

Bias Crime



REPORT IT!

What is a bias incident?

A bias incident or hate crime is defined in the Attorney General's Guidelines as any suspected or confirmed offense or unlawful act which occurs against a person or property (public or private) on the basis of New Jersey's nine protected classes: race, color, religion, gender, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, and national origin.

What are some common types of bias/hate crimes?

Bias incidents and hate crimes take many forms, ranging from racially-motivated graffiti, to threats of physical harm, to actual infliction of property damage or bodily injury. Under New Jersey law, any crime – such as harassment, assault, terroristic threats, arson, criminal mischief, or homicide – is subject to more serious punishment if the crime was committed against a person because of a person's race, color, religion, gender, or other protected class status. Not all incidents turn out to be crimes, but any potential bias incident should be reported to the police as a bias incident so that it can be fully investigated.

What should I report?

You should report any and all suspected or confirmed bias incidents to your local police department. In other words, if you are a victim of, or a witness to, any offense which occurs against a person based on that person's race, color, religion, gender, or other protected status, then you should report that incident. To aid with investigations try to note important information including licence plate numbers, identifying physical features such as tattoos, etc.

What should I do if I witness a bias/hate crime in progress?

Call **911** to **report it**.

What if I'm uncomfortable reporting incidents to local police?

Every County Prosecutor's Office in New Jersey has specific personnel assigned to the Bias Crimes Unit. These individuals are responsible for receiving bias incident complaints, filling out a report for every incident, and investigating as appropriate. You also may report a bias incident to the NJ Attorney General's Office online at nj.gov/oag/bias or to the NJ Division of Civil Rights at bias.njcivilrights.gov, via email to NJBIAS@NJDCJ.org or by calling the Bias Hotline at **800-277-BIAS** (2427).

Do I have to give my name and contact information?

You do not have to give your name or contact information. You can report a bias incident anonymously.

Who reviews bias incident reports in New Jersey?

Every bias incident reported in New Jersey is reviewed by law enforcement at many levels, including the local police department, New Jersey State Police, County Prosecutor's Office, the Office of Homeland Security & Preparedness, and/or the Attorney General's Office. These layers of review ensure that bias incidents are investigated thoroughly and properly. The Passaic County Prosecutor's Office Bias Crimes Liaison is Detective 1st Grade Nancy Petrara-Stafyleras (NStafyleras@passaiccountynj.org or 973-837-7735).

To REPORT a Bias Incident:

- Contact Your Local Police or County Prosecutor
- Contact the NJ Attorney General's Office:
 - Bias Hotline at 1-800-277-BIAS (2427)
 - E-mail: NJBIAS@NJDCJ.org
 - Online: www.nj.gov/oag/bias