

# 01 Threat or Stereotype

On July 29, 2010 The Sikh American Legal Defense and Education Fund (SALDEF) provided cultural sensitivity training to approximately fifty FBI agents and staff members at the FBI's Washington Field Office. Participants watched 'On Common Ground'.



A DVD training video produced by SALDEF in collaboration with the Department of Justice, and received a presentation about the Sikh articles of faith, religious practices, and appropriate protocol when interacting with Sikh Americans. The presentation was well received and SALDEF was requested to hold a similar presentation in the near future.

The SALDEF DVD training course has been tailored here to familiarize law enforcement officers with cultural and religious practices associated with Sikhism. Awareness of cultural and religious observations, including those of Sikhism, can help avoid misunderstanding and tension – assisting the public in understanding the challenges and realizing the contributions of the Sikh community in America.

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**NOTE ►** This course is primarily video based. Questions throughout the course are based upon the content within the videos. Each video segment has a specific focus and contributes directly to the overall goal of the course.

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◀ Click the graphic to view an introductory video.

Be sure to keep an eye out for anything unusual.

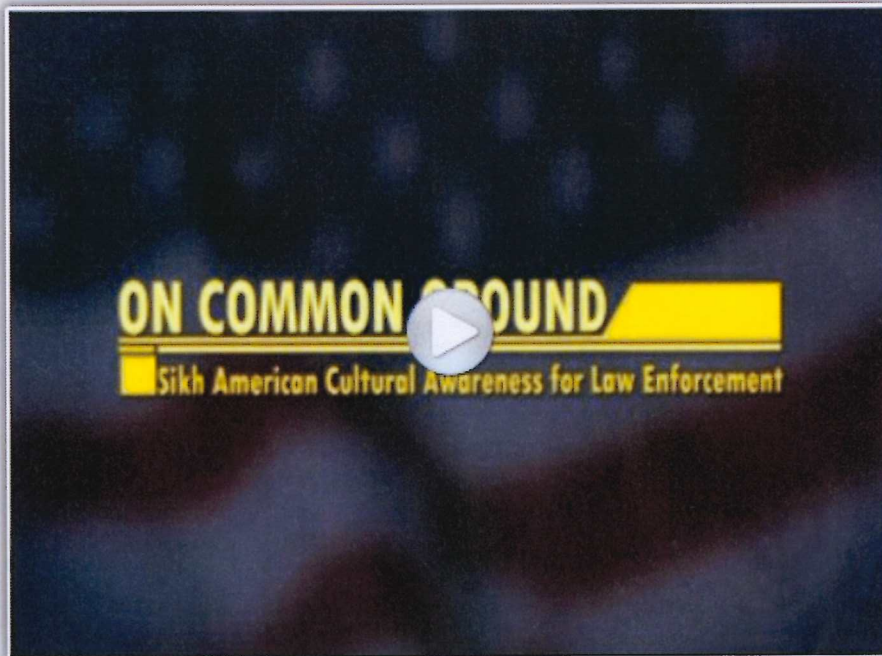
There are many reasons why cultural awareness is important to our role as police officers.

Often times, being aware of the nuances of another culture will lessen the incidents of miscommunication and conflict in the community we serve.



## Course Perspective

This next video highlights some of the circumstances under which this course material applies. ▼





## 02 Sikh Americans

Who exactly are Sikh Americans?  
This segment introduces who they are, their origins and religion. ►

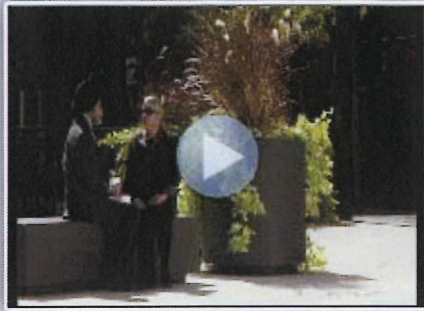
Estimates indicate there are currently *three thousand Sikh Americans* who have made the Las Vegas Valley their home today.



◀ Distinct characteristics about Sikh names.

When did Sikh Americans arrive in the United States and how have they contributed? ►





◀ Common misconceptions about their religion, attire and origins.

Misunderstandings. ▶



## **Review your understanding of the topics in this lesson.**

To take a test, click the "Post Test" radio button. To review your past test results for this course, select the "*See prior results*" radio button. When you have made your selection, click the "*Submit Request*" button.

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## 03 Articles of faith



◀ The physical Sikh identity is defined by specific articles of faith and the Turban.

### Regarding the Kirpan

The kirpan is not designated a weapon, but a ceremonial, religious sword. It is not inherently designed as a weapon per NRS but there are some obvious officer safety concerns.

Remember to treat the kirpan with respect when encountering the item during a non emergency situation. There is very little case law in the United States regarding the wearing of the Kirpan.

Kirpans are not allowed on airplanes but have been allowed in schools with reasonable accommodations.







◀ Guidelines for wearing the Kirpan vary by State Statute and municipal code.

The fifth and last article of faith is the Kesh. ▶



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## 04 Gurdwara

Gurdwara is the name for a Sikh place of worship. The name is made up of two words – guru and dwara which means 'place'. In Sikhism the term 'Guru' is not used for a teacher or a guide or an expert or even a human body. The word Guru is composed of two terms. GU- means darkness and RU- means Light. For Sikhs, Guru is the Light that dispels all darkness. It is called JOT (Divine Light). Guru Nanak, the founder Guru of Sikhism was regarded as the embodiment of Divine Light. There are two Gurdwaras in the Las Vegas Valley:

- Gurdwara Baba Deep Singh Ji held its official opening in September 2000 and was the first Sikh place of worship in the Las Vegas Valley. Gurdwara Baba Deep Singh Ji is located at 6341 W LONE MOUNTAIN ROAD, LAS VEGAS, NV 89130 in NWAC.
- In addition, Guru Nanak Gurdwara, a second Sikh place of worship, is located east of McCarran International Airport on Russell road before U.S. Highway 93 / 95 at 4487 East Russell Road, Las Vegas, NV.



◀ This segment introduces the Gurdwara, a Sikh communal place of worship, and discusses guidelines and protocols to consider when visiting a Gurdwara.

### Community meetings

Head covering is required when you are in the Gurdwara. Men usually wear the head covering provided at the temple or carry a large white or colored handkerchief to place over their head. The graphic below shows head covering for non-Sikhs when entering a Gurdwara.



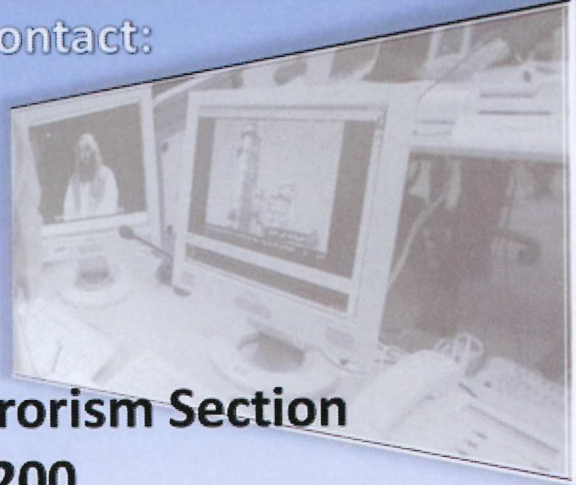


## 05 Review



◀ Now that you have some basic knowledge and awareness about Sikhs, take a moment to review some highlights of this presentation.

For further information or training on the subject contact:



**LVMPD  
Counter Terrorism Section  
(702) 828-2200**

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