The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of Public Safety and Security
One Ashburton Place, Room 2133
Boston, Massachusetts 02108
Tel: (617) 727-7775
TTY Tel: (617) 727-6618
Fax: (617) 727-4764
www.mass.gov/eopss

MAURA T. HEALEY
Governor

KIMBERLEY DRISCOLL
Lieutenant Governor

GINA K. KWON
Secretary

MEETING MINUTES
HATE CRIME TASK FORCE

Date: August 3, 2026
Time: 2:00 pm - 3:30 pm
Microsoft Teams: Join the meeting now **Meeting ID**: 272280252765 **Passcode:** Lbpwfa
Dial in by phone +1 857-327-9245,,813708751# **Phone conference ID:** 813 708 751#

1. Welcome

On Monday, August 3, 2026, at 2:00 pm, Secretary Kwon called the Hate Crimes Task Force meeting to order. Advance notice of the meeting was posted in compliance with the open meeting laws. A quorum of the membership was present, and roll call was taken.

Secretary Kwon introduced EOPSS newly appointed Undersecretary for Law Enforcement Jennifer Kirshenbaum. Undersecretary Kirshenbaum shared her excitement about this role and looks forward to meeting everyone.

	Membership	Present	Absent	Meeting Minutes
1	**Co-Chair** Secretary Gina Kwon	X		Abstain
2	**Co-Chair** Josh Kraft	X		X
3	*Ariella Hellman	X		
4	Ana Javier		X	
5	Liam Lowney	X		X
6	Margaret Rwaramba	X		X
7	Chief Kelly Nee	X		X
8	*Officer Israel "Izzy" Marrero	X		
9	Kevin Baker		X	
10	Timothy Moran	X		X
11	Genevieve Nadeau	X		X
12	Matthew Owens	X		Abstain
13	Amanda Robbins	X		X
14	Representative Brandy Fluker Reid	X		X
15	Senator Rebecca Rausch	X		X

16	Giselle Byrd	X		Abstain
17	Devin Dear	X		Abstain
18	Vacant Teacher			
19	Chief Jody Kasper	X		X
20	Bishop Talbert Swan II	X		X
21	*Sheriff Frank Cousins	X		
22	Representative Steven George Xiarhos		X	
23	Jennifer Cotter	X		X
24	Robert Trestan	X		X
25	Dara Kaufman	X		X
26	Dr. Nawal Nour	X		X
27	DA Anthony Gulluni		X	

*Arrived after roll call vote, Ariella Hellman, Officer Marrero, Sheriff Cousins

EOPSS Staff: General Counsel Suleyken Walker, Undersecretary Jennifer Kirshenbaum, Lisa Caputo, William Ramsdell and Cliff Goodband

2. Review and Approval of Draft Meeting Minutes from May 4, 2026

Dr. Nour moved to approve the draft meeting minutes, which Josh Kraft seconded. The meeting minutes were approved.

3. Membership Updates

Secretary Kwon welcomed three new task force members and invited each to introduce themselves.

Sergeant Matt Owens shared that he has over 20 years of experience as a police officer and has been with the State Police since 2011 in various assignments. He served as a task force officer with the FBI, worked for the HART Unit, and is now taking over for Sergeant Todisco.

Giselle Byrd, as Senator Miranda's designee on the task force, shared that she is the Executive and Artistic Director at The Theater Offensive, a Tony-nominated company, and that she also serves on the Massachusetts Commission on the Status of Women. Giselle stated it is an honor to be able to be here and looking forward to protecting our community.

Devin Dear, as the student seat, shared that he attended Boston College for his freshman and sophomore years and recently transferred to Northeastern to pursue mechanical engineering. Devin is very excited to contribute in any way that he can.

Josh Kraft also welcomed each new member to the task force.

Rep. Fluker-Reid asked about the status of the educator's seat and would like to help provide recommendations, as she knows a few teacher organizations. Anjeza will follow up with Rep Fluker-Reid.

Chief Nee suggested it would be helpful to receive an updated roster and email listserv of the task force members.

4. Presentation of the MSP Hart Unit

Sergeant Owens presented on HART (Hate Crime Awareness and Response Team, which included:

- Mission & Operational Network
  - Core Mission Statement
    - Enhance local, state, and federal partnerships while strengthening relationships with community leaders to respond more effectively and efficiently to hate crimes and hate-based incidents across Massachusetts.
  - Inter-Agency Integration
    - Commonwealth Fusion Center (CFC)
    - Boston Regional Intelligence Center (BRIC)
    - National Targeting Officers (NTD)
    - Joint Terrorism Task Force (JTTF)
- HART Investigations overview of 2025, 2026 data
- Case Studies from Braintree, UMass Boston
  - Braintree
    - The Braintree incident involved a reported physical altercation originating from a highway road rage incident that included racial epithets as he chased the victim. The subject was arrested and charged.
  - UMass Boston
    - The UMass Boston incident involved a report of a yarmulke set on fire by an unknown male. The same subject was seen on camera writing on the walls at multiple locations and hanging posters around campus. Investigators subsequently identified the subject through a social media search. HART assisted in the interview of the subject. Investigators arrested and charged the subject, but the charges were ultimately dismissed.
- HART Portal Capabilities and Essential Partnerships

Sergeant Owens emphasized that the case studies are extremely complex and used as an example of evidentiary and prosecutorial difficulties and the importance of documenting hate-based investigations. Sergeant Owens concluded the presentation and opened it up for any questions.

Giselle Byrd inquired about the existence of a hotline and shared her personal incident of hate speech and how it took a little time to recognize that it was hate speech, with having to explain the incident repeatedly.

Robert Trestan gave an overview of some of the presentations the task force has heard, including the State of Oregon and LA v. Hate, and noted the need for legislation in Massachusetts to create a trauma-informed way to respond to hate incidents.

Secretary Kwon said both the US Attorney's Office and Attorney General's Office have hotlines, but not a specific hate crime hotline, and that a subcommittee could recommend one.

Robert Trestan also inquired if the task force could receive a status update on the EOPSS annual report, when the 2025 data would be released, and how the HART data interacts with that report. The last report was 2024. Secretary Kwon stated that the report is in its final approval stage and, when approved, will be released.

Chief Nee recalled a previous recommendation from a task force subcommittee that had been implemented, which involved sending a notice to every police chief in Massachusetts encouraging the designation of a civil rights officer within their department. She inquired whether the task force was continuing to follow up on that recommendation. Secretary Kwon will follow up if a list currently exists.

5. Update from the Representatives of the Hate Crimes Task Force Working Group
There were no updates to share for the working groups. A fall meeting will be scheduled for the annual report subcommittee. Secretary Kwon also emphasized the importance of members actively participating in the subcommittees.

6. Update on Hate Crime Legislative Bills
William Ramsdell reported that nothing the legislative subcommittee and the task force were tracking had advanced. The session has ended, and we are currently on a break until January. Senator Rauch's amendment to add sex and gender as a protected class was included, so we are continuing to track that status.

Senator Rauch asked the task force about sending a letter to the Conference Committee about the importance of keeping that.

7. Open Session for Topics not Reasonably Anticipated within 48 Hours of the Meeting
No new topics were raised.

8. Adjourn
A motion to adjourn was made and seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 3:30 pm.