

This factsheet identifies and explains how to tell different types of hate crime

What Is A Hate Crime?

A hate crime is a crime committed against a person or people because of a particular group they belong to – such as women, lesbians, gay men and bisexual people, transgender people, Black and minority ethnic people, Jewish people, Muslim people and so on. Of course, many of us belong to more than one of these groups. In hate crimes individuals or groups are attacked because the perpetrator is motivated by hatred for their group or community, or uses it against them, or exploits a perceived vulnerability.

Homophobic and transphobic attacks send a message of violence to all members of the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) communities and aim to instill fear in us.

Hate crime can take many different forms. Below are some of the most common types. If you have experienced or witnessed these or any other type of homophobic or transphobic hate crime it is important that you tell someone. You can get in touch with your local police station or, if you live in Greater London, You can contact Galop (anonymously if you prefer) on 020 7704 2040.

Physical or verbal abuse

This is an attack or abuse directed at a person because they are, or are perceived to be, lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender. Homophobic or transphobic physical or verbal violence occurs in the home, at school and college, at work, and in public. It ranges from threatening looks and name-calling, to physical violence that needs medical attention, or could even result in death. Attacks or abuse are recorded as homophobic or transphobic if the victim, or any other person (such as a witness or the police) thinks it was homophobic. Often homophobic or transphobic insults or threats accompany the violence.

Even if you feel homophobic or transphobic insults are common, it is worth reporting them to Galop or the police. They will be logged as homophobic or transphobic incidents and help build up a picture of what LGBT people are dealing with. Repeated insults from the same person can be considered harassment, and could result in a warning, caution or charge for the perpetrator. Keep a record of any incidents you experience or witness, with dates if possible, as this could be further evidence.

Galop would encourage all LGBT people to report serious assaults, even if anonymously, as then alerts may be issued, for example on cruising grounds or near pubs or bars.

Physical abuse can also include sexual abuse or rape. Galop has produced a **‘Sexual Offences’** factsheet which deals specifically with these experiences, outlining the recent changes in the law and giving advice on what to do following a sexually abusive incident and where to get help. To get a copy of this call Galop on 020 7704 2040 or download it from our website www.galop.org.uk.



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Harassment

Harassment may be hate mail, phone calls, texts, emails, graffiti, repeated name calling, following, pestering or repeated theft or damage to property. Though physical violence often has devastating effects on people, harassment can be very damaging to the victim too as they feel constantly unsafe. Always keep all evidence of harassment, such as recordings of phone calls, notes or letters (which could also contain fingerprint or saliva evidence) and keep a record of incidents and when they occurred.

If harassment occurs at school or college contact your school counsellor or student welfare officer, or a trusted member of staff. You can ask them to offer you confidentiality. Alternatively, you may want to contact Galop first to talk through your options.

Being attacked or harassed in your home

Experiencing violence or harassment in your own home is traumatic as there may be nowhere else to go to feel safe. If the perpetrator is a member of your own family who lives there it is important to get help and support in dealing with the situation. If you are **under 25** contact **Stonewall Housing Advice Line on 020 7359 5767** about supported housing with LGBT people. If you are under 18 and want to leave home it may be possible to be placed with lesbian or gay foster parents, or to get a lesbian or gay befriender who can support you. Contact the **Albert Kennedy Trust on 020 7831 6562**. Or call **Childline** for support on **0800 1111** (24 hours).

If the perpetrator is a neighbour and you live in local authority or housing association accommodation, your housing officer should be able to help you and should put in place the harassment policy, which means the perpetrator should be contacted and warned that their behaviour may result in being evicted. Some people experiencing harassment in their homes opt to go on transfer lists to move out of the area.

Even if you own your own home the council may be able to help you. Galop and Stonewall Housing can assist you and help advocate on your behalf. You will usually need to make reports to the police if you want to be moved.

If you live in privately owned property, then you should consider reporting to the police, as the local authority will have less power to deal with perpetrators. Contact Galop to discuss your options.

Witnessing an incident

If you witness a homophobic or transphobic incident or crime it is valuable if you make a report as you may have vital details that could help solve a case or arrest a perpetrator. If you do not want to do this in person you can do it anonymously via Galop either by calling our helpline or filling in an anonymous report form on our website. Your report could help prevent further violence.

The information contained in this factsheet should only be used for guidance. While Galop has made every effort to make sure that it is correct and up-to-date, we would advise you always to seek further advice before making any decisions or taking action.

This factsheet aims to provide general advice, but you should always remember that factors, such as age, sexual orientation, sex, race, gender, religion, or disability, may make a difference to individual situations.

CRIMINAL INJURIES: If you have experienced a violent crime you may be entitled to compensation. For further details on this you should visit the Criminal Injuries Compensation Authority (CICA) at <https://www.cica.gov.uk>. If you are having difficulties, Galop may be able to assist you in completing any forms necessary to make a claim.

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