

Hate crime

What this guide is about

This guide explains what a hate crime is and what to do if you or someone experience a hate crime. It also explains how we act against anyone perpetrating a hate crime.

Who is this guide for

For people who live in a Progress Housing Group home.

Bitesize summary

- Crimes committed against someone because of their disability, transgender-identity, race, religion or belief, or sexual orientation are hate crimes
- If you are a victim of a hate crime, you should report it immediately to us and the police.
- We will use a range of tools when tackling hate crime, including prevention, support and enforcement, in a proportionate and flexible response.

While all crime is damaging to our communities, we take hate crime extremely seriously and recognise the traumatic effect that hate crime can have on the victim and our diverse communities.

Victims of the crime may suffer physical injuries or endure emotional trauma; news of the hate crime can spread quickly throughout a community, increasing fear and lessening people's willingness to express their identity and go about their daily lives.

We will take a 'victim-centred' approach when responding to hate crime, and we encourage victims and witnesses of hate crime to report all incidents.

Hate crime

Crimes committed against someone because of their disability, transgender-identity, race, religion or belief, or sexual orientation are hate crimes.

Hate crimes can include:

- Threatening behaviour
- Assault

- Robbery
- Damage to property
- Inciting others to commit hate crimes
- Harassment
- Online abuse.

Types of hate crime

Hate crime can fall into one of three main types: physical assault, verbal abuse and incitement to hatred.

Physical assault

Physical assault of any kind is an offence. If you've been a victim of physical assault you should report it. Depending on the level of the violence used, a perpetrator may be charged with common assault, actual bodily harm or grievous bodily harm.

Verbal abuse

Verbal abuse, threats or name-calling can be a common and extremely unpleasant experience for minority groups.

Victims of verbal abuse are often unclear whether an offence has been committed or believe there is little they can do. However, there are laws in place to protect you from verbal abuse.

Incitement to hatred

The offence of incitement to hatred occurs when someone acts in a way that is threatening with the intention to stir up hatred. That could be in words, pictures, videos, music, and includes content posted on the internet.

Reporting hate crime

If you are a victim of a hate crime, you should report it immediately to us and the police.

You can report a hate crime to us online at www.progressgroup.org.uk by:

- Logging into your online tenant account
- Emailing us
- Live chat – available Monday to Friday, 8am to 5pm.

You can also:

- Call us on 0333 320 4555
- Visit or write to us - Sumner House, 21 King Street, Leyland, Lancashire PR25 2LW
- Ask a friend, councillor or MP to report a hate crime to us on your behalf.

Reporting hate crime to the police

You can report hate crime anonymously online at www.report-it-org.uk or www.crimestoppers-uk.org (0800 555 111).

Call 999 if you're reporting a crime that's in progress or if someone is in immediate danger.

If the crime isn't an emergency, call 101 or contact your local police - www.police.uk/

Investigating hate crime

We consider hate crime to be capable of being anti-social behaviour (ASB) and a breach of tenancy. This means that we will deal with a hate crime under our ASB Policy.

All hate crimes are recorded and investigated where possible. We will record your complaint and take details of what is affecting you and the person affecting you. We will also ask for relevant information or supporting evidence that may be required, including the dates and times of incidents, what happened, who was involved, and how it made you feel.

Sometimes an investigation is not possible, for example, when a complaint is anonymous, and more information is required to enable an investigation.

Sometimes, someone suffering from hate crime might be frightened to reveal their identity. We encourage people suffering from hate crime to come forward in person so that they can provide us with as much detail as possible so that we can investigate their concerns.

If you report offensive graffiti to us, we will remove this within 24 hours. Non-urgent repairs will be completed within five working days.

We will act as a third party and report the incident to the police if you have not already done so if you consent to us reporting the hate crime on your behalf

If we can investigate your report, one of our community safety officers will contact you within one working day.

We will:

- Ask for details regarding the issues affecting you

- Ask for details of others who have witnessed the hate crime and who we may need to speak to
- Ask questions to enable us to assess the risk and vulnerability of you and your household or others affected by the ASB.

We will then:

- Consider whether we need to make any support referrals
- Consider any target hardening measures, such as extra door locks, security lighting, etc., where appropriate
- Discuss evidence gathering and provide you with diary sheets and/or agree on other methods of recording further incidents, such as audio equipment (The Noise App), photographs, video recordings of incidents, etc.
- Discuss liaising with other agencies where appropriate, such as the police, if you have reported a hate crime to them
- Consider any safeguarding concerns for the person causing the ASB or their household

- Discuss possible early intervention measures to resolve matters quickly, such as visiting the person causing the ASB to discuss allegations of tenancy breaches, issue tenancy warnings, and make referrals to mediation
- Ask for your permission to visit the person committing the hate crime. We will not disclose your identity unless you permit us to do so. Please note that we may be unable to maintain anonymity if the incident details identify you.

If the matter is urgent and there is a serious risk of violence, we will consider whether an application for a without-notice injunction is appropriate.

