



Prejudice motivated crime

What is prejudice motivated crime

A prejudice motivated crime is any crime motivated by bias or hatred towards a person or a group. This crime would be because of the victim's actual or perceived characteristic/s. These might be:

- religion
- race
- sex
- age
- disability
- sexual identity
- gender identity
- homelessness
- political activity.

It doesn't matter if the person actually has one of these characteristics. What matters is the offender is targeting the victim because they believe the victim belongs to a group.

Crimes motivated by prejudice or hatred can receive serious sentences.

What crimes are motivated by prejudice

Any crime may be motivated by prejudice, for example:

- obscene, threatening, insulting, abusive words and behaviour
- physical assault and violence
- damage to property

- harassment
- hate mail and online targeting.

These crimes are prosecuted under a range of laws. Regardless of what law applies, the most important thing is for the crime to be reported to police.

Specific crimes

Racial and religious vilification

- Racial or religious vilification is when a person incites hatred, revulsion, or ridicule of another person because of the other person's race or religion.
- It is against the law and Victoria Police investigates and prosecutes these crimes. VEOHRC can also investigate if the vilification is not criminal in nature.

Nazi symbol display

- It is a criminal offence to publicly display the Nazi Hakenkreuz if you know it is a symbol of Nazi ideology. Some exceptions apply.
- It is also an offence not to remove a Nazi symbol from public view, when directed by police.
- More information on these laws, including information on permitted uses, is available at www.vic.gov.au/about-the-nazi-symbol-ban.

Reporting prejudice motivated crime

- Before you report a crime, get to a safe place.
- Victims and witnesses can report crime.
- If it's safe to do so, take a picture or video of the offender or incident.



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- Notify police of unwanted sexual or anti-social behaviour on public transport by texting "STOPIT" to 0499 455 455.

Report it

- For emergencies, to report a crime in progress, or for immediate police attendance, call Triple Zero (000).
- For non-emergencies, call the Police Assistance Line on 131 444 or report online at www.police.vic.gov.au/police-assistance-line-and-online-reporting.
- Report anonymously to Crime Stoppers on 1800 333 000 or www.crimestoppers.com.au.

What to do if you have experienced or witnessed a prejudice motivated incident

- If there has been no crime, you take civil action through:
 - the Australian Human Rights Commission (humanrights.gov.au/complaints/make-complaint)
 - Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Committee (www.humanrights.vic.gov.au/get-help/ or 1300 292 153).
- Police will still take a report of the incident.

**For more information,
visit police.vic.gov.au/prejudice-motivated-crime**