

# HATE CRIMES

## WHAT IS A HATE CRIME?

- A hate crime is a criminal offence committed against a person or property motivated in whole or in part by hate, bias or prejudice against an identifiable group.
- An identifiable group may be distinguished by race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, sex, age, mental or physical disability, sexual orientation, or gender identity or expression.
- Almost any type of criminal offence can be motivated by hate. Examples of hate crime offences may include acts of violence or hostility such as an assault (hitting or spitting on someone) or causing damage to property.
- The key is that these acts intentionally target individuals or property based on the offender's hate towards the "identifiable group".

The Criminal Code also requires a court that imposes a sentence for any offence to take into consideration whether the offence was motivated by hate, bias or prejudice based on any of the identifiable groups or any other similar factor.

## WHAT ARE KEY INDICATORS THAT A HATE CRIME MAY HAVE BEEN COMMITTED?

1. Comments made during the offence.
2. Motivation of the perpetrator or even lack of an apparent motive.
3. Victim's perception that they were targeted.
4. Display of hate symbols, gestures, and language.
5. The manner in which the offence was committed.
6. Recurring patterns of harassment, humiliation, or intimidation.
7. Other relevant circumstances surrounding the offence.

## CANADIAN CHARTER OF RIGHTS AND FREEDOMS

Freedom of expression is an enshrined fundamental freedom in Section 2 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

Section 2 of the Charter reads:

Everyone has the following fundamental freedoms:

- A) Freedom of conscience and religion;
- B) Freedom of thought, belief, opinion and expression, including freedom of the press and other media of communication;
- C) Freedom of peaceful assembly; and
- D) Freedom of association.

***Hate speech is not protected by the Charter.***

## WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO REPORT HATE CRIMES?

Hate crimes are message crimes.

The message is, “You are not welcome!”

A timely and effective police response can improve the relationship between police and the communities the police serve.

**Hate crimes** and hate incidents create community-wide unrest.

**Hate incidents** can escalate and prompt retaliatory action.

**Others in the community** who share the victim’s characteristics may also feel victimized and vulnerable.

**Hate crimes and hate incidents** can lead to feelings of isolation, and emotional and psychological stress.

**Hate-motivated crimes** have long-lasting and serious side effects for society as a whole.

#### **HOW TO REPORT HATE CRIMES IN AN EMERGENCY:**

**CALL 9-1-1, if there is an immediate threat to life or property**

- Stay calm.
- Call the police from a safe location.
- Protect and document potential evidence if safe to do so.
- Report exact utterances and relevant details.

#### **HOW TO REPORT HATE CRIMES IN A NON-EMERGENCY**

If you’ve witnessed or experienced a hate crime or suspicious incident, contact your **local police**.

