

## Hate Crimes

### 319.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The purpose of this policy is to meet or exceed the provisions of Penal Code § 13519.6(c) and provides members of this department with guidelines for identifying and investigating incidents and crimes that may be motivated by hatred or other bias.

#### 319.1.1 DEFINITIONS

**Hate crimes** - A criminal act committed in whole or in part, because of one or more of the following actual or perceived characteristics of the victim (Penal Code § 422.55; Penal Code § 422.56; Penal Code § 422.57):

- (a) Disability
- (b) Gender
- (c) Nationality
- (d) Race or ethnicity
- (e) Religion
- (f) Sexual orientation
- (g) Association with a person or group with one or more of these actual or perceived characteristics
- (h) Examples of hate crimes include, but are not limited to:
  - 1. Interfering with, oppressing or threatening any other person in the free exercise or enjoyment of any right or privilege secured by the constitution or laws because of one or more of the actual or perceived characteristics of the victim (Penal Code § 422.6).
  - 2. Defacing a person's property because of one or more of the actual or perceived characteristics of the victim (Penal Code § 422.6(b)).
  - 3. Terrorizing a person with a swastika or burning cross (Penal Code § 11411).
  - 4. Vandalizing a place of worship (Penal Code § 594.3).

The federal Matthew Shepard and James Byrd, Jr. Hate Crimes Prevention Act expands federal hate crimes to include crimes motivated by a victim's actual or perceived sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or disability (18 USC § 249).

**Victim** - Includes, but is not limited to, a community center, educational facility, entity, family, group, individual, office, meeting hall, person, place of worship, private institution, public agency, library or other victim or intended victim of the offense (Penal Code § 422.56).

# Torrance Police Department

## TPD Policy Manual

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#### **319.2 POLICY**

The Torrance Police Department recognizes and places a high priority on the rights of all individuals guaranteed under the state and federal constitution and incorporated in state and federal law.

#### **319.3 PREVENTION AND PREPARATION**

While it is recognized that not all crime can be prevented, this department is committed to taking a proactive approach to preventing and preparing for likely hate crimes by, among other things:

- (a) Make an affirmative effort to establish contact with persons and groups within the community, who are likely targets of hate crimes and forming networks that address prevention and response.
- (b) Accessing assistance by, among other things, activating the California Department of Justice Hate Crime Rapid Response Protocol when necessary. ( See attachment: HC\_ResponseTeam.pdf )
- (c) Providing victim assistance and follow-up as outlined below, including community follow-up.
- (d) Educating community and civic groups about hate crime laws.
- (e) Establishing a community relations liaison to work with community organizations and leaders to coordinate public meetings, local group meetings and school assemblies on recognizing, preparing for and preventing hate crimes.

#### **319.4 INVESTIGATIONS**

Whenever any member of this department receives a report of a suspected hate crime or other activity that reasonably appears to involve a potential hate crime, the following should occur:

- (a) Officer(s) will be promptly assigned to contact the victim, witness, or reporting party to investigate the matter further as circumstances may dictate.
- (b) A supervisor should be notified of the circumstances as soon as practical.
- (c) Once "in progress" aspects of any such situation have been stabilized (e.g., treatment of victims, apprehension of present suspects, etc.), the assigned officer(s) will take all reasonable steps to preserve available evidence that may tend to establish that a hate crime was involved.
- (d) Based upon available information, officers should take appropriate action to mitigate further injury or damage to potential victims or the community.
  1. Officers should contact the property owner to remove any evidence that cannot be physically removed (i.e., painted words or signs on a wall) by the officer once the offense is documented.