/?eventID=2025091040>

1. Welcome (9:00 – 9:20)

- Staff welcomed the Task Force members to the Domestic Extremism and Mass Violence Task Force meetings.
- Staff announced that 4 written public comments were received by 5pm Thursday, September 25, and distributed to Task Force members before the meeting. Staff noted that the public comment portal will remain open for one week after the meeting, and close next Friday, October 3. Additional comments received will be distributed to the Task Force after the portal closes and posted to the Task Force website.
- Staff reviewed the agenda. Hardeep moved to adopt the agenda, seconded by Luis.
- Staff reviewed Friday, May 9, 2025, meeting minutes. Sharonne moved to approve the minutes, seconded by Hardeep.
- Sharonne asked if there is an ongoing list of resources. Staff let the Task Force know that resources Task Force members find can be sent to the DEMV email to be shared out with other members.
- Short Q/A with Cynthia Miller-Idriss on recent events while waiting for the Task Force’s guest speaker to arrive.
 - Question: a lot of online portals provide resources up front about teen suicide – has anyone thought of creating resources for youth who are online and potentially related to extremism?
 - The Executive Director of PERIL has been working on including a line in media that says, “violence is preventable” and bringing awareness to the risk of youth radicalization to violence. It’s difficult because there isn’t a national resource or hotline available and it is very localized to states. There are efforts to create a narrative shift for getting help therapeutically for youth who are subject to radicalization, but it has not fully moved forward yet.
 - Is having a “violence is preventable” message in media part of the public health messaging?
 - Yes – you could have these kinds of messaging on busses and campaign materials. For ex: “Hear someone help someone” and providing

resources, vs “see something say something” but we need structures to help report and get resources.

- Parents for Peace and Life After Hate are both NGO models that are referred to. At any local school, there are resources for counselors and therapists to do things like suicide prevention work, but not necessarily radicalization. The point of the public health approach helps create resources and systems for people in a variety of fields to notice warning signs. Part of the concern also is that kids are not aware of what to report, saying things of concern are often chalked up to “that is just how the online culture is.” There is an element that is educating kids on what to report.

2. Constitutional Principles & Civil Liberties (9:20 – 10:20)

Mary McCord, Executive Director of the Institute for Constitutional Advocacy and Protection (ICAP), provided a presentation on constitutional principles and civil liberties, and how they come into play when working to address and prevent extremism and mass violence. Mary divided her presentation into 3 parts: 1) protests, demonstrations, and rallies; 2) true threats; and 3) Fourth Amendment considerations.

A. Protests, Demonstrations, and Rallies

Mary reviewed a couple of key constitutional principles as they relate to protests, demonstrations, and rallies: the First Amendment and the Second Amendment. While the First Amendment protects freedom of speech, it does not protect violent conduct or speech that is directed to inciting or producing imminent, lawless conduct or violent conduct when it is likely to actually incite or produce that conduct. It also does guarantee the right to express oneself at all times and all places in all manners, and it does not protect violent or unlawful conduct even if the person is intending to engage in the expression of an idea that would normally be protected under free speech. Government interests, such as public safety, allow the government to take some action to infringe on that expression of free speech, an example being paramilitary activity.

The Second Amendment protects an individual’s right to bear arms for one’s own self-defense, as determined by the Supreme Court of the United States (SCOTUS). SCOTUS has also determined that the Second Amendment does not prevent the prohibition of private paramilitary organizations. Landmark SCOTUS cases regarding the Second Amendment include *Presser v. Illinois* (1886) and *District of Columbia v. Heller* (2008).

Paramilitary activity is not protected under the First or Second Amendments and may violate criminal laws. No federal or state authority exists for individuals to organize, train and/or function as private military units. *Presser v. Illinois* has been a landmark SCOTUS ruling since 1886 regarding paramilitary activity. *DC v. Heller*, another landmark SCOTUS ruling in 2008, states that the Second Amendment does not prevent the prohibition of private militia groups. All 50 states prohibit private militia activity, either via federal law or state law.

Threats of violence, stalking, and harassment are not protected by the First Amendment. To prosecute a threat, the government must prove that there is/was a true threat. Courts have held that some types of speech meet the definition of true threats that are not protected under the First Amendment, an example being voter intimidation tactics that threaten specific people groups with specific consequences or activity.

Colleges and universities have seen an increase in protest activity since October 7, 2024. SCOTUS has been clear in stating that First Amendment protections carry as much weight on campuses as they do elsewhere and protections should not be applied with less force. First Amendment protections apply to all public colleges & universities, as well as any private colleges & universities that receive federal funding and are required to comply with federal anti-discrimination laws, such as Title VI and Title IX.

