



Illinois Commission on
Discrimination and Hate Crimes

CALENDAR YEAR 2022

ANNUAL REPORT

Chaired by Illinois Department of Human Rights Director James (Jim) Bennett

cdhc.illinois.gov

#StopHate



LETTER FROM THE CHAIR

“Darkness cannot drive darkness; Light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate; Love can do that.” — Dr. Martin Luther King



Director Bennett attended the United We Stand Summit at the White House.

The mission of the Illinois Commission on Discrimination and Hate Crimes (CDHC) is “to identify and uproot sources of discrimination and bias at the source, while assisting with the development of resources, training, and information that allow for a swift and efficient response to hate-motivated crimes and incidents.”

Now, more than ever, our mission is critical.

Every day we see more instances of hate-motivated crimes across the country. Hate crimes are unique in their capacity to destabilize communities and sow fear, division, and distrust – which we must prevent from becoming a vicious cycle that leads to further hate and heartache.

As chair of the CDHC, I am proud to say that we have made significant progress in our efforts to develop resources that will lead to safe response and support to these types of situations across our state. Our Commission is comprised of a team of leaders passionate about uplifting, celebrating, and protecting our diverse backgrounds and cultures. We, the Commission, are working hard to make sure that future generations can live freely and openly in harmony and community in Illinois.

In our second year, the CDHC completed our initial assessment and focused on developing recommendations to address our findings. Our seven recommendations provide services to impacted Illinoisians, giving them options for support outside of law enforcement. Our recommendations also create statewide awareness of the issues at hand while providing better training and resources for law enforcement agencies and responding entities.

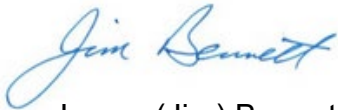
LETTER FROM THE CHAIR

These recommendations ultimately represent our vision of building bridges within our communities, supporting and implementing preventative measures, building trust, and working towards a better and safer tomorrow for all.

Our work is ongoing, and hate is hard to eliminate because bias exists everywhere. We know of the burden many Illinoisans carry when they or their loved ones walk out their door in the morning, hoping they will be safe. That safety is what we hope to ensure for all.

We will continue to challenge ourselves, and each other, to move forward, uplift, and support an Illinois where everyone feels safe to be precisely who they are, without the fear of retribution. In Illinois, hate does not get the last word.

Respectfully,



James (Jim) Bennett
Director of the Illinois Department of Human Rights
Chair, Illinois Commission on Discrimination & Hate Crimes

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Illinois is a Welcoming State for All

The [Illinois Commission on Discrimination and Hate Crimes \(CDHC\)](#), a Governor-appointed commission administered by the Illinois Department of Human Rights (IDHR), was activated in April 2021 to address hate crime incidents and acts of violence in Illinois. The causes of bias and hate crimes are complex, layered, and intertwined with years of trauma that result in the need to build trust with the impacted communities.

Commission Overview and Activities

The Illinois State Legislature established the [Illinois Commission on Discrimination Act](#). The statute mandates that the CDHC must “work in partnership with community leaders, educators, religious leaders, social service agencies, elected officials, and the public to identify and uproot sources of discrimination and bias at the source¹.”

The CDHC consists of a chairperson and 20 commissioners appointed by the Governor and approved by the Senate. Each member serves a 4-year term. CDHC established its first Executive Director position in November 2022.

In 2022, the CDHC met five times: January 27th, March 31st, August 4th, September 29th, and December 8th. During this period, the Commissioners analyzed the findings from 2021 and drafted the seven actionable recommendations summarized in this report. The CDHC’s recommendations are multipronged—each recommendation builds the infrastructure our state needs to support victims of hate crimes or bias-motivated incidents.

Report Structure

In its second year, the CDHC completed its initial assessment and focused on developing recommendations to address its findings. The seven recommendations identified provide concrete actions that will reduce discrimination, bias or hate incidents, and hate crimes in Illinois. The report concludes with an update on state-level policy developments that are relevant to the CDHC’s work.

