

17. Under advisement from December 12, 2023 (Item No. 11): Receive report from the Office of the County Executive relating to strategies for implementing the recommendations from the Hate Prevention and Inclusion Task Force to prevent and respond to hate incidents and hate crimes in Santa Clara County. (ID# 24-3293)



24-3293

DATE: February 6, 2024 (Item No. {{item.number}})

TO: Board of Supervisors

FROM: Rocio G. Luna, Deputy County Executive
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SUBJECT: Implementation Strategies for Hate Prevention and Inclusion Task Force Recommendations

RECOMMENDED ACTION

Under advisement from December 12, 2023 (Item No. 11): Receive report from the Office of the County Executive relating to strategies for implementing the recommendations from the Hate Prevention and Inclusion Task Force to prevent and respond to hate incidents and hate crimes in Santa Clara County.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no fiscal implications associated with the receipt of this informational report. Implementation of the recommendations as described in this report would have an estimated one-time impact to the County General Fund of \$1,500,000 and an estimated ongoing impact of \$400,000 relating to the addition of a Senior Management Analyst and a Program Manager I in the Office of the County Executive. The one-time cost of \$1,500,000 would reduce the availability of one-time funding in Fiscal Year (FY) 2024-2025. The ongoing cost would increase the structural deficit by \$400,000 and would require an offset in order to achieve a balanced budget for FY 2024-2025.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION AND BACKGROUND

On December 12, 2023 (Item No. 11), the Board approved a referral from Supervisor Chavez and Supervisor Lee to Administration to provide a report related to the Hate Prevention and Inclusion Task Force (HPITF) recommendations for preventing and responding to hate incidents and hate crimes in Santa Clara County. Administration was asked to include preliminary strategies, with estimated resource allocations, for implementation of the proposed work. This report provides the requested information under the following five categories: 1) Education, Training, and Support to Address Religious Bias; 2) Expand Anti-Hate and Advocacy Partner Operations; 3) Creation of a Working Group; 4) Countywide Communications Campaign to Increase Awareness; and 5) Continuation and Expansion of the Mini-Grants Program.

Not many counties or city municipalities have dedicated resources to prevent or respond to community hate incidents. For those that do, dedicated funds have been set aside to support activities either in full or in part. It should also be noted that while some of the strategies listed below explicitly address religious bias, all included strategies for the proposed work aim to build awareness and inclusion around race, gender (identity and expression), sexual orientation, disability, and immigration status.

1. Education, Training, and Support to Address Religious Bias

On October 20, 2023 (Item No. 4), HPITF members noted that some educational materials are already available or would require very little updating to solidify curricula and make available to provide information on religious bias in Santa Clara County. In order to understand the needed support, staff would need additional time to survey current local educational resources and training organizations. Also, additional information would need to be gathered to best understand the most common misconceptions and information gaps that training would serve to address. After an initial assessment, the securing of providers including field experts and training specialists would likely result through an informal competitive process for awards.

As Santa Clara County is a large geographic and diverse community, staff recommend the building of training infrastructure to maximize reach and availability of training efforts. Some strategies for maximizing training efforts would include the creation of on-demand training modules, supporting providers with accessible training products that include captioning and interpretation in multiple languages, and the recording of key content for future use. Additionally, as informed by training strategies in the County, staff recommend progressively tiered and specialized training modules that will move learners from beginner to advanced modules and can give specific guidance to specific groups such as healthcare workers, community leaders, and educators.

Resources: Additional staffing would be needed for the coordination of work and the collection and analysis of data. Recording and module building may be offset by the use of external vendors.

One-time funding: Initial estimates start at \$100,000 for out-of-the box training sessions. Additional funds would be needed depending on the scope, frequency, and availability of additional training offerings.

2. Expand Anti-Hate and Advocacy Partner Operations

Throughout the convening of HPITF, community leaders voiced the need to build more stable partner operations. Rising trends of hate incidents and hate crimes place anti-hate and advocacy partner organizations in a challenging and destabilizing position of having to respond to urgent and critical incidents with minimal training and few resources. In order for organizations to expand their operations of preventing and responding to hate in a sustainable manner, targeted investments are needed in these areas.

To aid in both the prevention of hate and the responding to hate, one option is for the County to have a grant process to support local anti-hate and advocacy partner organizations. This process would require organizations to self-identify as partner organizations and describe

their contributions and services offered to combat hate. Grants would be disbursed based on the size and need of the organization.

Resources: Staff would be needed to administer the grant process including establishing partner organizations as County vendors; processing awards; and collecting, analyzing, and reporting on any data metrics. Reliance on staff would lessen if a community-based organization (CBO) were to be selected as the backbone organization to administer the grants.

One-time funding: The grant pool would be dependent on the estimated number of awards and anticipated range of awards. For example, distribution of \$10,000 to 20 awardees would necessitate a total allocation of \$200,000.

3. *Creation of a Working Group*

Since 2022, the California Civil Rights Department (CRD) has housed the Commission on the State of Hate (Commission), a body that monitors trends in hate activity in California, engages in research on hate activity, increases awareness of the status of hate through public forums and collaborations, and makes recommendations about how to prevent and respond to hate activity. The Commission was established to strengthen California's efforts to stop hate and promote mutual respect among the state's diverse populations. The activities of the Commission are open to the public, and it is charged with the following duties:

- Publish a rigorous, comprehensive accounting of hate activity in California.
- Engage in fact finding and research on hate activity.
- Host community forums on the status of hate.
- Provide resources and guidance to communities and government officials on how to effectively reduce and respond to hate activity.

