

HOW TO REPORT HATE CRIME



**REASONS
WHY YOU
REALLY
SHOULD**

1 DON'T JUST GRIN AND BEAR IT

Even in the 21st century people are still being abused or attacked simply because they're gay, black, Muslim, trans, disabled ... Whether it's being shouted at, threatened, beaten up, having your car vandalised or being conned out of money, being targeted simply because you're different is wrong and needs to be stopped.

IF YOU'VE BEEN TARGETED, THIS GUIDE TELLS YOU:

- how you're protected
- where to go for help
- how and why to report it (even if you're not that fussed)

2 WHAT IS A 'HATE CRIME' ANYWAY?

Basically, 'hate crime' means that if someone commits a crime against you because of your race, sexual orientation, religion, gender identity or disability, they can get a tougher sentence.

You don't have to prove they *hate* you, just that they're hostile. If a case goes to court, the judge or magistrate considers whether the person was hostile towards you because you're Sikh, blind, Polish or whatever (or because they thought you were) before deciding the sentence.

3 STICKS AND STONES AND ALL THAT...

Hopefully we all know that violence should be reported but many people experience verbal abuse or harassment and just shrug it off. This can be just as damaging and lead to something worse.

It may also be a criminal offence. So whether it's a stranger publicly encouraging others to hate gay people, a neighbour harassing you because you have a learning disability or a colleague posting antisemitic abuse on your Facebook page, report it.

4 WHY BOTHER?

Here's the deal: the police can only do something about people or things they know about. We all know that the person who shouts antisemitic, transphobic or racist abuse on the street today may well end up doing something more violent in the future if they think they can get away with it. If the police don't know about what's going on, they can't prevent things getting worse. So tell them.

Even if you're not sure it's actually a crime.

5 WHO YOU GONNA CALL?

If you feel you're in immediate danger, call 999 (stop reading this guide and call the police now!).

If it's not urgent you can call the police on 101 any time of day or night.

Make sure you tell them you think the incident was a hate crime and why you think this. Did the perpetrators say or do something to make you think it was? Were you targeted somewhere in particular – outside your Mosque, or near your Traveller site, for example? Or was there something else? Whatever it is, make sure the police note it down!

6 HAVE NO FEAR

OK, so the police got things wrong in the past so you may be worried they won't take hate crimes seriously. But today the police can't treat you any worse just because you're Asian or you're a lesbian or whatever.

Some areas have special officers to look into hate crimes so ask if you can speak to one if you want. They may have a specific community officer too, such as an LGBT liaison officer.

7 AND IF YOU DON'T WANT TO GO TO THE POLICE ...

There are other ways to report what's happened. There's a special police website for reporting hate crimes (anonymously if you want) called True Vision: www.report-it.org.uk. It passes the information to the police for investigation.

There might also be a 'third party reporting service' in your area which acts in the same way.

Or talk to someone else you trust such as your carer, social worker, teacher or manager.

8 GETTING HELP

Once you've reported a crime you should hear from Victim Support. They help with practical things such as broken locks or can simply provide someone to talk to.

If someone ends up being charged, you should hear from your local Witness Care Unit. It's their job to support you while the case is ongoing and they'll be able to answer any questions you have.

9 APPEARING IN COURT

If the Crown Prosecution Service takes your case to court, they'll try to make things as easy as possible for you. They may let you give evidence from behind a screen or by video link, or restrict media reporting if you're worried about being identified.

You may be able to use a hearing loop or an interpreter if you need one, or have someone help you answer the questions in court if you have a learning disability.

Ask your contact at the Witness Care Unit about 'special measures'.

10 DON'T BE AFRAID TO MAKE A COMPLAINT

Public bodies need feedback to make improvements – they can only make things better if they know it's going wrong – and will have a process for handling complaints (which they'll publicise in reception or on their website). So if you don't like the way you're being treated by the police or others, note down the person's name or ID number.

If you have a good experience, tell people about it. This will give others the confidence to go to the police if they experience a hate crime.

So, to recap ... It is not OK to be targeted just because you happen to be different.

Reporting every incident helps the police deal with troublemakers. It's easy and not as scary as you may think.



Call 999 in an emergency

Call 101 to speak to your local police force

Report what's happened online at www.report-it.org.uk

For more information contact:

stonewall.org.uk

 [@StonewallUK](https://twitter.com/StonewallUK)

08000 50 20 20

victimsupport.org.uk

 [@VictimSupport](https://twitter.com/VictimSupport)

0845 30 30 900