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COMMISSION OVERVIEW

The purpose of the CDHC, pursuant to the Illinois Commission on Discrimination and Hate Crimes Act (20 ILCS 4070/15), is to identify and uproot sources of discrimination and bias at the source, while assisting with the development of resources, training, and information that will allow for a swift and efficient response to hate-motivated crimes and incidents. This mandate includes, but is not limited to:

- Working with community leaders, educators, religious leaders, social service agencies, elected officials, and the public to identify and uproot sources of discrimination and bias at the source.
- Partnering with local governments, law enforcement officials and prosecutors, educators, and community organizations by assisting with the development of resources, training, and information that allow for a swift and efficient response to hate-motivated crimes and incidents.
- Assisting educators throughout Illinois on issues concerning discrimination and hate, teaching acceptance, and embracing diversity at academic institutions.
- Ensuring that this State's laws addressing discrimination and hate-related violence are widely known and applied correctly to help eradicate and prevent crimes based on discrimination and intolerance.
- Making recommendations to the Governor and the General Assembly for statutory and programmatic changes necessary to eliminate discrimination and hate-based violence.
- Helping implement recommendations by working with State agencies, the General Assembly, the business community, the social service community, and other organizations.

Commission Composition

The fully-appointed CDHC consists of a chairperson and 20 additional members appointed by the Governor with the advice and consent of the Senate. The Commission is now complemented by an Executive Director and other CDHC staff positions housed within the [Illinois Department of Human Rights](#).

The **Figure 1.1** on the next page outlines the commissioners who served at the time the report was written and published.

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James (Jim) Bennett Chair	Director, Illinois Department of Human Rights
Hilda Bahena*	Associate Judge, Circuit Court of Cook County
Anita Banerji**	Consultant, Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights
Cindy Buys	Law Professor, Southern Illinois University School of Law
David Goldenberg	Midwest Regional Director, Anti-Defamation League
Julie Justicz	Chief Strategy Officer and Director, Hate Crimes Project
Melineh Kano	Executive Director, RefugeeOne
Brendan Kelly	Director, Illinois State Police
Rabbi Seth M. Limmer*	Founder, Repair Consulting
Amy Meek*	Civil Rights Bureau Chief, Illinois Attorney General's Office.
Mona Noriega	Chair, Illinois Human Rights Commission
Channyn Parker	Director, Community and Strategic Partnerships, Howard Brown Health
Jason Rosensweig*	Director of Legislative Affairs and Policy, Illinois Department of Human Rights
Dr. Dilara Sayeed*	President, Illinois Muslim Coalition
Karen Tamley	President and CEO, Access Living Chicago
Marvet Sweis	Trial Attorney, Taxman, Pollock, Murray & Bekkerman, LLC
Molly Uhe-Edmonds	School Principal, North Mac School District #34

Figure 1.1. - *Denotes Committee Chair/Co-Chairs

HATE CRIMES & BIAS-MOTIVATED INCIDENTS

Increasing Awareness of Hate Crimes and Bias-Motivated Incidents

Hate crimes and bias-motivated incidents are on the rise. Nationally, hate crimes reported to the FBI tracking system increased 11.6%, from 8,120 in 2020 to 9,065 in 2021ⁱⁱ. But given the severe incompleteness of the data, a more accurate statement is that awareness of bias and hate motivated incidents is increasing.

It is widely accepted and established that hate crimes are significantly underreported. The annual FBI report, with data submitted from many, but not all, local law enforcement agencies around the country, usually totals between 7,000 and 9,000 hate crimes a year. But the Department of Justice's National Crime Victimization Survey estimates, through sampling, that the true number is 250,000 – 500,000 – meaning the FBI data underrepresents hate crimes by a factor of 25-70.

These facts are a large part of why the Commission has focused so much of its work on the ways we can improve hate crime reporting. That said, despite being severely incomplete, the data reveals patterns and trends notable for policymakers. According to the FBI's 2021 hate crimes statistics, the largest bias motivation for such crimes nationally continues to be race/ethnicity/ancestry, comprising almost 61% of the reported hate crimes. Incidents related to sexual orientation and gender identity comprised 16% while 14% were related to religion (**See Figure 2.1**). In Illinois, bias and hate crimes based on race/ethnicity/ancestry and religion make up a larger percentage when compared to the national statistics, respectively 69% and 16%^{iv}. These patterns help direct the attention of the CDHC to the most vulnerable and targeted communities, and the awareness-raising needed to prevent future hate crimes (**See Figure 2.2**).

