

2024-2025 ORANGE COUNTY GRAND JURY REPORT



Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere.... Martin Luther King, Jr.



Hate: What is Orange County Doing About It?

Grand Jury

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ACRONYMS

501(c)(3)	Internal Revenue Service (IRS) designation for tax-exempt non-profits
AB	Assembly Bill
ADL	Anti-Defamation League
AAPI	Asian American and Pacific Islander
BOS	Orange County Board of Supervisors
CDSS	California Department of Social Services
DOJ	California Department of Justice
FBI	Federal Bureau of Investigation
HRC	Orange County Human Relations Council
IAC	Orange County Sheriff's Department Interfaith Advisory Council
LGBTQ+	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer
NAEYC	National Association for the Education of Young Children
OCAPICA	Orange County Asian Pacific Islanders Community Alliance
OCBSN	Orange County Black Solidarity Network
OCCF	Orange County Community Foundation
OCHRC	Orange County Human Relations Commission
OCJF	Orange County Jewish Federation
OCSD	Orange County Sheriff's Department
OCDA	Orange County District Attorney
POST	Peace Officer Standards and Training
SPLC	Southern Poverty Law Center

SUMMARY

In 2023, Orange County reported 95 hate crimes, a decrease from 112 incidents in 2022 and the first decline since 2016. The most frequently targeted groups continue to be the Black, Jewish, and LGBTQ+ individuals. Black and Jewish residents, who comprise just over 2% of the county's population, remain disproportionately impacted. Notably, hate crime data may be incomplete, due to four cities—Costa Mesa, Garden Grove, Orange, and Westminster—submitting incomplete records.

Civil rights organizations cautioned that the apparent drop in hate crimes might reflect underreporting rather than an actual reduction. For example, the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) documented 88 antisemitic incidents in the Orange County/Long Beach region in 2023, a sharp increase from 55 the prior year, suggesting that official data may underrepresent the true scope of the problem. Advocates also criticized the limited inclusion of community partners in the count's reporting process and highlighted the exclusion of noncriminal hate incidents, such as verbal harassment, distribution of hate flyers, and school-based bullying, which are often left out of law enforcement data.

In studying hate crimes and incidents, the Grand Jury found:

- Substantial barriers to reporting both hate crimes and hate incidents, such as fear of retaliation, distrust of law enforcement, and cultural stigma, which contribute to widespread underreporting
- Inconsistencies and gaps in how hate crimes and incidents are documented, primarily due to the decentralized nature of data collection
- Diminished collaboration between governmental bodies and community-based organizations

The Grand Jury study found the need for enhanced countywide coordination, improved public awareness strategies, and the reinstatement of robust collaborative frameworks such as the now defunct “Hate Prevention Network.” To promote progress in this critical area, the Grand Jury has made twelve recommendations at the end of this report.

BACKGROUND

Hate and prejudice have existed since the beginning of human history. However, the legal framework addressing hate crimes as a distinct category of criminal victimization is relatively new. The term “hate crime” itself gained prominence only in the early 1980s, driven by social justice movements advocating civil rights, women’s rights, LGBTQ+ rights, and victims’ rights.

These movements sought legal policies to combat discrimination, ultimately leading to the widespread adoption of hate crime legislation across the United States.

The 1968 Civil Rights Act significantly influenced today's hate crime laws. Though not specifically addressing hate crimes, it used federal criminal civil rights protections against violence or threats targeting a person's race, religion, color, or national origin, safeguarding rights like voting, education, and housing. However, due to complexities in proving bias motivation, the Act had limitations as a prosecutorial tool for hate crimes.

According to the Southern Poverty Law Center, in 1990, Congress passed the Hate Crime Statistics Act, which required the Attorney General to publish an annual report on crimes that showed prejudice based on race, religion, sexual orientation or ethnicity. The Act ordered the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) to collect and report this data under its Uniform Crime Reporting Program (UCR), which has been gathering crime data from state and local law enforcement since 1930.

The FBI has been publishing hate crime statistics reports since 1991. Today, it defines a hate crime as a violent or property crime that is "motivated in whole or in part by an offender's bias against a race, religion, disability, sexual orientation, ethnicity, gender or gender identity."

The California Department of Justice (DOJ) defines a "hate incident" as an action or behavior—such as name calling, distributing materials with hate messages in public places, and insults—motivated by hate but which does not rise to the level of a crime. Hate incidents may be brought to civil court.

These definitions have since been widely adopted by law enforcement agencies nationwide, including the DOJ. They provide a standardized and comprehensive framework. This consistency facilitates accurate reporting, enables reliable national data collection, and helps agencies better understand, track and respond to bias motivated behavior across jurisdictions.

