

Reporting Hate and Bias Crimes

Spokane Police Department



Your Neighborhood Resource

North Precinct

5124 N. Market Street
(509) 363-8281

northprecinct@spokanecity.org

Downtown Precinct

221 W. First Avenue
(509) 622-5823

spddowntownprecinctofficers@spokanecity.org

South Precinct

2116 E. 1st Avenue
(509) 625-3330

southprecinct@spokanecity.org

Spokane Police Department

1100 W. Mallon Avenue
Spokane, WA 99260

Phone: 311

SpokanePolice.org

What is a Hate Crime Offense?

A person is guilty of a hate crime offense if he or she commits any of the following acts because of his or her perception of the victim's race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender expression or identity, or mental, physical, or sensory disability:

- Causes physical injury to the victim or another person;
- Causes physical damage to or destroys the property of the victim or another person; or
- Makes threats that causes a person or group to have reasonable fear of harm to their person or property.

A crime is presumed to be a Hate Crime Offense when a person does the following:

- Burns a cross on property of a victim who is or whom the actor perceives to be of African American heritage;
- Defaces property of a victim who is or whom the actor perceives to be of Jewish heritage by defacing the property with a swastika;
- Defaces religious real property with words, symbols, or items that are derogatory to persons of the faith associated with the property;
- Places a vandalized or defaced religious item or scripture on the property of a victim who is or whom the actor perceives to be of the faith with which that item or scripture is associated;
- Damages, destroys, or defaces religious garb or other faith-based attire belonging to the victim or attempts to or successfully removes religious garb or other faith-based attire from the victim's person without the victim's authorization; or
- Places a noose on the property of a victim who is or whom the actor perceives to be of a racial or ethnic minority group.

An incident may not necessarily be a hate crime offense:

- If the suspect is committing another crime and calls the victim a derogatory name.
- If the suspect uses insulting or derogatory words but does not place another person in a reasonable fear of harm to their person or property.
- If the incident is not found to be a crime.

In some instances, the police may be limited in what they can do, but SPD keeps track of all incidents of hate and bias, and we very much encourage the reporting of every incident of this type.

How to report a Hate Crime Offense

- If the incident is happening now or just happened, call 9-1-1 immediately.
- If the incident has already occurred, the immediate danger is over and there are no injuries, please call:

CRIME CHECK (509) 456-2233

- If you believe the incident was motivated by someone's perception of your race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender expression or identity, or mental, physical, or sensory disability, ask the officer or call taker to make a note of that in the report.
- If you can, give the officer or call taker the exact wording of what was said, regardless of how offensive it is.
- If there are witnesses to the incident, point them out to the officers at the scene.
- If the case meets the criteria for a hate crime offense, your case will then be forwarded to a detective for follow up investigation.

All community members deserve to feel safe.