



# **THE HATE CRIMES ADVISORY COUNCIL OF THE STATE OF CONNECTICUT**

## **2024 ANNUAL REPORT**

Submitted pursuant to Subsection d of Section 51-279f of the Connecticut General Statutes

6 February 2025

Co-Chairs Hon. Douglas Lavine / Amy Lin Meyerson, Esq.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY .....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>INTRODUCTION .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>SUBCOMMITTEE ON LAW ENFORCEMENT, REPORTING, AND DATA ANALYSIS .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>1. INTRODUCTION .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>2. MODEL POLICY AND HATE CRIME CHECKLIST.....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>3. HATE CRIMES SUMMIT FOR LAW ENFORCEMENT .....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>4. REPORTHATE.CT.GOV .....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>5. REVIEW OF CONNECTICUT HATE CRIMES STATUTES.....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>6. FOI EXEMPTION FOR HATE CRIME COMPLAINANTS.....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>SUBCOMMITTEE ON RESTITUTION PROGRAMS AND SENTENCING .....</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>CONNECTICUT STATE POLICE (CSP) HATE CRIMES INVESTIGATIVE UNIT (HCIU): HIGHLIGHTS AND HCAC COLLABORATION .....</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>1. OUTREACH TO CONNECTICUT RESIDENTS IMPACTED BY THE WAR IN THE MIDDLE EAST .....</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>2. UNITED AGAINST HATE (UAH).....</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>3. SAFE PLACE PROGRAM .....</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>4. CSP TROOP LIAISON .....</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>MEDIA AND COMMUNITY AWARENESS EFFORTS.....</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>ONGOING AND FUTURE EFFORTS .....</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>CONCLUSION .....</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>APPENDIX I: CONNECTICUT HATE CRIMES ADVISORY COUNCIL ROSTER.....</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>APPENDIX II: STATE OF CONNECTICUT HATE/BIAS CRIME REPORT FORM.....</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>APPENDIX III: STATE OF CONNECTICUT STATE POLICE HATE/BIAS CRIMES POLICY .....</b>	<b>23</b>

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Created by state law under [Connecticut Statute § 51-279f](#), the Connecticut Hate Crimes Advisory Council (HCAC or Council) is responsible for encouraging and coordinating programs that increase community awareness and law enforcement reporting of hate crimes to combat such crimes. It also is responsible for making recommendations for legislation concerning hate crimes, including recommendations on restitution for victims, community service designed to remedy damage caused by any such crime, and additional alternative sentencing programs for first-time offenders and juvenile offenders. A roster of members serving on the Council is available at Appendix I. The Council's website URL is <https://portal.ct.gov/hatecrimes/The-Council>.

As discussed in detail in earlier reports, in its inaugural year, the Council undertook an extensive review of hate crime laws and law enforcement reporting practices in Connecticut and around the country and made recommendations to prevent hate crimes, enforce hate crimes statutes, and create a more tolerant and accepting society. This work included interviews of law enforcement, community groups, individuals who had been on the receiving end of hate-based crimes and incidents, and legislative officers around the country to determine best practices in reducing hate crimes. The Council submitted its recommendations in the 2022 HCAC Annual Report (First Report) to Governor Lamont and the Legislature as of October 1, 2022.

The First Report provided “a comprehensive and rigorous guide to the measures that Connecticut can take to become a national leader in combating and preventing hate crimes and building a more inclusive society in which every resident is equally protected and secure.” All of the Council's recommendations are detailed in the First Report and organized into five common themes: Community Awareness, Hate Crimes Reporting and Analysis, Restitution Programs and Sentencing, Law Enforcement Training and Best Practices, and Funding Resources. The HCAC Annual Reports and additional information are available on the HCAC website at <http://portal.ct.gov/hatecrimes>.

In the 2022-2023 year, the Council elected to prioritize work in six key areas:

1. Review Connecticut Hate Crimes Statutes
2. Develop a Statewide Model Policy for the Investigation of Hate Crimes
3. Develop a Statewide Law Enforcement Reporting Template for Bias Crimes
4. Develop a Statewide Community Response Model
5. Develop a Community-Based Statewide Hate Crimes Reporting System
6. Restorative Justice

The 2023 Hate Crimes Advisory Council Annual Report (Second Report) presents the efforts and accomplishments in connection with these areas.

In the 2023-2024 year, the Council focused its efforts in the following five areas:

1. Law Enforcement, Reporting and Data Analysis
2. Restitution Programs and Sentencing
3. Coordination with the Connecticut State Police Hate Crimes Investigative Unit

4. Media and Community Awareness
5. Ongoing Education and Activities

This Third Report presents the Council's progress in those areas. Notably, the Council focused its efforts on discrete steps to effect change at the state level based on the recommendations in prior annual reports.

