

WHAT'S A HATE CRIME?

A hate crime must meet two criteria:

- » A crime must happen, such as physical assault, intimidation, arson, or vandalism; and
- » The crime must be motivated, in whole or in part, by bias.

The list of biases included in state or federal hate crime statutes varies. Most include race, ethnicity, and religion. Some also include sexual orientation, gender, gender identity and/or disability.

As you respond to a hate crime, check specific statutes in your area, then consider working to add missing categories, to protect vulnerable community members.

WHAT'S A BIAS INCIDENT?

A bias incident is conduct, speech, or expression that is motivated by bias or prejudice but doesn't involve a criminal act.

WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE?

Hate crimes, if charged and prosecuted, will be dealt with in the court system. They typically carry enhanced penalties, such as longer sentences.

Bias incidents occur with no clear path or procedure for recourse.

Both, however, demand unified and unflinching denouncement from individuals, groups, and entire communities.

WHAT'S THE IMPACT?

Hate crimes and bias incidents don't just victimize individuals; they torment communities.

When someone scrawls threatening graffiti targeting Asian Americans, for example, everyone in the community may feel frightened and unsafe, as may members of other ethnic or racial groups.