The Downers Grove Public Library's Framework for Releasing Anti-Hate Statements is a living document that may change as library staff and leadership continue to learn and grow. This document is not a comprehensive checklist for all situations; rather, this document is intended to help library staff, management, and Trustees navigate the process of releasing an anti-hate statement. An anti-hate statement is a useful tool to support historically, intentionally, and traditionally marginalized people groups (HITMPGs) and may serve as a learning resource for all community members. The library released its first anti-hate statement following the murder of George Floyd, in June 2020. As additional hate incidents occurred, a clear need emerged to publicly communicate support during times of crisis. As the library continued its equity, diversity, and inclusion journey, omission of such statements became evident and needed to be addressed. Library staff created this document to provide a structured approach to the development of anti-hate statements. Additionally, this document is meant to uphold transparency in the library's process of releasing anti-hate statements. Two Board Meeting discussions on this framework can be found [here](#) and [here](#). EDI Training for Trustees led by RGW Consulting in June can be found [here](#) and September can be found [here](#). Statements are considered by staff, the Equity Advisory Team, and the Board of Library Trustees prior to their release.

Releasing statements that are in line with the library's EDI work is something that is vital to showing support to HITMPGs. Anti-hate statements celebrate diversity by making HITMPGs and issues they face visible. Drawing attention to hate incidents and violence experienced by HITMPGs neither excludes our support nor denies another group's pain and suffering.

Why do we release anti-hate statements?

Releasing anti-hate statements accomplishes three primary goals:

- To show support of HITMPGs: through statements, the library can show strong support, ensure they feel welcome, and establish they have a safe space at the library
- To communicate that hate has no home in the library: this kind of behavior will not be tolerated within our building
- To model behavior that we would like to see in the community: we are acting as a catalyst for positive change

The support of HITMPGs in a time of need is the primary and most significant reason for releasing a statement. In addition to any statement, the library must continue to demonstrate its commitment to EDI work through other efforts within the library's practices and policies.

What situations do we write an anti-hate statement for? When do we release a statement?

Anti-hate statements should be released any time a HITMPG or community group is experiencing a need for support against hate and violence on a public and large platform. This may be due to a one-time incident, or an escalation of numerous incidents over time. Local, national, and international events should be taken into consideration. If a community group is in crisis, it warrants an anti-hate statement. If people in the targeted community group would feel scared to come to the library or go in public, the library should release a statement.

Statements should be released in a timely manner to provide the most amount of support to the HITMPG.

Who is the audience?

The primary audience for the statement is the affected HITMPG, as our primary goal is to show support for the community in crisis. Other community members are invited to consider the statement by reflecting on the actions that would warrant the library to release an anti-hate statement, the historic and systemic hate, and resources for change.

How do we write one?

Statements should not be hollow, whitewashed, or generic, which can cause more harm and pain for the HITMPG. To avoid these problems, it is important to follow a few rules of thumb:

- Be authentic and genuine in concern for the HITMPG. Authors of statements should carefully consider what the community in crisis is experiencing, where they feel seen or unseen, and how the library can support them.
- Name the specific issue(s) at hand. By naming the problem, the library is acknowledging the root cause of harm to the community. Additionally, the library acknowledges historically harmful narratives. This makes the marginalized community feel validated and seen.
- Show empathy for families and community members that have experienced loss.
- Express support for the staff members and community members that identify and relate to the HITMPG.
- Provide a path forward for readers: suggest resources, our own book lists, and ways to be an ally.
- Do not copy and paste or link to other statements unless appropriate. Using another individual's or organization's statement is not acceptable.
- When crafting the statement, be aware of the *characteristics of white supremacy*. Do not shape a statement around easing white fragility. Instead, focus on the impacted community group.

Where is it posted and shared?

Each statement will have different needs. It's important to consider the statement when identifying how it is posted and shared.

- All statements should be posted on the library's EDI page. When a new statement is posted, the EDI homepage slider will be posted with a prompt for patrons to visit the webpage.
- The statement should be posted on social media with direction to the library's EDI webpage. An abbreviated version may be the most appropriate depending on the length of the statement.
- An email may be sent to the library's patron base with the statement and EDI webpage link. It may be appropriate to send an abbreviated version or mention of the statement with the library's regular eNews in place of a separate email, depending on the situation.