

Responding to Hate: A Quick Reference Guide

During the COVID-19 crisis, many communities are experiencing heightened levels of bigotry. Individuals need to know their rights and resources when acts of hate occur. This guide provides information to help community members understand and respond to three kinds of hate: **Hate Crimes**, **Hate Incidents**, and **Acts of Discrimination**.

Hate Crimes are criminal acts motivated in whole or in substantial part by bias, prejudice or bigotry. There are two requirements to show a hate crime:

1. An underlying crime (murder, assault, threats of violence, arson, vandalism); and
2. The crime is committed, at least in part, **because of** race, religion, national origin, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation or disability.

Hate Incidents are instances in which a person directs non-threatening bigoted, biased or prejudiced language (spoken or written, online or in-person) towards another individual based on race, religion, national origin, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, age or other personal characteristics. Hate incidents, although hurtful and offensive, usually do not violate the law and are considered protected speech under the First Amendment. However, in some limited circumstances, hate incidents may give rise to civil legal claims against a perpetrator (defamation, invasion of privacy, intentional infliction of emotional distress, etc.), which carry a lower burden of proof than proving a crime.

Acts of Discrimination are acts of unfair treatment in the workplace, public accommodations (restaurants, hotels, theatres, stores or other businesses), housing (whether buying or renting) or federally-funded schools or universities because of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, disability, gender identity or age. Discrimination is a violation of civil law, but is not a criminal offense.

What to Do If You Experience or Witness Acts of Bias or Hate

Hate Crimes	Hate Incidents	Acts of Discrimination
1. Immediately report the incident to law enforcement	1. If you believe your safety is at risk, report the incident to law enforcement	1. Report to federal agencies responsible for addressing discrimination (see list of recommended agencies below)
2. Collect and retain any available evidence (photos, video recording, etc.)	2. Report cyber incidents to the platforms on which they occur	2. Report to state and local Human Relations Commissions
3. Report to a civil rights organization (see list of recommended organizations below)	3. Report to a civil rights organization (see list of recommended organizations below)	3. Report to a civil rights organization (see list of recommended organizations below)



Recommended Civil Rights Organizations:

- [Anti-Defamation League](#)
- [Asian Americans Advancing Justice](#)
- [Asian Pacific Policy and Planning Council](#)
- [Chinese for Affirmative Action](#)
- [Japanese American Citizens League](#)

Recommended PA Law Enforcement & Government Agencies:

- [PA State Police Heritage Affairs](#)
- [PA Attorney General's Office](#)
- [PA Human Relations Commission](#)

Recommended Federal Agencies Responsible for Addressing Discrimination:

- **Workplace:** [U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission](#)
- **Accommodations:** [U.S. Department of Justice, Civil Rights Division](#)
- **Housing:** [U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development](#)
- **Education:** [U.S. Department of Education, Office of Civil Rights](#)

Cyber Safety:

- [ADL Cyber-Safety Action Guide](#)

For more information, recommendations and resources, read [Responding to Hate: Information and Resources](#).

If you experience or witness a hate crime, hate incident or act of discrimination, please report it to ADL at www.adl.org/report.