



# 2019 Hate Crimes Report

A report from the County of Orange



# A Message from the Chair of the OC Human Relations Commission

Orange County is one of America's most diverse counties, and the opportunities to enrich and expand our cultural awareness and appreciation are within grasp. Roughly 3.2 million people, according to U.S. Census estimates, call Orange County home. Consider some general facts about our County's make-up:

- Roughly 30% of our population is foreign-born.
- Over 40% of our residents speak a language other than English at home, including roughly 25% who speak Spanish.
- There are over 80 faiths practiced in Orange County.

The Orange County Human Relations Commission believes that our diversity, anchored to common values of tolerance, respect and goodwill, enhances our county's social fabric, and we should celebrate the richness and abundance it brings.

Unfortunately, hate crimes and incidents still occur in our county. Individuals have been targeted because of their actual or perceived race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, disability, religion or some other aspect of their being.

Comparing 2018 to 2019, hate incidents dropped from 165 to 156, but hate crimes increased by over 20%, from 67 to 83. While some might say this is not a vast problem in a county of over 3 million residents, it is estimated that only a small fraction of hate crimes and incidents are actually reported to law enforcement.

We cannot allow fear, hatred and bigotry to divide us. We must listen to one another, communicate respectfully, build bridges of understanding, and support each other through these traumatic events. Let us send the message that when our neighbors are attacked because of who they are, how they worship, or whom they love, we will denounce it loudly and stand against it fiercely. We believe that ALL people should live free from harassment, discrimination and violence based on race, religion, sexual orientation, ethnicity, gender, disability or other fundamental aspects of their being.

In publishing this annual Hate Crime Report, we are confronted by the fact that hate crimes continue to rise. We can – and we must – do better. It is our hope that this report will inform ongoing conversations in different spaces about the need to support hate victims and, as a community, to commit to treat one another as we individually would want to be treated.

For the Commission, I am,



Michael Reynolds, Chair  
Orange County Human Relations Commission

# What are hate crimes and hate incidents?

## What is a hate crime?

In California, the legal definition of a **hate crime** under California Penal Code 422.6 is defined as a criminal act committed, in whole or in part, because of one or more of the following actual or perceived characteristics of another's disability, gender, nationality, race or ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, or association with a person or group of persons with one or more of the preceding actual or perceived characteristics.

## What is a hate incident?

A **hate incident** is the behavior that is motivated by hate or bias towards a person's actual or perceived disability, gender, nationality, race or ethnicity, religion or sexual orientation but is not criminal in nature. Typically, these behaviors are protected by the First Amendment right to freedom of expression. If this type of behavior escalates to threats or carried out against a person or property, or becomes an incitement to commit violence, it would be classified as a hate crime.

## **A HATE CRIME OR HATE INCIDENT MAY HAVE OCCURRED IF ANY OF THE FOLLOWING IS PRESENT:**

- There was a perception that the victim was targeted because of their race, gender, sexual orientation, nationality, religion, etc.
- The perpetrator wrote or spoke in a manner that indicated bias.
- The date of the incident or crime coincides with a date of significance to victim's religion, nationality, ethnicity, etc.

## **WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I'M VICTIMIZED?**

- Contact law enforcement immediately to file a report.
- Obtain medical attention, if needed. Be sure to keep all medical documentation.
- Leave all evidence in place. Do not touch, remove and/or clean up anything.
- Document what happened by taking photographs of the evidence, writing down exactly what was said, particularly any words that indicate bias, motivation, and other information that may be valuable.
- Get the name(s), address(es) and phone number(s) of other victim(s) and witness(es).
- If possible, write down a description of the perpetrator and the perpetrator's vehicle.
- Find support from friends, family and from seek professional help, if needed.
- Report the occurrence to OC Human Relations Commission

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To report a hate crime, call 714-480-6580  
You can also report online at [www.ochumanrelations.org/hatecrime](http://www.ochumanrelations.org/hatecrime)

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# *Hate Crimes in Orange County: Upward Trend Continues*

## **Methodology**

The 2019 Hate Crimes Report is intended to inform all residents of the human relations climate in Orange County. The Orange County Human Relations Commission received reports from 19 law enforcement agencies, 24 education institutions, and five community-based organizations. Duplicates are eliminated, and reports are verified to meet the criteria of the legal definition of a hate crime in the California penal code. This report also includes hate incident data, which helps identify red flags for trends and potential hate crimes. The statistics help to inform and bring awareness to the general public, schools administrations, law enforcement agencies and elected officials. Hate crime and hate incident reports received are voluntary and confidential, which may result in limited categorical data labeled as “unknown” for this report.