The 2018 California State Auditor's Report revealed that while reported hate crimes in the State had increased by more than 20% between 2014 and 2016, law enforcement agencies were falling short in identifying, reporting, and responding to these crimes. In response to the Auditor's findings and a rise in anti-Asian violence during the COVID-19 pandemic, Assembly Member Phil Ting authored Assembly Bill 449 (AB449), the *Freedom from Hate Crimes Act*. The bill amended the existing penal codes on hate crimes and passed unanimously in both the State Assembly (75-0 on May 25, 2023) and the State Senate (39-0 on September 11, 2023). Governor Gavin Newsom signed it into law on October 23, 2023. AB 449 represents a significant step forward in strengthening California's efforts to prevent, identify and respond to hate crimes. The main provisions of AB449 are as follows:

1. Standardizes Hate-Crime Policies. These policies must include legal definitions, bias-motivation criteria (including often-overlooked areas like anti-disability bias), reporting protocols, training schedules,
2. Enhances accountability and transparency. Every law enforcement agency in California must adopt the Police officer Standards Training (POST)-compliant hate crimes policy by July 1, 2024.
3. Responds to a real rise in hate crimes. The law addresses significant underreporting and uneven recognition of hate crime as demonstrated by the CA DOJ data showing a 31% increase in hate crime events from 2019 to 2020, with spikes in 2021, especially targeting AAPI, LGBTQ+, Jewish, Muslim, and disabilities communities.
4. Prioritizes anti-disability bias. Disability-motivated hate crimes are historically invisible; fewer than 0.4% are reported. This bill explicitly requires policies and training that help officers recognize and document anti-disability bias and religious crimes.
5. Empowers law enforcement through training. All officers must receive training, including on bias awareness, victim response and identification of less visible forms of hate (e.g., anti-homeless, and anti-disability).
6. Requires accountability: Southern California law enforcement agencies must submit their POST-compliant hate crime policy to the California Department of Justice by January 1, 2025.

AB449 is expected to transform California's hate-crime framework by creating uniform statewide standards for responding to hate crimes. It promotes transparency: the DOJ will publish which agencies are complying, promoting public accountability and addressing underreporting.

REASON FOR THE STUDY

The Grand Jury reviewed compliance with AB449, and gained an understanding of the local programs, initiatives, and interventions directed at combating hate crimes and incidents in Orange County. This study was motivated by concerns regarding the effectiveness of local efforts and the increase in hate crimes and incidents.

METHOD OF STUDY

The Grand Jury conducted a comprehensive study of hate crimes and incidents, including the following:

- Review of reports from local, state, and federal agencies, policy documents, and academic studies
- Review of best practices from civil rights organizations such as the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) and the Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC)
- Interviews with County and city officials, law enforcement personnel, school administrators, non-profit organizations, and faith-based organizations
- Surveys of school superintendents and city managers (see Appendix)
- Field visits to the Museum of Tolerance, Anaheim Criminal Justice Center, multiple ADL presentations, the first Annual Groundswell Summit, and 211 Orange County
- Attendance at virtual conferences: Truth and Transformation Conference—Harvard Kennedy School’s Ash Center for Democratic Governance and Innovation, “No Place for Hate Back-to-School Kickoff” and “Author Read Aloud”
- Attendance at the Sheriff’s Department Interfaith Advisory Council event
- Attendance at the POST Hate Crime training program for law enforcement
- Attendance at the sentencing of a murder case that included hate crime enhancements, offering firsthand insight into the judicial consequences of bias-motivated violence

INVESTIGATION

The County’s Commitment to Addressing Hate

The Orange County Human Relations *Commission* (OCHRC) was established by the Board of Supervisors (BOS) in 1971 to address issues of prejudice and discrimination within the community. In 1991, the Orange County Human Relations *Council* (HRC), a 501(c)(3) non-profit, was formed to secure grants and funding for human relations programs that the BOS did not finance directly. This arrangement allowed the Council to support the OCHRC more effectively, since it could access funding and grant opportunities available only to non-profits. In May 2023, the Orange County Human Relations Council changed their name to Groundswell, but continued their work with the Human Relations Commission in the same capacity.

In June of 2024, after thirty-four years of successful collaboration, the BOS abruptly ended their partnership with Groundswell for reasons unclear to the Grand Jury. Soon after, the BOS reduced

the Human Relations Commission size from eleven to seven members, eliminated cities' representation on the Commission, excluded law enforcement (one law enforcement position was reinstated at the January 14, 2025, BOS meeting after law enforcement representatives addressed the Board about the importance of their involvement), reduced the Commission's meeting frequency from monthly to quarterly, and restricted the Commission's ability to engage with the public. All the above decisions raised concerns about the County's commitment to addressing systemic bias, hate crimes, and discrimination.

