



# WYCKOFF POLICE DEPARTMENT

340 Franklin Avenue  
Wyckoff, New Jersey 07481



David V Murphy  
Chief of Police

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## Wyckoff Police Department PRESS RELEASE

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**TO: ALL NEWS MEDIA**  
**FROM: Wyckoff Police Department**  
**DATE: June 17, 2020**  
**CONTACT: Lieutenant Joseph Soto**

**(201) 891-2121 DISPATCH**  
[wyckoffpolice@wyckoffpolice.org](mailto:wyckoffpolice@wyckoffpolice.org)

On Wednesday, June 17, 2020, at approximately 07:27 hrs., patrol units from the Wyckoff Police Department were dispatched to the Gourmet Garden Restaurant at 85 Crescent Avenue on a report of “Corona Virus” and Bias graffiti spray painted on the doors, windows and sidewalk area of the business. The Wyckoff Police Department Detective Bureau and the Bergen County Sheriff’s Office Bureau of Criminal Investigations responded to process the scene. In consultation with The Bergen County Prosecutors Office, they have identified this as a Bias Crime. The investigation thus far shows no other reason for the crime other than the ethnicity of the business and its owners. At this time, if caught, the actor(s) will face charges consistent with Bias Intimidation and Criminal Mischief. If the investigation reveals additional information, other charges may be applicable.

Bias Intimidation by statute is defined as

### **2C:16-1. Bias Intimidation.**

a. Bias Intimidation. A person is guilty of the crime of bias intimidation if he commits, attempts to commit, conspires with another to commit, or threatens the immediate commission of an offense specified in chapters 11 through 18 of Title 2C of the New Jersey Statutes; N.J.S.2C:33-4; N.J.S.2C:39-3; N.J.S.2C:39-4 or N.J.S.2C:39-5,

(1)with a purpose to intimidate an individual or group of individuals because of race, color, religion, gender, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, national origin, or ethnicity; or

(2)knowing that the conduct constituting the offense would cause an individual or group of individuals to be intimidated because of race, color, religion, gender, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, national origin, or ethnicity; or

(3)under circumstances that caused any victim of the underlying offense to be intimidated and the victim, considering the manner in which the offense was committed, reasonably believed either that



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(a) the offense was committed with a purpose to intimidate the victim or any person or entity in whose welfare the victim is interested because of race, color, religion, gender, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, national origin, or ethnicity, or (b) the victim or the victim's property was selected to be the target of the offense because of the victim's race, color, religion, gender, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, national origin, or ethnicity.

b. Permissive inference concerning selection of targeted person or property. Proof that the target of the underlying offense was selected by the defendant, or by another acting in concert with the defendant, because of race, color, religion, gender, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, national origin, or ethnicity shall give rise to a permissive inference by the trier of fact that the defendant acted with a purpose to intimidate an individual or group of individuals because of race, color, religion, gender, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, national origin, or ethnicity.

Chief Murphy stated that The Wyckoff Police Department will be taking a swift and aggressive response in the investigation of this crime. The Wyckoff Police Department will not tolerate bias incidents, hate crimes, racism or any other cowardly act meant to alienate a member of our community. We all work diligently to make Wyckoff a community of acceptance. We will not allow that to change. I am appalled by this event. We stand with and support the owners of this business. This incident is not a reflection of our Wyckoff community, but rather a reflection of a hate-filled person. As we have stated many times, the main priority of our officers is our community and their safety. We would like to thank all those in the community that either contacted us or responded directly to the business with their show of support and offers of help in the cleanup efforts.

We are asking the community to provide any information that you feel may be of value to our investigation. All tips will remain anonymous.

Please direct all information to Detective Sergeant Michael Ragucci or Detective Sergeant Kevin Kasak at 201-891-2121 or [detectives@wyckoffpolice.org](mailto:detectives@wyckoffpolice.org)