

Civil Rights Hub

Public Rights Project's Civil Rights Hub offers free legal support and technical assistance for local governments.



The Trump administration is aggressively targeting immigrants and people of color, rolling back hard-earned protections for workers and LGBTQIA+ people, and attempting to dismantle economic and environmental initiatives that serve all residents.

In the past, local government officials could defend their communities against these attacks without fear of retribution. But the landscape has shifted. In response to this urgent moment, **Public Rights Project (PRP) launched its Civil Rights Hub to help local government officials:**



Address threats to their funding and authority



Bolster legal advocacy in state and federal courts



Fill gaps in federal enforcement and where legal protections are eliminated



Support the development and defense of pro-rights policies and practices

Our services

- **Training, technical assistance, and legal research** to help local governments track issues of concern to their communities, decide when to litigate, and enforce rights in the absence of federal protections.
- **Multi-city group virtual and in-person convenings** to assist local officials in planning and coordinating work across jurisdictions.
- **Media partnerships and coordination** to highlight the issues local government officials face and how they are responding.
- **Litigation** in high-stakes lawsuits against the federal government or other defendants, and amicus brief and public comment development on local governments' behalf to protect local interests and defeat abuses of power.

Harmful effects on local governments and communities

A recent executive order threatens to strip communities of federal grants that were appropriated by Congress. The impacts are already being felt in some cities.

After strong community input, the city of Nashville applied for federal grants to support transportation projects that enhance bike/pedestrian access and connect neighborhoods to the downtown area. The city also invested its own funds and held a referendum on the projects, which voters approved. But without federal funding, Nashville will not fulfill its commitment to voters — **disenfranchising their vote and creating distrust in our democratic system.**

Why PRP?

There are many organizations focused on protecting and advancing civil rights. Here's why Public Rights Project is different.

- We focus solely on serving local government officials.
- We have deep legal expertise about the challenges caused by federal overreach.
- We've built a vast network of partners, including States United Democracy Center, Democracy Forward, ACLU, Center for Reproductive Rights, and others.

Our impact

Since launching the Civil Rights Hub, we've secured several early wins, including:

- A preliminary injunction blocking the Trump administration from freezing AmeriCorps funding to 2 local communities that serve students and elderly residents.
- A preliminary injunction blocking the administration's attacks on funding for 16 plaintiff cities and counties based on their sanctuary policies.

Our past wins

Fighting for civil rights is in our DNA. Examples of our other work include:



Reproductive rights: PRP represented seven prosecuting attorneys in support of Michigan Gov. Whitmer's request for the state Supreme Court to decide if the state constitution protected abortion rights. PRP successfully argued to uphold abortion rights in the state until voters could weigh in on a ballot measure in November 2022.



Workers' rights: PRP helped the San Francisco and Los Angeles district attorneys recover over \$6 million for workers from Handy, a gig home cleaning and maintenance company that misclassified its workers.



Abuses of power: In 2020, PRP served as co-counsel for Portland and Oakland arguing against deployment of federal forces at protests. The lawsuit against the first Trump administration centered on preserving local governments' discretion over policing and community interactions.

Partner with us

Get in touch to discuss ways we can partner to protect civil rights in your community!
Contact Civil Rights Hub Director Jenny Ma at jenny@publicrightsproject.org.

