

FACT SHEET: Combating Hate Crimes

On March 30, 2021, Attorney General Merrick B. Garland's first directive to the Department of Justice was a 30-day expedited internal review to determine how the department could deploy all the tools at its disposal to counter the recent rise in hate crimes and hate incidents. After that review, in May, the Attorney General issued a memorandum announcing steps that the Department would immediately begin to take to deter hate crimes and bias-related incidents, address them when they occur, support those victimized by them, and reduce the pernicious effects these incidents have on our society. Since then, the department has aggressively worked to implement the Attorney General's directives to increase resources to combat hate crimes through federal law enforcement action and to enhance training, support and outreach to state and local partners.

Pursuing Hate Crimes Prosecutions: Since January 2021, more than 30 people have been charged in over 20 cases. In addition, more than 30 defendants have been convicted during this same time period.

Elevating Hate Crimes to Level 1 National Threat: As of Oct. 1, 2021, hate crimes and criminal civil rights violations are categorized in the FBI's highest-level national threat priority, which will increase the resources for hate crimes prevention and investigations and makes hate crimes a focus for all 56 of the Bureau's field offices.

Coordinating Hate Crimes and Incidents Work: The Attorney General appointed Deputy Associate Attorney General Rachel Rossi as the department's hate crimes coordinator to centralize the efforts of department attorneys, law enforcement partners, community organizations and other stakeholders around responding to hate crimes and incidents.

Expanding Language Access: The department has added information to its website on reporting hate crimes in twenty-four languages. Information is now available in eighteen of the most frequently spoken AAPI languages in the United States, including Chinese (both Simplified and Traditional), Japanese, Korean, Tagalog, Vietnamese, and many more.

Reviewing Hate Incidents: The Attorney General designated the Criminal Section Chief in the Civil Rights Division to facilitate an expedited review of hate incidents to determine whether they violate federal criminal laws, in accordance with the COVID-19 Hate Crimes Act.

Reviewing USAO Resources: The Executive Office for U.S. Attorneys conducted a nationwide survey of each USAO's resources dedicated to handling both civil and criminal enforcement of civil rights.

Conducting Training Sessions: In September 2021, the Office for Community Oriented Policing Services hosted a webinar for campus law enforcement officials on DOJ resources for responding to hate crimes on college campuses. Later that month, CRS hosted a webinar for educators and college administrators that highlighted its facilitated dialogue programs that support campuses working to address the sources of tensions and strengthen relationships between campus community groups. In October, the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention hosted a virtual symposium on preventing youth-related hate crimes.

Revitalizing Community Relations Service: The department is revitalizing the Community Relations Service, the component known as "America's Peacemaker," which provides facilitated dialogue, mediation, training, and consultation services for communities facing bias-related conflict.

Funding: In 2021, the Office of Justice Programs (OJP) awarded more than \$21 million to state, local and tribal agencies and community organizations to help address an alarming rise in violent and property crimes committed on the basis of race, color, national origin, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity or disability. As a part of this \$21 million, the OJP's Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) administered a new program named in honor of Matthew Shepard and James Byrd Jr. Through the Shepard-Byrd solicitation and the related Collaborative Responses to Hate Crimes program that seeks to address precipitous increases in hate crimes, BJA awarded \$8.4 million in site-based funding and training and technical assistance. BJA also awarded \$1.5 million under the Emmett Till Unsolved Civil Rights Crimes Reauthorization Act of 2016 to help solve cold case civil rights murders that occurred before Dec. 31, 1979, and an additional \$1.8 million to offer training and technical assistance to other communities seeking to resolve these cases, including making microgrants to the field. OJP's Office for Victims of Crime awarded \$2 million to respond to the needs of individuals and communities victimized by hate crime. OJP's National Institute of Justice awarded almost \$7.5 million to support research designed to develop a better understanding of the phenomenon known as domestic radicalization and to advance evidence-based strategies for preventing and intervening in acts of domestic terrorism.

Providing Law Enforcement Trainings: On Sept. 1 and 2, 2021, the FBI held its fourth Civil Rights regional conference in Philadelphia, which included approximately 150 participants. The fifth regional conference was held in New Orleans on Dec. 7 and 8, 2021, where approximately 160 people attended. One final regional conference in Atlanta is scheduled for May 2022. Each conference included federal, state, and local attendees. These conferences help local law enforcement agencies better understand federal civil rights and hate crimes laws; encourage reporting; strengthen relationships between law enforcement and local civil rights organizations; and build trust within the diverse communities they serve.

Conducting an Awareness Campaign: On June 30, 2021, the FBI launched a National Anti-Hate Crimes Campaign involving all 56 FBI field offices to encourage reporting. The campaign includes outdoor advertising, billboards and radio streaming in addition to social media.