The Grand Jury also learned that the current OCHRC formed an *ad hoc* committee whose stated goal is to define a hate incident. The Grand Jury questions the rationale behind this objective, given that the DOJ established a widely accepted definition of hate incidents in 1990, which has already been adopted by the Orange County Sheriff's Department and local law enforcement agencies. The Grand Jury is concerned that the Orange County Human Relations Commission's efforts to redefine a term that is already well defined could lead to unnecessary confusion and inconsistency and distract the Commission from its primary goal of addressing hate-based activity.

What We Know About Hate Crimes and Incidents

What we know about hate crimes and incidents, patterns and trends comes primarily from two sources:

1. Data reported by law enforcement to the California DOJ and ultimately to the FBI
2. Data collected through self-report surveys completed by victims of hate crimes

Long-standing critics of the official data say that it understates the number of hate crimes and incidents and poorly captures the experience of groups who distrust the police. Nevertheless, media coverage of the FBI's annual hate crime report is still the primary mechanism through which policymakers, legislators and the public understand how hate crimes and incidents occur, who perpetrates and is victimized by hate crime, and whether hate crimes against specific groups are increasing over time.

Self-reported surveys from victims, such as the National Crime Victimization Survey administered by the Bureau of Justice Statistics, are a crucial tool for understanding the true extent of crime, including hate crime. These surveys provide information from the victim that might not have been reported and help law enforcement understand the prevalence and characteristics of hate crimes, informing policy decisions and prevention strategies.

Reporting Hate Crimes and Incidents Is Essential

Reporting suspected hate crimes is vital to supporting victims and sending a clear message that such actions are unacceptable. According to the U.S. Justice Department, hate crimes and incidents occur twenty-four to forty-eight times more often than reported.¹ Many victims of hate crimes and incidents hesitate to report them due to fear of retaliation from perpetrators, distrust of law enforcement, and concerns over immigration status, particularly within marginalized communities. Language barriers and lack of awareness about reporting mechanisms also contribute to underreporting. Cultural stigma surrounding victimization can further discourage individuals from coming forward. As a result, many hate crimes and incidents go unreported, hindering efforts to track patterns, allocate resources, and implement effective preventive strategies.

What the County is Doing

Orange County has implemented various initiatives to combat hate crimes, including the “Hate Hurts Us All Campaign,” launched on June 13, 2022, by the BOS in collaboration with the Orange County Human Relations Commission. The initiative was developed in response to a significant rise in hate activity, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic. More recently however, the County’s efforts appear to have diminished, limiting the effectiveness of prevention programs and reducing engagement with community-based organizations.

The Orange County Sheriff’s Department Interfaith Advisory Council (IAC) was established in 2015 to build better relationships between law enforcement and different faith communities. The IAC brings together leaders from various faiths to engage in dialogue and collaborate on initiatives that promote peace. Its efforts have significantly contributed to creating a more inclusive environment; however, many faith-based groups in Orange County are unaware of the good work that the IAC is doing.

Whom Does the County Work With?

District Attorney’s Office

The Orange County District Attorney’s office has made combating hate crimes a priority, underscoring the profound impact such crimes have on individual victims and entire communities. In October 2022, the OCDA’s office received a significant five-year federal grant from the U.S. Department of Justice (scheduled to end in September 2027) to strengthen their

¹ On September 23, 2024, the [FBI released](#) the hate crimes data from the UCR Program as reported by law enforcement agencies across the country. Those agencies reported 11,862 hate crime incidents involving 13,829 offenses. [Bias-Motivated/Hate Crime | Bureau of Justice Statistics](#)

efforts in combating hate crimes and incidents. This grant has been instrumental in funding initiatives such as the establishment of a dedicated Hate Crimes Unit in the OCDA's office. An additional hate crimes prosecutor has been hired to collaborate with community-based organizations such as the Anti-Defamation League, The LGBTQ+ Center of Orange County, and the Orange County Human Relations Commission.

Non-profits

Non-profit organizations play a pivotal role in addressing hate crimes and incidents by offering victim support, legal assistance, and community advocacy. These groups advocate for stronger policies, improved reporting, and comprehensive law enforcement training to enhance responses to hate crimes and incidents.

- **Orange County Asian Pacific Islanders Community Alliance (OCAPICA)**

Over the past three years the Alliance has primarily administered the County's "No Place for Hate," program, a dynamic, student-centered initiative designed to cultivate an inclusive school environment and proactively combat bias, bullying, and hate. Funding is from California's Asian Pacific Islander Equity Budget, and it expires in 2026. This funding is for *all* residents in Orange County, not just individuals identifying as Asian or Pacific Islander. OCAPICA is organizing activities for the annual California "No Place for Hate Week," in October, not to be confused with the local No Place for Hate program referenced above. This statewide initiative is made possible through funding from the California Department of Social Services (CDSS). Funding for "No Place for Hate Week" is available to both counties and nonprofit organizations, to host events, workshops, and activities that support safe and inclusive environments.

