**Hate Crimes Key Terms**

**Disability** – any physical or mental impairment

**Ethnic group** – a group having real or putative common ancestry, memories of a sharedpast, and a cultural focus upon one or more symbolic elements which define the group’s identity

**Ethnicity** – a group of people whose members identify with each other through acommon heritage, often consisting of a common language and culture, and an ideology that stresses common ancestry

**Hate Crime** – a criminal action against an individual or a group which is motivated byhatred of race, religion, sexual orientation, handicap, ethnicity, or national origin. A hate crime can be an act of intimidation, threats, property damage, assault, and even murder

**National origin** – citizenship, a cultural affiliation to a national group, which may be linkedto a state other than that of which the person is a citizen

**Nationality** – a legal bond between a person and a state; does not indicate the person’sethnic origin

**Protected Characteristics** – a characteristic shared by a group: race, language, religion,ethnicity, nationality, or any other similar common factor

**Race** – a local geographic or global human population distinguished as a more or lessdistinct group by genetically transmitted physical characteristics

**Religion** – a lack of religious belief; religious or philosophical convictions related to theexistence of or non-existence of a god

**Sexual orientation** – heterosexuality, bisexuality, or homosexuality