

LGBT Safe Places Program

TPD hopes to prevent hate crimes

BY: Kevin Boughton

POSTED: 6:09 PM, Sep 26, 2016



VIDEO BY KGUN

+SHOW CAPTION



TUCSON (KGUN9-TV) - The Tucson Police Department is looking for businesses willing to become safe places for members of the LGBT community to come if they've been the victim of a hate crime, or they fear they might be.

Officers are rolling out a new program, Safe Place, it hopes will prevent hate crimes in the city.

"This was a way for the department to get that rolled out before these types of events occur," said Lt. Colin King.

"I think it shows TPD recognizes that there's still an issue in our community where people do face discrimination based on their gender, color, and something needs to be done," said Tucson Pride President John Foley.

King says when businesses sign up they agree to let people stay inside their business and wait for police to arrive. The department is working with the group Tucson Pride, launching the program this weekend during the group's annual gay pride events.

King says the police department will give businesses a rainbow police badge decal to place in their window. The initial effort will focus on enrolling businesses in the Downtown District because of its high concentration of people and shops and restaurants, but King says he hopes to expand the program across the city.

There's no cost to participate for businesses, and basic training for those employees will be free, King says.