## **Hate Crime Reports Continue to Rise**

In Orange County, 83 hate crimes were reported in 2019, a 24% increase from 2018. This is the largest jump in hate crime activity in the last five years. The increase of hate crimes reported in Orange County differs from the California Department of Justice’s 2019 Hate Crime Report, which shows an 8.3% decrease of hate crime events. The Orange County data includes hate crime reports from several educational institutions, which are not reflected in the Attorney General’s report.

## **Main Motivation for Hate Crimes in 2019 - Race/Ethnicity/National Origin**

The most frequently reported hate crime was motivated by the targets of Race, Ethnicity and/or National Origin (47%) followed by Religion (28%), Sexual Orientation (18%), Gender Identity (5%) and Disability (1%). Cases labeled “Unknown” (5%) are also included due to reporting parties providing limited categorical data.

Of the 47% of cases motivated by Race, Ethnicity, and/or National Origin, 53% were driven by Anti-Black sentiment, followed by Anti-Hispanic (30%) and Anti-Asian (17%), as seen in Figure 1 on page 4.

Of the 28% of hate crimes motivated by Religion, the Jewish community was the primary target at 52% followed by Catholics, Christians, and Muslims (14% combined), as seen in Figure 2 on page 4.

Of the hate crime cases reported motivated by Sexual Orientation (18%) and Gender Identity (5%), 78% of the cases were Anti-Gay followed by Anti-Female(11%) and Anti-Transgender (11%), as seen in Figure 3 on page 4

## **Hate Crime by Location & Offense**

In 2019, most hate crimes took place in Public Places (37%) followed by Places of Worship (18%), Residences (17%), School Campuses (13%), Work/Businesses (12%) and Jail/Detention Centers (4%).

The most reported hate-based criminal offense was Vandalism (44%) followed by Aggravated Assaults (22%), Simple Assault (13%), Criminal Threats (9%), Harassment (5%), Theft (4%), Assault and Battery (3%) and Arson (1%).

