

## **Recognizing and Preventing Harassment and Discrimination**

This document is developed by the Equity and Human Relations Advisory Committee (EHRAC) of the City of Culver City to share important and helpful information with the community. It is developed based on research (See resources at the end of this document). This document is for educational purposes only to provide information on recognizing harassment and discrimination in the community. The document also provides information about behavior that rises to the level of a hate crime. The EHRAC's hope and intent is that by more members of the community becoming aware of these issues, it will in some ways prevent harassment and discrimination from occurring.

The purpose of this document is to provide information and education on the types of harassment and discrimination that one might witness, and to provide resources to learn more about what to do next.

**Types of behavior a person may observe by another member of the community include** inappropriate jokes, biased comments, harassment, bullying or belittling behavior, all forms of microaggression, and any form of communication employing language that is non-inclusive of gender and other identities.

### **Examples of biased comments, harassment, bullying, or belittling behavior (not inclusive):**

- Treating someone as a second-class citizen because of their gender, ;race, or sexual orientation by attempting to restrict their ability to own property, marry whom they love, or deny them other civil rights commonly given to the dominant social group;
- Complimenting a person born and raised in the United States on their English simply because they are not white;
- Reassuring someone that they are not like the negative stereotype of their marginalized group;
- Making inappropriate jokes or negative comments about someone's weight or personal appearance such as telling a thin person they should eat more food;
- Judging a person who identifies as a woman as "harsh" or "bossy" when she speaks with authority, talking over her in meetings or ignoring her input despite the same behavior being encouraged when it comes to people who identify as men;
- Carving racial epithets into a wall, or posting historically offensive symbols, such as confederate flags or swastikas;
- Using a slur against others related to religion or sexuality, such as mocking a group's dress, cultural norms or language or acting in ways that signal to the

marginalized group that they are considered inferior and worthy of mistreatment or bias.

### Things for you to consider:

- **Good judgment.** Bystanders who witness harassment or discrimination should not place themselves in a position where they will do more harm than good. Good judgment is essential when witnessing harassment and discrimination against another individual.
- **Hold others accountable.** If someone you know is engaging in derogatory speech or behavior, talk to them. Hold them accountable so they know that you will not tolerate anyone in your immediate circle engaging in hate behavior. Drawing the “line in the sand” will speak volumes to those in your circle.
- **Become engaged.** Speak up at City Council and School Board meetings. The more people who stand against hate, the fewer hate crimes we will have.
- **Educate yourself.** Understand the history of racism in America that some individuals or organizations have been trying to bury. ***Burying the history of racism in America denies the lived experiences and histories of Black, Indigenous, and communities of color and can continue to perpetuate false beliefs and stereotypes about race, ethnicity, country of origin, and leave BIPOC communities vulnerable to acts of implicit or explicit racism, discrimination, bias, and hatred.*** It is incumbent upon us all to bring these historical events and practices to the light, address them, and look for ways to change the culture and end hate. Read books and articles to become more knowledgeable about our country’s history. Have conversations with others who have different viewpoints.

### Hate crimes

Understanding the law as it applies to hate crimes, being knowledgeable about appropriate resources, and being motivated can empower individuals to help to prevent inappropriate behavior before it rises to the level of unlawful harassment, a hate incident, or a hate crime.

### Definition of a hate crime

California laws prohibit hate crimes and/or provide enhanced penalties for specified hate-related acts:

· Penal Code § 422.55 defines “hate crime” as a criminal act committed, in whole or in part, because of one or more of the following actual or perceived characteristics of the victim: disability, gender, nationality, race or ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation; or because of the person’s association with a person or group with one or more of these actual or perceived characteristics.

· Penal Code § 422.6(a) makes it a stand-alone crime to willfully injure, intimidate, interfere with, oppress, or threaten, by force or threat of force, another person’s free exercise or enjoyment of their civil rights.

· Penal Code § 422.6(b) makes it a crime to knowingly deface, damage, or destroy the real or personal property of another person, because of that person’s actual or perceived protected characteristic(s) listed in § 422.55.

· Penal Code § 422.7 and § 422.75 – provide for aggravating factors and enhanced penalties under certain circumstances when a person commits a hate crime.

**We encourage you to deepen your understanding of this topic by exploring the following website resources that were used to develop the information and recommendations in this document:**

1. Race Equality First:

<https://raceequalityfirst.org/hate-crime-advocacy-and-empowerment>

2. Safe Horizon:

<https://www.safehorizon.org/programs/help-hate-crime-victims>

3. Hollaback Bystander Resources:

<https://www.ihollaback.org/bystander-resources/>

4. California Legislative Information:

[https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/codes\\_displaySection.xhtml?lawCode=PEN&sectionNum=422.55](https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/codes_displaySection.xhtml?lawCode=PEN&sectionNum=422.55)

5. Lehigh University Student Affairs Bystander Intervention Training:  
<https://studentaffairs.lehigh.edu/content/what-bystander-intervention>

6. Baker College Blog On Workplace Microaggressions and How To Reduce Them:  
<https://www.baker.edu/about/get-to-know-us/blog/examples-of-workplace-microaggressions-and-how-to-reduce-them/>