

Hate Crime Awareness and Prevention

Understanding Hate Crimes, Laws and Reporting Tools

What is a Hate Crime?

A hate crime is any criminal act or attempted criminal act directed against a person or persons based on their actual or perceived race, nationality, religion, sexual orientation, disability or gender.

Examples of bias incidents and hate crimes:

- Racially-motivated graffiti
- Threats of physical harm
- Property damage or bodily injury
- Harassment, Assault, Arson
- Criminal mischief
- Homicide

Why Have Hate Crime Laws?

Hate crimes have a broader effect than most other kinds of crime.

Hate crime victims include not only the crime's immediate target but also others like them. Hate crimes affect families, communities, and at times, the entire nation.

Why Report Hate Crimes?

It is important to report hate crimes not only to show support and get help for victims, but also to send a clear message that the community will not tolerate these kinds of crimes.

Reporting hate crimes allows communities and law enforcement to fully understand the scope of the problem in a community and put resources toward preventing and addressing attacks based on bias and hate.

How to Report a Hate Crime

For emergencies, dial 9-1-1 to get immediate help. If someone is in imminent danger, dial 9-1-1 or your local police immediately.

To report a hate crime:

If you believe you are the victim of a hate crime or believe you witnessed a hate crime:

STEP 1: Report the crime to your local police.

STEP 2: Quickly follow up this report with a tip to the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI).



Hate Crime Scenerios

Race

In a mall parking lot, a 25-year-old Japanese American male was attacked by a 43-year old white male wielding a tire iron. The victim suffered severe lacerations and a broken arm. Investigation revealed that the offender and victim had previously exchanged racial insults in the mall. The offender initiated the exchange by calling the victim by a well-known and recognized slur used against the Japanese community and complained that the Japanese were taking away jobs from Americans.

Disability

A group home for persons with psychiatric disabilities who were in transition back into the community was the site of a reported arson. Investigation revealed that neighbors had expressed many concerns about the group home in town meetings and were angry that the house was located in their community. Shortly before the fire was reported, a witness heard a man state, "I'll get rid of those 'crazies,' I'll burn them out." Twelve persons, including patients and staff, suffered second and third degree burns.

Sexuality

Three gay, male friends, some of whom were wearing makeup and jewelry, were exiting a well-known gay bar when they were approached by a group of men who were unknown to them. The men began to ridicule the gay men's appearance and shouted "Sissy!" "Girlie-men!" and other slurs at them. The exchange of words then escalated to physically attacking the three friends, rendering them unconscious.

Religion

Overnight, unknown persons broke into a synagogue and destroyed several priceless religious objects. The perpetrators drew a large swastika on the door and wrote "Death to Jews" on a wall. Although other valuable items were present, none were stolen.