

VS VICTIM SUPPORT



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Religion Hate Crime Factsheet



What is a Hate Crime?

Hate Crime is a term that describes an incident or crime against someone based on an aspect of who they are, or who they are perceived to be; their Identity. Identity is divided into five Protected Characteristics in relation to Hate Crime. These are categories of identity that might be the target of prejudice, hostility or hate. These characteristics are:

- Race or Ethnicity
- Disability
- Religion of Belief
- Sexual Orientation
- Gender Identity

“Hate crimes can be devastating for victims, deeply divisive for communities, and dangerously linked to extremism ... it is very damaging both for those who are targeted by appalling violence or abuse and for entire communities too”

- Yvette Cooper, Home Affairs Committee

Religion Related Hate Crime

In 2018-19, there were 8566 instances of reported Religious Hate Crimes. Of these, 87% of the cases were logged with information on the religion affected.

Number and proportion of religious Hate Crimes recorded by the police 2018/19 in which information on the targeted religion was provided

Perceived religion of the victim	Number of offences in England and Wales 2018/19	%
Buddhist	19	0
Christian	535	7
Hindu	114	2
Jewish	1,326	18
Muslim	3,530	47
Sikh	188	3
Other	535	7
No religion	215	3
Unknown	1,255	17
Total numbers of targeted religions	7,717	
Total number of offences	7,446	

MEND state that Muslim Adults are the most likely to be a victim of religiously motivated Hate Crime, and statistically offences against Muslims were highest at 47% of total Faith hate Crimes. Hate crimes against Jewish people more than doubled, with 1326 offences against Jewish people compared with 672 in the previous year.

“Beyond the initial shock and pain of being targeted with antisemitism is a mixture of disappointment and helplessness that this hatred lives strong in modern society. How can it still be that someone feels so righteous in their anger to attack you for your Jewishness?” - Member of Community Security Trust

Certain events can often lead to a spike in Hate Crimes across England and Wales. TELL MAMA reported that the number of anti-Muslim hate crimes reported across Britain increased by 593% in the week after a white supremacist killed worshippers at two New Zealand mosques.

“We saw this coming years ago. The snail-like pace of social media to act on anti-Muslim accounts from 2012, the rise of the far-right and manipulation of the online world by them, terrorist attacks, inflammatory media headlines and the mainstreaming of anti-Muslim bigotry into the political mainstream have all added to the problem.” - Iman Atta, OBE, Tell Mama

Barriers to reporting Religious Hate Crime

Although we have a better understanding of the prevalence and impact of Religion/Faith Hate Crime, we recognise there are still barriers to reporting Hate Crime and accessing support.

Perceptions

- Some people can feel anxious about the way they represent their religious groups and feel hesitant to come forward in case their group is unfairly accused of ‘complaining’.

Lack of Information

- Many people are unaware of what a Hate Crime is, and how the abuse, bullying, hostility or prejudice they have endured could be classed as a criminal offence.

Normalising the Incidents

- Particularly in the aftermath of political agitating or polarising events, it can become frightening to report on Hate Crime when there appears to be an atmosphere of apathy or hostility towards certain religious groups. Some people feel that their experience might be ignored or even suppressed when the cultural climate and the media appear to be hostile.

Lack of Trust in Police and Criminal Justice Agencies

- Some members of a faith might feel under scrutiny from police forces who do not share their beliefs, and so feel uncomfortable reporting the nature of the crime as they do not expect to be taken seriously about their religion.

“Political, media and institutional decision-makers need an action plan to stop the toxic mix of scare stories on social media and a divisive political environment, which is providing a breeding ground for hate.”

- Matthew Bolton, Citizens UK



How to report a Hate Crime

If a Hate Crime has taken place, we advise that you contact the police by one of the following methods:

- If it is an emergency and the crime is still taking place, call **999**.
- If it is not an immediate emergency, call **101**.
- If you prefer, you can go to your **local police station** and report the crime there.
- Victim Support can report to the Police **on your behalf** and you can choose to remain **anonymous** if you wish
- Witnesses of Hate Crime can also contact **Victim Support** to report an incident

However, we understand some people might be concerned about involving the police for a variety of reasons. Victim Support will provide you with help and support whether you decide to involve the police or not. To talk to us, please contact us through any of the following options:

- To contact our Hate Crime Services at Victim Support contact us on **0300 30 31 982**
- Visit our website at **<https://www.reporthate.victimsupport.org.uk/>**
- **Twitter@ VictimSupportHC**
- **Facebook: VictimSupportHC**
- **Instagram: vswaleshatecrime**
- If you wish to make a self-referral email: **hate.crimewales@victimsupport.org.uk**

Regardless of whether you report the crime to the police or contact us directly, we advise keeping a note of all incidents related to Hate Crime. Ideally this would include times, dates and details of what happened. This is valuable if you decide to change your mind reporting it at a later date, or if the abuse is consistent or ongoing.

The support we offer covers helping with simple tasks like filling out forms, offering personal and home security, but we can also assist with bigger problems. These include ongoing emotional support, housing and police advocacy or support with understanding the criminal justice system over the course of your trial. We'll give you the information you need to understand your options and next steps.