The Council has worked diligently to understand and reduce hate and the drivers of hate across Connecticut. We continue to stress, however, that reducing hate is not a one-off effort that can be completed in one year. The reduction of hate crimes and hate-based incidents and increasing awareness and respect of others will take time, agency reform, and an ongoing and concerted effort to implement. Effective responses to hate crimes and hate-based incidents require a coordinated, sustained, and multi-faceted approach engaging law enforcement, the education system, state and federal government, and the active participation of the citizenry.

The recommendations set forth in the Council's First Report provide an effective road map that, if implemented in full, will put Connecticut on the cutting edge of nationwide efforts to identify the root causes of hate crimes, provide culturally sensitive care for victims, and enhance law enforcement's ability to identify and effectively respond to hate crimes. While the Council has taken numerous steps along that path, the journey is not yet complete, and we are continuing our work.

The Council reiterates its request that the Legislature closely study these recommendations and deliberate on them. Council members welcome the opportunity to explain in further detail the basis for these recommendations, which advance pragmatic, cost-effective, creative, and robust approaches to the problems posed by hate crimes.

Our shared goal is, and will remain, to make Connecticut a safer, more peaceful, and more humane place for all its members. We call on Connecticut, and its proud residents, to work together to advance our national motto *E Pluribus Unum*, that we are, "Out of Many, One."

## INTRODUCTION

Hate crimes have a particularly damaging effect on communities and wider society. While hate crimes tend to target one or two individuals at a time, they also spread fear throughout entire communities. Unlike other types of crimes, victims of hate crimes are targeted because of who they are; because of their inherent personal characteristics. An attack on one member of a particular community because of that community's personal characteristics thus becomes an attack on every member of the victim's community, causing community-wide fear and trauma. This undercuts the sense of safety and security of members of the targeted community and by extension weakens the state as a whole. Hate crime legislation responds to the well-documented fact that hate crimes tend to cause more severe physical injuries, that bias crime victims and their communities suffer greater emotional and psychological harms, and that they suffer longer.

Anticipating and preventing a potential upsurge in hate crimes is of critical importance to the well-being of our state. The citizens of Connecticut have a right to expect that responsible state and federal actors will protect their basic physical security and take the threat posed by hate crimes seriously. In our view, improving the responses of our state agencies to hate crimes and building strong partnerships of trust and cooperation with communities is a matter of great urgency.

The Governor's Hate Crimes Advisory Council (HCAC or the Council) is charged with encouraging and coordinating programs to increase community awareness and reporting of hate crimes and to combat such crimes and make recommendations for any legislation concerning such crimes. General Statutes §51-279f. Its roster includes members who are appointed by the Governor and ten statutory appointees, including members from the Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection or DESPP, the Chief Public Defender's Office, Police Chiefs Association, the Connecticut Bar Association and affinity bar associations. The Council is administered by the Chief State's Attorney's Office.

In its first year, the Council focused on investigation and research. It undertook an extensive review of best practices across the country by speaking with law enforcement officers from other cities, prosecutors, community organizers, and victims and perpetrators of hate crimes.

The result of that effort was the Council's First Annual Report in October, 2022. The First Report included fifty separate recommendations organized into five common themes:

1. Community Awareness
2. Hate Crimes Reporting and Analysis
3. Restitution Programs and Sentencing
4. Law Enforcement Training and Best Practices
5. Funding Resources

In its second year, the Council prioritized the implementation of six (6) main recommendations set out in the First Report:

1. Review Connecticut Hate Crimes Statutes
2. Develop a Statewide Model Policy for the Investigation of Hate Crimes

3. Develop a Statewide Reporting Template for Bias Crimes
4. Develop a Statewide Community Response Model
5. Develop a Community-Based Statewide Hate Crimes Reporting System
6. Restorative Justice

The Council's work in those seven areas is detailed in the Second Annual Report, published in October, 2023.

In its third year, the Council set priorities in five (5) areas:

1. Law Enforcement, Reporting and Data Analysis
2. Restitution Programs and Sentencing
3. Coordination with the Connecticut State Police Hate Crimes Investigative Unit
4. Media and Community Awareness
5. Ongoing Education and Activities

Additionally, the Council invited speakers to provide education on the issues different communities face.

A report of the Council's work follows.

**Subcommittee on Law Enforcement, Reporting, and Data Analysis**  
**Co-Chairs: Richard Ashby Wilson and Chief Gary MacNamara**

## **1. Introduction**

The subcommittee had an active year in 2023-24. The promotion of good laws and policies to combat hate crime requires access to reliable and accurate evidence about the type and incidences of hate crimes in the state. To facilitate evidence-based policy, a primary focus of the subcommittee has been to improve the quality and quantity of hate crimes reporting to law enforcement and other state agencies.

It is widely accepted that hate crime is underreported by victims compared with other types of crime. Even when reported by a victim, police may not accurately identify and charge a hate crime (Lantz et al. 2019). In the 2022 Uniform Crime Reporting Program, 3,109 law enforcement agencies across the United States reported 11,634 bias-motivated victimizations (USDOJ 2023c). Observers regularly note that the DOJ's reported annual figures undercount the total number of hate crimes by a large margin (Wilson 2023). Over 80% of the 17,541 law enforcement agencies in the country (Bureau of Justice Statistics 2018) report zero hate crimes or do not report at all (USDOJ 2023c).

