



**County of Los Angeles**  
**Community and Senior Services**  
 Office of External Communications  
 3175 W. 6<sup>th</sup> Street, Suite 302 – Los Angeles, CA  
 90020  
<http://css.lacounty.gov>



Cynthia D. Banks  
 Director

**PRESS RELEASE**

**For Immediate Release**

February 29, 2016

Contact: Kevin Anderson  
 Office: (213) 738-2065  
 Cell: (213) 738-2593  
[kanderson@css.lacounty.gov](mailto:kanderson@css.lacounty.gov)

**INCREASE IN ANTI-MUSLIM HATE CRIMES IN LA COUNTY**

**New Analysis by County Commission Reveals Hate Crime Reports Rose in November and December 2015 Following Paris and San Bernardino Killings**

After the Paris (Nov. 2015) and San Bernardino attacks (Dec. 2015), amidst anti-Muslim statements by high profile figures and its amplification by the media, L.A. County government has been concerned about the dangers this poses to the safety and well-being of the tens of thousands of L.A. County residents of the Muslim faith. Following the September 11<sup>th</sup> attack, there was a meteoric rise in acts of hate and violence against those who were Muslim and those who are perceived as such, particularly those of the Sikh faith.

The L.A. County Commission on Human Relations carried out a special research project on hate crimes in November and December of 2015, and found that there was only 1 anti-Muslim/Middle Easterner hate crime in November and December of 2014, and that number rose to 11 anti-Muslim/Middle Easterner hate crimes in 2015 for those two months. Note that while the 2014 numbers are complete, the 2015 hate crime reports are still being received and reviewed, so this number could increase.

**Reported Anti-Muslim/Middle Easterner Hate Crimes in LA County:**

Month	November 2014	December 2014	TOTAL HCs
# of Hate Crimes	1	0	1

Month	November 2015	December 2015	
# of Hate Crimes	2	9	11

Here are descriptions of some of these anti-Muslim/Middle Easterner hate crimes reported in L.A. County following the Paris and San Bernardino attacks in November and December 2015:

- **December 1:** At a restaurant in L.A. a man asked the victim, “Where are you from?” Victim stated he was from Saudi Arabia. Suspect then yelled at him and punched and kicked him.
- **December 2** (day of San Bernardino shootings): An Islamic organization in North Hollywood received phone calls from a suspect who used profanity, ridiculed Islam and stated that he hoped that Israel would eliminate Palestine, Turkey and Syria.
- **December 3:** An Islamic school in Hawthorne received a threat that everyone on the premises would be shot.
- **December 14:** An unknown suspect defaced the exterior of a middle school in Lake Balboa with graffiti that included expletives and anti-Islamic rhetoric and referred to a teacher by name.
- **December 17:** In a park in South L.A. a homeless victim who is Muslim and from Iraq was punched by a man who used profane language and told the individual to “Go back to your country.” Victim had previously been attacked by the same man.
- **December 19:** In Chatsworth, a victim found his motorcycle scratched and spray painted with anti-Arab language.

On December 15, 2015, the L.A. County Board of Supervisors unanimously passed a motion made by Hilda Solis, Chair of the Board, and Supervisor Sheila Kuehl, to condemn the violence in San Bernardino, to recognize that “no religion or race or ethnicity is responsible for these acts,” and that “fear-based stereotyping and scapegoating creates an atmosphere conducive to Islamophobia, xenophobia, discrimination, hate, and bigotry.” The motion directs County agencies to increase outreach and assistance to the targeted vulnerable communities.

On January 20, 2016, the L.A. Countywide Criminal Justice Coordination Committee, chaired by Supervisor Solis, established a Task Force to promote stronger relations and cooperation among police agencies and affected communities, and to more effectively prepare for any future incident that could result in increased hate crime. The Task Force held its first meeting this week.

*The Los Angeles County Commission on Human Relations is one of the oldest and largest agencies of its kind. In 1944, following the interracial violence of Los Angeles’ Zoot Suit Riots, the L.A. County Board of Supervisors created the Committee for Interracial Progress, which later became the Commission. Today, the Commission is working to transform prejudice into acceptance, inequity into justice, and hostility into peace, through its strategic priorities on youth, human relations leadership, fairness and equity in the County’s criminal justice systems, and by strengthening hate violence prevention and response. The Commission is part of L.A. County’s Department of Community and Senior Services.*

###