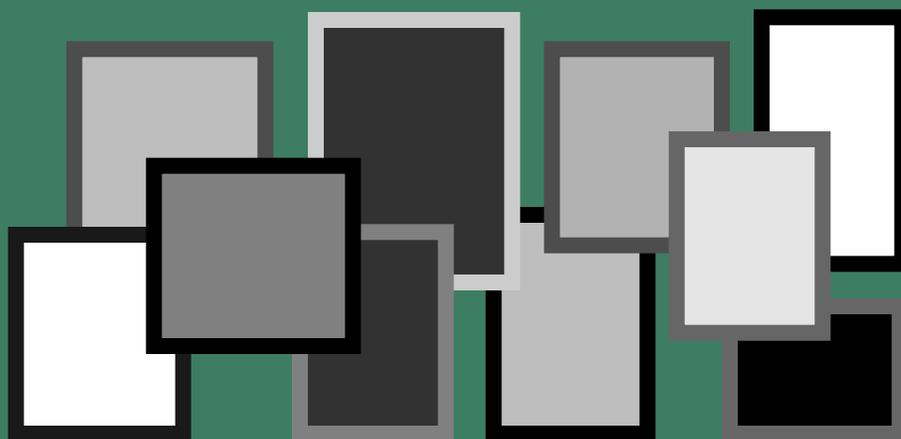


HATE CRIME IN CALIFORNIA

2000

DATA CHARACTERISTICS AND KNOWN LIMITATIONS



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Data Characteristics and Known Limitations

CRIME DATA

Local law enforcement agencies are required to submit monthly copies of hate crime reports to the Department of Justice (DOJ) in compliance with Section 13023 of the California Penal Code, which states ". . . any criminal acts or attempted criminal acts to cause physical injury, emotional suffering, or property damage where there is a reasonable cause to believe that the crime was motivated, in whole or in part, by the victim's race, ethnicity, religion, gender, sexual orientation, or physical or mental disability . . ." shall be reported to the DOJ.

The following information and limitations should be considered when using hate crime data:

1. The hate crime reporting system was implemented by the DOJ in September 1994. Law enforcement agencies were requested to submit copies of initial crime reports beginning with July 1994. Crime reports that were submitted as hate crimes, but later determined to be unfounded, were not included.
2. Initial crime reports were selected as the reporting document to provide maximum information for coding and to minimize the workload impact on local law enforcement agencies.
3. The Department of Justice requested that each law enforcement agency establish procedures incorporating a two-tier review (decision-making) process. The first level is done by the initial officer who responds to the suspected hate crime incident. At the second level, each report is reviewed by at least one other officer to confirm that the incident was, in fact, a hate crime.
4. Caution should be used when making jurisdictional comparisons. Factors to be considered are: cultural diversity and population density; effective strength of law enforcement agencies; and the training received in the identification of hate crimes by law enforcement officers in each jurisdiction.
5. The following factors may influence the volume of hate crimes reported to the DOJ:
 - Cultural practices and likeliness of reporting hate crimes to law enforcement agencies.
 - Strength and investigative emphasis of law enforcement agencies.
 - Policies of law enforcement agencies.
 - Community policing policies.

Note: All requests or questions regarding these data should be submitted to the Criminal Justice Statistics Center, P.O. Box 903427, Sacramento, California 94203-4270. The telephone number is (916) 227-3509. E-mail: doj.cjsc@doj.ca.gov

COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY AND ELECTED CITY ATTORNEY PROSECUTORIAL DATA

The following information and limitations should be considered when interpreting hate crime cases:

1. In order to show the criminal justice system's response to hate crimes, in March 1995, the Attorney General requested all district attorneys and elected city attorneys to submit summary data of complaints filed and convictions secured.
2. The 2000 District Attorneys and Elected City Attorneys Report File of Hate Crime Cases contains summary data based on cases referred to each district attorney or elected city attorney, and filings and convictions which occurred between January 1 through December 31, 2000.

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