Charlotte-Mecklenburg Community Relations is the human relations agency for the City of Charlotte and Mecklenburg County. The department seeks to enhance community harmony and promote awareness of Charlotte-Mecklenburg’s growing multiculturalism. It does this through facilitating community dialogue and meetings as well as coordinating resident and organizational coalitions to address community issues and concerns. They offer customizable conflict resolution trainings, where participants learn the five conflict resolution styles, benefits of active listening, and tools to de-escalate difficult situations.

Charlotte & Mecklenburg areas

Virtual Offerings

What is conflict de-escalation and bystander training?
These trainings vary in their methods, but all have the aim of empowering individuals, including bystanders, to prevent the escalation of conflict.

More information on how to use this resource is below.

The Bridging Divides Initiative (BDI) is a non-partisan research initiative that tracks and mitigates political violence in the United States. BDI supports efforts to grow and build local community resilience through elections and other periods of heightened risk, laying a foundation for longer-term work to bridge the divides we face as a nation. Learn more at bridgingdivides.princeton.edu.
The Dispute Settlement Center (DSC)
The Dispute Settlement Center is North Carolina’s founding community mediation center, providing mediation, training, group facilitation, and restorative practices services to individuals and groups. Trainings include conflict resolution strategies, mediation, de-escalation and bystander intervention. DSC promotes dialogue through restorative practices and its Leadership Dialogues Program for talking across differences. Based in the Chapel Hill area, DSC serves North Carolina and beyond.

Chapel Hill area
Virtual Offerings

Cumberland County Dispute Resolution Center (CCDRC)
The Center offers 30 years of combined experience where trained volunteer mediators can assist with taking the next steps. They specialize in mediation, teen court, and victim/offender mediation. Additionally, they offer on-demand de-escalation training.

Fayetteville & surrounding areas
Virtual Offerings
**DC Peace Team (DCPT)**

DCPT provides training in nonviolent strategies and tactics including de-escalation and bystander intervention techniques. Additionally, they provide unarmed civilian protection and accompaniment in local communities including at public events including at rallies, protests, and demonstrations.

- Request information about customized trainings
- Upcoming trainings
- Virtual Offerings

**Training Active Bystanders (TAB)**

TAB is an innovative evidence-based program that trains participants on active bystander competencies and leads discussions on response plans in their communities.

- Request information about customized trainings
- Upcoming bystander intervention trainings
- Virtual Offerings

**Right To Be**

Right To Be is a movement-building social justice organization that focuses on turning care for each other into simple, creative, effective action, with the purpose of building a world free of harassment and filled with humanity.

- Request information about customized trainings
- Upcoming bystander intervention trainings
- Upcoming de-escalation trainings
- Guide to the 5Ds of bystander intervention
- Virtual Offerings
NATIONWIDE OR VIRTUAL TRAININGS & RESOURCES

Cybersecurity & Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA)
A U.S. federal agency that aims to understand, manage, and reduce risk to cyber and physical infrastructure including election infrastructure.

- **Election Security report** — provides information on physical security preparedness at voting locations and election facilities.
- **Personal Security Considerations fact sheet** — outlines basic security measures to mitigate threats to personal safety.
- **De-Escalation Series and the Power of Hello resource** — provides information for critical infrastructure staff to identify potentially escalating situations, safely disengage, and report.
- **Active Shooter Preparedness video** — demonstrates possible actions that individuals can take if confronted with an active shooter scenario.

Community Relations Service (CRS)
A component of the Department of Justice, CRS works with community groups to resolve community conflicts or prevent and respond to alleged hate crimes. CRS trains representatives from government, faith organizations, law enforcement, civil rights groups, and other community organizations.

- **Request information about customized trainings**
- **Learn more about CRS' training programs**
WHO SHOULD USE THIS RESOURCE?

De-escalation and bystander intervention resources are intended to support efforts at the local level to prevent and mitigate potential violence, harassment, and abuse.

Local officials such as city council members, school board members, election officials, and poll workers may want to consider utilizing de-escalation and bystander intervention tools to prepare for potentially contentious public meetings and election administration.

 Volunteers and community members, who are planning to attend potentially contentious meetings may use these resources to prepare and strategize personal roles and techniques to recognize and de-escalate conflict.

See BDI’s de-escalation guides for local officials and poll workers.

See DC Peace Team’s de-escalation and bystander intervention guide. DC Peace Team is a nonprofit that empowers ordinary civilians to become nonviolent agents of sustainable peace and justice.

If your organization offers trainings like these, please reach out to bdi@princeton.edu to be added to the directory.
Anyone (active bystander) can de-escalate tensions or harmful behavior by drawing on the CLARA method. However, before engaging in de-escalation, it is important to assess the situation, including your safety and others. Conflict de-escalation is not a technique that is appropriate for all circumstances.

**CALM and Center Yourself:** Check in with yourself, appear calm, centered, and self-assured even if you don’t feel it. Avoid pointing, crossing your arms, or other more aggressive postures.

**listen:** Let the person vent and be sure to listen explicitly for feelings, needs, or values.

**acknowledge:** Begin by acknowledging the feelings, needs, or values you have heard. [Not about agreeing with their position, statement, or behavior.] ex. “I sense your aggravation at this situation. I hear your concern for safety.”

**respond:** After acknowledgment, if there is a further threat of harassment or violence, offer open-ended or choice questions; address the issue; make a clear request or proposal. ex. “Will you tell me more about your concerns? “I understand you have every right to feel angry but it is not ok to threaten people here.”

**assess:** Trust your instincts: If de-escalation is not working, STOP & GET HELP.