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crime

BUSINESS CRIME GUIDE

**SUPPORTING
EMPLOYEES
AFFECTED BY
HATE CRIME**

A GUIDE FOR EMPLOYEES



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#NoPlaceForHate

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INTRODUCTION

Any crime lowers the quality of life for a victim, but a hate crime attacks a person's core sense of identity and belonging within society. Hate crime victims can have higher levels of depression, stress and anger, and for longer than victims of some other types of crime. The effects on an individual being targeted because of their personal characteristic should not be underestimated.

The purpose of this guide is to offer practical support for employees should they become a victim of or witnessing a hate crime or a hate incident. It gives useful tips on how and where to report hate crime in the workplace, and where additional help and support can be found locally and nationally.

WHAT IS A HATE CRIME?

HATE CRIME

A hate crime is “any criminal offence which is perceived by the victim or any other person, to be motivated by hostility or prejudice based on a personal characteristic, specifically actual or perceived race, religion/faith, sexual orientation, disability and gender identity”.

- Race (e.g. skin colour, ethnicity, citizenship)
- Religion (e.g. faith, atheists, targeting religious premises)
- Sexual Orientation (e.g. homosexual, bisexual, pansexual)
- Gender Identity (e.g. transgender, agender, demi-gender)
- Disability (e.g. learning needs, mental health, physical impairment)

A hate crime can manifest itself as:

- Physical abuse or violence
- Verbal abuse or threats
- Sexual abuse
- Offensive calls or texts
- Written/printed abuse (including offensive mail or email)
- Indirect attacks
- Harassment, exclusion or isolation
- Damage to property
- Online abuse

HATE INCIDENT

In England and Wales the police also monitor hate incidents. This could include: not allowing someone to enter a club because of their colour; laughing at homophobic jokes; refusing to let someone with a disability sit next to you.

Just because a crime has not been committed does not mean the behaviour is acceptable. The police still record and investigate hate incidents. Many hate incidents can turn into hate crime. For example, bullying can become the criminal offence of harassment.

“

AN INCIDENT IS TREATED AS A HATE CRIME OR HATE INCIDENT IF THE VICTIM OR ANY OTHER PERSON PERCEIVES IT TO BE.

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WHY DOES HATE CRIME EXIST?

Hate-based crime and incidents are underpinned by underlying negative attitudes, prejudices and stereotypes, which exist within individuals and society. These attitudes have to be addressed, challenged and tackled to prevent escalation of behaviours into serious crimes.



WHY YOU SHOULD REPORT IT

Hate crime is rarely a one-off incident and victims of hate crime are more likely to suffer repeatedly.

The effect of hate crime can have a devastating psychological effect on the victim. Hate crime often consists of a series of crimes. The cumulative effect of such incidents and crimes can destroy lives through emotional damage and long-term trauma. For victims of hate crime, the risk of attack may be constant. Feelings of insecurity can result in anxiety, a continuous state of watchfulness, and an inability to sleep. The impact on a person can include:

- Feeling isolated and vulnerable
- Feeling as though your self-respect has been taken from you
- Protecting yourself, but finding yourself on the wrong side of the law
- Loss of faith in the police and criminal justice system
- Feeling like retaliating, but fearing reprisals
- A break-down in family relationships
- Finding it difficult to cope
- Having a sense of despair
- Finding that nobody believes you
- Feeling hated by others
- Feeling afraid to let your children out
- Feeling afraid to go out and staying in
- Suffering from emotional / mental stress
- Hating your home and wanting to move
- Being overcome by panic or anxiety

If victims of hate crime do not report it, government agencies and policy makers will not know the extent of the problem in order to take important steps through legislation, etc, to eliminate it. Hate crime is committed by people who do not care who suffers and to what extent. If they go unchallenged, they will continue to put others in danger. Report it so they can be caught before others suffer.

INFORMATION FOR EMPLOYEES WHO HAVE EXPERIENCED A HATE INCIDENT

You have a right to be safe at work and any issues which could be hate related should be reported to your employer and/or the police (for details see the reporting section of this document).

It might be tempting to shrug off a hate crime, but the police will investigate and stop this from getting worse – either for you or someone else. The police will investigate crimes whether or not they include physical violence, and this can include someone using offensive language towards you or harassing you because of who you are, or who they think you are, as well as someone posting abusive or offensive messages about you online.

With most crimes it is something the victim has in their possession or control that motivates the offender to commit the crime – with hate crime it is ‘who’ the victim is or ‘what’ the victim appears to be that motivates the offender to commit the crime. Not all hate incidents will amount to criminal offences, but it is equally important that these are reported and recorded by the police.

Evidence of the hate element is not a requirement – you do not need to personally perceive the incident to be hate related, it would be enough if another person, or a witness or even a police officer thought that the incident was hate related.