Significant government interests allow for restrictions or curtailing on protected First and Second Amendment activity. These restrictions include imposing content-neutral time, place, and manner restrictions that are narrowly tailored to serve a significant government interest and must leave ample alternative ways for speech to be communicated to intended audiences. Importantly, restrictions may not be based on viewpoint or the content of speech and must be applied in a manner that is not discriminatory based on viewpoint. Significant government interests that justify time, place, and manner restrictions include protecting human life and property, ensuring safe and accessible streets and sidewalks, and protecting individuals from harassment and intimidation. Restrictions, such as advance permits, limiting when and where activity can take place, asking for identification, banning specific materials or items, or creating buffer zones between protests and counterprotests, are permissible as long as the restrictions are content-neutral and are applied evenly and fairly to everyone across the board. Communication between organizers, law enforcement, and, if applicable, location leadership (such as government or higher education leadership) should happen early, often, and transparently to ensure that protests, rallies, and demonstrations allow First Amendment rights to be exercised safely.

Lawful protests can become unlawful assemblies if the participants develop an intent to engage in unlawful or violent action during the course of the demonstration, protest or rally, and that intent must be shared broadly across the participants. Individual wrongdoing by participants during the course of a demonstration, protest, or rally is not enough to transform a lawful assembly into an unlawful assembly.

B. True Threats

While hate speech can be protected under the First Amendment, SCOTUS has held that some speech is so dangerous that it is not protected by the First Amendment. Violence, incitement to violence, and true threats are not protected speech under the First Amendment. SCOTUS has defined that for speech to be a true threat, it must be specific, particularized to a person or group/entity/organization, and made in a targeted way, all of which will be evaluated in the context of how it was reasonably perceived by the listener and if the speaker has a subjective

understanding of the threatening nature of their statements, even if they did not intend to actually carry out the threat. In criminal prosecutions, prosecutors must show that the speaker's intent was reckless – that they were aware that others could interpret statements as threatening violence and made those statements anyways. Symbolic speech can also be considered a true threat depending on the context – they are protected if they are done generally in public, but unprotected and can be seen as a true threat if it is specific and targeted at a particular group or community. A landmark SCOTUS case regarding symbolic speech and true threats under the First Amendment is *Virginia v. Black* (2003).

C. Fourth Amendment

Fourth Amendment questions and activity have risen sharply in recent months with federal immigration efforts. The Fourth Amendment protects individuals from unreasonable searches and seizures and requires warrants to be based on probable cause and particularity. Litigation in relation to federal immigration actions has been related to whether there has been reasonable, articulable suspicion for some of the stops of individuals that have occurred. For an actual arrest or detention, an officer needs probable cause that a crime has been committed. Probable cause must be individualized, meaning it must be particular to the person being targeted for the stop, arrest, or detention. Brief investigatory stops asking for identification, whether that be at protests or elsewhere, must have a reasonable, articulable suspicion that is individualized and particular to the person being stopped. Recent litigation over Fourth Amendment protections include *Vasquez Perdomo v. Noem* (2025), which SCOTUS has sent back down to the lower courts for the appeal process, and, in the interim, has granted a stay of the lower court's injunction against federal immigration actions.

Mary, Cynthia, and Task Force members then discussed the following:

- Difference between violence that arises at BLM protests vs Unite the Right protests: how do we distinguish free speech vs extremist activity?
 - Ideology does not matter, what matters is motivating a true threat - if it crosses the line into a true threat, that would be unprotected. Paramilitary activity is unprotected because it is content-neutral. Data has been historically clear that the greatest physical threats have come from racially motivated & anti-government groups.
- If ICE is inside a private space, can you still record?
 - If it is your private space, yes you can record.
- What is the lawfulness of law enforcement officers wearing masks & concealing their identification?
 - It is bad practice to mask or to keep identification under wraps, but there is no federal law that prohibits it. States can prohibit state officers from masking identification, but likely not federal officers. Some due process arguments might be able to be made at time of arrest.
 - Concerning doxing & swatting - doxing by itself is not unlawful due to the amount of public information available, but the threat associated with doxing is

unprotected/can be unlawful. If information is obtained unlawfully, it could be unprotected. Swatting, which is calling in fake police reports, is unlawful.

- A note about coded language - law of threats has not evolved to take into account veiled threats or speech, aka coded language.
- What is the authority of ICE when it comes to traffic stops?
 - SCOTUS has been clear that there needs to be a special need or an otherwise tailored, individualized reason for making traffic stops right at the border.
 - ICE shouldn't be making traffic stops otherwise because they are federal agents with no authority to enforce local traffic laws.
- What is the legal threshold for individuals having to comply with a request from law enforcement officers to identify themselves?
 - There should be a reasonable, articulable suspicion for the stop, which you then show identification that you are not the person they are looking for.

