



**PRESS RELEASE**  
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**Virginia Advisory Committee to the U. S. Commission on Civil Rights  
Releases Advisory Memorandum: *Hate Crimes Statistics and Incidence in Virginia***

The Virginia Advisory Committee to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights released an [advisory memorandum](#) to the Commission following a series of public meetings and collection of public testimony on hate crimes in the state. In this study, the Committee sought to identify the best practices used in defining, identifying, reporting, prosecuting, and preventing hate crimes in Virginia.

The memorandum addresses a wide range of concerns including: (1) a review of available data to track and respond to hate crimes and hate incidents in the state; (2) a discussion of the nature and types of hate crimes/bias incidents and the groups that are affected or targeted by them; (3) barriers or challenges that may prevent law enforcement from addressing hate crimes effectively; and (4) best practices for preventing, responding to, and accurately recording hate crimes and bias motivated incidents in the state.

Committee Chair K. Shiek Pal said, “At a time of unprecedented divisions across our country, the Commonwealth of Virginia witnessed firsthand the egregious expressions of racial and anti-Semitic animus during the 2017 events in Charlottesville. Hate crimes have a particularly destructive effect on communities beyond the immediate victims, and it is imperative that the trends and scope of such crimes be carefully analyzed and understood to help develop better practices to address the fundamental civil rights concerns underlying these crimes.”

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The U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, established by the Civil Rights Act of 1957, is the only independent, bipartisan agency charged with advising the President and Congress on civil rights and reporting annually on federal civil rights enforcement. Our 51 state Advisory Committees offer a broad perspective on civil rights concerns at state and local levels. The Commission: in our 7th decade, a continuing legacy of influence in civil rights. For information about the Commission, please visit <http://www.usccr.gov> and follow us on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#).