# Hate Crime

Hate Crime is a criminal offence committed against an individual or their property, because of their age, disability, race, religion, sexual orientation or gender identity. This guide looks at disability Hate Crime and how to report it.

**What is Hate Crime?**

Hate Crimes can take place anywhere: at home, in public, on the internet, or on social media.

Hate Crime can include:

* threatening behaviour
* verbal abuse or insults including name-calling
* assault
* robbery
* damage to property
* encouraging others to commit Hate Crimes
* bullying and harassment
* online abuse on sites like Facebook or Twitter

**A disability Hate Crime is when someone commits a crime because of their prejudice towards disabled people.**

The Equality Act 2010 defines a disabled person as “someone who has a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities”.

Physical, mental, cognitive, learning or sensory difficulties may all count as disabilities depending on how they affect you.

The Equality Act includes special rules that ensure people with HIV, cancer and multiple sclerosis are seen as disabled people from the point of diagnosis, rather than the point when the condition has an adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

**How to report a Hate Crime**

If you have experienced or witnessed a Hate Crime you can report this by:

* Calling 999 (emergency) or 101 (non emergency): If you cannot make voice calls, you can contact **999** emergency services by SMS text from your mobile. Emergency SMS is part of the standard 999 service which has been designed specifically for people with hearing loss or difficulty with speech. You will need toregister your mobile phone at emergency SMS here: <http://www.emergencysms.org.uk/> before using the service.
* Texting by phone or Talk By Text: Users can contact the emergency services by dialling - 18000. This call will be connected to the 999 service and translated by a Text Relay Assistant.
* In person at any police station
* By completing an online Hate Crime Reporting Form here: <https://www.scotland.police.uk/secureforms/c3/>
* Through Contact Scotland BSL here: <https://contactscotland-bsl.org/>
* By contacting a service that has agreed with Police Scotland to [Third Party Reporting](http://www.scotland.police.uk/contact-us/hate-crime-and-third-party-reporting/third-party-reporting-centres). Staff within these centres have been trained to assist a victim or witness in submitting a report to the police and can make a report on your behalf. <https://www.scotland.police.uk/contact-us/reporting-hate-crime/third-party-reporting-centres/>

**Further information and useful contacts**

Easy Read Guide to Disability Hate Crime here: <http://www.report-it.org.uk/files/disability_hate_crime_book_low.pdf> – plain language rep orting book
Victim Support Scotland here: <http://www.victimsupportsco.org.uk/> – supports victims of crime

Information last updated on **3rd February 2025.** Please note that information may be subject to change. All information is provided in good faith but Disability Information Scotland does not endorse any product or service referred to within this resource.

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