- **G.R.E.E.N. Foundation (Gathering Resources to Educate and Empower through Networks)**

This non-profit organization addresses health disparities among residents and promotes social justice in Southern California. In response to rising hate crimes, especially against Black and immigrant communities, they have expanded their outreach through education, advocacy, and community engagement. They assist victims of hate crimes, facilitate dialogue on racial equity, and train young adults in social justice and advocacy. Their initiatives, including "Artists Against Hate," integrate health education with anti-hate advocacy.

- **Orange County Community Foundation (OCCF)**

This foundation strengthens the community by inspiring charitable giving and driving solutions to pressing issues involving discrimination. In hate crime prevention, OCCF leads through grantmaking and coalition building, launching the African American Alliance Fund in 2020 to combat racial injustice. In 2023, OCCF helped establish the

Orange County Black Solidarity Network, offering community-based services to address and prevent hate incidents.

- **Orange County Jewish Federation (OCJF)**

This organization raises awareness about antisemitism and other forms of hate through school programs and community events. Like the African American community, the Jewish community is a tiny percentage of the population in Orange County, yet it experiences some of the highest rates of hate crimes and incidents.² The OCJF's initiatives include the "Countering Hate" summit, which unites leaders to discuss strategies for promoting tolerance. Collaborating with organizations like the Anti-Defamation League and Southern Poverty Law Center, OCJF provides resources and support for victims of hate crimes. Additionally, they offer tools and guidance to help communities respond to acts of hate. Their programs and services are free.

- **Groundswell**

This organization, previously known as the Orange County Human Relations Council, partners with other non-profits, community groups, educational institutions, law enforcement and the public to prevent and respond to hate activities. Both their Bridges and Restorative Justice Programs focus on teaching conflict resolution skills and fostering a sense of belonging in school communities.

- **Anti-Defamation League (ADL)**

This organization introduced the "No Place for Hate" initiative in Orange County to combat bias, bullying, and hate in K–12 schools. The program empowers students, educators, and families to create inclusive and respectful environments through activities promoting diversity and challenging prejudice. While ADL's anti-bias efforts date back to 1985, its No Place for Hate program has been active in Orange County schools for over a decade.

- **Orange County Black Solidarity Network (OCBSN)**

This is a coalition dedicated to combating hate and empowering the African American community in Orange County. Established in 2023 with support from California's Stop the Hate program, OCBSN addresses the disproportionate targeting of Black residents, who account for over half of race-related hate crimes, despite being only 2.3% of the

² Rep. *Orange County Hate Crimes Report*. Santa Ana, CA: Orange County District Attorney's Office, 2023.

population.³ Their initiatives include counseling, bystander intervention training, town hall meetings, cultural events, and educational workshops. They also advocate for systemic change, condemning racist remarks by local officials and striving for a more equitable community.

The above organizations work—mostly on limited funding—to raise awareness, provide support for victims, and promote tolerance, through educational programs, community events, and collaborative partnerships. By fostering a more inclusive environment and teaching conflict resolution skills, these non-profits create a united front against hate.

Law Enforcement

The Grand Jury studied the Orange County Sheriff's Department and local law enforcement agencies to assess their effectiveness in identifying, reporting, and preventing hate crimes and incidents and providing victim assistance. Legislative actions, including enhanced penalties by the DOJ, have strengthened standardization and hate crime prevention.

The Grand Jury's study confirmed that all Orange County law enforcement agencies updated their hate crime policies to be POST-compliant and mandated POST training for all officers upon their joining the department, and yearly thereafter. Shifting to a preventive approach, as outlined in AB449, aims to reduce hate crimes and incidents, build trust between law enforcement and communities, and promote respect and equality. This strategy is essential in decreasing hate activity and helping residents feel more empowered to report all hate crimes and incidents to law enforcement.

School Districts and Cities

School districts across Orange County are integrating anti-bias education into their curricula, recognizing that early education on diversity and tolerance, preferably prior to the sixth grade, helps prevent hate-motivated behaviors. Research from the RAND Corporation and National Association for the Education of Young Children underscores the importance of early anti-hate education in reducing prejudice and fostering inclusive attitudes. Many districts offer professional development for educators to equip them with the necessary skills to address bias in classrooms.

