**Disability Hate Crime**



 Welcome to the Disability Hate Crime section of the Police Scotland website. Here you will find information about this type of hate crime, how to report it, and you can read about [people's personal experiences.](https://www.scotland.police.uk/what-s-happening/campaigns/2020/disability-hate-crime/disability-hate-crime-personal-accounts/)

1 in 5 people in Scotland identify as having a disability but only 4% of reported hate crime is disability hate crime. We know that it's under-reported. Our #DontTolerateHate campaign encourages both victims and witnesses to report all incidents and help stamp out disability hate crime.

**What is Hate Crime?**

Any crime which is perceived by the victim or any other person as being motivated (wholly or partly) by malice and/or ill-will towards a social group.

The social groups currently covered by hate crime legislation are: Disability, Race, Religion, Sexual Orientation and Transgender Identity.

Hate crime happens in many different ways, and can include damage to property, someone shouting and swearing at you, threatening or verbally abusing you, being physically attacked or receiving online abuse.

Hate crime can happen anywhere, for example, at home, on public transport, in the street, in school, college or at work. It can also happen online.

If you think you have been targeted because you have a disability then this is hate crime.

**Key Messages**

* Disability hate crime is never acceptable - whether you’re a victim or you witness a hate crime - report it.
* No one should suffer from hate crime - don’t put up with it – report it.
* Don’t tolerate hate crime in your community - together we can tackle disability hate crime.
* Disability hate crime can take place anywhere, in the home, the workplace, education or online - recognise hate crime and report it.

**Reporting disability hate crime**

**Victims**

We’ve learned that many people don’t realise they have actually been a victim of hate crime. If you have been verbally abused or threatened because of your disability which has left you feeling scared, isolated or unable to go about your usual routine, you may have been a victim of hate crime. Please report it to the police or one of our partners.

[contactSCOTLAND-BSL](https://contactscotland-bsl.org/) is a Scottish Government service that connects deaf BSL users throughout Scotland through an online BSL interpreting video relay service (VRS) with all of Scotland’s public authorities and voluntary organisations (Third Sector) and now beyond. This can be used to report disability hate crime.

**Bystanders**

If you witness someone with a disability being abused in a public place, it’s important that you don’t let it go by without taking action. We’re not talking about putting yourself at risk, there are a number of ways that you can report an incident, and demonstrate that disability hate crime has no place in our society.

In some cases victims and bystanders of Hate Crime do not feel comfortable reporting the matter directly to the Police, and may be more comfortable reporting it to someone they are familiar with. For more information visit the [Third Party Reporting](https://www.scotland.police.uk/contact-us/hate-crime-and-third-party-reporting/) page in the Contact Us section.

I Am Me is a community charity working in partnership with Police Scotland to raise awareness of, and, tackle disability hate crime. You can find out more by visiting the [I AM ME Scotland](https://iammescotland.co.uk/) Keep Safe app page.

**'Mate' Crime**

Mate Crime is when someone says they are a friend, but they use this friendship to take advantage of people with disabilities.

This can include taking money, asking them to do things they don’t want to do or hurting them. If you or someone you know has a disability and are being taken advantage of, we want you to report it to the police.

Mate Crime can involve a number of people including friends, family and carers. Even if the exploitation is not an illegal act, this can still have a negative impact on the individual.