The creation of a local working group would align with the functions and purpose of the Commission, while having a distinct focus on Santa Clara County and being informed by state and national trends. To ensure efficiencies, staff recommend for the working group to include the following characteristics:

- The working group is not a formal legislative body governed by the Brown Act. Instead, the working group is an operational-focused body with full flexibility to convene formal and ad hoc sessions in a format that is in-person, virtual, or hybrid.
- The working group has official membership selected from self-nominated participants, but with mechanisms for the public to give input including but not limited to public forums, town halls, and listening sessions.
- The working group is responsible for setting priorities for the disbursement of funds allocated toward hate incident/hate crime prevention.

Resources: Staffing resources would need to be allocated to ensure operational goals are met and information is accurately recorded and published.

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One-time funding: Funding would be needed for supplies for the working group and community sessions, as well as for securing any language access supports such as interpreters, translations, and captioning with an initial estimate of \$50,000, assuming limited activities.

4. Countywide Communications Campaign to Increase Awareness

CRD received funding and authorization from the State Legislature to establish the California versus Hate Resource Line and Network (CA vs. Hate). California vs. Hate is a non-emergency hate incident and hate crime reporting system to support individuals and communities targeted for hate. It is committed to making California a safer and more inclusive place for all by supporting and protecting diverse communities in partnership with organizations across the state. The goals of CA vs. Hate are to:

- Help individuals and communities targeted for hate.
- Identify options for next steps after an act of hate.
- Connect people targeted for hate with culturally competent resources and care coordination services.
- Improve hate incident and hate crime reporting data to enhance prevention and response.

California has created template documents that can be edited by local jurisdictions for community-specific distribution of information. The County could leverage the State's resources and infrastructure to launch a local campaign. Local strategies can range in activities from reach to the general population through widescale methods to specifically crafted approaches for hard-to-reach populations. Widescale methods include utilizing generalized messaging through the use of billboards, advertising on buses and bus stop shelters, and radio/television public service announcements. For hard-to-reach populations, strategies include utilizing targeted messaging through the use of social media, online searches, dissemination points based on zip codes, and trusted community messengers to provide specialized and culturally relevant information.

For example, in 2018, the Office of Immigrant Relations launched the "One County" campaign. The campaign was coordinated through a contract with Better World Advertising, a firm that developed the campaign messaging and marketing collateral with a total allocation of \$300,000, which included billboards and advertising through multiple media channels; and, Valley Transportation Authority provided discounted rates for limited campaign postings. Another example is when the County contracted with local CBOs, from 2020-2022, to address information gaps in Santa Clara County related to COVID-19 by distributing targeted messaging to hard-to-reach populations. Further, as comparison to another jurisdiction's anti-hate communication efforts, in 2020, after a surge of hate activity, the Board of Supervisors of Orange County approved \$1,000,000 to enhance and expand efforts to address hate in their county.

Resources: Depending on the strategies used, additional staff would be needed to coordinate and evaluate efforts. The dependence on staff would decrease if roles and responsibilities for

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tracking and evaluation were contracted to an outside vendor. However, staff oversight would be needed for any contract monitoring and internal reporting.

One-time funding: One-time funding would be contingent on the strategy or strategies utilized. The funding may range from several thousand dollars for limited, small-scale distribution strategies to upwards of several million for larger-scale distribution (including a combination of small-scale and larger-scale distributions).

5. Continuation and Expansion of the Mini-Grants Program

In FY 2021-2022, the Division of Equity and Social Justice (DESJ) administered 40 mini-grant agreements with community groups and individuals for \$2,500 each and a total disbursement of \$100,000 for the program. At the conclusion of the program, awardees noted the invaluable support of the County in reaching new audiences. Many awardees learned significantly about the needs, beliefs, and actions of their communities and wished to expand their work with additional funds. The distribution of the mini-grants required support from 1.5 FTE Senior Management Analysts and coordination with two staff from the Office of the County Executive’s Fiscal and Contracts teams. The Office of the County Counsel was leaned on heavily at the start of the program to draft and review all mini-grant agreements.

Resources: Dedicated staff would be needed to administer the program for 40 awardees. Additional numbers and scope may require additional staffing. Staffing would be reduced if the administration of the mini-grants were done by an outside vendor.

One-time funding: To reinstate the program as originally executed would require \$100,000. To implement recommendations from previous awardees and open opportunities to new vendors would require an increase in funding from the previous allocation.

Overall Resources. While not assigned to any one project, an additional Program Manager (I or II depending on scope), may be needed to support the coordination of projects and facilitation of bridging-conversations among community leaders, organizations, and County departments. This dedicated staff member could also be responsible for tracking outcomes and ensuring the successful completion of the overall initiative.

CHILD IMPACT

Addressing ways to combat hate would have a positive impact on children and youth—as measured by the County indicators “**Early Childhood Mental Health**” and “**Youth Feel Valued by the Community**”—through the support of activities that prevent and address hate incidents and hate crime for the diverse communities of Santa Clara County, including youth with identities most impacted and most at risk for becoming victims of hate.

SENIOR IMPACT

Addressing ways to combat hate would have a positive impact on seniors, particularly those who are victims or are at risk of becoming victims of hate incidents or hate crimes.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

Addressing ways to combat hate would have positive sustainability implications, especially as it pertains to community engagement in alignment with the County indicators under “**Enhancing Social Equity and Safety.**”