

Staying Safe Against Hate

Hate incidents and hate crimes occur when people take actions that are motivated by intense dislike, negative beliefs, or irrational fear based on someone's real or perceived religion, race, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, political affiliation, and/or age. Hate incidents and hate crimes often rise before and after national elections and in response to global events, including war, conflict, and acts of terrorism. People can directly experience hate incidents or hate crimes, witness them, or be aware of them through the media. Hate incidents and hate crimes can target individuals or groups, including community or religious centers.

Hate incidents involve non-criminal actions motivated by hate.

Hate crimes are criminal acts motivated by hate, like verbal threats of harm, assault, or vandalism.

Hate crimes and hate incidents are wrong and should never happen. However, they sometimes occur. Here are some ways to help keep yourself and your family safe:

- Remain vigilant. Be aware of your surroundings.
- Avoid isolated or low-lit areas.
- Whenever possible, travel in pairs or groups.
- Text or call a friend or family member when you leave or arrive places.
- Know how to call 9-1-1. If language is a barrier, know how to ask for an interpreter.

If You Experience or Witness a Hate Crime

It can sometimes be difficult to know if a hate crime has occurred. If you experience or witness a situation you think could be a crime and you perceive it to be based on a dislike, bias, or hatred of a specific group to which you belong, here are some steps you can take:

Put Your Safety First

- Leave any area that is unsafe.
- Seek medical attention if needed.
- Write down or tell someone what you saw, the exact words that were said, or any other facts so you don't forget them.
- For incidents that occur in online spaces, take screenshots of messages.
- Contact a trusted person for support.

Consider Reporting the Crime

- Dial 9-1-1.
- If you need interpretation, say the name of your language or “No English, I speak [your language].”
- Law enforcement may contact you for more information as they investigate.

Consider reporting to the FBI

- The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) monitors hate crimes
- Online: tips.fbi.gov
- By Phone: Call the FBI at 1-800-CALL-FBI (1-800-225-5324)



If you do not feel comfortable contacting law enforcement or need additional support:

- Contact a trusted person for support.
- Utilize a Bias or Hate Resource hotline that provides supportive listening and resources.
- Reach out to the Victims Connect Resource Center at 855-484-2846 or <https://victimconnect.org/>



If you are concerned about your immigration status when reporting a crime, consider seeking legal advice from an immigration attorney prior to reporting a crime. U.S. immigration law may provide protection for victims of certain crimes.

If you experience a hate crime or hate incident, it is common to experience a range of reactions, such as:

Anger	Helplessness	Fear	Sadness	Frustration	Insecurity
Poor sleep	Headaches	Shame	Worry	Low self-esteem	Uncertainty

It may be helpful to:

- Seek support from people you love and trust.
- Do things that help you cope, like deep breathing, exercising, praying, etc.
- Limit media and social media exposure to violence or other distressing content.
- Keep a routine, making sure you go to bed and wake up at the same time every day.
- Reach out to community-based organizations or faith-based institutions for support.