PROTECTING OUR COMMUNITIES TOGETHER

HATE CRIME THREAT RESPONSE GUIDE

At the federal level, a hate crime is defined as a criminal offense motivated in whole or in part by the offender's bias against a race, religion, disability, ethnic or national origin, sexual orientation, gender, or gender identity.

If you receive a threat, **immediately call 911**.

Written or Visual Threat

When a threat is received in a written or graphic format, such as a handwritten note or graffiti:

- DO NOT touch or alter the item. DO NOT throw it away.
- Photograph or precisely rewrite the threat on another sheet of paper. Make note of:
  - The date, time, and location the threat was identified.
  - Any details about how the threat was delivered or discovered.
  - Anyone else who saw the threat.

Phoned Threat

When a threat is received by phone:

- Remain calm. If not in immediate danger, do not hang up.
- Record the call if legal to do so. *(Some states require both parties to consent to a recording.)*
- Try to obtain as much information as possible about the caller and the threat.
- Write down any numbers or letters on the phone display.
- Write down the exact wording of the threat.

Electronic Threat

When a threat is received over the internet, such as through email or social media:

- DO NOT delete the electronic threat.
- Leave the message open on the device or computer.
- Print, photograph, or copy the message. Note the date and time the threat was received.

Verbal Threat

When a threat is received verbally:

- Stay calm and attempt to de-escalate the situation.
- If the perpetrator leaves, note their description and direction of travel.
- Write down the threat exactly as it was communicated.

Physical Threat

A physical threat is an in-person threat that places the victim or others in immediate danger. It is important to keep in mind that all threat types have the potential to escalate into a physical threat.

When confronted with an immediate threat of physical harm, there are three options:

- **Run:** Identify an escape route. Leave behind any belongings and if possible, help others escape.
- **Hide**: Find a safe place to hide from the threat. Lock doors and block entrances. Silence cell phones (including vibrate mode) and remain silent.
- **Fight:** Fighting should be a last resort. Act with as much physical aggression as possible and attempt to incapacitate the threat.

FBI FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

If you or someone you know may have been the victim of a Hate Crime, please call the FBI at **1-800-CALL-FBI**, or report threats electronically at **tips.fbi.gov**.