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CHRISTOPHER S. PORRINO  
*Attorney General*

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Dear Friends,

Acts of hatred and bias diminish all of us and cannot be tolerated. My pledge as Attorney General is to eliminate crimes motivated by bias, and seek justice for any person or group that is targeted by such ignorance and bigotry.

In my recent travels across the State, I've noticed an increase in questions about how our law enforcement community responds to bias incidents. Because these are such important questions, I directed my staff to create an informational flyer that highlights our telephone hotline for reporting bias crimes (800-277-BIAS) and answers frequently asked questions about bias crimes/incidents.

I have also established an email hotline specifically dedicated to reporting bias incidents. The address is: [NJBias@NJDCJ.org](mailto:NJBias@NJDCJ.org). The email hotline immediately connects the public to law enforcement staff from the New Jersey Division of Criminal Justice (DCJ). DCJ is charged with ensuring that bias incidents are investigated thoroughly and appropriately. All complaints—whether received in person, by telephone or email—will be sent to the New Jersey State Police, DCJ, Office of Homeland Security and Preparedness, and the appropriate County Prosecutor.

We encourage you to circulate the enclosed flyer to your friends, family members, co-workers, and constituents. In addition, on March 29, 2017, from 6 p.m. to 8:30 p.m., at the Middlesex County Fire Academy, Sayreville, DCJ will be holding training for our community partners on how to recognize, respond, and report bias crimes/incidents. If you are interested in attending, please register at [www.surveymonkey.com/r/LS99BWS](http://www.surveymonkey.com/r/LS99BWS). Seating is limited. Additional dates and locations will be announced on our Department's website.

In New Jersey, we have a rich tradition of connection, communication and collaboration that has been forged between our office and New Jersey's diverse communities. Working together, we will continue to combat hatred, protect the victimized, and generate positive, substantive change—the kind of change that makes all New Jersey communities safer.

Sincerely,

Christopher S. Porrino  
NEW JERSEY ATTORNEY GENERAL



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# Bias Crime **REPORT IT!**

## **What is a bias incident?**

A bias incident or hate crime is defined in the Attorney General's Guidelines as any suspected or confirmed offense or unlawful act which occurs against a person or property (public or private) on the basis of New Jersey's nine protected classes: race, color, religion, gender, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, national origin, or ethnicity.

## **What are some common types of bias/hate crimes?**

Bias incidents and hate crimes take many forms, ranging from racially-motivated graffiti, to threats of physical harm, to actual infliction of property damage or bodily injury. Under New Jersey law, any crime – such as harassment, assault, terroristic threats, arson, criminal mischief, or homicide – is subject to more serious punishment if the crime was committed against a person because of a person's race, color, religion, gender, or other protected class status. Not all incidents turn out to be crimes, but any potential bias incident should be reported to the police as a bias incident so that it can be fully investigated.

## **What should I report?**

You should report any and all suspected or confirmed bias incidents to your local police department. In other words, if you are a victim of, or a witness to, any offense which occurs against a person based on that person's race, color, religion, gender, or other protected status, then you should report that incident. To aid with investigations try to note important information including licence plate numbers, identifying physical features such as tattoos, etc.

## **What should I do if I witness a bias/hate crime in progress?**

Call **911** to report it.

## **What if I'm uncomfortable reporting incidents to local police?**

Every County Prosecutor's Office in New Jersey has specific personnel assigned to the Bias Crimes Unit. These individuals are responsible for receiving bias incident complaints, filling out a report for every incident, and investigating as appropriate. You also may report a bias incident to the NJ Attorney General's Office online at [nj.gov/oag/bias](http://nj.gov/oag/bias), via email to [NJBIAS@NJDCJ.org](mailto:NJBIAS@NJDCJ.org) or by calling the Bias Hotline at **800-277-BIAS** (2427).

## **Do I have to give my name and contact information?**

You do not have to give your name or contact information. You can report a bias incident anonymously.

## **Who reviews bias incident reports in New Jersey?**

Every bias incident reported in New Jersey is reviewed by law enforcement at many levels, including the local police department, New Jersey State Police, County Prosecutor's Office, the Office of Homeland Security & Preparedness, and/or the Attorney General's Office. These layers of review ensure that bias incidents are investigated thoroughly and properly.

## **To REPORT a Bias Incident:**



- **Contact Your Local Police or County Prosecutor**
- **Contact the NJ Attorney General's Office:**
  - **Bias Hotline at 1-800-277-BIAS (2427)**
  - **E-mail: [NJBIAS@NJDCJ.org](mailto:NJBIAS@NJDCJ.org)**
  - **Online: [www.nj.gov/oag/bias](http://www.nj.gov/oag/bias)**