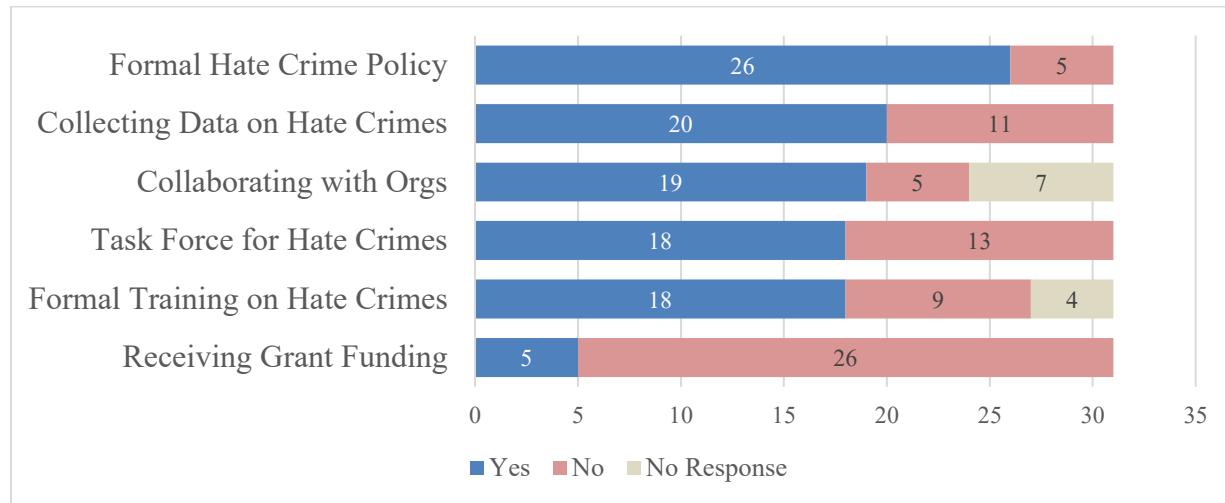
School District Survey Results

The Grand Jury surveyed all school districts in Orange County to determine what they are doing to combat and prevent hate crimes and incidents. The survey results revealed that most school districts in Orange County have a formal policy regarding hate crimes and incidents, but only

³ [U.S. Census Bureau QuickFacts: Orange County, California](#) and 2022 Orange County Hate Crimes Report from Orange County District Attorney

two thirds collect the data to track them. Few districts have funding specific to combating hate. One notable finding was the need to create stronger networks for resource-sharing—such as centralized reporting systems, model policies, and best practices—to support standardization across school districts. See Appendix for details of the survey.

Figure 1: Survey Results of School Districts (all 31 responding) on Hate Crime Activities



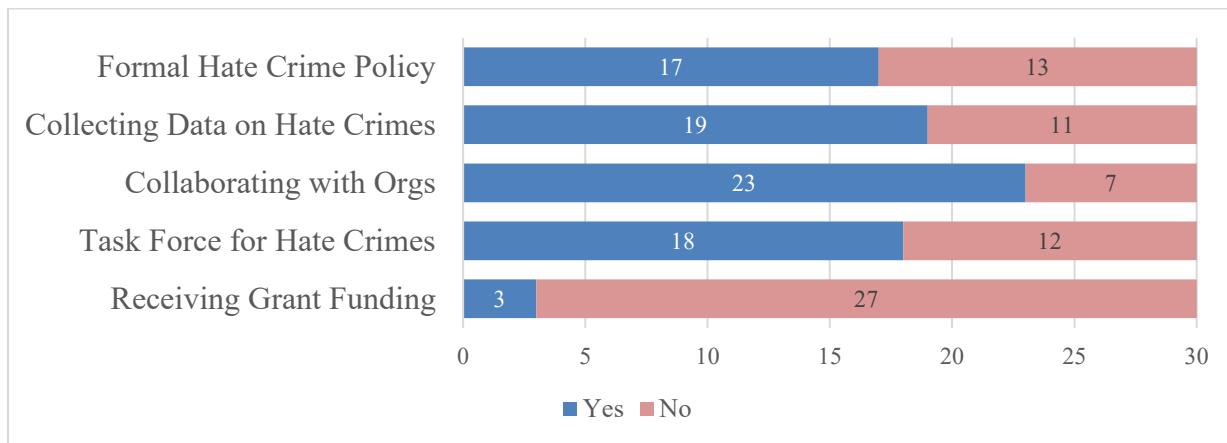
- Many school districts have a formal plan to address hate crimes.
- The majority of school districts collect or analyze hate crime data.
- Most school districts collaborate with community organizations.
- Most school districts have a task force.
- Most school districts provide formal training on identifying hate crimes and incidents.
- Very few school districts receive specific grant funding for hate crime prevention or victim support.

Note: All school districts participated.

City Survey Results

The Grand Jury surveyed all the city managers in Orange County. Results provided a comprehensive overview of how thirty out of the County's thirty-four cities are addressing hate crimes and incidents. The responses highlighted significant differences in the approaches and resources allocated to this issue, reflecting the unique circumstances and priorities of each city.

Figure 2: Survey Results of Cities (30 responding) on Hate Crime Activities



- Many cities do not have a formal plan to address hate crimes.
- Several are not collecting or analyzing hate crime data.
- Most cities collaborate with community organizations.
- Task forces are used by some but not all cities.
- Very few cities receive specific grant funding for hate crime prevention or victim support.