Hate Crimes by the Numbers

For the 2021 data year, the FBI’s Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Program accepted Summary Reporting System (SRS) hate crime data submissions and additional National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS) hate crime reports. The prior SRS dataset, which collected more limited information than the more robust NIBRS, was phased out after 2021^v.

Figure 2.1. Hate Crime Incidents by Protected Class (U.S.)

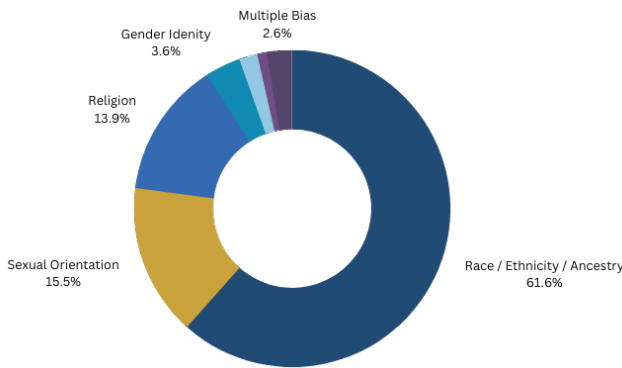


Figure 2.2. Hate Crime Incidents by Protected Class (Illinois)

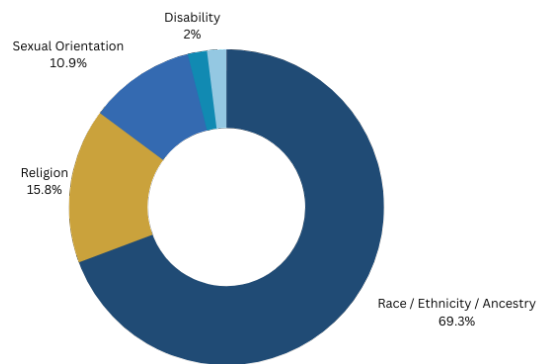
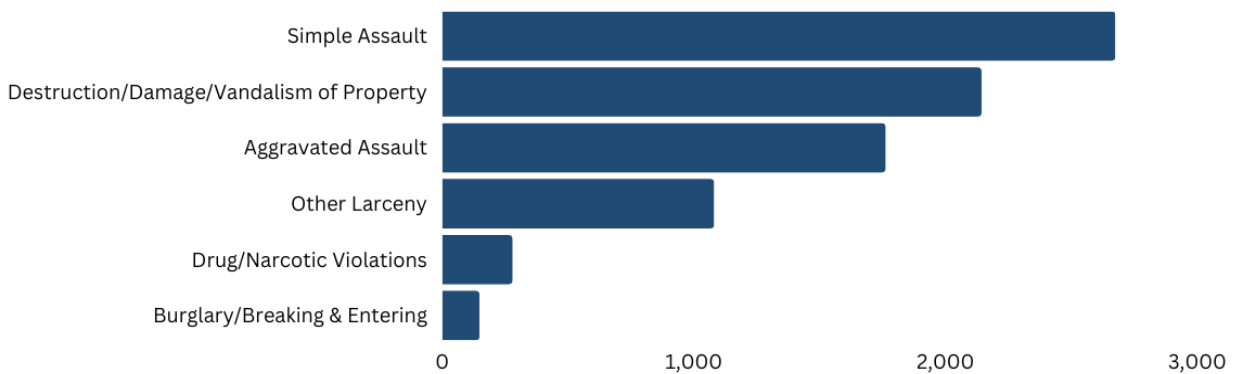
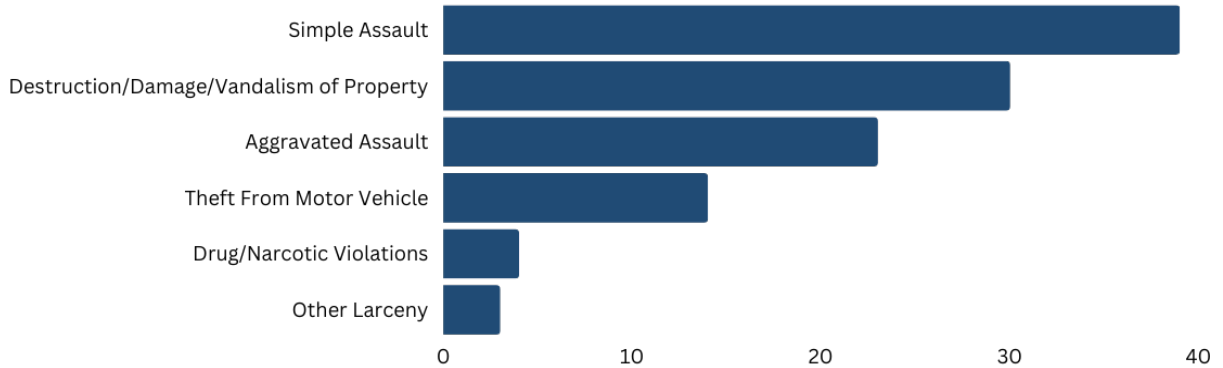