A more accurate measurement is provided by the National Crime Victimization Study (NCVS), a nationwide survey of Americans on their experiences of crime. In 2019, the NCVS reported 305,390 hate victimizations in the United States, of which a little over half were reported to the police (Kena et al. 2021). England and Wales overhauled their reporting system to adopt a more victim-centered approach after the murder of Black teenager Stephen Lawrence (Macpherson 1999). Extrapolating the England and Wales model to the larger population of the United States would imply that there are about 670,000 hate victimizations per year in the U.S. To our knowledge, the gap between the actual number of hate crimes and those officially counted is higher than any other form of interpersonal violence. In short, hate crime largely goes unreported and unpunished (Bell 2023).

The national process of transforming law enforcement to be better trained in identifying and responding to hate crime is still in its early stages. Certain institutional initiatives are known to be effective in improving the enforcement of hate crime statutes. Studies have found that setting up a dedicated and well-trained police unit operationalizing a systematic policy (including protocols or checklists) in reporting and responding to hate incidents can lead to greater success in the identification of hate crime and the enforcement of state anti-bias statutes (Mason et al. 2017). Furthermore, reporting can be improved by establishing third party non-law enforcement reporting mechanisms (Pezzella et al. 2019).

## **2. Model Policy and Hate Crime Checklist**

With these observations in mind, members of the Council worked closely with Police Officer Standards and Training (POST) Council staff in 2023 and 2024 to develop a statewide reporting form (or checklist) for law enforcement [see Appendix II], as well as a model policy for

all police departments in the state [Appendix III]. The reporting form collects detailed information on hate crimes and bias incidents. It augments standard police case reports by providing more actionable evidence about the contextual and motive elements of an incident, thus enabling more effective prosecution by state's attorneys' offices. The model policy for state and municipal police departments sets out the core definitions essential to policing hate crimes, reviews the checklist in detail, and guides police officers on how to sensitively respond to the victim of a hate crime.

The checklist and policy together ensure uniform responses by Connecticut police departments to Connecticut residents who report what they believe are hate crimes. Prior to the development of the checklist and policy, law enforcement responders were required to make a determination on the fly as to whether the reported incident could trigger a crime under one of Connecticut's hate crime statutes, which as discussed below are not a model of clarity. The current checklist and policy require law enforcement responders to capture certain information in connection with the report. This data will help inform Connecticut's policies and resource deployment regarding hate crimes and hate crime education.

Both the checklist and the model policy were approved by POST-Council at its November 2023 meeting. This policy and police reporting form were distributed by POST to all state law enforcement agencies in August 2024 and are being incorporated into the police academy's training program. Training of approximately 200 law enforcement staff on the checklist and model policy began in August 2024, and further training of new recruits and in-service officers is planned in 2024-25 and in all subsequent years.

### **3. Hate Crimes Summit for Law Enforcement**

On October 29, 2024, the Hate Crimes Advisory Council sponsored an all-day hate crimes summit at Yale University for law enforcement in the state, titled "Connecticut Combats Hate." Chief Lovello of Yale Security and the HCAC took the lead in organizing the summit in coordination with members of the Hate Crimes Advisory Council Law Enforcement, Reporting and Data Analysis Subcommittee MacNamara, Querijero, and Wilson.

This summit brought together police officers and prosecutors from around the state to examine the phenomenon of hate crimes, to better understand state and federal hate crime laws, and to share best practices on policing and prosecuting hate crimes. Speakers included high-profile victims of hate crimes, and nationally recognized hate crime experts such as Cynthia Deitle, a former FBI Civil Rights Division agent, Jennifer Felten-Green of the USDOJ Civil Rights Division, Detective Orlando Martinez of the Los Angeles Police Department, and Michael Brovner of the Queens, NY District Attorney's Office Hate Crimes Bureau.

This year, lunch and venue costs were covered by Yale University. If successful, the Council plans to sponsor a hate crime summit in 2025 for community and advocacy groups. We hope to sponsor a hate crime summit each subsequent year, and a request for appropriations to support this endeavor to the state legislature is necessary.



#### **4. ReportHate.CT.gov**

A variety of factors influence victims' reluctance to report hate crime victimizations. A perennial structural impediment to hate crime reporting is the social and cultural distance between police and communities that are frequently targeted by hate crimes, obstructing police investigations and diminishing the law enforcement response (King and Kutateladze 2023). The degree of reporting of hate crime victimizations varies according to race, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation and other demographic factors. Immigration status decreases the willingness to report a violent crime (Gerstenfeld 2018, p. 73). During the 2020 Covid-19 pandemic, Lantz and Wenger (2021) found that while anti-Asian hate crimes increased by 145% in major U.S. cities, only 34% of Asian-Americans reported hate crimes to the police, and Asians were 53% less likely to report a hate crime than other victims. LGBTQ+ victims of hate crimes are reluctant to report because of an historically strained relationship with the police (Pezzella et al. 2019). Historically, there has been distrust between police and the Black community, obstructing the reporting of hate crime (Fetzer et al. 2019).

