

Province putting up \$3.3 million to develop programs to battle hate-crimes in Ontario

Written By ALYSSA PARKHILL

The provincial government is taking significant steps to support the prevention of hate-motivated crimes in communities across Ontario.

Last Wednesday (July 22), Dufferin-Caledon MPP Sylvia Jones revealed the Province is writing a cheque for \$1.7 million to go towards 'community-based programs to combat hate-motivated crimes.'

'Our government has zero tolerance for hate, racism and discrimination in all forms,' said MPP Sylvia Jones, who also serves as Ontario's Solicitor General.

The funding will go towards programs for the next two years, until 2022.

The \$1.7 million is being provided from the Safer and Vital Communities Grant and will be distributed to successful applicants from non-profit organizations and First Nation Band Councils.

The grant 'provides funding to community-based, not-for-profit organizations and First Nations Chiefs and Band Councils to address local risks to safety and well-being in the community'.

In 2017, Canada had 2,073 police-reported hate crimes, with over 1,000 of them taking place in Ontario. In 2018, there were a total of 1,798 police-reported hate crimes in the country with 762 of them in Ontario.

According to these statistics, Ontario sees more motivated hate-crimes, whether on race or ethnicity, religion and sexual orientation, than any other province.

'We must continue to work together to confront these real-life barriers that threaten and limit opportunities for too many Ontarians,' said Jones. 'Effective solutions cannot come from government alone, and the Safer and Vital Communities grant will allow community-based organizations to be full partners in the fight against hate in Ontario.'

To be eligible for the funding, organizations must apply and be dedicated to address hate-crimes in their community. This can be done in the form of a series of programs such as recreational, youth development and raising awareness.

Applicants will be chosen and announced in the winter of 2021.

In addition to the grant of \$1.7 million toward community organizations, another \$1.6 million is being invested to protect communities against all hate and racism.

Solicitor General and MPP Jones announced on Tuesday (July 28), the new grant that will flow over the next two years to 'create a new Anti-Racism and Anti-Hate Grant program.'

'Racism and hate will not be tolerated and our government is doing everything it can to protect people from being victimized because of their race or religious beliefs,' said Jones. 'This new grant program will be developed collaboratively with community partners across Ontario to ensure it leads to the most effective solutions in the fight against racism and hate in our province. These much-needed solutions cannot come from government alone.'

This new grant also falls in line with Ontario's Anti- Black Racism Strategy to combat and break down the barriers to improve and

move forward with racial equity. To do this, the government is planning on reviewing government policies, programs and services to provide more opportunities and better outcomes.

Working in the role of Minister Responsible for Anti-Racism, MPP Jones is dedicated to increasing public awareness and bringing vital change.

For more information, please visit [Ontario.ca](https://www.ontario.ca).