

NEWS

TOWNSHIP OF WOODBRIDGE



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Acting Attorney General Andrew J. Bruck, Mayor John E. McCormac, and Woodbridge Police Department Announce WPD SAFE PLACE Program



Left to Right: Chief of Staff to Middlesex County Prosecutor Paul Miller, New Jersey State Police Lt. John Hayes, Middlesex County Corrections Chief Investigator David D'Amico, Councilwoman Lizbeth DeJesus, Mayor John McCormac, Patrol Officer Jessenia Minsal, Acting Attorney General Andrew J. Bruck, Woodbridge Police Director Robert Hubner, Woodbridge Police Deputy Director Joseph Nisky, Patrol Officer Khari Manzini

Woodbridge – Acting Attorney General Andrew J. Bruck, Mayor John E. McCormac and the nationally accredited Woodbridge Police Department (WPD) today unveiled a nationally recognized initiative designed to create awareness and increase safety for victims of Discrimination, Bias and Hate Crimes - the **WPD SAFE PLACE** Program.

“Vulnerable populations, most notably the LGBTQ+ community, have increasingly become targets of hatred and bias incidents. The Woodbridge Police Department (WPD) stands committed to providing for the safety and security of all residents and visitors - including the LGBTQ+ community. **WPD SAFE PLACE** is geared to enhance the relationship between the Woodbridge Police Department, the LGBTQ+ community, victims of bias incidents, local businesses, schools and allies,” said Mayor McCormac.

“I applaud the Woodbridge Police Department for implementing the Safe Place Program, and demonstrating their commitment to preventing and reducing anti-LGBTQ+ crimes,” said Acting Attorney General Andrew J. Bruck. “Initiatives like this can potentially save lives, and send a clear message to New Jersey’s most vulnerable residents that their safety matters.”



Acting Attorney General Andrew Bruck Speaking on the Woodbridge Safe Place Program

Woodbridge Police Director Robert Hubner reported that the goal of the **WPD SAFE PLACE** program is to reduce crimes of hate while demonstrating a Township-wide “no tolerance” policy toward discrimination. WPD Community Affairs Officers have undertaken the mission to engage Woodbridge Township businesses, places of worship, schools, recreation facilities and other locations to participate in the **WPD SAFE PLACE** program.

The WPD provides program information and specially designed decals to the participating allies encouraging those locations and entities to clearly post the signage at the entrance(s) and publicly visible areas in their premise as the symbol of a safe haven for victims of LGBTQ+ crime. If a victim of a bias incident enters the Safe Place, an ally will be able to provide a list of resources compiled by the Woodbridge Police Department or assist the victim in contacting the appropriate police and/or support services.



Woodbridge Police Department's LGBTQ Liaison Officer Khari Manzini

Resource List:

Sexual Health:

Nursing contact number: **732- 855-0600 ext. 5012**

Nursing website: <https://www.twp.woodbridge.nj.us/209/Nursing>

Middlesex County Center for Empowerment: 1-877-665-7273

Women Aware: 732-249-4504

Catholic Charities (for counseling/housing issues): 732-826-6278

Rutgers UBHC (for counseling/mental health): 1-800-969-5300

2ND Door: Statewide counseling and support service for Youth (not specific to LGBTQ), message board and text messaging support: **888 222 2228**

Pride Center: 85 Raritan Avenue, Suite 100, Highland Park NJ, 08904-2430. **732-846-2232**

Request for WPD Safe Place Decals:

WPD SAFE PLACE decals (4"x 6") are provided FREE of charge. These decals are specifically designed for businesses, schools, organizations and allies to post at or near the front entrance to their premise as a symbol of safety for victims of LGBTQ+ related crimes and as a warning to criminal offenders. **WPD SAFE PLACE** decals are NOT to be displayed in private residences. If interested in participating in The **WPD SAFE PLACE** Program, please provide the name of your business, the address, and your contact information by emailing us at the SafePlace@twp.woodbridge.nj.us or call the non-emergency phone number, **732-634-7700**, for the Community Affairs Unit.

To learn more about the program visit: [TWP.Woodbridge.NJ.US/Safe Place](http://TWP.Woodbridge.NJ.US/SafePlace).

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