



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Crime Stoppers Hate Crime Reward Fund Gets Boost from Community, Law Enforcement Partnership

TIPS LEADING TO FELONY HATE CRIME ARRESTS COULD RECEIVE \$2,000 REWARD

San Diego – The City and County of San Diego has seen a marked increase in hate crimes committed against many communities., with a recent 39% increase in hate crimes reported in the county. Today, law enforcement, government officials and community leaders from across the region responded to that troubling increase and announced a Crime Stoppers “Hate Crime Fund” to assist in the investigation and successful prosecution of these crimes.

Tips leading to the arrest of a suspect in a felony hate crime featured by Crime Stoppers could result in a \$2,000 reward, supported by the fund. The establishment of the fund, which has already received over \$18,000 in donations, was spearheaded by Nicole Murray-Ramirez, City and County Commissioner, Chair of the San Diego GLBTQ Historic Task Force and Hate Crime Fund Founder.

“Today, we are sending a strong message to anyone thinking of committing a hate crime in San Diego County” said Nicole Murray-Ramirez. “Commit a hate crime and there will be a \$2,000 reward for your capture.”

Last year, the San Diego County District Attorney’s Office prosecuted 30 hate crime cases. Of those, 20 were race-based attacks and seven of the crimes targeted the LGBTQ+ community, an increase in both categories from the year before.

“Hate crimes ripple through our communities and hate against one group is a threat to everyone,” said District Attorney Summer Stephan. “We won’t tolerate these crimes in our community and

this new fund provides an additional tool that will engage the public, assist investigations and ultimately help us hold those who commit these crimes accountable.”

The San Diego Police Department also announced the creation of a new Hate Crimes Unit, which will centralize investigation of hate crimes that occur in the City of San Diego. Previously, various divisions within SDPD would investigate hate crimes that occurred in their area. The new unit will help ensure standardized and cohesive coordination of hate crimes investigations moving forward.

“Hate crimes have a profound impact on our communities and it has a lasting effect, both physically and emotionally, that is felt by all of us,” San Diego Police Chief Scott Wahl said. “Public safety is a shared mission, and we can’t do this alone. These tools will not only help us solve hate crimes, but also deter them in a real way.”

Several incidents have been identified as some of the first to utilize the Hate Crime Fund, providing a \$2,000 reward for information leading to the arrest of suspect(s) on felony charges:

1. On September 10, 2024, at Alcazar Garden in Balboa Park, an unidentified white male suspect approached a Hispanic female, told her she “doesn’t belong here,” made derogatory comments about her race, and swung a cane at her. The victim managed to avoid being injured by the attacker. The suspect is described as a 60-year-old white male.
2. On August 4, 2024, at 7:45 p.m., on the 6300 block of El Cajon Boulevard, an unidentified white female suspect approached an elderly Hispanic female, made derogatory comments about her race, and struck her in the head multiple times. The victim ran into the center median to get away from the suspect. A Good Samaritan stopped to help the victim and called 911. The suspect is described as a white female with blonde hair.
3. On September 8, 2024, around 2:15 a.m., near Whole Foods Market at 700 University Avenue in Hillcrest, three victims were hit in the head and face area with projectiles fired from a gel pellet style gun out of a moving vehicle. The suspect vehicle is described as an older model brown or beige minivan and the suspects are described as white or Hispanic males in their 20’s or 30’s.
4. On May 18, 2024, around 1:00 a.m., in front of Rich’s Nightclub, an employee was hit in the eye with a projectile fired from a gel pellet style gun out of a vehicle driving by. The victim required surgery and another victim was hit in the back of the head. The suspect vehicle is described as an older model black sedan.

Anyone with information regarding hate crimes is encouraged to call SDPD at (619) 531-2000 or Crime Stoppers at (888) 580-8477.

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