



Attorney General Raoul's Office Received Nearly \$400,000 Department Of Justice Grant For Hate Crime Training

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CHICAGO - Attorney General Kwame Raoul's office was awarded a \$394,772 Department of Justice (DOJ) grant for a 48-month project to provide specialized hate crime training to law enforcement officers and prosecuting attorneys in Illinois. The grant, which was awarded through the DOJ's Matthew Shepard and James Byrd, Jr. Hate Crimes Program, will support Raoul's efforts to increase the reporting of hate crimes and improve the criminal justice system's response to hate crime victims.



Hate crimes are underreported both nationally and in Illinois. According to the most recent FBI statistics, in 2019, only 23 out of 728 participating law enforcement agencies in Illinois reported any hate crime incidents to the Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) program, which is one of the lowest rates in the nation. In Illinois, 24 cities with populations larger than 50,000 reported no hate crimes incidents at all in 2019.

“Specialized training programs will help ensure hate crime victims in Illinois communities encounter fewer barriers when they interact with the criminal justice system. I am committed to working toward an environment in which victims are comfortable enough to report hate crimes because our responders and investigators have training to effectively and empathetically respond,” said Raoul. “Over the next year, my office will work with law enforcement, prosecutors and community groups to improve the support we provide victims while enhancing our enforcement of hate crime laws.

The grant will allow the Attorney General’s office to meet the critical need for the evidence-based, trauma-informed and victim-centered training programs for hate crime first responders including law enforcement officers, investigators, as well as prosecutors

handling hate crime cases. Training topics will include the specifics of the state and federal hate crimes statutes, the effects of trauma on victims, the importance of community relationships and identifying a hate crime.

“No matter how well intentioned an officer or prosecutor is, if they don't know what constitutes a hate crime, accountability of offenders and protections for victims may slip through the cracks due to lack of knowledge. My hope is that this training will provide law enforcement officers with the knowledge-base necessary to appropriately hold those that choose to inflict hate upon any members of our communities accountable,” Chief of Hazel Crest Police Department Mitchell R. Davis III. “As a member of the Illinois Commission on Discrimination and Hate Crimes and as survivor of discrimination and hate crimes, I would let (victims) know that they are not alone. I would let them know that the courage necessary to report being victimized can save others.”

Davis is also former, and first Black President of the Illinois Association of Chiefs of Police, Special Assistant to the President of the Chicago Metropolitan Chapter of the National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives, member of the Board of Directors for the International Association of Chiefs of Police and Chairman of the Illinois Law Enforcement Training and Standards Board.

Raoul's office will develop and conduct the training programs in partnership with community-based organizations, law enforcement, prosecutors, national experts and other partners.

“We at the Illinois Law Enforcement Training and Standards Board (ILETSB) are excited to support and collaborate with the Illinois Attorney General's Office on this important grant. Communities targeted by hate often face barriers to reporting hate crimes, such as fears about being targeted for immigration enforcement,” said Keith Calloway, Executive Director of the ILETSB. “When community members who report hate crimes or bias incidents are treated with empathy and respect, they are more likely to participate and stay engaged in the criminal justice process. This will lead to an increase in the number of cases reported and thoroughly investigated, the number of arrests and charges, and the number of convictions. This will enhance community-police relationships and build community trust, further improving reporting.”

The Attorney General Raoul's office will develop the training program over the next year, with law enforcement expected to start training at the end of 2023 and prosecutors being trained in 2024. Trainings will be available online or video format, and a more intensive curriculum will be provided at in-person training for field training officers and investigators.

“ADL Midwest is thrilled by this news. We applaud Attorney General Raoul for prioritizing Illinois’ response to hate crimes and look forward to supporting the grant’s implementation,” said David Goldenberg, ADL Midwest Regional Director. “Reported hate crimes are at a 20 year high – and we know that number is low because an estimated 40 percent of hate crimes are never reported. This grant gives Illinois new tools and resources to train law enforcement and prosecutors on what Illinois and federal hate crimes laws say, when they should be applied, and how law enforcement and prosecutors can best support victims and build trust with targeted communities.”

Please visit the Attorney General’s [website](#) to access [resources related to hate crimes](#) or to contact the office’s Civil Rights Bureau.

Attorney General Raoul’s Civil Rights Bureau enforces state and federal civil rights laws prohibiting discrimination and hate crimes in Illinois. Attorney General Raoul encourages individuals who experience or witness hate crimes to contact local law enforcement. Raoul also encourages people to report discrimination or hate-motivated incidents to his office by [visiting his website](#), emailing CivilRights@ilag.gov, or by calling his Civil Rights Hotline at 1-877-581-3692.