## Hate Crime Graphs

Figure 1

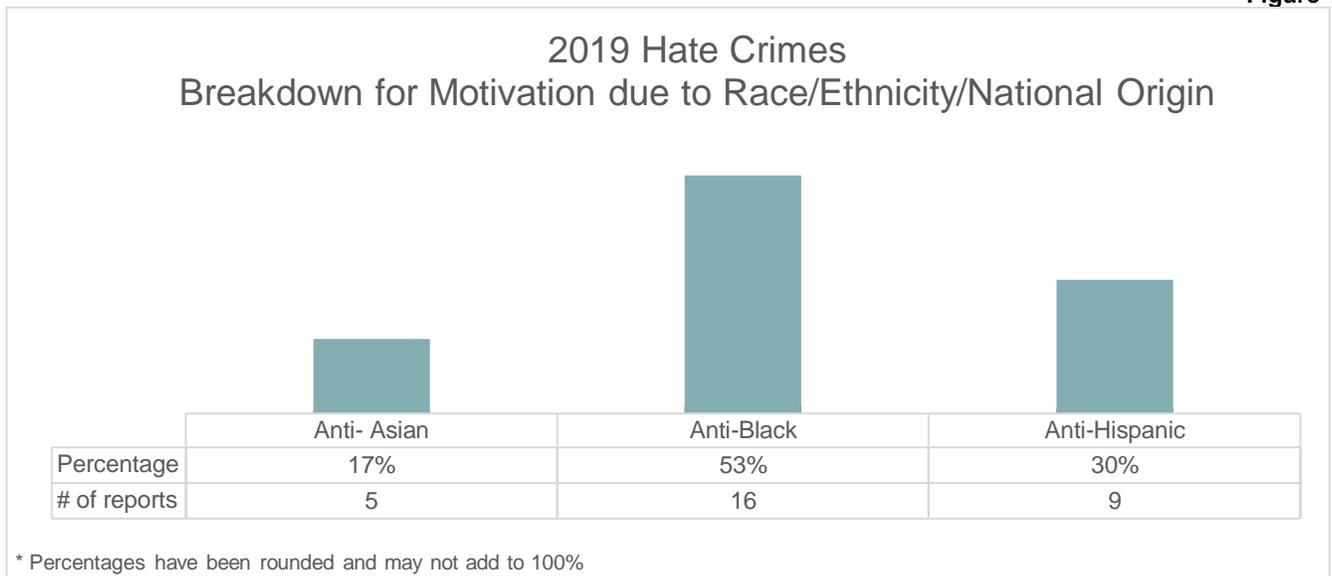


Figure 2

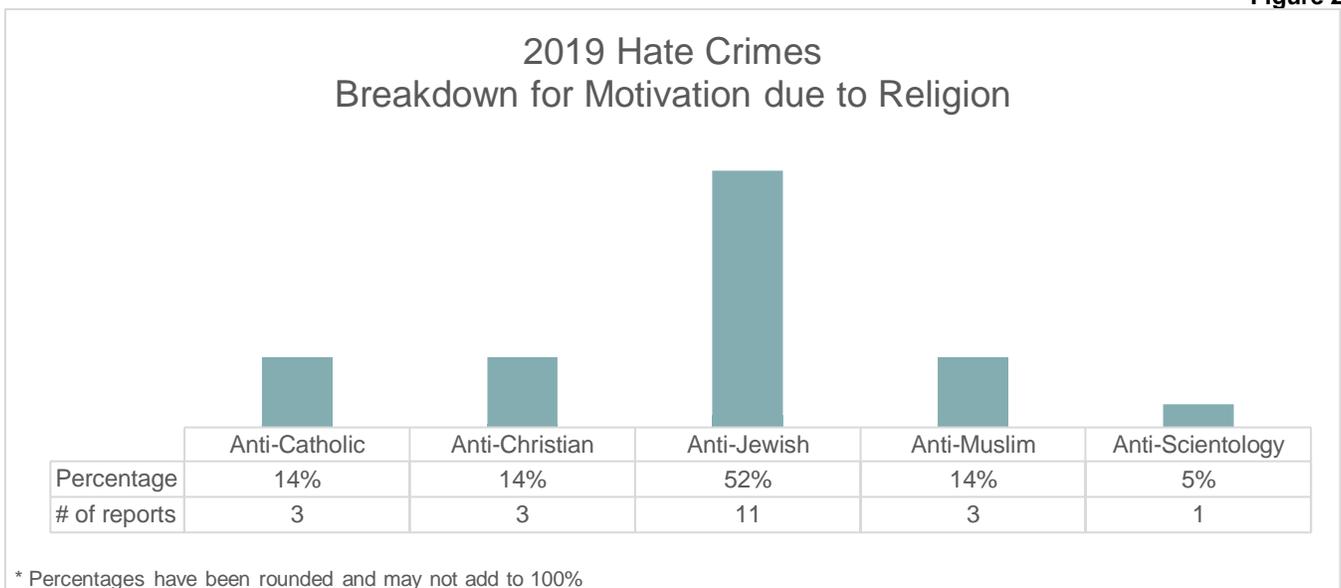
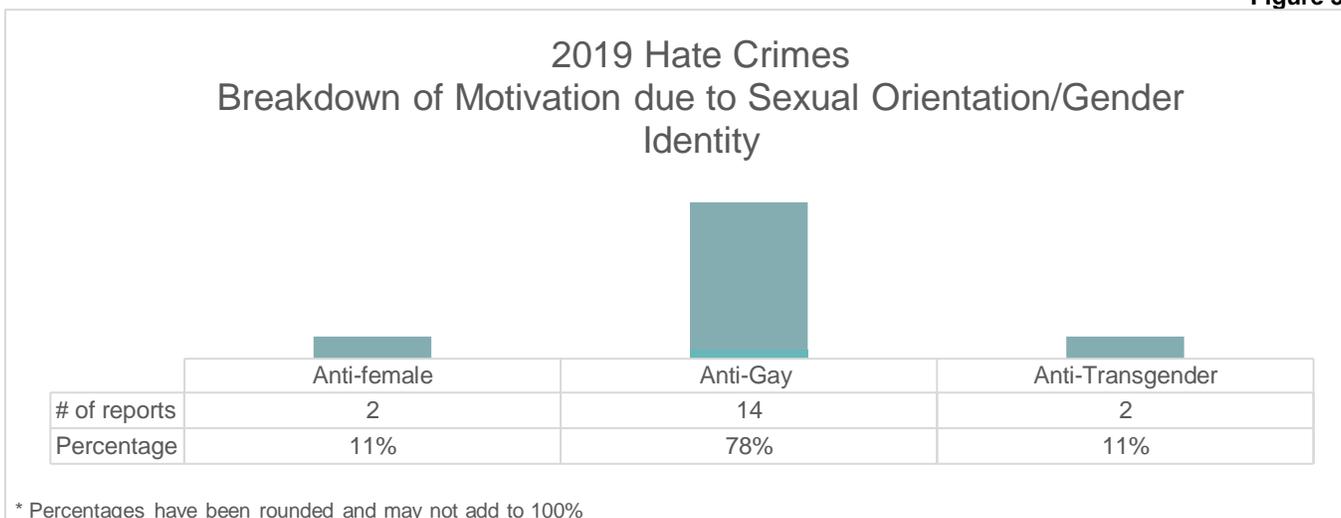


