

HOW COMMUNITIES CAN HELP

A comprehensive response to hate crimes involves the engagement of local government, prosecutors, law enforcement, religious institutions, residents, schools, and civil rights and community-based organizations.

Strategies stakeholders can implement to combat hate crime activity:

- **Publicly condemn suspected hate crime activity**
- **Establish a network of community stakeholders to ensure prompt responses to and support of victims of hate crimes**
- **Encourage victims and witnesses of hate crimes to report to law enforcement**
- **Employ restorative justice practices where appropriate**
- **Promote activities that embrace diverse populations and unite communities**
- **Advocate for laws and policies that enhance the State's response to hate crimes**

RESOURCES

Maryland OAG Hate Crimes
Hotline
1-866-481-8361

Maryland Commission on Civil
Rights
1-800-637-6247

Maryland Commission on Hate
Crime Response & Prevention
stophate@oag.state.md.us

For additional resources and
information, see OAG's Strategies for
Responding to Hate Crimes and Bias
Incidents, available online at
[www.marylandattorneygeneral.gov/
CivilRights/Documents/hate_crimes.pdf](http://www.marylandattorneygeneral.gov/CivilRights/Documents/hate_crimes.pdf)

Maryland Office of the
Attorney General
200 St. Paul Place Baltimore, MD
21202
410-276-6300
www.marylandattorneygeneral.gov



ANTHONY G. BROWN
MARYLAND ATTORNEY GENERAL

FIGHTING HATE CRIMES A Resource Guide



Maryland Office of the
Attorney General
Civil Rights Division

HATE CRIME V. HATE/BIAS INCIDENT

A hate crime is a crime, including a threat to commit a crime, committed because of another person's or group's perceived personal characteristic or group membership.

You may be a victim of a hate crime under Maryland law if you are targeted because of your race, color, religious beliefs, disability, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, national origin, or homelessness.

Examples of Hate Crimes:

- Threatening to attack a place of worship
- Assaulting or injuring someone because of their perceived identity

A hate/bias incident is any act or expression of hostility or aggression that is motivated by bias against a protected class but does not constitute a crime under State or federal law.

Examples of Hate/Bias Incidents:

- Verbal abuse/slurs
- Distributing hate literature in public spaces
- Displaying hate material on one's own property

PROTECTING RELIGIOUS WORSHIP

A person may not damage or threaten to damage property used for a religious purpose or obstruct others from exercising their religious beliefs by force or threat of force.

PROTECTING PROPERTY

A person may not damage, burn, or destroy – or attempt or threaten to damage, burn, or destroy – the real or personal property of a person or group because of that person's or group's perceived characteristic or membership in a protected class. The protection includes the real or personal property connected to a building that is publicly or privately owned, such as a cemetery, library, meeting hall, recreation center, or school.



WHAT TO DO IN THE EVENT OF A HATE CRIME

- Call 911 immediately. Hate crimes that aren't reported can't be investigated or prosecuted. Prompt reporting helps preserve evidence and assists officers in preventing additional crimes.
- Get help. Victims and witnesses of hate bias activity may also wish to seek support from local religious institutions and civil rights and community-based organizations, which can offer a variety of services, including advocacy, safety planning, and counseling.
- Victims may bring civil action against those who committed the crime, and the court may impose an injunction and award certain economic and non-economic damages.
- For information regarding trends in hate crime activity in Maryland, see the annual Hate/Bias Reports issued by the Maryland State Police and the Maryland Coordination and Analysis Center, available online at www.mcac.maryland.gov/resources/.

A threat against any person based on hate is a threat to all of us. The Office of the Attorney General is committed to ensuring all Marylanders live without fear of being targeted because of their race, gender, national origin, religion, or sexual orientation. Together with our partners in law enforcement, we will continue to enforce our laws to ensure those committing crimes based on hate are held accountable.