

COUNTERING HATE

HAF'S GUIDE FOR HATE CRIME VICTIMS

WHAT IS A HATE CRIME?

A hate crime is a **criminal act** against a person or property **motivated by the perpetrator's bias against** a particular group of people on the basis of **race, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, age, or disability.**

What Do Hate Crimes Look Like?

Hate crimes take many forms.

Name-calling and the display of offensive symbols, no matter how vile, are not in-and-of-themselves criminal; in fact, such acts of expression are protected by the First Amendment's guarantee of freedom of speech.

However, things the perpetrator says or does during the commission of a crime, such as the use of racial or religious epithets; symbols the perpetrator uses; and other contextual factors serve as evidence of the perpetrator's motive.

The following examples demonstrate hate crimes directed toward Hindu Americans:

A Hindu man was pushed in front of an oncoming subway train in New York by a woman who told police she pushed him because she hated Hindus and Muslims, and blamed them for 9/11.

Vandals destroyed a Hindu temple in Maple Grove, MN, inflicting over \$300,000 in damage, toppling and dismembering sacred sculptures, and breaking windows and walls.

What Should You Do If You Are a Victim of a Hate Crime?

Whether it is a single incident or repeat offense, **dial 911 immediately** and seek medical attention, if necessary. Write down as much information as you can remember about what the perpetrators looked like, what they said, and what they did. If the crime resulted in injury or property damage, take photographs immediately. Keep a log with dates and times, locations, perpetrators, and witnesses. Such evidence is critical for police, prosecutors, and attorneys to be able to effectively investigate and prosecute the case, if deemed appropriate.

Resources

FIND YOUR LOCAL FBI OFFICE

<http://www.fbi.gov/contact-us/field>

SUBMIT INFORMATION ELECTRONICALLY TO THE FBI

<https://tips.fbi.gov/>

INFORMATION ON VICTIM RIGHTS THROUGH THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/ovc/publications/infores/whatyoucando_2010/WhatUCanDo_508.pdf

INFORMATION ON VICTIM ASSISTANCE AND COMPENSATION PROGRAMS IN YOUR AREA THROUGH THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

<http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/ovc/map.html>

Incident Reporting Checklist

- File a formal police report.
- Get the responding officer's name and badge number.
- Ensure the officer files an incident report form and assigns a case number. If a police report is not taken at the time of your report, go to the police station and ask for one.
- Get your own copy of the report.
- Urge the officer to check the "hate/bias-motivation" or "hate crime/incident" box.
- File a report with your local FBI office. The FBI works closely with local authorities in hate crimes investigations. The FBI collects data on hate crimes and works with local community groups and religious organizations to collectively address such incidents.
- HAF requests that you help us in tracking incidents of hate crimes in our communities. The more data we have, the better we can work with the appropriate authorities to identify areas of particular concern and ensure the safety and security of the community. The form is available at: <https://www.hafsite.org/media/pr/report-bias-motivated-crimes>
- Notify your local Hindu community representatives so that a coordinated, unified response can be formulated promptly. The appropriate response is a non-violent one that, along with law enforcement, involves people of different faiths, races, nationalities, and backgrounds coming together to denounce hateful messages, prejudice, and violence.

INFORMATION ON HATE CRIMES LAWS ACROSS STATES

<https://www.adl.org/sites/default/files/documents/assets/pdf/combating-hate/2014-adl-updated-state-hate-crime-statutes.pdf>

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*HAF is unable to provide individual legal advice, assistance, or counsel.