



The Regional Municipality of Durham Report

To: Finance and Administration Committee
From: Chief Administrative Officer
Report: #2025-A-4
Date: June 10, 2025

Subject:

Community-Based Hate Reporting Program

Recommendation:

That the Finance & Administration Committee recommends to Regional Council:

- A) That Council approve the development of a community-based hate reporting program;
 - B) That Council approve the expenditure of \$50,000 to fund this project;
 - C) That Council request the Durham Regional Police Service Board publicly report a summary of hate activity data on an annual basis; and
 - D) That Council request the Durham Regional Police Service Board direct staff to consult religious and cultural groups when developing antihate initiatives.
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Report:

1. Background

- 1.1 This report responds to a [motion](#) referred to staff by Durham Regional Committee of the Whole to explore the possibility of establishing a protocol or policy to notify various human rights organizations when hate-motivated acts are identified by regional staff but may not reach the threshold of criminality.
- 1.2 In accordance with the motion, and as part of the initial research, staff from the Region's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Division engaged leaders from B'nai Brith Canada, Centre for Israel Jewish Affairs, Hindu Canadian Foundation, Muslim Women of Durham Region, National Council of Canadian Muslims, and the Vishwa Jain Sangathan Canada to learn about their experiences related to hate activity in Durham and seek their expertise on combatting it. Area municipalities, Durham

Regional Police Service (DRPS) and the Region's Anti-Racism Taskforce have also been engaged as part of this process.

- 1.3 While Durham Region staff may become aware of hate activity in carrying out their duties, there is more the Region can do to facilitate the *collection* of hate activity data. The following report provides an overview of information gathered in response to the motion, including criminal code definitions, prevalence of hate activity, the role of police services, hate activity impacts, and recommended actions to address current gaps in data collection and reporting.

2. Definitions

- 2.1 The Criminal Code of Canada doesn't use the term "hate crime" but does recognize that acts can be motivated by hate and that sentences can be increased if there is proven hate intent. As a result, many police services refrain from using the phrase "hate crime" and will use "hate-motivated crime" instead.
- 2.2 A **hate-motivated crime** is a criminal act against a person or property that is motivated in whole or in part by hate or bias against an identifiable group- any section of the public distinguished by colour, race, religion, national or ethnic origin, age, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or mental or physical disability¹.
- 2.3 A **hate-motivated incident** doesn't meet the criminal threshold under the Criminal Code. These are non-criminal actions or behaviours motivated by hate against an individual or an identifiable group listed above¹. It can include verbal or online abuse or distributing offensive leaflets and posters.
- 2.4 The term **hate activity** will be used in this report to encompass both hate-motivated crimes and hate-motivated incidents. Hate activity is motivated by hatred, bias and/or prejudice against an identifiable group and perpetrators can include individuals, groups, and organizations.

3. Prevalence of Hate Activity

- 3.1 In recent months, Durham Region has had incidents of high profile hate activity which have received nationwide attention and condemnation from numerous religious organizations and prominent Canadian figures, including the Prime Minister.

¹ RCMP, [Understanding and addressing hate-motivated crime](#)

3.2 According to the latest Annual Hate Crimes Report² by Statistics Canada:

- a. Police services in Canada recorded a sharp rise in hate crimes in 2023, with 4,777 incidents reported, up 32% from 3,612 incidents in 2022. These figures are likely underestimating the prevalence of hate activity for reasons described in Section 6 of this report.
- b. Police-reported hate crimes targeting religion are up in 2023, the second sharp increase in three years.
- c. The majority of hate crimes targeting a specific religion reported by police in 2023 were directed at the Jewish (70%) and Muslim (16%) populations.
- d. Hate crimes targeting the South Asian population have increased four years in a row, increasing 227%, to 265 incidents in 2023.
- e. The number of hate crimes targeting Black communities remained the highest proportion of hate crimes targeting a given race- 784 incidents.
- f. The number of hate crimes targeting First Nations people, Métis and Inuit communities increased by 6% in 2023 to 70 incidents.
- g. There were 860 hate crimes targeting people with diverse sexual orientations recorded in 2023; a 69% increase from the previous peak of 509 recorded in 2022.