Mindful of this, the HCAC has developed a Community-Based Statewide Hate Crimes Reporting System online with the website ReportHateCT.gov. This initiative has been led by Council members Ken Barone and Michelle Querijero, with support from Council members Michael Bloom, Stacey Sobel, and Richard Wilson. This is a non-law enforcement and community-oriented hate crime reporting system that will permit those experiencing hate crime victimization to report anonymously and through a non-law enforcement mechanism. Data from the portal will primarily be used to inform data analysis and policy formulation by state agencies. In 2023, the Council submitted a successful appropriations request to the CT General Assembly to support the development of this system, its maintenance, and data analysis. ReportHateCT.gov is a statewide online portal to increase the reporting of hate crimes and will gather basic information on a hate crime or bias incident. The Council worked closely with the State Attorney General William Tong, DESPP-Legal, and UConn's Institute for Municipal and Regional Policy in developing this online system. The system went live in September, 2024 and testing and a pilot project have begun. It may be integrated with Connecticut Intelligence Center (DESPP-CTIC) at a later date.

Funds are required for the Division of Administrative Services to maintain the online reporting system. Funds are also required for a dedicated data analyst at UConn-IMRP to clean the data and produce regular reports for state agencies and law enforcement based on the data received. For the online portal to be successful, there needs to be a statewide public education campaign that includes advertising on billboards, on television, and online. Funds are required for this public outreach effort.

#### **5. Review of Connecticut Hate Crimes Statutes**

At the state level, the term "hate crime" was not widely known until the 1980s when state legislatures (e.g., California's Cal. Pen. Code § 422.55) began passing laws that applied penalty enhancements for crimes motivated by bias (Farrell and Lockwood 2023). State laws typically

define hate crimes as offences against person or property motivated in whole or in part by the offender's prejudice against the victim's perceived or actual race, ethnicity, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, or disability (Connecticut General Statutes (CGS) § 53a 181j-k). In some states (e.g., Connecticut, Illinois), hate crime statutes are stand-alone crimes, whereas in others they serve as a penalty enhancement (e.g., New York, Texas).

At the beginning of the Council's work in 2021, we began to hear from police and prosecutors about various problems in the formulation of Connecticut's hate crime statutes. These have been confirmed in subsequent discussions with judges, prosecutors, police and public defenders. The issues that have been identified are:

- The categories of social identity protected in the CGS are inconsistently listed and are left undefined in the various statutes.
- The triple intent requirement in CGS § 53a 181j-k (Intimidation 1 & 2 as a hate crime, the most commonly charged hate crime) is confusing and obstructs effective enforcement of Connecticut's hate crime laws.
- There are 20 different hate crimes statutes in many different sections of the CGS, making accurate charging by a police officer difficult and cumbersome.
- Currently, no statute has "hate crime" in the name, thwarting the deterrent effect.
- Some statutes such as the ridicule statute (§ 53-37) are outdated and likely unconstitutional (See *RAV v St Paul* 1993).

In early 2023, the Council submitted a request to the CT Sentencing Commission to undertake a review of the Hate Crimes Statutes. This request was accepted. Council members met with the Sentencing Commission on three occasions to discuss possible reforms. The Commission has indicated that it will release its report in March 2025 and this report will identify inconsistencies and problematic areas in the hate crime laws that call for remedy. Given the two year wait for the Sentencing Commission's report, the HCAC has moved forward, conducted its own review in consultation with stakeholders, and developed its own statutory proposals for the 2025 legislative session. One of these proposals is to consolidate the current dozen or so statutes into a single "Hate Crime Statute" which is consistent in the intent requirement and protected classes and which provides clear definitions for social categories.

## **6. FOI Exemption for Hate Crime Complainants**

Through the new police reporting form and the ReportHateCT.gov website, the state stands to gain much more data on hate crimes. This data is vulnerable to Freedom of Information requests and the identity of victims of hate crime may be compromised. Under present conditions, an extremist organization promoting hate crimes could send an FOI request and gather the names and addresses of victims of hate crimes who report to police or through the online portal. One of the commonly cited reasons by victims for their unwillingness to report a hate crime is fear retaliation by the offender (Gerstenfeld 2018).

In contrast, the names of alleged perpetrators are protected under existing CGS 1-210 provisions. To rectify this imbalance, the Council proposed an FOI exemption for hate crime complainants in the 2024 legislative session.