Figure 3.1. Hate Crime Offenses by Type (U.S.)



The data not only outlines which protected classes are most impacted by hate crimes, but it also documents what kind of offenses victims are likely to experience. **Figure 3.1** and **Figure 3.2** show that simple assault and property damage are the most common hate crime offenses throughout the U.S. and in Illinois.

Figure 3.2. Hate Crime Offenses by Type (Illinois)



Reasons why Hate Crimes are Unreported or Underreported

Training professionals who directly or indirectly respond to incidents of bias or hate will improve identification, investigation, and tracking of such incidents. Individuals who experience or witness hate crimes often choose not to report to law enforcement because of lack of awareness or distrust. Or hate crimes have not been recognized or classified as such in official systems, resulting in a loss of relevant data and a true picture of the state of affairs. In addition, the victim or witness may not be aware of available resources or support services that could be helpful to them. Increased awareness of hate crime dynamics and elements will support appropriately categorizing, reporting, and gathering data. Once we improve the data reporting, we can then analyze and process that data into meaningful information for policymakers, officials, and communities.

Victims in Illinois have multiple paths to report hate crimes and bias incidents and receive support, although it is largely uncoordinated across the state and subject to confusion. Remedies are available in both the criminal and civil legal system as well as government administrative agencies and several nonprofit organizations primarily focused on specific protected classes.

Without a centralized mechanism to learn of available assistance, survivors are often left to heal on their own due to a lack of resources or awareness of existing support. The CDHC's recommendations seek to bridge the gap for survivors, witnesses, and communities who experience hate crimes.

Progress Updates and Recommendations

Recommendation # 1:

Establish a hate crimes and bias incident helpline, separate from law enforcement, to serve victims of hate crimes and bias incidents.

The CDHC recommends establishing a state-run helpline to connect individuals to local support services and, if applicable, to law enforcement.

Through this helpline, a caller will receive a trauma-informed response and learn about reporting options, legal or counseling services, and other support services.

In Illinois, individuals have multiple paths for reporting a hate crime or bias incident, including to law enforcement agencies and nonprofit organizations, such as the Anti-Defamation League and Chinese-American Service League. However, many individuals do not report an incident they experience or witness because they do not trust the potential response from law enforcement, they may not know what resources are available to them, they may feel that little will ensue from doing so, among many other reasons.

A well-promoted, victim-centered statewide helpline would increase the available options for Illinoisans and provide them with additional avenues for a follow-up response by helpline staff or other resources. Additionally, the State would have access to the data needed to better understand current community needs and inform policy and programmatic work.

Progress Update

State and Federal funding for an Illinois-based helpline is being pursued and planning has begun with a launch date no later than July 2024.

Recommendation #2

Establish a grant program for community-based social service agencies to develop and deploy resources and programs to serve victims of hate crimes and bias incidents within their respective service areas.

To ensure helpline success in supporting victims, the State may establish a new competitive grant program with an accompanying appropriation to fund organizations to develop and maintain hate crime and bias incident victim support services. Several organizations in Illinois currently provide victim support services in various capacities but may not cover the entire state or all protected classes. A statewide grant program will allow for more organizations in more regions of the state to serve a wider population.