3.3 As outlined in Section 2 of this report, hate crimes are a complex and nuanced topic for police services. Through their work, the DRPS recognizes the impact that hate has on communities in Durham. While DRPS does not include hate-related data on their Crime Statistics Dashboard³, they recently provided data on hate-motivated crimes and incidents in a report entitled 'Community Diversity Monitoring'⁴ for the Police Service Board in December 2024. The report included the following data:

- a. There was a 77% increase in hate-motivated crimes/incidents from 57 (January to December 2023) to 101 (January to November 2024).
- b. A municipal breakdown of reported hate-motivated crimes/incidents:
 - Ajax (12.5%)
 - Brock (1%)
 - Clarington (12%)
 - Oshawa (25%)
 - Pickering (19%)
 - Scugog (4%)
 - Uxbridge (5%)
 - Whitby (21.5%)

2 Statistics Canada, [Police-Reported Hate Crime in Canada, 2023](#)

3 DRPS, [Monthly Crime and Traffic Statistics](#)

4 DRPS, Report to the Police Board, Dec 2, 2024, [Community Diversity Monitoring Report](#)

- 3.4 The Toronto Police Service displays hate-motivated crime data on its Public Safety Data Portal⁵. These crimes rose 47 per cent in 2023 and they cited the geopolitical events in the Middle East as a major factor.
- 3.5 York Regional Police publicly releases an annual statistics report⁶ that includes coding categories for “hate crime type” and “hate crime motivations”. In 2023, 293 hate crimes were reported and the most common motivational factors were race/ethnicity (46%) and religion (38%).
- 3.6 Peel Regional Police publicly releases an annual Hate-Motivated Crime Report⁷ which showed 162 hate-motivated crimes, a 32% increase compared to 2022. Notably there was an 88% increase in reported hate crimes motivated by sexual orientation.
- 3.7 The increase in hate activity is not unique to the GTA and Canadian cities. This escalation is being attributed to political polarization, online radicalization, social media algorithms, economic pressures, global turbulence, and lack of accountability⁸.

4. Hate Activity Impacts

- 4.1 Hate not only harms those directly targeted but also impacts broader society, undermining social cohesion and local efforts to build safety, trust, and community.
- 4.2 At the individual level, hate impacts mental health by inducing trauma and fear, increases social isolation, and may result in individuals hiding or changing their identity⁹. Members of the targeted community may experience vicarious trauma symptoms resulting from witnessing others being victimized.
- 4.3 At the community and societal level, hate creates fear, mistrust of institutions, and foments discrimination and violence⁹.
- 4.4 Psychological research demonstrated that even the use of hateful language against others in political campaigns can decrease psychological and relational well-being¹⁰.

5 Toronto Police Service Public Safety [Data Portal](#)

6 York Regional Police [2023 Annual Statistics Report](#):

7 Peel Regional Police [2023 Annual Hate-Motivated Crime Report](#)

8 Canadian Anti-Hate Network: <https://www.antihate.ca/>

9 Canadian Race Relations Foundation, [Reporting Hate, Finding Support. A Toolkit for Communities](#)

10 American Psychological Association, Novotney, A. (2023). Hate crimes are on the rise in the U.S. What are the psychological effects? <https://www.apa.org/topics/gun-violence-crime/hate-crimes>

