

PBP FORM 290 		PITTSBURGH BUREAU OF POLICE "HATE CRIME INVESTIGATIONS" <i>"...accountability, integrity and respect."</i>		ORDER NUMBER: 43-07
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06/01/00

1.0 PURPOSE:

- 1.1 The Pittsburgh Bureau of Police will take a proactive role in promoting peace and harmony within the community, and ensuring that rights guaranteed by state laws and the U.S. Constitution are protected for all citizens regardless of their race, color, ethnicity, or religion. When such rights are infringed upon by violence, intimidation, threats or other harassment, the Bureau will use every necessary resource to rapidly and decisively identify the perpetrators, arrest them and bring them before the court.
- 1.2 All acts of racial or religious violence or threats will be viewed as serious, and the investigations will be given priority attention.

2.0 DEFINITIONS:

- 2.1 A racially, ethnically or religiously targeted incident is an act threatened or attempted by any person or group of persons against the person or property of another individual or group that may in anyway constitute an expression of racial, ethnic or religious hostility. This includes threatening phone calls, hate mail, physical assaults, vandalism, cross burnings or destruction of other religious symbols, or firebombing. This list is not all-inclusive. Some incidents may not clearly fit a specific definition. In those cases, a common-sense approach must be used. If an incident appears to be an incident of racial, religious, or ethnic bias, it should be investigated as such. Verification can be made during the investigation.
- 2.2 Officers must recognize that a single incident such as vandalism or threats may initially appear as less serious when viewed in the larger context of all crime. Incident reports should be reviewed for patterns of incidents occurring at either the same location or directed at a particular individual or group. Very often what may begin as a minor incident escalates into a more serious crime.

3.0 POLICY:

- 3.1 It shall be the policy of the Bureau of Police to bring the investigative and enforcement elements of the Bureau into quick action following any and all reported or observed incidents of racial, religious or ethnic hatred. There is to be special emphasis placed on victim assistance and community cooperation in order to reduce victim/community trauma or fear. It must be remembered that the actions taken by the agency in dealing with incidents of racial, religious and ethnic bias are visible signs of concern and commitment to the community.
- 3.2 The proper investigation of racial, religious or ethnic incidents is the responsibility of all Pittsburgh Police Officers. Each officer must be sensitive to the feeling, needs and fears that may be present in the community as a result of incidents of this nature.