The following language was agreed by parties in a proposed bill:

“The name and address of an individual reporting an incident involving an allegation of bigotry or bias towards any person, group of persons or religiously-affiliated entity based in whole or in part on the actual or perceived race, religion, ethnicity, disability, sex, sexual orientation or gender identity or expression of such person, group or entity, including, but not limited to, any allegation of a violation of subdivision (3) of subsection (a) of section 53a-62, subdivision (4) of subsection (a) of section 53a-180, subdivision (4) of subsection (a) of section 53a-180c, subdivision (3) of subsection (a) of section 53a-180d, 354 subdivision (4) of subsection (a) of section 53a-181c, section 46a-58, 53-355 37, 53-37a, 53-37b, 53a-40a, 53a-181j, 53a-181k or 53a-181l to (A) a law enforcement agency, including on the standardized form or other reporting system developed pursuant to subdivision (1) of subsection (b) of section 29-7d, or (B) any database for the reporting of such allegations established by the Institute for Municipal and Regional Policy at The University of Connecticut.”

This language had bipartisan support and the endorsement of advocacy groups. The proposed bill that the wording was attached to, however, did not pass in a vote in the Senate on the final day of session.

The Council will persevere and seek to pass legislation including this exemption in the 2025 legislative session. As part of that effort, the Council will coordinate with stakeholders including advocacy groups and other State agencies that might have an interest in the legislation.

**Subcommittee on Restitution Programs and Sentencing**  
**Chair: Judge Doug Lavine**

The subcommittee pursued two initiatives this year. The first was to gain approval for a Community Victim Impact Statement. It is well known that when an individual is the victim of a hate crime, the community of which he/she is a part also suffers great emotional and psychic harm, and fear. The Office of the State's Attorney this year proposed a statutory change in the 2023 legislative session to authorize an individual victim to designate a member of a victim community to offer a statement outlining how the community has been affected by a hate crime. While the proposal was not enacted in the 2024 Legislative Session, the Council will continue to push this initiative in the next year.

Secondly, Judge Lavine made extensive efforts to promote the use of restorative justice practices when appropriate within the Judicial Branch. Restorative justice stresses reconciliation rather than punishment. Restorative justice approaches are used within the Juvenile Court system, but, with few exceptions, nowhere else in the criminal justice system. Judge Lavine met with Gary Roberge, Executive Director of the Court Support Services Division, and talked with his staff members to urge the Branch to employ restorative justice practices when possible. With the approval of State's Attorney John Doyle, the New Haven Judicial District has been identified as the site of a pilot program to test the use of restorative justice approaches in adult court.

**Connecticut State Police (CSP) Hate Crimes Investigative Unit (HCIU): Highlights and  
HCAC Collaboration  
Liaison: Lieutenant Haley A. Russenberger**

The Connecticut State Police (CSP) Hate Crimes Investigative Unit (HCIU) was created pursuant to Public Act 22-9, which went into effect July 1, 2022. Pursuant to that Act, the HCIU seeks to prevent and detect any criminal activity or suspected criminal activity in the state that violates hate crime laws. The HCIU also compiles, monitors and analyzes data regarding criminal activity related to hate crime laws and shares this information with other law enforcement units to assist in the investigation of any criminal or suspected activity that could violate hate crime laws. The HCIU may also assist other law enforcement units.

By statute, the HCIU Liaison is a member of the Council and has worked to support the Council's efforts in reducing hate crimes and bias incidents around Connecticut. In 2023-2024, HCIU engaged in numerous outreach efforts to Connecticut residents: for example, outreach to those impacted by the war in the Middle East; participation in United Against Hate (UAH) efforts; conducting and participating in educational seminars at various locations; and introducing the Safe Place Program. Some of these efforts are detailed below. .

**1. Outreach to Connecticut Residents Impacted by the War in the Middle East**

The War in the Middle East that erupted on October 12, 2023 had a significant impact on Connecticut's Muslim and Jewish communities. As part of HCIU's statewide mission to strengthen the relationship between state law enforcement and the Muslim community, fostering better understanding and cooperation, HCIU began visiting mosques around Connecticut to discuss hate crimes with the congregants as a special guest of the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR). HCIU began visits with mosques in Berlin, New Britain and Bridgeport in October, 2023. HCIU also undertook visits to all Hartford County synagogues during the high holidays to discuss hate crimes with the congregants and conducted security checks with the Secure Community Network.

In early 2024, HCIU held similar discussions at mosques in Stamford, Wallingford, Waterbury and Bridgeport. This work continued in the spring of 2024 when HCIU visited mosques in Groton City and Newtown and continued discussions on hate crimes with the congregants. HCIU returned to mosques in Waterbury, New Britain and Norwalk to check in and continue discussions with the congregants on hate crimes. HCIU and law enforcement agencies across Connecticut have also provided security at various events that may experience protests, including banquets and community vigils.

HCIU also participated in a virtual statewide campus public safety briefing, where law enforcement from colleges across the state convened to discuss strategies for serving and protecting students on campus.

## **2. United Against Hate (UAH)**

[United Against Hate](#) (UAH) is a Community Outreach Program sponsored by the U.S. Department of Justice. It aims to improve hate crime reporting by teaching community members how to identify, report and help prevent hate crimes and building trust between law enforcement and communities. As part of its mission, the HCIU has supported numerous UAH events throughout Connecticut.