Figure 3



## *Hate Incidents: Slight Decrease Indicated*

### Hate Incident Reports Slightly Decrease

In Orange County, a total of 156 hate incidents were reported in 2019, a 6% decrease from last year. Hate incidents are notoriously underreported for a variety of reasons. According to the Southern Poverty Law Center, there are up to 260,000 hate events that go unreported annually nation-wide. Hate incidents are integral pieces of information offering a bigger picture, ascertaining specific red flags, and identifying trends in hate activity that may need to be addressed as a community.

### Main Motivators for Hate Incidents

The main motivation for hate incidents was Religion (44%) followed by Race/Ethnicity/National origin (39%), and Sexual Orientation/Gender Identity (15%) and 2% were targeted for more than one motive.

Similar to our hate crime data, of the 44% of hate incidents due to Religion, the Jewish community was the primary target at 65% followed by 31% of the incidents targeting the Muslim community (31%), as seen in Figure 4 on page 6

Of the 39% of hate incidents motivated due to Race/Ethnicity/National Origin, 51% were Anti-Black followed by Anti-Hispanic(13%) and Anti-Multiple Races (13%), as seen in Figure 5 on page 6.

Of the hate incident cases reported motivated by Sexual Orientation/Gender Identity, 68% of the cases were Anti-Gay followed by Anti-Female (14%), Anti-Lesbian (9%), and Anti-LGBT in general (9%).

### Hate Incident by Location & Offense

In 2019, the highest hate incidents reported were Harassment and Hate Speech (74%) followed by Vandalism (21%), Simple Assault (3%), and Aggravated Assault (2%).

In 2019, the top location for hate incidents was at School Campuses (44%) followed by Work/Business (23%), Public Area (15%), Private Property (7%), Phone/Online (7%), and Place of Worship (3%)

A breakdown of where hate incidents mostly occurred on campuses is displayed in Figure 6 on page 6, which shows that 41% reported in high schools, 25% in middle schools, 19% in colleges/university, and 15% in elementary schools.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), students who experience hate crimes or hate incidents are at increased risk for lower academic achievement as they tend to skip school and are more likely to drop out (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2019). Studies show there is a link between school safety and students' academic performance. The effects of hate incidents and hate crimes are widespread. Along with the immediate and long-term effects on the victims, it also has longitudinal effects on the offenders, educators, parents, and school climates (Concordia University, 2016).

