



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**STATEWIDE SURVEY FINDS MOST HATE CRIMES ARE UNREPORTED
IN COLORADO**

Nearly 3 in 10 adult Coloradans say they experienced a hate crime or bias-motivated incident in the last 5 years, according to the large-scale survey

DENVER, CO, September 30, 2022 – The number of Coloradans who experienced a hate crime or bias-motivated incident in the last five years is significantly higher than official government data indicates, according to a statewide survey commissioned by Hate Free Colorado. Nearly 3 in 10 survey participants ages 18+, or an estimated 1.25 million Coloradans, said they were targeted with verbal harassment, property damage, and/or physical injury within the last five years.

The survey also found that, of those who experienced a hate crime or bias-motivated incident within the last five years, only 18 percent reported the incident to police.

“The survey confirmed what we knew anecdotally – that hate crimes happen much more frequently in Colorado than previously measured and that the vast majority of incidents are never reported to law enforcement,” said **Jeremy Shaver, a spokesperson for Hate Free Colorado and Senior Associate Regional Director for the Anti-Defamation League Mountain States Region**. “While it is troubling to learn that so many Coloradans have experienced hate personally, the survey results fill a critical data gap to help us better understand the scope of the problem in Colorado and to identify where resources are needed to take the most effective action.”

[Hate Free Colorado](#) commissioned the survey to better understand the lived experiences of Coloradans and estimate the incidence of hate crimes and bias-motivated incidents in the last five years, as well as how the incidents were reported – if at all.

Major findings:

- Hate crimes in Colorado are significantly under-represented in official data. In 2020, the FBI received a total of 281 hate crime reports from law enforcement agencies in Colorado. However, the survey found that in the last five years, **28 percent of adult Coloradans (1.25 million) experienced a hate crime or bias-motivated incident.**

- Of those who experienced a hate crime or bias-motivated incident, **1 in 7 experienced physical injury, 1 in 4 experienced property damage, and 9 in 10 experienced verbal harassment.**
- Of those who experienced a hate crime or bias-motivated incident, **61 percent said it was due to race/ethnicity/ancestry. Members of racial/ethnic minority groups are 1.5-2 times more likely** to have experienced a hate crime or incident than white, non-Hispanic Coloradans.
- Those who belong to other impacted groups – based on their gender or gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, and/or disability – experienced significantly higher incidences of hate than the average among all Coloradans.
 - **One third to one half of transgender and gender-diverse Coloradans** experienced a hate crime or incident
 - **Coloradans who identify as gay, lesbian, bisexual, or queer are more than 1.5 times** as likely as straight Coloradans to have experienced a hate crime or incident
 - More than **1 in 4 Muslim Coloradans** and **1 in 6 Jewish Coloradans** reported experiencing a hate crime or incident **because of their religion**
 - **Coloradans with disabilities are nearly 1.5 times** as likely as persons without a disability to have experienced a hate crime or incident
- An individual with multiple marginalized identities increases the odds of experiencing a hate crime. For instance, **nearly 6 in 10 People of Color who are 18-24 and LGBTQ+** experienced a hate crime or incident.
- Most hate crimes and bias-motivated incidents in Colorado go unreported to the police – or to anyone for that matter. **Only 18 percent of those who experienced a hate crime or incident reported it to the police and only 29 percent reported it to anyone at all** (e.g., employer, community organization, family member/friend, clergy person, counselor, or police).

“No one community can address this issue alone. The safety and wellbeing of LGBTQ Coloradans, Black and Brown Coloradans, and all those frequently targeted with hate must be a concern for all Coloradans if we’re going to reverse this trend,” said **Nadine Bridges, Executive Director of One Colorado.**

Harry Budisidharta, Executive Director of the Asian Pacific Development Center, added, “Data often drives policy. We hope these alarming survey results generate greater awareness and action by government officials, law enforcement agencies, and community organizations to fight back against increased hate.”

“The core issue that the survey highlights is the impact to quality of life for Coloradans,” said **Dilpreet Jammu, Executive Director of Colorado Sikhs.** “When individuals are targeted with a hate crime - for no other reason than their personal identity - their sense of safety, purpose and belonging is destroyed. A hate crime impacts an entire community. It is imperative that we come together to address this issue so all are truly able to thrive in Colorado.”

Recommended Actions:

1. **Hate Crime Hotlines** – Establish non-emergency numbers at the local and/or state level for individuals to report a suspected hate crime.

2. **Law Enforcement Training** – Expand training opportunities for law enforcement officers who are most likely to interact with individuals targeted with a hate crime or bias-motivated incident. Training should specifically address recognizing indicators of a hate crime, conducting effective victim interviews and filing reports with the proper notes and categorizations.
3. **Outreach to Impacted Groups** – Create special units or teams within law enforcement agencies to develop relationships with communities that are most frequently targeted with hate crimes and bias-motivated incidents. Share information on agency policies and procedures, as well as victim resources.
4. **Education for Impacted Groups** – Conduct information and education sessions for community organizations, service providers and non-profit organizations that serve those who are most frequently targeted with hate crimes and bias-motivated incidents. Share information on victim resources and help agencies develop effective processes for handling incident reports from impacted community members.

Methodology:

Hate Free Colorado commissioned Fran Simon of Simon Analytics to conduct research to estimate the incidence of hate crimes and bias-motivated incidents and their reporting. Benenson Strategy Group donated consulting services on research design and methodology.

The survey was conducted in English and Spanish from May 2-July 7, 2022. Responses were gathered through both a statewide SMS/text message survey and online surveys distributed by Hate Free Colorado partner organizations. A total of 5,177 Coloradans ages 18+ responded to the surveys.

The SMS survey gathered 3,346 respondents, and the data were weighted by age, gender, race, ethnicity, religion, and region to be representative of Coloradans ages 18+.

The online survey resulted in 1,831 respondents.

Though there were some demographic differences between the two methodologies, there were no statistically significant differences in the major hate crime metrics such as incidence of hate crimes, reporting hate crimes to anyone, and reporting hate crimes to the police.

Hate Free Colorado Partner Organizations:

American Civil Liberties Union of Colorado
Anti-Defamation League Mountain States Region
Asian Pacific Development Center
The Center on Colfax
Colorado Cross-Disability Coalition
Colorado Immigrant Rights Coalition
Colorado Latino Leadership, Advocacy & Research Organization
Colorado Resilience Collaborative
Colorado Sikhs
Interfaith Alliance of Colorado

Matthew Shepard Foundation
Meet the Middle East
Multicultural Mosaic Foundation
NAACP – Aurora Branch
NAACP CO-MT-Wyoming State Conference
One Colorado
Out Boulder County
Partnership for Community Action

Law Enforcement Partners:

Aurora Police Department
Boulder Police Department
Colorado Attorney General's Office
Denver Police Department
Eighteenth Judicial District Attorney's Office (Arapahoe, Douglas, Elbert, Lincoln)
Federal Bureau of Investigation – Denver Field Office
First Judicial District Attorney's Office (Gilpin/Jefferson)
Second Judicial District Attorney's Office (Denver)
Twentieth Judicial District Attorney's Office (Boulder)
U.S. Attorney's Office for the District of Colorado

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