5. Current Hate Reporting and Anti-Hate Initiatives in Durham

- 5.1 The DRPS invites the public to report both hate-motivated crime and hate-motivated incidents. The Hate Crime Unit leads investigations on hate activity, both criminal and non-criminal, and refers residents to community resources for support.
- 5.2 Recognizing the recent increase in hate crimes/incidents, the DRPS has proactively taken steps to address community concerns, including:
- a. Participation of the Hate Crime Unit in platoon meetings
 - b. Providing education to recruit classes
 - c. Implementing mandatory hate crime e-learning modules
 - d. Offering ongoing education and support to frontline and investigative officers
 - e. Training DRPS Communications personnel on hate crime awareness
 - f. Elevating hate crime calls to a Priority 2 status (up from Priority 4)
 - g. Ensuring the Hate Crime Unit reviews every hate crime incident for consistency
 - h. Having the DRPS Equity and Inclusion Unit review incidents and offer support to victims and complainants
 - i. Maintaining an internal dashboard to track and categorize hate crimes/incidents across Durham Region
- 5.3 DRPS is implementing additional measures to enhance response to hate activity, including:
- a. Launching a public-facing hate crime dashboard
 - b. Expanding the capacity of the Hate Crime Unit to lead investigations and management of all hate-related matters
 - c. Collaborating with the Canadian Race Relations Foundation to incorporate best practices
 - d. Engaging with other Ontario police agencies to learn and adopt effective reporting protocols
- 5.4 The Durham Region Anti-Racism Taskforce (DRART) completed a hate reporting advocacy campaign¹¹ in 2024. Residents were encouraged to report hate activity to DRPS through online and printed marketing materials.
- 5.5 Religious groups and other identity-specific community organizations have been involved in the collection hate activity data in Durham Region. For example, B'nai B'rith Canada operates an Anti-Hate Reporting hotline and online app which allows members of the public to report hate activity. Data gathered enables B'nai Brith Canada to share information with police services and support anti-hate advocacy efforts. The Hindu Canadian foundation also operates an Anti-Hindu Reporting Tool and shares information with local police services and uses the data to support advocacy efforts designed to combat anti-Hindu hate.

11 Durham Region Anti-racism Taskforce, [Reporting Hate Activity poster](#)

- 5.6 Hate activity erodes community safety. Initiatives designed to address hate across multiple priority risk factors are identified in the Region's Community Safety and Well-Being Plan (CSWB). Regional staff are liaising with community partners to determine appropriate and restorative community healing activities following violent or traumatic events in community.
- 5.7 In March 2025, the Region of Durham received a grant from the Canadian Race Relations Foundation's National Anti-Racism Fund for 'Together Against Hate' initiative designed to increase public awareness of hate through a public campaign and conference delivered in partnership with community organizations. The conference is being planned for November 2025.
- 5.8 Local area municipalities are also addressing the rise in hate through community initiatives such as the Town of Ajax's recent Community Healing event aimed at fostering a sense of unity, understanding and safety for all. Educational collaborations with Trent University and antihate awareness campaigns are also in development.

6. Hate Activity is Under-Reported

- 6.1 Hate activity, both hate-motivated crime and hate-motivated incidents, is under-reported across all jurisdictions and this significantly impacts data collected and conclusions drawn.
- 6.2 According to Statistics Canada's 2019 General Social Survey (GSS) on Canadian's Safety, Canadians self-reported being the victim of over 223,000 hate motivated-incidents over a one-year period yet only 22% of these incidents were reported to police.
- 6.3 According to the DRPS, residents may be reluctant to report hate for several reasons, including:
- a. Language barriers
 - b. The victim may not have recognized that the crime was motivated by bias or hate
 - c. Not being taken seriously by police
 - d. Not knowing where and how to report
 - e. Fear of retaliation
 - f. Normalization of hate¹²
- 6.4 Individuals from diverse communities may underreport due to systemic racism and personal experiences of reprisal and violence when raising concerns. Data shows that Black, Indigenous, and racialized communities, 2SLGBTQ+ communities and religious communities are more likely to be the target of hate-motivated activity, and

12 DRPS, <https://www.drps.ca/community-safety-and-support/hate-crime/>

these same communities are more likely to mistrust or have low confidence in police services.¹³

- 6.5 Controlling for demographic identities and offence types, research shows that people who had prior experiences with police discrimination were significantly less likely to report hate crimes to police compared to non-hate-based crimes¹⁴.
- 6.6 Community-based hate reporting is increasing in prominence, internationally and locally, to improve reporting and community safety as it appeals to individuals who are reluctant to engage their local police service.

