

Quick Guide on Hate Speech & Hate Crime

~~HATE~~

maltagayrights.org



WHAT IS **HATE SPEECH**?

Hate speech, also known as bias motivated speech, is written, printed or verbal speech that uses threatening, abusive or insulting language, with the intent to stir up violence or hatred with reference to a person or group based on gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, race, colour, language, ethnic origin, age, disability, religion, or belief or political or other opinion.

WHAT IS **HATE CRIME**?

Hate crime is any criminal offence which is aggravated or motivated* by hostility, aversion or contempt based on a victim's membership (or presumed membership)** of a group based on gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, race, colour, language, national or ethnic origin, age, disability, citizenship, religion or belief or political or other opinion.

** The offender demonstrates this hostility, aversion or contempt, at the time of committing the offence, immediately before or after the offence. ** Membership in relation to a group, includes association with members of that group. "Presumed" means presumed by the offender.*

WHAT DOES HATE CRIME LOOK LIKE?

- Online abuse
- Verbal abuse
- Harassment
- Assault
- Aggression
- Inciting violence or hatred
- Threats of violence

WHO IS AFFECTED?

Anyone can be affected by hate speech or hate crime, as they can be targeted for their (perceived or actual) membership of or association with a group based on:

- gender
- gender identity
- sexual orientation
- race
- colour
- language
- ethnic origin
- age
- disability
- religion
- belief
- political or other opinion



WHAT ARE THE **EFFECTS** OF HATE SPEECH & HATE CRIME?

Hate speech is directed not just to LGBT persons, but even people of colour, Muslims, persons with disability, the elderly and other groups. When hate speech is normalised and entering everyday discourse, it jeopardises peace, social cohesion, and democratic values. Hate speech has been shown to lead to hate crimes, violent extremism and even genocide.

Hate speech and hate crime impact individuals and communities in various ways.

Individuals can:

- feel vulnerable
- feel anxious or depressed
- avoid places and fear their safety
- feel suicidal
- feel a need to conceal themselves

In communities, it can:

- create division and tension between groups
- create a sense of isolation
- Impact social cohesion

WHY REPORT HATE SPEECH & HATE CRIME?



Reporting hate speech
and hate crime helps to:

- stop such incidents from getting worse or repeating
- send a message that hate will not be tolerated
- stop it from happening to others
- help the police and other stakeholders to take action and enact measures and policies to prevent such incidents from happening in the future
- help victims access the support they need
- express solidarity with the victim



**SAFETY
FIRST**

If you do not feel safe to file a police report, seek support and advice first.
(contact MGRM or Victim Support Agency)

HOW TO REPORT HATE SPEECH & HATE CRIME

1

Before taking action, it is important to **ensure your, or the victim's wellbeing**. Seek support if you/they need it (support services listed at the end of this guide).

2

Gather all **evidence** of the incident as soon as possible, before it is removed.

3

If you are ready to do so, **report the incident** to the police (at a police station or online) or the Victim Support Agency (call 116 006).

ONLINE HATE SPEECH IS TOO MUCH TO HANDLE. WHAT TO DO?

Self-care is important. Take a break from social media, go out and do things that sustain you like exercise, meditation, hobbies, or hanging out with friends. Do not engage, and seek mental health support from any of the services at the end of this guide.

REPORTING ONLINE HATE SPEECH

When you report a case of online hate speech with the Victim Support Agency, you need to provide a screenshot of the post and comment, and the URL link of where the post/comment was originally published. The screenshot should not be altered in any way. You also need to provide the URL link to the alleged offender's Facebook (or other social media) profile, and a screenshot of said profile.

THE VICTIM SUPPORT AGENCY

The Victim Support Agency was established to act as the national contact point for victims of crime, including victims of hate crime. Victims of crime who need assistance are invited to call on **116 006 (freephone)** which is available every day from **7.30am till 7.30pm**, including weekends and public holidays. This national victim supportline is meant to provide information to Victims of Crime and facilitate access to victim support services.

MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT



Rainbow Support Service

call **+356 7943 0006** or email **support@maltagayrights.org**

Online Chats

- **kellimni.com**
Available 24/7
- **OLLI chat**
(Richmond Foundation)
Mon - Fri | 8am - 8pm
Sat | 8am - 4pm

Phone

- **Freephone 1579**
(National Helpline)
Available 24/7
- **Freephone 1770**
(Richmond Foundation)
Mon - Fri | 8am - 8pm
Sat | 8am - 4pm
- **+356 9935 6622 (LGBTI+ Gozo counselling services)**
Mon - Fri | 9am - 5pm

LEGAL INFORMATION & SUPPORT



aditus foundation

email **info@aditus.org.mt**
or call **+356 7707 2221**

GENERAL INFORMATION



MGRM

email **mgrm@maltagayrights.org**
or call **+356 9925 5559**