Progress Update

This recommendation requires legislative and agency action.

Recommendation #3

Mandate comprehensive hate crimes basic and in-service training module for local law enforcement agencies through the Illinois Law Enforcement Training Standards Board (“ILETSB”) and in consultation with the Commission, bar associations, and related organizations, develop and offer hate crimes continuing legal education courses for State’s Attorneys, Assistant State’s Attorneys, other lawyers, and judges.

Under the Illinois State Police Law (20 ILCS 2605/), the Illinois State Police (“ISP”) Division of Academy and Training is required to provide State Police officers with training “in identifying, responding to, and reporting all hate crimes.” No such mandate exists under state statute or rules and regulations for training for local law enforcement agencies, which are subject to the Illinois Police Training Act (50 ILCS 705/). Currently, pieces of hate crimes-related lessons are contained in several different ILETSB-certified training modules, but there is no standalone hate crimes module. ILETSB has indicated that it will mandate a hate crimes training module for law enforcement using agency action.

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Often, a possible hate crime or bias incident is not investigated as such by a law enforcement agency when an incident is reported by a victim or witness. This may be due to a law enforcement officer not recognizing elements of a hate crime, not asking certain questions of a victim during an interview, or not investigating an underlying motive to an incident, among other possible reasons. A mandate of comprehensive basic and in-service hate crimes training like that which is provided by ISP and the Chicago Police Department (“CPD”) will help victims of hate crimes and incidents receive appropriate responses, bridge data and investigatory gaps, and develop trust between communities and law enforcement agencies.

Prosecuting attorneys encounter many of the same and additional barriers to the pursuit of and prosecution of hate crimes charges against offenders. Through partnerships with bar associations, associations representing State’s Attorneys and their staffs, and other legal professional groups, the State should develop and deliver trainings for lawyers and judges on the best practices for identifying hate crimes, interviewing victims and witnesses, and prosecuting hate crimes.

To ensure compliance by local law enforcement agencies and lawyers, the State should appropriate funds to compensate agencies and organizations for the respective courses.

Progress Update

- This recommendation requires legislative action and agency action.
- Illinois Attorney General Kwame Raoul’s Office was awarded a \$394,772 Department of Justice (DOJ) grant for a 48-month project to provide specialized hate crime training to law enforcement officers and prosecuting attorneys in Illinois. The grant, which was awarded through the DOJ’s Matthew Shepard and James Byrd, Jr. Hate Crimes Program, will support Attorney General Raoul’s efforts to increase the reporting of hate crimes and improve the criminal justice system’s response to hate crime victims.

Recommendation # 4

Establish a statewide data collection and analysis hub for hate crimes and bias incidents.

Official statistics reported to ISP by local law enforcement agencies under the Uniform Crime Reporting Act and in turn by ISP to the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) do not reflect the actual number of incidents (see Page 7, above). The Oregon Criminal Justice Commission data collection and reporting structure provides a model for Illinois to follow.

Through a centralized State-managed hub separate from law enforcement agencies, Illinois should regularly collect and publicly report anonymized hate crimes and bias incident data from the following sources:

- a) Hate Crime and Bias Incident Helpline
- b) ISP
- c) County State's Attorneys' Offices
- d) Office of the Illinois Attorney General
- e) Administrative Office of the Illinois Courts
- f) Organizations receiving State grant funds under Recommendation 2

Progress Update

Improved data collection and analysis would further highlight additional community support needs and gaps in enforcement. This recommendation is being incorporated into the timeline to establish the Illinois hate crimes and bias incident helpline. The CDHC continues to convene data collection experts to inform best practices.

