

## Bias Related Incidents

### 1.0 POLICY

1.1 When bias related incidents are reported they shall be treated as a high priority and sufficient resources will be utilized to identify and arrest the perpetrator(s) if possible. All acts of bias related violence or threats will be considered serious and the investigation given appropriate priority attention. Members shall be particularly sensitive to the victim's concerns. During responses to bias related incidents members shall take necessary action to allay fear and provide safety to those threatened.

### 2.0 DEFINITION

2.1 BIAS RELATED INCIDENT A bias related incident is any unlawful act that is maliciously motivated, fully or in part, by the victim's actual or perceived race, color, religion, national origin, sex, ancestry, age, sexual orientation as described in Title 13, §§1455 and 1456. If an incident appears to be motivated by bias, it should be treated as such. Incidents should be closely reviewed for patterns of occurrences at either the same general location or directed at a particular individual or target group.

### 3.0 PROCEDURE

3.1 Members will investigate all bias related incidents thoroughly and completely.

3.2 The following areas should be examined to determine if an incident is bias related.

- (1) Possible motivation of perpetrator.
- (2) Perception of the victim.
- (3) Display of a symbol or emblem that could be perceived as offensive.
- (4) Date and time of occurrence. (Hanukkah, Martin Luther King Day, etc.)
- (5) Statements made by perpetrator.
- (6) Is the victim from one racial, religious or ethnic group and the suspect from another?
- (7) Did the victim recently move to the area?
- (8) If multiple incidents have occurred in a short period of time, are all the victims of the same racial, religious, or ethnic group?

3.3 All incidents believed to be bias related will be thoroughly investigated and documented.

3.4 Members shall attempt to ensure that the victims are aware of the services provided to them by the Victim's Assistance Act, other state agencies or support groups.

3.5 Members who receive complaints of denial of services, deprivation of basic rights, housing issues, or other acts that appears to be occurring because of a person's race, color, religion, sex, handicap, familial status or national origin should refer the complainant or assist the complainant in contacting:

Vermont Human Rights Commission

14-16 Baldwin Street

Montpelier, Vermont 05633-6301

800-416-2010 (voice)

802-828-2480(voice)

802-828-2481(fax)

877-294-9200(TTY)

Human.rights@state.vt.us

Effective July 1, 1990

Revised December 1, 1997

Revised June 15, 2009

The Vermont State Police Manual is not intended to apply in any criminal or civil proceeding outside of internal Department proceedings. No policy included in this publication should be construed as creating a higher legal standard of safety or care in an evidentiary sense with respect to third party claims. Violations of law will form the basis for civil and criminal sanctions in a recognized judicial setting.