In the fall of 2023, Trooper Samantha Stella, the CSP LGBTQ+ Liaison, was a panel member at the Tolland UAH event. Trooper Clifford Magloire also participated in a UAH presentation in Newtown. HCIU continued its participation of UAH events in the spring of 2024 when it attended a UAH event at Central Connecticut State University, engaging in dialogue with students about combating hate and ensuring campus safety amidst recent spikes in violence and hate nationwide. The HCIU also held similar discussions at UAH events at Temple Sinai in Newington and Hall High School in West Hartford. In the late summer and early fall, the HCIU helped to coordinate a UAH event at Western Connecticut State University.

## **3. Safe Place Program**

The HCIU began work with the Seattle Police Department's Safe Place Program Coordinator to learn more about the Safe Place initiative, program history, how it benefits communities impacted by hate crimes, and how to implement the program as a statewide collaborative effort with municipal law enforcement agencies. After reviewing the Program, the HCIU has begun implementing the Safe Place Program throughout Connecticut.

The Safe Place Program is a partnership between police departments, schools and the business community to help respond to hate crimes and give people who have experienced a crime of bias or hate a safe place to go after their incident where they can be assured that the business will shelter them while they call for help.

Participating businesses, schools or other nonprofit entities are given a Safe Place Sticker, training materials, and flyers, all of which are free. The Safe Place Stickers signal to anyone experiencing a hate or bias incident that hate has no place in that location, that they will be heard, treated with care, dignity and respect by the staff, and sheltered while they call for help from the police.

At the time of this report, five businesses, one church and one library have joined the Safe Place Program. The HCIU is adding "Report Student Bullying" to the Safe Place Sticker for all levels of public schools within the CSP jurisdiction. The HCIU is adding "Report Student Bullying" to the Safe Place Sticker for all levels of public schools within the CSP jurisdiction. HCAC assisted with funding for the stickers. Additionally, Trooper Stella was highlighted on Channel 8 News, providing the public with information about the Safe Place Program. The video can be viewed [here](#).



#### 4. CSP Troop Liaison

The HCIU has a trooper liaison at all eleven CSP barracks. These dedicated troopers, chosen by their Troop Commander, have been trained by the HCIU and work in tandem with the HCIU to support its objectives. As part of this role, the trooper liaisons meet with focus communities and reinforce that the CSP supports them. There was a POST-C Hate Crimes Re-Certification training at the Connecticut Police Academy in December which all of the CSP liaisons attended.

Of recent note, Trooper Matthew Gamson, the Troop G Liaison, attended two Law Enforcement & First Responder Luncheons in Greenwich and Woodbridge, Trooper Jared Tuers, the Troop B Liaison, attended a Sikh memorial event in Norwich, Trooper Clifford Maglorie attended several events including the Connecticut Combats Hate Symposium Training at Yale University and the United Against Hate Meeting at Newtown Congressional Church. In addition, the CSP liaisons continue to make frequent visits to the houses of worship in their respective troop areas.

### **Media and Community Awareness Efforts**

The Council continued its efforts to support community organizations in connection with reducing hate in Connecticut. To that end, the Council heard presentations from a variety of speakers from different organizations including the Hate Crimes Diversionary Program administered by the Judicial Branch Court Support Services Division; a presentation by members of the Connecticut Women & Disability Network regarding Hate Crimes and the Disabled and Deaf Communities; and the Sikh Community

The Council is also planning a Public Awareness Campaign revolving around short, thirty-second media spots with high-profile people delivering a message intended to convey that Connecticut is a welcoming place for people to feel safe, that hate has no home here, and that if a bias incident does occur, certain resources are available. This would include law enforcement as well as the community-based reporting tool, [ReportHate.CT.gov](https://reporthate.ct.gov).



## ONGOING AND FUTURE EFFORTS

While the Council has accomplished a great deal in its few years of existence, much work remains to be done. Based on its review of Connecticut's Hate Crime Statutes, the Council plans to continue developing a Consolidated Hate Crimes Statute, which consolidates all hate crime offenses into their own chapter of the penal code and amends the statute to achieve internal consistency into persons and protected categories covered as well as intent. The Council will seek feedback from relevant stakeholders and present the statute to the General Assembly to be considered.

Additionally, the Council plans to release the community-based reporting tool, ReportHate.CT.gov early in 2025. As previously discussed, hate crimes continue to be massively underreported, and certain marginalized community groups remain reluctant to report any hate crimes or bias-related incidents to law enforcement. ReportHate.CT.gov will allow the public to report hate crimes and bias-related incidents. Data on the hate crimes and incidents reported will be analyzed by UCONN-IMRP and will be sent on a periodic basis to HCIU. The goal is ultimately to connect the reports from ReportHate.CT.gov to the DESPP Connecticut Information Center (CTIC) so that they can be sent in real time to local law enforcement, if necessary.