7. Community-Based Hate Reporting

- 7.1 Community-based hate reporting services were introduced to help individuals and communities who were unwilling or unable to report directly to the police, providing an alternative reporting mechanism and a source of support.
- 7.2 These services are administered by community-based organizations and permit anonymous reporting. Providers share anonymized aggregate data to uncover trends and patterns of behaviour within local communities. They are often staffed by crisis responders, trained in trauma-informed care and principles of diversity, equity, and inclusion, as well as professional crisis support staff.
- 7.3 The designated community service organization provides support to the individuals and families reporting hate through counseling, legal assistance, and referrals to culturally appropriate community programs to help recovery and enable residents to regain the feeling of safety within their communities.
- 7.4 Community-based hate reporting has been successfully administered for decades in the UK and Australia and is being introduced in Ontario in cities such as Hamilton, Waterloo, the Municipality of Chatham-Kent, and most recently Ottawa.
- 7.5 The following chart summarizes key features of municipal-level community-based hate reporting in Ontario cities:

13 Statistics Canada, 2020. [Public Perceptions of the Police in Canada's Provinces, 2019](#)

14 Erentzen, C., & Schuller, R. (2020). Exploring the Dark Figure of Hate: Experiences with Police Bias and the Under-reporting of Hate Crime. *Canadian Journal of Criminology and Criminal Justice* 62 (2), 64-97. <https://muse.jhu.edu/article/774994>

	Organization Responsible	Funding Sources	Organization's Statement on Data Sharing	Link to Reporting Form
Hamilton	Hamilton Anti-Racism Resource Centre (HARRC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> City of Hamilton provided \$130,000 in funding over two years in 2018 Canadian Race Relations Foundation (CRRF) grant Federal Economic Development grant 	<p>"We gather data and monitor incidents of racism and hate crimes in Hamilton and encourage compliance with existing anti-discriminatory legislation"</p> <p>"We will not share information without expressed consent. We are not a program service or initiative that is a partner of the Hamilton Police Service."</p>	https://www.harrc.ca/reporting-form
Waterloo	Coalition of Muslim Women of KW	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initially funding through the Federal Anti-Racism Action Program Region of Waterloo allocated \$100,000 in 2022 to fund the 'Hate or Discrimination Reporting and Support Program' 	<p>"If an incident reported through the tool meets the threshold of a crime and the user provided contact information, the organization will reach out and ask if the person is comfortable reporting details to police. This option will be completely up to the user"</p>	https://reportinghate.ca/
Chatham-Kent	Chatham-Kent Victim Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> TBD 	<p>"Specific identifying information about individuals or incidents is not shared with the police or anyone else without your express permission unless there is an active safety risk to yourself or others."</p>	https://ckvictimservices.com/report-hate/

	Organization Responsible	Funding Sources	Organization's Statement on Data Sharing	Link to Reporting Form
Ottawa	Ottawa Victim Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provincial Anti-Racism and Anti-Hate grant City of Ottawa allocated \$150,000 in their 2025 Operating Budget to support an Anti-Hate Campaign to market the new service. 	"We do not share personal details with law enforcement or third parties without your clear consent. This form does not replace an official police report."	https://ovs-svo.com/hate-crime-reporting-tool/

- 7.6 These services can support local policing efforts as they identify areas and issues of concern. Local police services may even leverage community-based hate reporting when seeking public assistance. For example, when the Chatham-Kent Police Service sought help from residents in an investigation of graffiti, including the Nazi hakenkreuz (Nazi hooked cross), drawn on park equipment, they asked resident to use the Chatham-Kent Victim Services Hate Reporting Tool in their media release¹⁵.

8. Proposed Project

- 8.1 In response to recent high profile hate activity in Durham and building upon anti-hate initiatives already underway cross the Region, staff recommend that Regional Council provide partial funding for a two-year community-based hate reporting project as outlined below.
- 8.2 Victim Services of Durham Region has expressed interest in supporting this work and delivering the program on behalf of the Region in a similar model to Chatham-Kent and Ottawa. Victim Services of Durham Region is a registered charity and community-based organization that supports victims of hate based on their needs, with or without police involvement. Their staff are able to offer individuals and families experiencing hate a range of services, including immediate crisis response, intervention, practical assistance, and referrals to various support services.

