

A woman wearing a purple hijab and a purple long-sleeved dress is sitting outdoors. She is looking off to the side with a thoughtful or concerned expression. She is holding a black smartphone in her right hand. The background shows a building with large windows and a brick wall.

Easy Read Guide

HOW TO REPORT A HATE CRIME

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1. What is a Hate Crime?

A hate crime is an act which targets a victim based on that person's perceived group identity, such as the person's race, religion, philosophical beliefs, disability, sexual orientation or gender. They are crimes which target the victim because of the offender's prejudice and hostility toward them based on these characteristics. Generally, hate crimes can include:

- **Threatening behaviour**
- **Assault**
- **Robbery**
- **Damage to property**
- **Inciting others to commit hate crimes**
- **Harassment**
- **Online Abuse**

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In the context of Islamophobia, a hate crime is when somebody targets a person, group of people or institution, with hostility because of their perceived affiliation with Islam and Muslims.

In other words, the perpetrator's hostile act is motivated by a prejudice toward Islam and Muslims.

Islamophobic hate crime acts can include:

- **Having Islamophobic abuse said to you in the street.**

This can include speech acts that target physical markers of your Muslim identity, such as a long beard for a Muslim man or the wearing of a hijab by a Muslim woman, or because of your phenotypical characteristics, such as your skin colour.

Example:

Fatima is walking to the supermarket wearing her hijab. A stranger shouts, "go back to your own country" and calls her a "terrorist." This is a hate crime because the abuse focused on Fatima's Muslim identity, signified by her wearing the hijab, while tying it to the well-known Islamophobic trope that frames Muslims as terrorists.

- **Someone physically assaulting you because you are a Muslim**

Example:

A group of men beat up a visibly Muslim man leaving a building that serves an Islamic function, such as a halal supermarket or a mosque. This would appear to be a hate crime, because the offenders targeted a visibly Muslim man leaving a site obviously associated with Islam/Muslims.

- **Damage to a mosque or Muslim-run business or family home**

Example:

A local mosque finds its windows smashed and Islamophobic graffiti sprayed on the walls overnight. This is a hate crime because the property targeted was clearly related to Islam/Muslims, and because of the Islamophobic nature of the graffiti.



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- **Online abuse targeting your Muslim identity**

Example:

Omar was called a “child groomer” on X by an account that shares a lot of right-wing content. This would appear to be a hate crime because the offender is using a well-known Islamophobic trope around grooming gangs to attack Omar. The fact that the account also shares right-wing content would further support the idea that this comment was motivated by hate.

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2. Why Report It?

It is critical that you report hate crime in order to...

- **Keep yourself safe**
- **To protect your family and the broader Muslim community**
- **To let the police know what is happening in the local area**
- **Because you have the right to live free from intimidation, abuse and hate**

3. How to Report a Hate Crime

It is crucial to state at the outset that if you or someone that you know is in immediate danger due to a hate crime, then **you must call 999 to report it** to the police as an emergency.

If the crime is not an emergency, then you can telephone 101 to be connected to your local police force, where you can report the incident. It is your right to receive a crime reference number and the name of the officer(s) looking into the incident within five working days¹. If you do not, then contact the local police force again to request these. You can also report hate crimes to True Vision (www.report-it.org.uk), which is a police-funded website designed to provide you with information about hate crime.

Additionally, you can reach out to community groups such as the Islamophobia Response Unit (IRU), which tracks incidents of Islamophobia and provides legal advice to those who have experienced Islamophobic hate crimes along with Islamophobic discrimination more generally.

1. <https://www.college.police.uk/guidance/victims-code/victims-rights-policing#:~:text=know%20how%20to%20access%20and,for%20police%20officers%20and%20staff>



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4. What Should you Tell the Police?

When you report the hate crime, you should be prepared to share the following details:

- **The date and time of the incident**
- **Where it happened**
- **What was said or done to you by the offender**
- **Who was involved**
- **Any evidence you might have (for example, photos, videos, messages and witnesses)**



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5. What Happens After Reporting it?

- The police will record your report
- They may call you back for more details
- You will receive a crime reference number within five working days of your initial report
- The police will carry out an investigation of what happened
- You should call the police once every week to get an update on the case

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6. How to Stay Safe

With Islamophobic attacks increasing, it is important you know how to keep yourself and those around you safe.

Stay Alert

This means that you should pay close attention to what is going on around you. Especially if you are journeying on foot alone at night, you should consider removing your earphones and keeping your phone in your pocket in order to avoid being distracted from the signs of potential danger. Keep an eye out for people behaving unusually. If you notice something, trust your instincts and move to a safe area, such as a more populated street or a nearby shop.

Travel Safely

Try to travel as part of a group whenever possible, especially late at night. When you are journeying alone on foot, make sure you try to stick to well-populated areas and avoid the use of shortcuts and isolated footpaths.

Keep Personal Items Secure

Try to purchase and carry at all times a personal alarm, which can be used to attract attention if you are being threatened or attacked. Make sure your personal belongings are kept safe in your pocket or concealed in a zip compartment of a bag.

Use Technology Wisely

Enable location sharing on your phone with trusted friends and family members so that they know where you are. Before going out, try to make sure that your phone is always charged and carry a portable charger just in case you need to charge it under emergency circumstances.

Stay Informed

Make sure you stay updated on social and political events in the country, and especially what is going on in your area. You should consider joining local community groups for mutual support and safety tips.

7. Where Else Can you Get Support?

Remember: you do not have to deal with this alone.

You can:

- Call victim support for further help:

0808 168 9111

- Contact the Islamophobia Response Unit: www.theiru.org.uk/contact

- Contact Muslim Engagement & Development (MEND): www.mend.org.uk

It is not your fault that you have been the victim of a hate crime. Islamophobia is a form of systemic, racialised religious discrimination that groups like MEND are working to defeat. An important part of this fight is for victims of Islamophobia to report it to the police. Reporting not only helps you, but it also protects your community and future generations of Muslims in Britain.

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