

BUREAU OF JUSTICE ASSISTANCE FACT SHEET



PROGRAMS THAT ADDRESS HATE CRIMES

The Department of Justice (DOJ) is committed to advancing work that promotes civil rights, increases access to justice, supports crime victims, protects the public from crime and evolving threats, and builds trust between law enforcement and the community. The Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) is committed to supporting work that addresses these priorities, including a focus on hate crimes, crimes that impact civil rights, and other bias-motivated and hate incidents.

Hate crimes can be more violent and involve greater victim injury as compared to other crimes, yet they are substantially underreported. Victims' reluctance to contact law enforcement may arise from perceptions of police bias, distrust of law enforcement or the criminal justice system, or barriers such as language or concerns about immigration status. As law enforcement agencies use data to inform their strategies and allocation of resources, this reluctance can pose a unique challenge to addressing hate crimes. Further, underreporting and not identifying hate crimes can be due to a lack of training and understanding on the part of law enforcement and prosecutors resulting in an inability to identify, report, or charge these crimes or to effectively investigate and prosecute these cases.

In addition, there are communities where there are decades-old cold case homicides that have gone unsolved where race was a factor. These homicides have significantly impacted victims' families and other community stakeholders and, in some cases, impacted the long-term trust in local law enforcement and prosecutors. To counter this mistrust, state, local, and tribal law enforcement and prosecution agencies are looking for ways to engage with these communities to build more collaborative solutions and support victims and their families. To that end, BJA is developing new programs to address these needs, working closely with our colleagues across DOJ.

Grant Funding Resources

Matthew Shepard and James Byrd, Jr. Hate Crimes Program

This program supports state, local, and tribal law enforcement and prosecution agencies and their partners in conducting outreach, educating practitioners and the public, enhancing victim reporting tools, and investigating and prosecuting hate crimes committed on the basis of a victim's perceived or actual race, color, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, or disability. With the funding received in fiscal year (FY) 2021, BJA is making new site-based awards as well as supporting training and technical assistance to the field. BJA expects to make additional site-based awards in FY 2022, and will issue the FY 2022 Matthew Shepard and James Byrd, Jr. Hate Crimes program solicitation in early 2022. For more information, visit: <https://bja.ojp.gov/program/shepard-byrd-hate-crimes-program/overview>.

Students, Teachers, and Officers Preventing School Violence Program

BJA's Students, Teachers, and Officers Preventing (STOP) School Violence Program seeks to improve school security by providing students and teachers with the tools they need to recognize, respond quickly to, and prevent acts of violence, including hate crimes. Both BJA and the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services offer grants to improve security within our Nation's schools and on school grounds through evidence-based programs. For more information, visit: <https://bja.ojp.gov/program/stop-school-violence-program/overview>.

Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant Program

The Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant (JAG) Program is a formula grant program that is the leading federal source of criminal justice funding to states, territories, local governments, and tribes. It provides critical funding necessary to support a range of program areas, including addressing and combating hate crimes. Funds are managed by the State Administering Agency (SAA). To learn more about JAG, visit: <https://bja.ojp.gov/program/jag/overview>. To find your SAA, visit: <https://www.ojp.gov/funding/state-administering-agencies/overview>.

Emmett Till Cold Case Investigations Program

The Emmett Till Cold Case Investigations Program, launched in FY 2020, provides support to state, local, and tribal law enforcement and prosecutors in their investigation and prosecution of cold case murders associated with civil rights violations. For more information, visit: <https://bja.ojp.gov/program/emmett-till-cold-case-investigations-program/overview>.

For information on funding opportunities, our newsletter, and webinar recordings on how to prepare to apply to BJA, visit: <https://bja.ojp.gov/funding>.

Additional Resources

Department of Justice Hate Crimes Enforcement and Prevention Initiative

The U.S. Federal Government has an important role to play in addressing hate crimes through collaboration with state, local, and tribal partners. Eliminating hate crimes and bias-motivated violence from communities and the country is one of DOJ's highest priorities.

The Department's Hate Crimes Enforcement and Prevention Initiative is charged with coordinating DOJ's efforts to eradicate hate crimes in part by facilitating training, outreach, and education to law enforcement agencies and the public at the federal, state, local, and tribal levels. This includes the involvement of DOJ's Civil Rights Division, the Community Relations Service, the U.S. Attorney's Offices, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services, and other agencies in the Office of Justice Programs, including the Office for Victims of Crime and the Bureau of Justice Statistics. For more information on the work of these agencies and opportunities to build on this work, visit: www.justice.gov/hatecrimes/.

Bureau of Justice Assistance National Training and Technical Assistance Center

To address state, local, and tribal agencies' and partners' general criminal justice training and technical assistance needs, visit the BJA National Training and Technical Assistance Center at: <https://bjatta.bja.ojp.gov/>.

ABOUT BJA

BJA helps to make American communities safer by strengthening the nation's criminal justice system; its grants, training and technical assistance, and policy development services provide state, local, and tribal governments with the cutting-edge tools and best practices they need to reduce violent and drug-related crime, support law enforcement, and combat victimization. To learn more about BJA, visit bja.ojp.gov or follow us on Facebook (www.facebook.com/DOJBJA) and Twitter (@DOJBJA). BJA is a component of the Department of Justice's Office of Justice Programs.