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**PRESS ADVISORY:**

## **U.S. Department of Justice Continues to Cloak Public Access to Guidelines on FBI Surveillance of Mosques & Communities**

***Muslim Advocates files amended complaint in federal court to protect religious freedom***

(SAN FRANCISCO) **October 15, 2009**—After a lawsuit filed by Muslim Advocates—a national legal advocacy and educational organization—the U.S. Department of Justice released a heavily redacted version of the FBI’s Domestic Investigative Operational Guidelines (DIOGs), which sanction racial and religious profiling of law-abiding Americans and infiltration of mosques and other religious and political gatherings. In response, late yesterday, Muslim Advocates filed an amended complaint, asserting that critical passages on gathering data on racial and religious communities and mosque infiltration in the DIOGs were redacted, and need to be made public.

“All Americans have the right to work, travel, express themselves, and practice their faith without worrying that the government is tracking their every move,” said Muslim Advocates Executive Director Farhana Khera. “We hope that this amended complaint will help shed light on how the FBI has wrongfully targeted houses of worship and ethnic and religious communities, monitoring innocent Americans’ religious services, charitable activities, vocations, travel, and other personal information.”

The redacted version of the DIOGs, released to the public on September 25, 2009, concealed whole sections on unprecedented FBI surveillance activities implicating protected First Amendment and equal protection rights, including sections relating to the use of informants in religious, political and academic organizations (see e.g. Sec. 16 “Undisclosed Participation”) and a section on the “geo-mapping” of ethnic and racial communities (see p. 33), *available at* <http://foia.fbi.gov/hottopics.htm>.

A copy of the draft DIOGs were shared with Muslim Advocates and other privacy, civil liberties and community organizations in November 2008 during meetings with the FBI. The FBI, however, required attendees to return the DIOGs at the completion of the meetings. The DIOGs, as reviewed by Muslim Advocates, allow the FBI to initiate surveillance activities at religious gatherings, monitor social networking forums and cultivate informants and agent provocateurs.

*Muslim Advocates v. DOJ*, U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia, Case No. 1:09-cv-01754

*Muslim Advocates (www.muslimadvocates.org) is a national legal advocacy and educational organization dedicated to promoting freedom, justice and equality for all, regardless of faith, by providing leadership through legal advocacy, policy engagement, and civic education, and by serving as a legal resource to promote the full and meaningful participation of Muslims in American public life.*