Many cities do not have formal, stand-alone plans dedicated to hate crime prevention. They often rely on broader public safety policies, or the resources provided by the OCSD. Some cities, such as Seal Beach and Newport Beach, have more structured approaches, including formal plans and designated units within their police departments to manage hate crimes. In contrast, some smaller cities, which reported few hate crimes and incidents, do not have specialized plans or task forces.

A common theme across the survey responses is the need for stronger networks for resource sharing, and collaboration with community organizations, schools, and religious institutions. Cities such as Seal Beach, Garden Grove, and Irvine engage with local groups to foster inclusivity and support victims of hate crimes. These collaborations involve educational programs, community events, and partnerships with entities that combat hate activities. However, some cities, such as Fountain Valley and Aliso Viejo, acknowledge the importance of such collaborations but have yet to establish a formal partnership. See Appendix for details of the survey.

COMMENDATIONS

The Grand Jury applauds the following organizations for their contributions to combatting hate crimes and incidents.

- The office of the Orange County District Attorney
- Groundswell
- Anti-Defamation League of Orange County and Long Beach
- Orange County Jewish Federation
- G.R.E.E.N. Foundation
- Orange County Sheriff's Department
- Orange County Department of Education

FINDINGS

In accordance with California Penal Code Sections 933 and 933.05, the 2024-2025 Grand Jury requires (or as noted, requests) responses from each agency affected by the findings presented in this section. The responses are to be submitted to the Presiding Judge of the Superior Court.

Based on its investigation titled “Hate: What is Orange County Doing About It?” the 2024-2025 Orange County Grand Jury makes fourteen findings, as follows:

F1: In June 2024, the Orange County Board of Supervisors abruptly ended the County’s partnership with Groundswell and significantly reduced the size, membership, and meeting frequency of the County Human Relations Commission—including the elimination of members representing cities and law enforcement—raising serious concerns about the County’s commitment to addressing systemic bias, hate crimes, and discrimination.

F2: The Orange County Human Relations Commission’s current methodology for compiling hate crime and incident statistics—relying only on reports from local law enforcement agencies—contributes to data incompleteness.

F3: While the California Department of Justice has already defined hate incidents, the Orange County Human Relations Commission has established an *ad hoc* committee to develop its own definition, which makes for data inconsistency and a diversion from the Commission’s purpose.

F4: Orange County lacks a centralized, coordinated, county-led system that unites all stakeholders to prevent and respond to hate crimes and incidents.

F5: Despite County and private efforts to combat hate activity, the African American and Jewish communities, two of the least populous demographics in Orange County, experience the highest number of hate crimes and incidents.

F6: Over the past three years, the Orange County Asian Pacific Islanders Community Alliance has implemented the State of California's Department of Social Services' "No Place for Hate" initiative. However, this grant funding expires in 2026, which will terminate this successful program.

F7: Local law enforcement agencies have undergone required Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST) hate crime and incident training, updated their policies, and implemented standardized support for victims to align with AB449. However, the impact of these changes will take years to fully materialize.

F8: The Orange County Sheriff's Department's outreach to the faith-based community through its Interfaith Council has fostered a more inclusive and respectful environment in the county. However, there are still several faith-based organizations that are unaware of or not included in the Interfaith Council.

F9: Many Orange County residents are hesitant to report hate crimes and incidents due to distrust of law enforcement, fear of retaliation, immigration status concerns, language barriers, cultural stigma, and lack of awareness, resulting in incomplete data.

F10: Although hate crimes and incidents can be reported through various platforms—including community organizations and online portals—not all these channels transmit reports to law enforcement, leading to gaps in official tracking, investigation, and response.

F11: Orange County school districts have no centralized database of available materials, resources, and programs for addressing hate crimes and incidents, limiting their ability to effectively combat hate.

F12: Hate is a learned behavior. Early intervention (before sixth grade) is essential for promoting tolerance and respect.

F13: The grant from the U.S. Department of Justice secured by the Orange County District Attorney's office aims to address and prevent hate crimes and incidents. This funding is scheduled to end on September 30, 2027, endangering this important program.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In accordance with California Penal Code Sections 933 and 933.05, the 2024-2025 Grand Jury requires (or as noted, requests) responses from each agency affected by the recommendations presented in this section. The responses are to be submitted to the Presiding Judge of the Superior Court.

