

## **Hate Crime & Fair Housing**

### **FAIR HOUSING HIGHLIGHT #10**

#### **What is a hate crime?**

A hate crime in Pennsylvania is called “ethnic intimidation.” When certain crimes against people (like harassment, threats, or assault) or certain crimes against property (like criminal trespass, criminal mischief or arson) are committed AND when these crimes are motivated by hatred toward the victim’s actual or perceived race, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, mental or physical disability, sexual orientation, gender or gender identity, ethnic intimidation can be charged.

#### **What are examples of hate crimes?**

Hate crimes can include physical attack, damage to personal property, institutional vandalism (damage done to a church, synagogue, cemetery, school, courthouse, etc.), terroristic threats and other types of assaults that are conducted due to the victim’s race, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, mental or physical disability, sexual orientation, gender or gender identity.

#### **Are hate crimes a violation of fair housing laws?**

Yes, housing related hate crimes and hate incidents are covered under state and federal fair housing laws if the crime is related to the victim’s race, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, mental or physical disability, sexual orientation, gender or gender identity.

#### **What should I do if I become a victim or a witness to a hate crime?**

Immediately contact 911. Tell police what has happened. Tell police why you believe the crime was motivated by hate. Stay away from the scene of the crime and do not touch anything.

#### **Do I call the Fair Housing Rights Center to report a housing related hate crime?**

After calling the police, a fair housing complaint may be also be filed with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development or the Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission (PHRC). In addition to being criminal offenses, hate crimes may violate the civil rights and fair housing rights of the victim. If federal, state, or local anti-discrimination laws are violated in the course of a hate crime, victims can seek remedies by contacting the agencies that enforce those laws. PHRC also coordinates an Inter Agency Task Force on Civil Tension and victims are encouraged to report hate crimes to this task force. For more information or assistance, call the FHRC.

**Questions? Call the Fair Housing Rights Center in Southeastern Pennsylvania at 215 576-7711  
or visit us online at [www.fairhousingrights.org](http://www.fairhousingrights.org).**