¹⁵ Chatham-Kent Police Service, [Media Release](#), August 2023

8.3 The project would be delivered in 2 phases:

a. Phase 1

- Timeframe: September 2025 to September 2026
- Components: development of a hate reporting portal and database, development of an evaluation strategy with indicators of effectiveness, allocation of staff resources at Victim Services of Durham Region, staff training, including training on the provision of culturally-appropriate supports, and awareness building of the reporting tool to residents

b. Phase 2

- Timeframe: September 2026- September 2027
- Components: Staff resources at Victim Services, a process review, portal and database maintenance, program marketing, and the development of an evaluation report for Durham Regional Council, the Durham Regional Police Service Board, and religious and human rights organizations

8.4 Total project cost is \$89,000. Staff will leverage \$39,000 in federal funding to support Phase 1 and are seeking approval from Council for \$50,000 to fund Phase 2 and all necessary training.

8.5 Staff will be exploring additional funding opportunities during the duration of the project as provincial and federal grants and funds are re-issued.

8.6 Staff have engaged the DRPS about local response to hate activity and to seek their feedback on the proposed project. The DRPS are eager to collaborate on this initiative and the police service “recognizes members of the community may be reluctant to report incidents directly to police agencies due to a range of concerns”. As an integral partner, the DRPS will be asked to participate in the steering committee formed to guide this initiative.

8.7 Staff are recommending that Council request the Durham Regional Police Service Board report a summary of hate activity data on an annual basis. Data to include breakdown by municipality, perceived motivations of the hate-motivated activity, trends in behaviour and steps the police service has undertaken to address hate-motivated incidents and crime.

8.8 Staff are also recommending that Council requests that the Durham Regional Police Service Board direct staff to liaise with religious and cultural groups, in addition to the Canadian Race Relations Foundation, in the development of antihate initiatives.

8.9 Details of the two-year project were shared with subject matter experts and leaders from the organizations, listed in Section 1.2, that regional staff originally consulted to better understand hate activity and hate activity impacts in Durham. Specifically, this project proposal was shared with:

- a. B'nai Brith Canada
- b. Centre for Israel Jewish Affairs
- c. Durham Regional Police Service
- d. Durham Region Antiracism Taskforce
- e. Durham local municipality DEI-focused staff
- f. Hindu Canadian Foundation
- g. Muslim Women of Durham Region
- h. National Council of Canadian Muslims
- i. Ontario Tech University's Centre on Hate, Bias and Extremism
- j. Victim Services of Durham Region
- k. Vishwa Jain Sangathan Canada

8.10 Regional staff responded to questions and incorporated feedback from the organizations listed above. The project has been endorsed by all with the exception of B'nai Brith Canada. All organizations listed above will be invited to collaborate on the program development to ensure the needs of their respective communities are being met.

9. Alignment to Strategic Plan and other Regional Strategies

9.1 This report aligns with the following strategic directions and pathways within Durham Region's 2025-2035 Strategic Plan:

- a. Connected and Vibrant Communities
- b. Healthy People, Caring Communities
- c. Strong Relationships

9.2 Regional Plans and Strategies that further support and align with goals of the proposed community-based hate reporting project include:

- a. Community Safety and Well-Being Plan;
- b. Multi-year Accessibility Plan;
- c. Durham Region Youth Strategy; and
- d. the upcoming Durham Region DEI Strategy

10. Conclusion

10.1 The rise in hate activity within Durham Region is deeply concerning. It is recommended that Council take decisive action to address this issue. Establishing an accessible and community-based mechanism for reporting hate activity advances community safety and sense of inclusion.

10.2 Addressing hate activity supports targeted communities, prevents future incidents, and improves inter-group relations by fostering connection, trust and a sense belonging.

10.3 The proposed project, coupled with local and regional anti-hate initiatives already underway in Durham Region, sends a strong message that hate has no home here.

10.4 For additional information, contact: Allison Hector-Alexander, Director Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion at 905-668-7711, extension 3893.

Respectfully submitted,

Original signed by

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