With the additional data gathered both by ReportHate.CT.gov and law enforcement's Bias Crimes Reporting Form, the Council expects that it will be able to obtain a more fulsome snapshot of the extent to which hate crimes and bias incidents are occurring. With this information, Connecticut will be better positioned to develop anti-bias policies, deploy resources, and create educational content to help reduce hate crimes and bias incidents.

The Council plans to continue its Media Campaign and Community Awareness efforts in the coming year. Plans are underway to begin filming high quality, memorable and actionable video spots to launch the Stop Hate PSA campaign. This campaign is intended to educate community members to recognize hate crimes as criminal and empower individuals to report crimes or bias incidents they may have witnessed or been involved in. The campaign will encourage the public to report hate crimes or bias incidents to law enforcements as well as link back to ReportHate.CT.gov.

The Council recognizes the importance of shielding information reported on hate crimes and bias incidents from malign actors that may seek to hinder such reports or punish the reporters. Consistent with other states, therefore, the Council intends to develop an exemption to the Freedom of Information Act to protect both the reporting party and the identifying information on anyone suspected of performing a hate crime or bias incident, to the extent gathered. The Council will seek the input of relevant stakeholders on this proposed legislation during the course of its development.

The Council also has several ongoing priorities for the coming year. Following up on its successful Connecticut Combats Hate Summit, the Council will move toward an annual Symposium for law enforcement to educate law enforcement personnel on both legal aspects of hate crimes and how their response to such allegations can influence targeted communities.

Ongoing development and data analysis of the data collected through the Bias Crimes Reporting Form and through ReportHate.CT.gov is needed and will require additional resources.

The Council also intends to continue to work with the Judicial Branch to incorporate restorative justice approaches to sentencing in appropriate cases. The Council will continue to work with the Chief State's Attorney to begin a pilot program on restorative justice and will continue its to permit victim impact statements and restitution in sentencing for property crimes. Finally, the Council will continue to implement other aspects of its First Report recommendations as time and resources permit.

## CONCLUSION

The Council once again expresses its appreciation to the Governor and General Assembly for their leadership on this very important issue and for establishing and appointing a group of Council members with a broad range of knowledge, skills, and diverse experiences. The Council's recommendations are intended to increase safety, belonging, inclusion, and equity while decreasing the experiences of racism and patterns of marginalization within and across targeted communities.

As detailed above, the Council has accomplished a great deal since its establishment in June, 2021 and is particularly proud of its multi-disciplinary and cross-agency engagement on this issue. However, the reduction of hate crimes and the increased tolerance and acceptance of citizens from all cultures is an important work in progress that must continue.

The Council anticipates that the improved tracking of hate crimes and bias incidents by law enforcement will help address appropriate resource allocation and community outreach programs and looks forward to studying the data in that area to fine-tune this approach as necessary. In the coming year, it is hopeful that the development of a community-based reporting tool will increase public awareness and lead to the reduction of hate crimes and increased tolerance for all.

Connecticut must continue its investment in education and other measures to advance equity and security for all its citizens. Public awareness of hate crimes, in community, school, and government settings, must be improved to communicate to targeted communities that they are visible and valuable. We must work to educate the public on the valuable contributions, humanity, and complexity of targeted individuals and communities. Only through a reversal of the systemic devaluing of marginalized communities will we be able to reverse the trend of hate crimes and bias incidents.

The Council is honored to have this opportunity to serve all people throughout Connecticut and looks forward to continuing to work collaboratively with the Office of the Governor, the General Assembly, DESPP, the Department of Criminal Justice, the Judicial Branch, and our communities to implement the recommendations presented in this Report. The Council will track the progress made as hate crime and bias incident data is gathered from the initial reporting of the hate crime through sentencing to further protect and provide relief to the victims of hate crimes.

Together we can identify and implement effective ways to fight hate crimes in Connecticut and lead the way to a safer and more inclusive United States of America.

**APPENDIX I: Connecticut Hate Crimes Advisory Council Roster**

## **Governor's Hate Crimes Advisory Council**

### **Co-Chairs**

Hon. Douglas S. Lavine  
Amy Lin Meyerson, Esq.

### **Members**

Corrie Betts, NAACP  
Michael Bloom, Jewish Federation Association of Connecticut  
Jason O. Chang, Asian American Studies Institute, UConn  
John Doyle, New Haven State's Attorney  
Rabbi Michael Farbman, Temple Emanuel of Greater New Haven  
Andrew A. Feinstein, Feinstein Education Law Group, LLC  
Brian Foley, Tolland Town Manager  
Steven D. Ginsburg, August Strategic Communications  
Erene Hammond, UnitedHealth Group  
Steven Hernandez, ConnCAN  
Rathanak M. Keo, #IAmNotAVirus  
Tamara K. Lanier, NAACP, Connecticut Racial Profiling Project, ACLU Connecticut  
Diana R. Lombardi  
Duane J. Lovello, Deputy Director of Public Safety, Yale University  
Gary M. MacNamara, Public Safety & Government Affairs, Sacred Heart University  
Robin P. McHaelen  
John P. Merz, Advancing Connecticut Together  
Aida Mansoor, Hartford International University for Religion and Peace  
Fernando J. Muniz, Community Solutions, Inc.;  
MD Masudur Rahman, Marjars Sourcing, Inc.  
Precious Price, Middletown Racial Justice Coalition  
Sharad A. Samy, The Commonfund for Nonprofit Organizations  
Jonathan S. Slifka, Connecticut Department of Aging and Disability Services  
Stacey G. Sobel, Regional Director, ADL Connecticut  
Richard A. Wilson, UConn School of Law