3. Break (10:20 – 10:25)

4. Task Force Administration (10:25- 11:25)

Staff provided an update on the Task Force's four subcommittees: primordial prevention, primary prevention, secondary prevention, and tertiary prevention. The subcommittees will be working to develop draft recommendations for the full Task Force to consider and approve in the fall of 2026 for the final report, due December 1, 2026. All four subcommittees had their kickoff meetings in August, with meeting summaries available on the Task Force website. Subcommittees will be meeting again throughout October and November.

Staff facilitated a discussion to finalize the Task Force's charter. Staff reminded the Task Force that there was a decision at the May meeting to delay finalizing the charter until the September meeting. Staff provided answers to questions that arose at the May meeting regarding the charter:

1. In the proposed May amendment, what does "will not collect data" mean?
 - a. Staff let the task force know that the language around data in the May proposed amendment meant that the Task Force would not collect & keep data about anyone suspected to be a potential or actual perpetrator of extremism or mass violence. The language does not mean that the Task Force is prohibited from reviewing existing data and trends around extremism or mass violence to help inform policy recommendations.
2. In the proposed May amendment, is it necessary to list out the things that the Task Force does not have authority to do?
 - a. Staff let the Task Force know that there is no requirement for the charter to list the things that the Task Force does not have authority to do, though they can choose to include that information in the charter if they would like. The scope and authority of the Task Force is listed on the Task Force website in an FAQ document at the top of the webpage.
3. Does the charter need definitions for extremism and mass violence included to guide the work?

- a. Staff let the Task Force know that definitions do not need to be in the charter since there are multiple definitions for both extremism and mass violence, and those definitions are listed in the 2025 Preliminary Report. Staff reminded the Task Force that while an understanding of extremism & mass violence and what the driving factors behind mobilization to violence are important, the Task Force’s focus is on developing recommendations at all four levels of prevention within a public health framework to prevent all forms of targeted violence.

Staff then walked through proposed changes from May, and additional proposed changes based on the discussion from the May meeting, with the Task Force:

- From May, adding a subsection called “operating principals” to Section I of the charter with the purpose of making the group’s mandate and intentions clear while recognizing concerns from the public that the group might designate individuals or organizations as extremist, conduct surveillance, or investigate instances of extremism or mass violence.
 - In response to discussion at the May meeting, staff developed an amendment to the “authority” subsection under Section I, which makes it clear that the Task Force’s authority is limited to the mandate the legislature provided the group, which is to develop policy recommendations for a public health framework.
- Amending the “scope & duration” subsection under Section I to reflect changes to the original meeting schedule, which moved from bi-monthly to quarterly. Staff highlighted that the Task Force will meet monthly from September 2026-November 2026 to discuss and vote on recommendations for the final framework, with November serving as a wrap-up meeting. Staff also noted that August 2026 will be held for recommendation discussion if there are many recommendations to get through.
- Adding a set of “community norms” to Section III of the charter with the purpose of having a set of agreements to adhere to for conversations and discussions among Task Force members during meetings.

After staff walked through the amendments & lingering questions from the May meeting, the floor was open for discussion and voting.

Task Force members discussed the difficulty of defining “extremism” because everyone has a different point of view on what constitutes extremist views. Some mentioned that the idea of trying to fix a domestic extremism problem is impossible, and suggested focusing on the prevention of violence instead, regardless of who is advocating for it.

Cynthia noted that the challenge of creating a public health style prevention is you’re trying to prevent an outcome wherein which violence is considered a viable solution. If we know there are things that create off ramps from pathways to radicalization or violence, then we can propose those solutions. One example is increasing digital literacy so that people are more

conscientious and skeptical of the media they consume (i.e. knowing how to spot manipulative content). In talking about preventing extremism, we're not talking about moderating an individual actor's beliefs, but talking about how to keep community and societal actors safe from violence that stems from radical beliefs. For all four subcommittees to discuss the public health approach fully, we have to address the issue of extremism.

Cynthia then shared the J.M. Berger definition of extremism: Extremism is characterized by an uncompromising worldview and a strong division between 'us' and 'them.'. It is the positioning the other as an existential threat that needs to be met with violence. Berger highlights the defining characteristics and behaviors typical of extremist groups. Such groups often exhibit a siege mentality, perceiving themselves as persecuted or under. This mindset contributes to an 'ends justify the means' approach, where almost any action, including violence, is permissible to achieve their goals.