IF YOU HAVE EXPERIENCED A HATE INCIDENT, CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING POINTS:

-
- Report your concerns to your manager as soon as possible and document the incident on an incident form. Note any potential sources of evidence, for example CCTV coverage, potential witnesses, photographs, etc. Make factual notes whilst the incident is fresh in your mind and include any comments made (ideally direct quotes) and how the behaviour made you feel.
 - If you have been assaulted at work, contact the police immediately to report the assault.
 - You may be able to have time off to recover from any injuries, so check the sickness policy.
 - Think about if you need any emotional support.

INFORMATION FOR EMPLOYEES WHO HAVE WITNESSED A HATE INCIDENT

If you observe behaviour which you perceive to be motivated by hatred or prejudice due to a person's race, religion, sexual orientation, disability or gender identity, then this is a potential hate incident, regardless of whether the person who the comments or behaviour were directed at perceived it as such.

ACTIONS YOU SHOULD CONSIDER TAKING ON OBSERVING THIS BEHAVIOUR:

- If it is safe for you to do so, challenge the person who made the comment or action and reiterate that hate incidents are not tolerated by the company.
- Reassure the person the abuse was directed at.
- Report the incident and/or support the victim to make a report to their line manager and/or to the police, either directly or through a third party reporting centre.
- If the incident was perpetrated by a client, customer or supplier, consider options around the organisation raising a grievance with the employer of the individual.
- Keep a record of what happened – this should include the parties involved, what took place, specific language or comments used (ideally by way of quotes); date and time of the incident; any potential evidence available; and the impact witnessed on the person the abuse was directed at.

RECORD KEEPING

Records need to be clear and accurate. The information should be factual and include details of the allegation; location and time of the incident(s); who was involved and possible causes; effect on the individuals involved; witnesses spoken to and statements obtained; evidence gathered; the outcome of the investigation and any follow-on actions.

Direct comments need to be in quotation marks, however it is also important to capture the effect the behaviour had on the complainant and person that the behaviour was directed at (if these are different).

REPORTING

Anyone who has been a victim of or witnessed a hate crime occurring whilst in the course of their employment should in the first instance refer to any policy and/or procedure; however, in the absence of these they should speak to their line manager or HR team. Anyone who feels unable to report the matter to their employer can report it either to the police or a third party reporting centre.

REPORTING TO THE POLICE

In emergencies, call the police on 999. The non-emergency number for your police force is 101, and most police forces now have an online reporting option.

REPORTING ONLINE

A victim can report their experience anonymously online through True Vision, a national online hate crime reporting portal, at www.report-it.org.uk.

THIRD PARTY REPORTING CENTRES (TPRCs)

Not all victims are comfortable with reporting their experiences directly to the police. The reasons for this may include the following:

- Victims find visiting police stations intimidating or daunting
- Victims think the police won't believe them or take them seriously
- Individuals are unaware they are victims of hate crimes
- Victims are not aware of alternative ways to report hate crimes
- Lack of support to help victims make a report, e.g. interpreters
- Victims fear being outed in terms of their sexuality or disability

LOCAL TPRCs

Partnership working has led to the setting up of more than 60 TPRCs across Hampshire and the Isle of Wight. TPRCs provide an alternative way to report a hate crime, better inform the public about such incidents, give confidential advice, help you report it, and support you along the way. You can remain anonymous if you wish, and you don't need to have contact with the police if you don't want to.

For a list of Third Party Reporting Centres in Hampshire and the Isle of Wight, visit: www.hampshire-pcc.gov.uk/hatecrime

For TPRCs in other areas, please contact your local Police and Crime Commissioner.

NATIONAL TPRCs

You can also report hate crime via one of the national independent reporting sites without revealing your personal details. An up-to-date list is available on the Police and Crime Commissioner's website: www.hampshire-pcc.gov.uk

VICTIM CARE SERVICE

The Victim Care Service (provided by Victim Support) is a free service that provides support for victims of crime to cope with, and recover from, the harmful effects of the crime they have experienced.

The service is available to all victims aged four years and up – it does not matter:

- What type of crime they've experienced
- When the crime happened
- Whether it was reported to the police or not
- Whether they are the direct victim or not

The Victim Care Service offers:

- Practical Support – for example the provision of alarms, signposting or referrals to other organisations and advice relating to Criminal Injuries and Compensation Authority claims
- Emotional Support – talking about experiences with a trained supporter and working in partnership to develop ways to increase confidence or self-esteem.
- Intensive Support – for victims of more serious crimes, such as sexual violence and domestic abuse, the most vulnerable victims and those that have been persistently targeted, intensive support is available.

To find out how the Victim Care Service could help you, call 0808 178 1641 (open Monday to Saturday, from 8am to 8pm) or visit:
www.hampshireiowvictimcare.co.uk

OTHER SUPPORT SERVICES

A list of further support services in Hampshire and the Isle of Wight is available on the Police and Crime Commissioner's website: www.hampshire-pcc.gov.uk

This guide has been produced with the support of the following organisations:



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