## Hate Incident Graphs

Figure 4

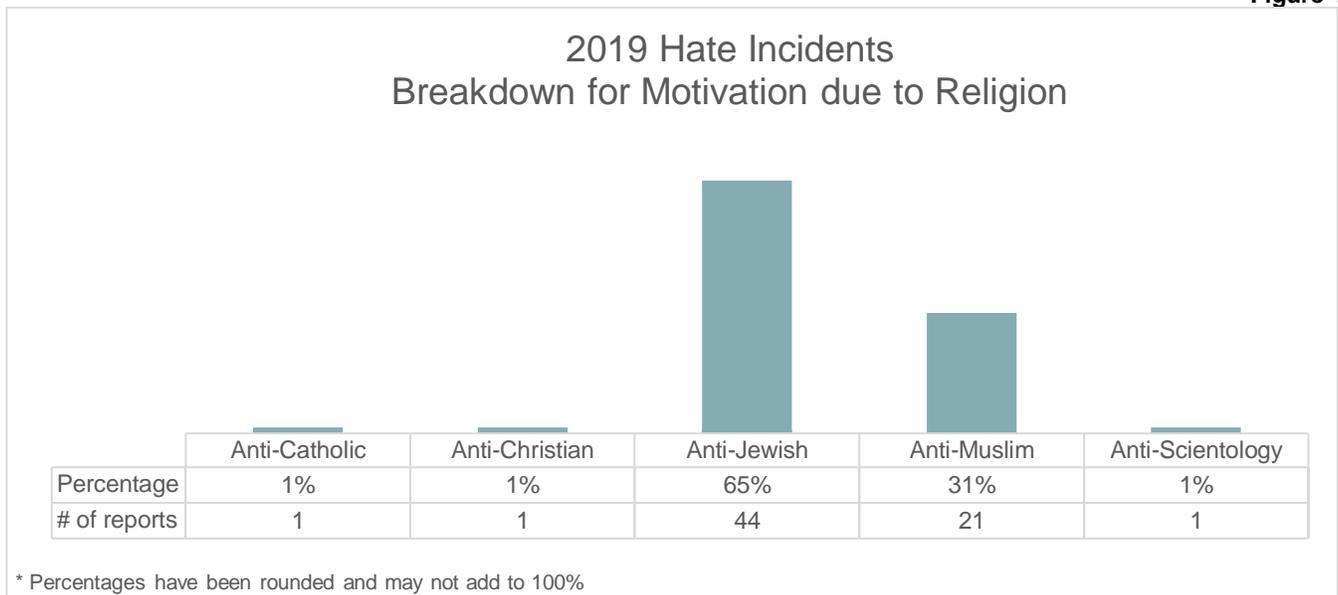


Figure 5

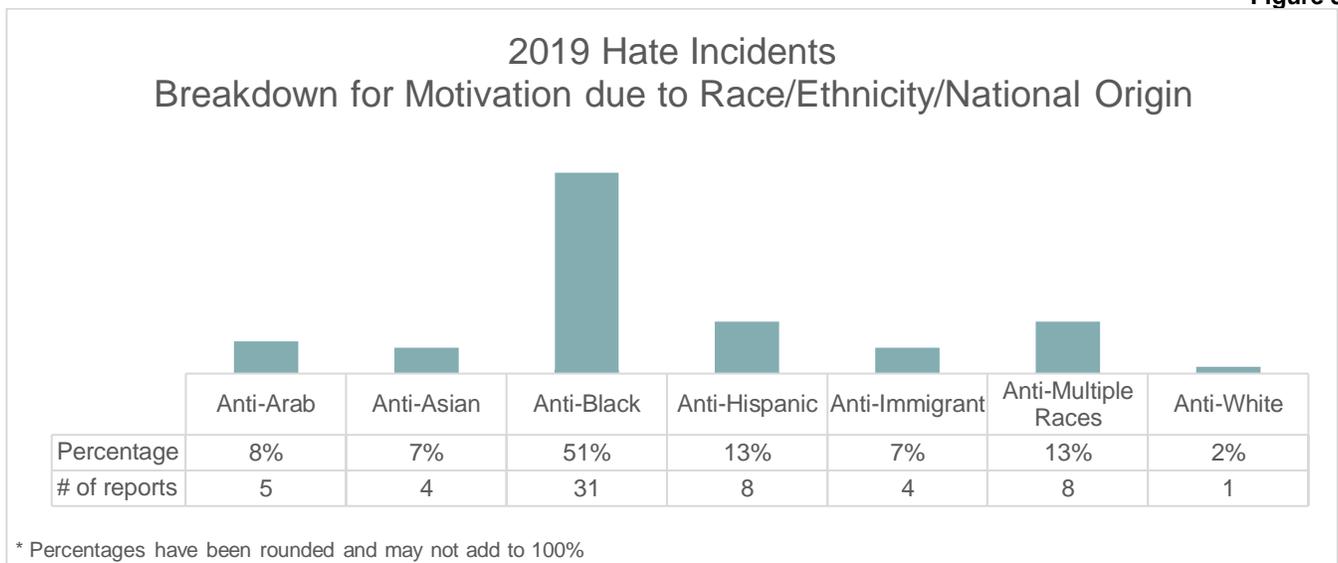
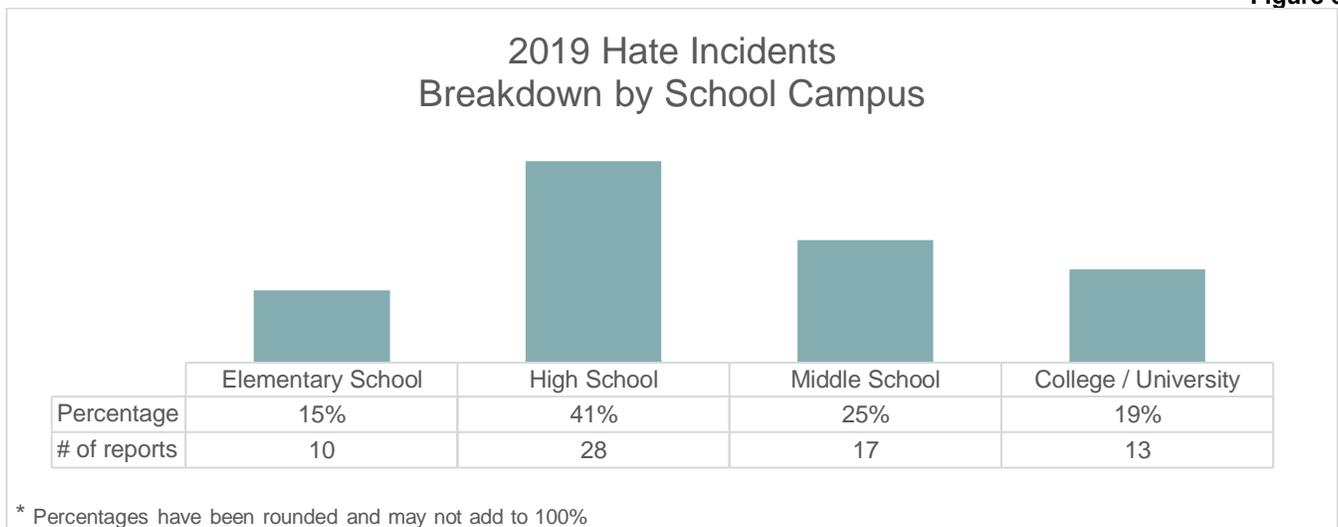


Figure 6



# OC District Attorney Summary of Hate Cases for 2019



Each year, the Orange County District Attorney's Office ("OCDA") is responsible for reviewing possible hate crimes to determine whether any criminal charges, hate crime or otherwise, should be filed. These cases are submitted to the OCDA by local law enforcement agencies after investigation by the agency and the identification of a possible suspect.

All prosecutors are instructed to proactively look for hate crime elements in submitted cases and alert the Special Prosecutions Unit, where specially assigned deputy district attorneys review these cases. The filing decision is guided by the state of the evidence and the standard of whether criminal charges can be proven beyond a reasonable doubt.

In 2019, the OCDA received 30 such cases for consideration and filed charges on 18 of them, while eight of the cases were rejected outright and four were pending the completion of additional investigation. Thirteen of the filed charges included hate crime charges. The cases referred for filing consideration included crimes motivated by bias against race, religion, and sexual orientation. In each of the 13 filed cases that included a hate crime, the charged defendant was convicted of or still faces hate crime charges. There is no "standard" sentence for a hate crime, as each case is reviewed on its own merits for a variety of factors including victim input. In 2019, convicted hate crime defendants received sentences ranging from probation to five years in state prison. Although a case may not resolve in the same year it was filed, a look at a given calendar year's statistics may show trends of increased awareness and reporting.

From 2014-2018, the OCDA saw an increase in the number of hate crimes reported to police agencies that were subsequently reviewed by prosecutors for filing of potential hate crime charges. In particular, the 30 cases received in 2019 and the 32 cases received in 2018 are substantially higher than the 17 cases received in 2017 and the 12 cases received in 2016. A look at multi-year data helps to demonstrate the increased awareness and recognition of hate crimes by both the public and our local law enforcement agencies. The OCDA looks forward to continued reasonable and fair prosecutions in 2020, with the help of Orange County's law enforcement agencies, outreach groups, and community members.