Authority/Operating Principles:

Task Force members noted their preference for the May version of the charter's amendments related to the Task Force's authority, and offered the Task Force focus more on violence instead of extremism, since those are community-type efforts rather than individual efforts.

Jay G. offered a proposed amendment that combined the September and May proposed amendments under the authority/operating principles sections:

"The Task Force's authority is limited to creating policy recommendations within a public health framework to prevent extremism and mass violence in Washington. The Task Force does not have their authority to speak on behalf of the AGO or the Attorney General. In furtherance of these limits, the Task Force will not collect data, perform surveillance, maintain lists of individuals, or investigate or designate individuals or groups as extremists. The Task Force will not investigate or respond to incidents of mass violence. Its role is advisory, focusing on policy recommendations outside the realm of the criminal justice system, historical analysis, and prevention strategies."

The Task Force unanimously approved Jay's addition and amendment to the authority section of the charter.

Scope & Duration:

The Task Force unanimously approved the amendment to the scope & duration section of the charter, updating the meeting schedule to quarterly and a hold for an August 2026 meeting if needed for recommendation discussion.

Community Norms:

The Task Force unanimously approved the addition of community norms to the charter.

Staff facilitated a roll call vote for the final version of the charter. 14 members of the Task Force were present for the vote, with quorum being 13. The Task Force approved the charter with 14 “Yes” votes. See roll-call vote below.

5. Next Steps & Closing (11:20 – 11:30)

Staff reminded the Task Force that the subcommittees would meet in October and November, and that the next Task Force meeting date is December 12, 2025. The Task Force adjourned early at 11:21 a.m.

Attendance List

Name	Organization	Present?
Adrianna S	UTOPIA Washington	Excused
Amber W	Washington Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction	Excused
Dyneeca V	Freedom Project	Present
Faaluaina P	Asia Pacific Cultural Center	Excused
Hardeep R	Khalsa Gurmat Center	Present
Jay G	WIDEN; Gairson Law, LLC	Present
Juan P	Unidos of Snohomish County	Present
Karen S	Muslims for Community Action and Support	Present
Karl E	Planned Parenthood of Greater Washington and North Idaho	Present
Kate B	Western States Center	Present
Keara K	Jewish Family Service	Present
Leslie C	Washington Coalition for Police Accountability	Present
Liz M	Peace & Justice Action League	Excused
Luis M	Snohomish Citizens for Human Rights	Present
Mark C	Walla Walla County Sheriff's Office	Present
Mary H	Thurston County Auditor	Excused
Mercedes S	Cedar River Clinics	Excused
Miri B	Parents 4 Peace	Present
Morgan M	ADL Center on Extremism	Present
Nathan W	Washington State Department of Health	Present
Richard B	Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs	Excused
Roger K	Projects for a Civil Society	Excused
Sarah W	CoLab for Community and Behavioral Health Policy Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences University of Washington	Excused
Seth L	PERIL: the Polarization & Extremism Research and Innovation Lab	Present
Sharonne N	Equity in Education Coalition	Present
Stacey M	WA State Emergency Management	Excused

William H	Center For Children & Youth Justice	Excused
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Voting Record – Chater Adoption

Name	Organization	Vote
Adrianna S	UTOPIA Washington	Absent
Amber W	Washington Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction	Absent
Dyneeca V	Freedom Project	Yes
Faaluaina P	Asia Pacific Cultural Center	Absent
Hardeep R	Khalsa Gurmat Center	Yes
Jay G	WIDEN; Gairson Law, LLC	Yes
Juan P	Unidos of Snohomish County	Yes
Karen S	Muslims for Community Action and Support	Absent
Karl E	Planned Parenthood of Greater Washington and North Idaho	Yes
Kate B	Western States Center	Yes
Keara K	Jewish Family Service	Yes
Leslie C	Washington Coalition for Police Accountability	Yes
Liz M	Peace & Justice Action League	Absent
Luis M	Snohomish Citizens for Human Rights	Yes
Mark C	Walla Walla County Sheriff's Office	Yes
Mary H	Thurston County Auditor	Absent
Mercedes S	Cedar River Clinics	Absent
Miri B	Parents 4 Peace	Absent
Morgan M	ADL Center on Extremism	Yes
Nathan W	Washington State Department of Health	Yes
Richard B	Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs	Absent
Roger K	Projects for a Civil Society	Absent
Sarah W	UW CoLab for Community and Behavioral Health Policy Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences	Absent
Seth L	PERIL	Yes
Sharonne N	Equity in Education Coalition	Yes

Stacey M	WA State Emergency Management	Absent
William H	Center For Children & Youth Justice	Absent