



**QUEENS COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY**

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**STATEMENT OF QUEENS DISTRICT ATTORNEY MELINDA KATZ**  
**ON CORONAVIRUS-INSPIRED HATE CRIMES**

Queens is arguably the most diverse county in the world and home to the largest immigrant population in New York City. This diversity is our strength and makes Queens County an amazing place to live, work and visit. We are the World's Borough and hate crimes have no place here. Crimes motivated by hate are an attack on all of us. When perpetrators commit a hate crime, they can inflict serious physical and psychological harm on their victims. But, more than that, they send a message of fear and terror to everyone who shares the victim's trait.

The spread of COVID-19 has generated concern that more hate crimes will arise out of prejudice and fear. We are working with the New York City Police Department's Hate Crimes Task Force and our local precincts to combat these crimes. I want to assure all those of Queens County that we will vigorously prosecute any hate crime motivated by the coronavirus.

**WHAT YOU CAN DO:**

**Immediately reporting incidents of hate crimes is critical.** Data gathered from reported incidents helps law enforcement and elected officials anticipate and allocate resources to combat hate crimes.

- If you witness a hate crime, believe that you are a victim or fear that you are about to be a victim **call 911 immediately.**

- To report past crimes or incidents: **call your local police precinct or the Queens District Attorney’s Office of Immigrant Affairs at: 718-286-6690 or email: [OIA@Queensda.org](mailto:OIA@Queensda.org)** Translators are on standby to assist.
- To report or file a civil discrimination or harassment complaint: **Call 311 and state you are calling about a “human rights” issue or Contact the New York State Attorney General’s Office at (800) 771-7755 or email: [Civil.Rights@AG.NY.gov](mailto:Civil.Rights@AG.NY.gov)**

At no time will an NYPD officer or the Queens District Attorney’s Office ask you about your immigration status, religious beliefs or sexual orientation when you report a crime.

When you speak with the police, make sure to report any offensive threats or statements that the perpetrator said to you during the incident.

If possible, photograph, record, or document any injury, graffiti or objects that the perpetrator may have used to commit the alleged crime.

It is also helpful to remember any unique physical descriptions of the alleged attacker such as tattoos, scars, clothing or shoe colors, and piercings.

Most importantly, stay safe and healthy during this pandemic. And know that we will get through these trying times together and that the Queens District Attorney’s Office is always available to help in your time of need.

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