Background for Recommendation

- Reporting of hate crimes and other incidents of discrimination and bias is critical to understanding the prevalence of victimization and identifying patterns of violence and discrimination in our communities. To fully understand the scope of the problem, we need to know the facts. And one of the first facts the Commission identified was that the current ways that we capture and analyze the data is inconsistent and flawed. We must take steps to improve data collection and reporting efforts.
- Illinois, like many states across the country, collects data on hate crimes from local law enforcement. The State is currently transitioning from the Federal Bureau of Investigation Uniform Crime Reporting Summary Report System to the National Incident Based Reporting System (NIBRS). NIBRS increases the number of offense classifications from 10 offenses to 52 Group A or major offenses and 10 Group B lesser offenses. It also includes up to 58 data elements, including date, time, and location of incident, type of injury to the victim, and other critical incident details.
- NIBRS also allows agencies to indicate a bias motivation for all major (Group A) offenses. The Illinois Program has added a hate crime form which allows agencies to report a bias motivation for minor (Group B) or lesser offenses in order to comply with state law mandated reporting of hate crimes. The Illinois NIBRS data specifications extends the FBI NIBRS data specifications by including Illinois-specific reporting as required by Illinois statute.
- This new rich source of data will allow law enforcement, policymakers and not-for-profit organizations to analyze trends and allocate resources to fight hate crimes and discrimination. Unfortunately, as mentioned, data reporting by local law enforcement is inconsistent.
- Currently 1,016 active Law Enforcement Agencies exist in Illinois. Only 370 agencies are currently reporting NIBRS data to the Illinois NIBRS Repository and another 92 are working towards NIBRS certification. Currently 481 agencies report under the legacy Summary Reporting System. The Illinois State Police set a deadline of 12/31/22 for law enforcement agencies to complete migration from the Summary Reporting System to Incident Based reporting.

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- Increasing the ability of local law enforcement agencies, many of which operate with limited staff and budgets, to report their crime statistics is critical. But law enforcement cannot serve as the sole source of data and resources for those who experience hate related incidents of violence, bias and discrimination. Organizations such as the Anti-Defamation League and Asian Americans Advancing Justice note that often survivors of hate incidents and crimes do not report their experiences to law enforcement agencies for myriad reasons, including language barriers and lack of trust in law enforcement.
- Instead, these incidents are reported to trusted family, friends, and community organizations. Through partnerships, town halls, and educational resources, we can help those at the frontlines to serve as meaningful links for survivors and bystanders and empower them to navigate the complex reporting system with a support system.
- this is in addition to offering public education resources and tools, we can bolster these efforts by investing in community-based data collection for better accuracy of occurrence; partnering and working with the community is the fastest way to create synergy and respond quickly to incidents.

Recommendation #5

Through IDHR, assess the capacity to research best practices and develop educational programs discouraging hate crimes for each protected class that may satisfy requirements for order of probation or conditional discharge for offenders.

Under the current hate crime statute (720 ILCS 5/12-7.1 (b-10)), a trial court shall require that an offender enroll in an in-person “educational program discouraging hate crimes involving the protected class” that was a victim of the crime in question. However, in-person programs are not available statewide in every region of the state for every protected class. The statute allows for “any other organization that provides educational programs discouraging hate crimes” to administer an educational program. IDHR should assess its capacity to develop and administer such programs using best practices.

Progress Update

This recommendation requires additional research and investigation.

Recommendation #6

Explore and engage in partnership opportunities with an academic and research institution, to develop and deploy evidenced-based radicalization inoculation interventions to reduce the number of hate and bias incidents in Illinois.

In recent months, Illinois has experienced numerous incidents in all regions of the state that have highlighted the pervasiveness of bias and hate, including posting racist, homophobic, antisemitic graffiti, hate-based flyers, and attacks on residents, including in school settings. Although the State must bolster its services and responses to when incidents occur, it must also work to prevent them from taking place at all.

To prevent radicalization and extremism among Illinoisans and ultimately reduce the number of hate crimes and bias incidents in Illinois, the State may partner with academic and research institutions that have developed evidence-based tools that address the underlying causes of radicalization and extremist activities. Prevention, especially among young people, reduces the possibility of hate crimes and bias incidents in the future.

Progress Update

The CDHC has held information-gathering meetings with potential partners and subject-matter experts. This recommendation requires agency action with a goal set to launch a partnership in calendar year, 2023.

Recommendation #7

In consultation with State and local units of government, develop and implement a comprehensive strategic community and organizational partner outreach plan to be reviewed annually to:

- Further promote existing resources to support communities and victims of hate crimes and bias incidents,
- Promote the full set of implemented recommendations from the Commission,
- Incorporate the assessments of implemented recommendations from the public and community leaders into future recommendations,
- Develop a formalized partnership network with community organizations statewide
- Continue to receive the testimony of Illinoisans affected by hate crimes and bias incidents,
- Implement training, tools, and programs to specifically prevent and address bias and hate incidents in educational settings. See Appendix 1 for outreach methods under consideration.

