

Reporting hate on someone's behalf – Tips from Cambs Constabulary

If you have identified an incident of hate. Here are some tips for you.

Try and gain the victim/witness (we shorten to V/W) trust and discuss the importance of reporting. Follow their direction to determine how best they should report. If they want you to make a report on their behalf then this is what we advise:

Only obtain **detail** when you are reporting on behalf of a person who wishes to remain **anonymous**. This is so police have a better understanding of the incident and can take appropriate action. **Detail** means things like descriptions, names of other people involved, evidence - such as cars, CCTV and so on.

IMPORTANT – you may wish to advise them:

- If the V/W does not want the perpetrator prosecuted, report anonymously. Without a V/W, it is less likely that an offender is located and/or prosecuted.
- However police operate a Positive Action Policy – an offender is likely to be prosecuted if there is strong evidence that they have committed an offence.

Risks and safety issues

- Record concerns the victim has for their safety, and that of others in their household.
- If the V/W is in **immediate danger, dial 999 immediately**.

Things you should know and consider

- If you were the first person to be told about this incident then **you** may be a 'first complainant witness'. So best advice is to write down/record in some way (and keep securely), everything or as much of the account as you can – it could be used as evidence.
- In any event, ensure that any information recorded is exactly what the V/W has told you (their words/actions, not your interpretation) and if appropriate get them to check what you have recorded is accurate.
- Consider issues of consent & safeguarding.

If you complete a report for someone or ring the police/other on someone's behalf: – Please tell police that you are Hate Reporting Centre personnel. Give your name and the agency you work for in case there is a need to contact you for further information.

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Taking information from a person who wishes to remain anonymous - The key is to ask OPEN questions:

- Who did that
- What did they do
- How did that happen
- When, Where, Which and Why etc.

Do what you can in the circumstances to get information so that the police can try and identify the offender or put a plan in place to protect the victim/witness.

IMPORTANT – In order to evidence **hostility**, police need to try & ascertain motivation - can you/the V/W assist with this? Did the offender say anything – what did they say (exact words if possible), what have they done before? Have they targeted you/family/friends before? Things like that are good for police to know.

Don't worry about getting this information if you are not able, just do your best or what you can in the circumstances and remember, if the victim does want to engage with the police it the police's job to get details, yours is to put the victim/witness in touch with the police.

NB - If your person doesn't know this is a hate crime or incident, and YOU perceive it then please explain to the police why YOU perceive it to be a hate crime or incident. You don't have to explain what hate crime is to the victim or witness especially if it will cause more distress or worry.