Based on its investigation titled “Hate: What is Orange County Doing About It?” the 2024-2025 Orange County Grand Jury made eleven recommendations, as follows:

R1: The Orange County Board of Supervisors should allocate funding to ensure that the Orange County Asian Pacific Islanders Community Alliance efforts continue uninterrupted. This should be done by December 31, 2025, and yearly thereafter. **(F6)**

R2: The Orange County Board of Supervisors should provide sufficient funding to the OCDA’s office to continue its anti-hate crime and incident programs beyond its federal grant expiration date. This should be done by October 31, 2027, when the grant funding is scheduled to end, and yearly thereafter. **(F13)**

R3: The Orange County Board of Supervisors should restore the Human Relations Commission to its original eleven-member makeup that includes representatives from cities, and should reinstate their monthly meetings. This should be done by September 30, 2025. **(F1)**

R4: By August 31, 2025, and semiannually thereafter, the Orange County Board of Supervisors should request a status report from the Human Relations Commission on its activities and plans since the termination of its contract with Groundswell. **(F1)**

R5: The Board of Supervisors should direct the Human Relations Commission to form a Hate Prevention and Response Coalition modeled after the former Groundswell effort. To avoid duplication, boost impact, and gather better data, it should include representatives from cities, Sheriff’s Department, District Attorney, schools, community groups, and affected residents. The coalition should create countywide hate crime protocols, support victims, promote inclusive education, and host public events. This should be done by September 30, 2025. **(F1, F2, F4)**

R6: The Orange County Sheriff’s Department (OCSD) and local police departments should establish formal collaborations with Black- and Jewish-led organizations. Such partnerships would enable law enforcement to focus more effectively on the needs of these communities and enhance their efforts in combating hate crimes and incidents in these populations. **(F5)**

R7: To ensure consistency and better understanding of what constitutes a hate incident, the Board of Supervisors should direct the Orange County Human Relations Commission to adopt definitions as defined by the California Justice Department. This should be done by September 30, 2025. **(F3)**

R8: The Orange County Sheriff's Department should expand representation within each faith, including multiple congregations, to ensure a broader and more inclusive interfaith collaborative. This should be done by December 31, 2025. **(F8)**

R9: The Orange County Sheriff's Department should collaborate with local police departments to increase outreach efforts that encourage the public to report hate crimes and incidents, even if the reports are anonymous. Anonymous reports should be tabulated separately. This should be done by December 31, 2025. **(F9, F10)**

R10: The Orange County Sheriff's Department should collaborate with local law enforcement agencies and non-profit organizations that receive reports of hate crimes and incidents to develop a centralized portal or reporting mechanism. This would streamline the process, improve data capture, and make it easier to track and address hate crimes and incidents. This should be done by December 31, 2025. **(F4, F7, F10)**

R11: The Orange County Department of Education should create a centralized database of up-to-date materials, resources, and programs designed to address hate crimes and incidents in K-12 schools. This should be done by December 31, 2025. **(F11, F12)**

R12: The Orange County Department of Education should implement and expand the current age-appropriate curriculum on tolerance and respect for students in kindergarten through fifth grade, including education programs for parents and caregivers. This should be done by December 31, 2025. **(F12)**

RESPONSES

The following excerpts from the California Penal Code provide the requirements for public agencies to respond to the Findings and Recommendations of this Grand Jury report:

§933

(c) No later than 90 days after the grand jury submits a final report on the operations of any public agency subject to its reviewing authority, the governing body of the public agency shall comment to the presiding judge of the superior court on the findings and recommendations

pertaining to matters under the control of the governing body, and every elected county officer or agency head for which the grand jury has responsibility pursuant to Section 914.1 shall comment within 60 days to the presiding judge of the superior court, with an information copy sent to the board of supervisors, on the findings and recommendations pertaining to matters under the control of that county officer or agency head and any agency or agencies which that officer or agency head supervises or controls. In any city and county, the mayor shall also comment on the findings and recommendations. All of these comments and reports shall forthwith be submitted to the presiding judge of the superior court who impaneled the grand jury. A copy of all responses to grand jury reports shall be placed on file with the clerk of the public agency and the office of the county clerk, or the mayor when applicable, and shall remain on file in those offices. One copy shall be placed on file with the applicable grand jury final report by, and in the control of the currently impaneled grand jury, where it shall be maintained for a minimum of five years.

933.05.

(a) For purposes of subdivision (b) of Section 933, as to each grand jury finding, the responding person or entity shall indicate one of the following:

(1) The respondent agrees with the finding.

(2) The respondent disagrees wholly or partially with the finding; in which case the response shall specify the portion of the finding that is disputed and shall include an explanation of the reasons therefor.

(b) For purposes of subdivision (b) of Section 933, as to each grand jury recommendation, the responding person or entity shall report one of the following actions:

(1) The recommendation has been implemented, with a summary regarding the implemented action.

(2) The recommendation has not yet been implemented, but will be implemented in the future, with a timeframe for implementation.

(3) The recommendation requires further analysis, with an explanation and the scope and parameters of an analysis or study, and a timeframe for the matter to be prepared for discussion by the officer or head of the agency or department being investigated or reviewed, including the governing body of the public agency when applicable. This timeframe shall not exceed six months from the date of publication of the grand jury report.