Progress Update

This recommendation requires agency action.

NEXT STEPS

The CDHC will remain focused on its recommendations and will continue to partner with organizations, state agencies, and the legislative body to further **anti-bias**, discrimination and hate-conscious policy and advocacy. As various national and statewide issues occur, the Commission will work to center the voices of our most marginalized communities in Illinois policymaking.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Commission on Discrimination and Hate Crimes is made up of 18 Commissioners who contributed their time, talent, and ideas to the work of the Commission and this report. The Commission is extremely grateful to the governmental bodies, non-profit organizations, and companies that gave their time to support our work. The Illinois Department of Human Rights served in an administrative capacity to support the Commission's work.



Photo of the Illinois Commission on Discrimination and Hate Crimes with disability advocates.

GLOSSARY

- **Ableism:** The marginalization and/or oppression of people who have disabilities, including temporary, developmental, physical, psychiatric and/or intellectual disabilities.
- **Anti-Bias:** An active commitment to challenge bias within oneself, others and institutions.
- **Bias:** An inclination or preference, either for or against an individual or group, that interferes with impartial judgment.
- **Bias or Hate Incident:** Acts of prejudice that are not crimes and do not involve violence, threats, or property damage.
- **Bullying:** Repeated actions or threats of action directed toward a person by one or more people who have (or are perceived to have) more power or status than their target in order to cause fear, distress or harm. Bullying can be physical, verbal, psychological or any combination of these three.
- **Bystander:** Someone who sees bias or bullying happening and does not say or do anything.
- **Discrimination:** The denial of justice, resources and fair treatment of individuals and groups (often based on social identity), through employment, education, housing, banking, political rights, etc.
- **Explicit Bias:** The conscious attitudes, stereotypes and overt intentional actions (positive or negative) toward members of a group merely because of their membership in that group.
- **Hate:** An extreme dislike for something, someone or a group. Hate that is based on an aspect of someone's identity (e.g., race, religion, sex, gender expression or identity, ability, sexual orientation, etc.) can result in interpersonal bias, discrimination, hate incidents, hate crimes and/or involvement in an organized hate group.
- **Hate Crime:** At the federal level, a crime motivated by bias against race, color, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, or disability.
- **Identity-Based Bullying:** Refers to any form of bullying related to the characteristics considered unique to a person's identity, such as their race, religion, sexual orientation or physical appearance.

* Definitions provided by the Anti-Defamation League.

GLOSSARY

- **Prejudice:** A premature judgment or belief formed about a person, group or concept before gaining sufficient knowledge or by selectively disregarding facts.
- **Racism:** (interim definition): Racism occurs when individuals or institutions show more favorable evaluation or treatment of an individual or group based on race or ethnicity. (Prof. Robert Livingston, The Conversation).
- **Segregation:** The separation or isolation of a race, class, or other group by enforced or voluntary restriction of their access to housing, schools, etc. or by other discriminatory means.
- **Sexism:** The marginalization and/or oppression of women, based on the belief in a natural order based on sex that privileges men.
- **Stereotype:** An oversimplified generalization about a person or group of people without regard for individual differences.
- **Social Justice:** A set of conditions and principles that ensure every person has equitable economic, political and social rights, access, and opportunities.

* Definitions provided by the Anti-Defamation League.

ENDNOTES

ⁱ Illinois General Assembly. (2007.) Commission on Discrimination and Hate Crimes Act. (20 ILCS 4070/). Retrieved from

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ⁱⁱⁱ Pezzella, F. S., Fetzer, M. D., & Keller, T. (2019). The Dark Figure of Hate Crime Underreporting. American Behavioral Scientist, 0(0).

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^{iv} Federal Bureau of Investigation Crime Data Explorer. (2023.) Hate Crimes: Illinois. Retrieved from <https://cde.ucr.cjis.gov/LATEST/webapp/#/pages/explorer/crime/hate-crime>. Accessed on March 1st, 2023.

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