### **Statutory Appointees (Ex-officio members, or their designees)**

Patrick Griffin, Chief State's Attorney  
Verinda Birdsong (Chief Public Defender designee)  
Seth Hershman (Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection designee)  
Lieutenant Haley A. Russenberger (Connecticut Hate Crimes Investigative Unit)  
Hon. Cecil J. Thomas (Connecticut Bar Association designee)  
Makana Ellis (George W. Crawford Black Bar Association designee)  
Riju Das (South Asian Bar Association of Connecticut designee)  
Michelle Querijero (Connecticut Asian Pacific American Bar Association designee)  
Leonard Rodriguez (Connecticut Hispanic Bar Association designee)  
Christopher D. Ferace (Connecticut Police Chiefs Association designee)

**APPENDIX II: State of Connecticut Hate/Bias Crime Report Form**

# STATE OF CONNECTICUT

HATE / BIAS CRIME REPORT

## GENERAL INCIDENT INFORMATION

Name of Department

Case / Incident Number

Date of Report

Date of Incident

Time of Incident

Incident Street Address

Incident City

Incident State

Incident Zip / Postal Code

## TYPE OF INCIDENT (CHECK ALL THAT APPLY)

☐ Hate Crime ⓘ

☐ Bias Incident ⓘ

☐ Crime with Bias Elements ⓘ

## TYPE OF BIAS (CHECK ALL THAT APPLY)

☐ Disability ⓘ

☐ Sex ⓘ

☐ Sexual Orientation ⓘ

☐ Gender Identity ⓘ

☐ Race ⓘ

☐ Ethnicity ⓘ

☐ Religion ⓘ

☐ Gender Expression ⓘ

## BIAS INDICATORS (CHECK ALL THAT APPLY)

☐ Hate Speech

☐ Acts/Gestures

☐ Property Damage

☐ Symbol Used

☐ Mask/Hood

☐ Day of Significance

☐ Graffiti / Spray Paint

☐ Written / Electronic  
Communication

☐ Noose

☐ Other

### **APPENDIX III: State of Connecticut State Police Hate/Bias Crimes Policy**





# Hate / Bias Crimes Investigations and Reporting Policy



## I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines for identifying and investigating hate crimes and hate incidents. The mission of the Connecticut State Police is to detect, prevent, and investigate crimes motivated by prejudice or bias against others based on race, religion, ethnicity, color, disability, sex, sexual orientation or gender identity. In doing so, this will create an atmosphere of police support and action that will encourage victims to report hate crimes. Effective July 1, 2022, The Commissioner of Emergency Services and Public Protection shall assign a Hate Crimes Investigative Unit, established under subsection (d) of section 29-4 of the general statutes. The unit shall seek to prevent and detect any criminal activity or suspected criminal activity in the state that is a violation of sections 46a-58, 53-37, 53-37a, 53-37b, 53a-61aa, subdivision (3) of subsection (a) of section 53a-62, subdivision (4) of subsection (a) of section 53a-181c, section 53a-181j, 53a-181k or 53a-181l of the general statutes; The Unit shall compile, monitor and analyze data regarding any criminal activity or suspected criminal activity described. The Unit shall share data and information with, and may provide additional assistance to, any law enforcement unit to assist in the investigation of any criminal activity or suspected criminal activity described below. The Unit shall become subject matter experts on hate groups and share information with other members of law enforcement through training, and collaboration.

## II. POLICY

**Not later than November 1, 2022, the Police Officer Standards and Training Council, in consultation with the Commissioner of Emergency Services and Public Protection and the State-Wide Hate Crimes Advisory Council, shall: (1) Develop, and disseminate to all law enforcement units, a standardized form or other reporting system to be used by a law enforcement unit in making an initial notification or report to the Hate Crimes Investigative Unit. The current Bias Crime Report Form (dps-0323-c-1) may be found on the intranet, via the A&O Manual Forms.**

**On and after January 1, 2023, each law enforcement unit shall, not later than fourteen days after receiving notification, information or a complaint of any criminal activity or suspected criminal activity described in subdivision (1) of subsection (a) of this section, provide a notice and report to the Hate Crimes Investigative Unit regarding such criminal activity or suspected criminal activity using the standardized form or other reporting system developed. The law enforcement unit shall continue to share information regarding the investigation of such criminal activity or suspected criminal activity with the Hate Crimes Investigative Unit**