## REPORTING AGENCIES

### Organizations:

Anti-Defamation League,  
Council on American Islamic Relations,  
Waymakers,  
OC Human Relations  
Orange County Human Relations Commission

### Educations Institutions:

Brea Olinda Unified School District  
Centralia Elementary School District  
Fountain Valley School District  
Fullerton Joint Union High School  
Fullerton School District  
Garden Grove Unified School District  
Huntington Beach City School District  
Huntington Union High School District  
Los Alamitos Unified School District  
Magnolia School District  
Newport Mesa Unified School District  
Ocean View School District  
Placentia-Yorba Linda Unified School District  
Rancho Santiago Community College District  
Savanna School District  
Soka University  
Westminster School District  
Coast Community College  
CSU Fullerton  
Cypress College  
Fullerton College  
Irvine Valley College  
Orange Coast College  
UC Irvine

### City Police Departments:

Anaheim  
Brea  
Buena Park  
Costa Mesa  
Cypress  
Fountain Valley  
Fullerton  
Garden Grove  
Huntington Beach  
Irvine  
Laguna Beach  
Los Alamitos  
Newport Beach  
Orange  
Santa Ana  
Seal Beach  
Tustin  
Westminster

### Orange County Sheriff's Department

Unincorporated areas of Orange County  
Aliso Viejo  
Dana Point  
Laguna Hills  
Laguna Niguel  
Lake Forest  
Laguna Woods  
Mission Viejo  
Rancho Santa Margarita  
San Clemente  
San Juan Capistrano  
Stanton  
Villa Park  
Yorba Linda

## *Need Support?*

The **OC Human Relations Commission** provides individuals who have been targeted by hate crimes and/or hate incidents with support and appropriate resources. All information, support and services provided are confidential. Throughout the year, the Commission provides presentations and releases the annual Hate Crimes Report informing Orange County community regarding hate crimes and hate incidents because of the impact that it has on the victims and society.

### **Victim Witness Assistance**

Help is available in the form of:

- Support in communicating with the law enforcement, the court, and other authorities
- Translation services for non-English speakers
- Information resources and referrals
- Crisis intervention and counseling
- Orientation to the criminal justice system
- Emergency financial application assistance
- Support with property return, restitution assistance, filing compensation claims, temporary restraining orders, emergency transportation, and case status/disposition information

Other organizations that support and defend victims of hate crimes:

- ACLU of Southern California, Orange County Branch - (714) 450-3962
- Anti-Defamation League (ADL) Orange County/Long Beach Region - (949) 679-3737
- California Department of Fair Employment & Housing (DFEH) - (800) 884-1684 or (800) 700-2320
- California Victim Compensation and Government Claims Board - (800) 777-9229
- Council on American-Islamic Relations, Southern California (CAIR) - (714) 776-1847
- Dayle McIntosh Center - (714) 621-3300
- Fair Housing Council of Orange County - (714) 569-0823
- Federal Bureau of Investigation Victim Assistance Program - (714) 542-8825
- Japanese American Citizens League (Pacific South West Chapter) - (213) 626-4471
- National Association for the Advancement of Color People of Orange County (NAACP) - (714) 543-3637
- OC Asian and Pacific Islander Community Alliance (OCAPICA) - (714) 636-9095
- Office of the Orange County District Attorney - (714) 834-3600
- Office of Victim Services, California Attorney General - (877) 433-9069
- Parents, Families & Friends of Lesbians and Gays (PFLAG) - (714) 997-8047
- Sikh Council California - 1-877-CALSIKH
- Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC) - (334) 956-8200
- LGBTQ Center OC - (714) 953-5428
- U.S. Department of Justice's Office Hate Crime Suppression Unit - (213) 580-3358
- U.S. Department of Justice Office for Victims of Crime - (800) 851-3420
- Waymakers - (949) 975-0488

**County of Orange Board of Supervisors:**

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This report was produced on behalf of the County of Orange, OC Human Relations Commission through a contract with the OC Human Relations Council.



## OC Human Relations Commission

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<http://www.occommunityservices.org/human-relations-commission>

“Seek out the causes of tension and conflict, discrimination and intolerance and attempt to eliminate those causes”

Serving Orange County Since 1971