We will be clear on what action we can and can't take and agree on an action plan with you.

Taking action

The next steps will depend on the particular nature of the case and the action plan we agreed on. We may:

- Speak to other witnesses
- Gather further evidence
- Review our case management system to see if we have received previous complaints and whether any warning markers exist
- Write to the person causing the ASB to advise them of the allegations received and arrange to visit them to discuss matters
- Work with our partners, such as police, fire service, social services, drug and alcohol support services, and mental health teams, to take a joined-up approach
- Consider non-legal tools and early intervention measures
- Consider legal action if it is reasonable and fair to do so.

We will monitor the case and keep you updated as your case progresses.

Prevention, support and enforcement tools and powers

We will use a range of tools when tackling hate crime, including prevention, support and enforcement, in a proportionate and flexible response, including the following:

- Issuing written **tenancy warnings**
- Signposting perpetrators of ASB to support services, which may help reduce or stop the ASB from repeating
- **Acceptable behaviour contracts.** These are signed by the person causing ASB and are a commitment to stop causing issues affecting others
- **Mediation.** This is an effective way of resolving disputes involving an independent and impartial third party - the mediators. It provides a safe, structured and positive environment for parties in dispute and seeks to change behaviour, resolve conflict and prevent issues from resurfacing. Please get in touch with us for more information about mediation or visit www.progressgroup.org.uk

- **Injunction order.** We can obtain this order from the County Court that can instruct someone not to do something, such as; not play excessively loud music or not to threaten violence against anyone. If a person breaches an injunction order, we can apply for contempt, and the person could receive a custodial sentence, a fine or both. The courts can, in some cases, grant a power of arrest or an exclusion area as part of the order. They can also attach positive requirements, which order the person to do something rather than not to do something, such as attending an alcohol support programme
- **Possession order.** We can apply for a possession order if the person causing the issues is a Progress Housing Group tenant. Once the court grants a possession order, this can sometimes lead to eviction. However, the courts view eviction as a last resort. They will expect the landlord to have tried, or considered, other measures before considering eviction as the most appropriate course of action. The courts can, in some cases, suspend a possession order on terms
- **Demotion order.** This alternative to possession proceedings can result in the tenant's tenancy being 'demoted' from an assured tenancy to an assured shorthold tenancy. This means they have less tenure security and rights for a fixed period.

We will also work in partnership with the police and local authorities. If appropriate, we will ask them to consider the tools and powers they have to tackle ASB, such as **closure powers**, which can result in premises associated with persistent ASB being closed to stop further ASB from being committed.

The police also have **dispersal powers**, and local authorities can issue **community protection notices (CPNs)** or delegate powers to social landlords to obtain CPNs.

If it is necessary to commence any legal action, you may need to attend court to give evidence in any legal proceedings. Your community safety officer will support you throughout this process. We will clearly explain the legal process and arrange for your transport to and from the court if your attendance is required.

We can also arrange for you to visit the court before any hearing so that you can see the court's layout in advance.

Closing your case

We will close your case when we have resolved the issues affecting you.

If, upon our investigations, there is not enough evidence to enable us to take action, we may close your case. We will clearly explain why action cannot be taken or what evidence is required for us to progress your case to a satisfactory resolution.

We may also close your case if you have stopped reporting any further issues to us, as we need to know whether the incidents are still continuing for us to consider any relevant actions to resolve matters.

When we close your case, we will send you a satisfaction survey, as we value any feedback you give us to help improve our service.

If you are unhappy about how we have handled your case, you can use our complaints procedure. Please ask for our 'Complaints and compliments' leaflet or visit www.progressgroup.org.uk/feedback

Other ways we can help

Please contact us if you have any concerns about hate crime or ASB. We also have lots of useful information about tackling ASB on our website.

You may also be interested in

- How we tackle ASB
- Our ASB Policy
- How we are performing – community safety.

Get in touch

The quickest way to get in touch is online at www.progressgroup.org.uk by:

- Logging into your online tenant account
- Emailing us
- Live chat – available Monday to Friday, 8am to 5pm.

You can also:

- Call us on 0333 320 4555
- Visit or write to us - Sumner House, 21 King Street, Leyland, Lancashire, PR25 2LW.

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Report or track a repair or check your rent balance

You can pay your rent, check your rent balance and report or track a non-emergency repair online 24/7.

Log in or sign up for your online tenant account at www.progressgroup.org.uk

Complaints and compliments

Your feedback is very important to us and helps us to improve our services. If you want to tell us that we have been doing something well or are unhappy about something, please tell us using the contact details on the left.

Our Complaints Policy and process follow the standards set out in the Housing Ombudsmen's Complaint Handling Code. You can read more on our website or let us know if you would like a leaflet.

Information in another format or language

This leaflet is available in the following formats:

- EasyRead
- Audio
- Large print
- Braille
- Other languages.

More information is available at www.progressgroup.org.uk/access