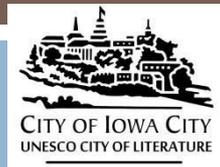


NOT IN OUR TOWN: RESPONDING TO HATE



The Role of Human and Civil Rights Commissions in Hate Crime Response



What Is A Hate Crime?

2

"*Hate crime*" means one of the following public offenses when committed against a person or a person's property because of the person's race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, political affiliation, sex, sexual orientation, age, or disability, or the person's association with a person of a certain race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, political affiliation, sex, sexual orientation, age, or disability:

1. Assault
2. Violations of individual rights
3. Criminal mischief
4. Trespass

Source: Iowa Code 729A.2

Hate Crime Trends

3

- African Americans are the most frequent victims of hate crimes in Iowa, accounting for half of reported hate crime victims in 2015.

Source: Iowa Department of Public Safety (Iowa DPS)

- As of 2016, the number of annually reported hate crimes in Iowa has averaged 10 in each of the past 5 years. However, nearly 41% of Iowa law enforcement agencies do not report hate crimes to the Federal Bureau of Investigations (FBI) database, as they are not required to do so.

Source: Des Moines Register

- Iowa City DOES voluntarily report hate crimes to the FBI database.



Hate Crimes in Iowa

A sample of Hate Crime in Iowa for 2016:

- **Cedar Rapids** A gay man and his friend found a note on their car after having lunch at a downtown restaurant. It said, “Get out of our neighborhood you (epithet). ... Burn in hell!”
- **Dubuque** A white supremacist with a swastika tattoo who claimed to have taken part in cross burnings, beat a Black man unconscious, breaking the man’s orbital bone, after hurling racial slurs at the man and his friends in a bar.
- **Iowa City** A Muslim Sudanese family found a note posted on their door, saying “You can all go home now. We don’t want (racial epithet) and terrorists here. ...”
- **Waterloo** The outside of Masjid Al-Noor Islamic Center was spray-painted with an anti-Muslim message in large red letters.

Iowa Demographics

5

- The population of Iowa is very rapidly becoming more diverse.
 - The Hispanic or Latino population was 2.8% in 2000. By 2014, it had increased to 5.5%.
 - The Asian population has increased from 1.3% in 2000 to 2.2% in 2014.
 - The Black or African American population was 2.2% of the population in 2000. In 2014, it was 3.1%.

Source: United States Census

Iowa Demographics Cont.

6

- In 2015, persons who were immigrants made up 4.8% of Iowa's population.
Source: American Immigration Council
- In 2015, persons who were refugees came to Iowa from 14 different nations.
Source: United Way of Central Iowa
- In 2016, 54.45% of the people in Iowa affiliated with a religion. 16.75% Catholic; 1.07% LDS; 6.41% were another Christian faith; 0.14% Jewish; 0.13% eastern faith; 0.22% are Muslim.

Source: Sperlings

2015 FBI Hate Crime Statistics

7

- In 2015, 14,997 law enforcement agencies participated in the Hate Crime Statistics Program. Of these agencies, 1,742 reported 5,850 hate crime incidents involving 6,885 offenses.
- There were 5,818 single-bias incidents that involved 6,837 offenses, 7,121 victims, and 5,475 known offenders.
- The 32 multiple-bias incidents reported in 2015 involved 48 offenses, 52 victims, and 18 known offenders.

Source: FBI Hate Crime Statistics

2015 Hate Crime Statistics Cont.

8

- **Single-bias incidents**
- Analysis of the 5,818 single-bias incidents reported in 2015 revealed that:
 - 56.9 percent were motivated by race/ethnicity/ancestry bias. (Since 2014, race, ethnicity and ancestry bias have been combined.) In 2014, race and ethnicity bias accounted for 58.9% of hate crimes, while ancestry was not counted.
 - 18.1 percent resulted from sexual-orientation bias.
 - 21.4 percent were motivated by religious bias.
 - 2.0 percent were motivated by gender-identity bias.
 - 1.3 percent were prompted by disability bias.
 - 0.4 percent (23 incidents) resulted from gender bias.

Source: FBI Hate Crime Statistics

What Steps Should A Person Take To Report a Hate Crime?

9

- Call the police or go to the police station and report the crime there. (Preserve all physical evidence.)
- The responsibility of investigating a reported hate crime belongs to law enforcement.
- The responsibility of charging and prosecuting the offender(s) belongs to the prosecuting attorney.

Victims' Rights

10

CIVIL REMEDIES. A victim who has suffered physical, emotional, or financial harm as a result of a hate crime is entitled to and may bring an action for injunctive relief, general and special damages, reasonable attorneys fees, and costs. An action must be brought within two years after the date of the violation of this chapter.

Source: Iowa Code §729A.5

Civil Rights Complaint. If a Hate Crime occurs in areas of housing, employment, credit, public accommodations, or education, it may also be a discriminatory act under Iowa City's Human Rights Ordinance. Complaint must be filed within 300 days.

Source: Iowa City City Code Title Two



Best Practices

Hate Crime Network or Task Force

- Some cities have established a “network” against bias.
 - Incorporates all the elements of a hate crime response.
 - Consists of representatives of community stakeholders such as schools, city government, civic organizations.
 - Set goals to facilitate hate crime reporting.
 - Sharing incident reports with other organizations and community groups.
 - In the incident of a hate crime, they will have someone available to contact and support the victim.
 - Would determine and plan an appropriate public response.

Why is a response important?

12

- Silence means acceptance

- If we do not respond to a hate crime, we send a message to the victim and perpetrator that hate and violence are okay.

Elements of an Effective Response

13

- Reporting
 - Reported to local law enforcement, or authority for investigation.
 - Receiving and/or publicizing reports from law enforcement of bias related incidents.
- Victim Support
 - Reassurance, safety, and listening
 - Developing a list of procedures or do's and don'ts
 - Connecting to resources
 - Iowa Attorney General's Victim Assistance Program
 - Assessing needs (Medical, Emotional, et cetera)
- Public Denunciation—action that
 - Condemns the hate crime
 - Takes a position against bigotry
 - Supports the targeted community

Best Practices - Cities

14

- Advocate for City officials to create a resolution to support inclusive communities and end bigotry.
- Create racial justice and social equity initiatives within City government.
- Establishing and publishing a hate crime response plan.
- Starting a bias crime network or task force.

What can a Human or Civil Rights Commission do?

15

- Open up a dialogue with community partners such as law enforcement, city officials, organizations and schools about networking against bias.
 - Sharing incident reports
 - Law enforcement can notify Human Rights Commission or City, set up communication chain with other community stakeholders
 - Work with schools on combating bias and hate.
 - Many universities have bias response teams (University of Northern Iowa)
 - Work with community schools to enforce the Safe Schools Law
 - Discuss obtaining training on hate crimes such as is offered by the US DOJ Community Relations Service or local law enforcement
 - Discuss establishing a response plan and policy

Resources

16

- **Anti-Defamation League**
 - Blueprint for combating bias and hate crime
 - Regional Office: Omaha, Nebraska
- **Southern Poverty Law Center**
 - Intelligence Report
 - Tolerance.org
- **Stopthehate.org**
 - Campus Hate Crime Resource
- **U.S. Dept. of Justice – Community Relations Service**
 - Regional Office: Kansas City, MO
- **Statistics**
 - FBI Uniform Crime Report
 - Iowa Department of Public Safety Uniform Crime Report

Additional Sources Cited

17

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Credits

- Original: Iowa Civil Rights Commission, 2007
- Updates and revisions: Iowa City Civil Rights Office, January 2017