(4) The recommendation will not be implemented because it is not warranted or is not reasonable, with an explanation therefor.

(c) However, if a finding or recommendation of the grand jury addresses budgetary or personnel matters of a county agency or department headed by an elected officer, both the agency or department head and the board of supervisors shall respond if requested by the grand jury, but

the response of the board of supervisors shall address only those budgetary or personnel matters over which it has some decision-making authority. The response of the elected agency or department head shall address all aspects of the findings or recommendations affecting his or her agency or department.

(d) A grand jury may request a subject person or entity to come before the grand jury for the purpose of reading and discussing the findings of the grand jury report that relates to that person or entity in order to verify the accuracy of the findings prior to their release.

(e) During an investigation, the grand jury shall meet with the subject of that investigation regarding the investigation, unless the court, either on its own determination or upon request of the foreperson of the grand jury, determines that such a meeting would be detrimental.

(f) A grand jury shall provide to the affected agency a copy of the portion of the grand jury report relating to that person or entity two working days prior to its public release and after the approval of the presiding judge. No officer, agency, department, or governing body of a public agency shall disclose any contents of the report prior to the public release of the final report.

(Amended by Stats. 1997, Ch. 443, Sec. 5. Effective January 1, 1998.)

Responses Required

Comments to the Presiding Judge of the Superior Court in compliance with Penal Code Section 933.05 are required from:

Findings

Orange County Board of Supervisors F1, F2, F3, F4, F5, F6, F13

Orange County Sheriff 's Department F7, F8, F9, F10

Orange County Department of Education F11, F12

Recommendations

Orange County Board of Supervisors R1, R2, R3, R4, R5, R7, R8

Orange County Sheriff's Department R6, R8, R9, R10

Orange County Department of Education R11, R12

APPENDIX

Survey Sent to all Orange County Cities

What is the name of your city?
Your Name and Title
Does your city have a formal plan and/or policy to address and prevent hate crimes/incidents?
Please provide a brief explanation of your answer.
Please send your plan to address hate crimes/incidents and any other applicable information via email to the Orange County Grand Jury
Does your city collect and analyze data on hate crimes/hate incidents?
Please provide a brief explanation of your answer.
Please send your current data and analysis on hate crimes/hate incidents via email to the Orange County Grand Jury
Has your city issued any Hate Crime/Incidents Reports in the past 5 years?
Please send your city's report(s) on Hate Crimes/Incidents via email
Does your city collaborate with community organizations, religious institutions, etc. to promote tolerance, diversity and anti-hate?
Please provide the names of the organizations and the nature of these collaborations.
Does your city have a hate crimes/hate incident task force or designated staff to handle hate-crime/incident-related issues?
Please provide details of your hate crimes/incident task force or designated staff
What additional resources or support would your city need to enhance its hate crime/hate incident prevention efforts?
Thinking beyond your city, what recommendations do you have regarding countywide efforts to address and prevent hate crimes and incidents?
Does your city receive any grant funding or other financial support/funding specifically designated for hate crime/incident prevention/awareness or victim support
Please provide the names of the grants and/or other funding sources for hate crime/incident prevention/awareness or victim support
What recommendations do you have regarding countywide efforts to address and prevent hate crimes and incidents?

Survey Sent to All Orange County School Districts

What is the name of your district?
Your Name and Title
Does your district have a formal plan and/or policy to address and prevent hate crimes/incidents?
Please provide a brief explanation of your answer.
Please send your plan to address hate crimes/incidents and any other applicable information via email to the Orange County Grand Jury
Does your district collect and analyze data on hate crimes/hate incidents?
Please provide a brief explanation of your answer.
Please send your current data and analysis on hate crimes/hate incidents via email to the Orange County Grand Jury
Has your district issued any Hate Crime/Incidents Reports in the past 5 years?
Please send your districts report(s) on Hate Crimes/Incidents via email
Do staff in your district receive formal training on recognizing and addressing hate crimes and bias?
Does your district collaborate with community organizations, religious institutions, etc. to promote tolerance, diversity and anti-hate?
Please provide the names of the organizations and the nature of these collaborations.
What additional resources or support would your district need to enhance its hate crime/hate incident prevention efforts?
Thinking beyond your district, what recommendations do you have regarding countywide efforts to address and prevent hate crimes and incidents?
Does your district receive any grant funding or other financial support/funding specifically designated for hate crime/incident prevention/awareness or victim support
Please provide the names of the grants and/or other funding sources for hate crime/incident prevention/awareness or victim support
If you have any further comments or information that you would like to share with the Orange County Grand Jury regarding your thoughts or recommendations associated with educating students on anti-bias education and hate crime/incident prevention, please feel free to share. We appreciate your time.

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