

Information for victims

The California Victims' Bill of Rights Act – Marsy's Law – gives you these important legal rights:

Get money for your losses

Apply for money to cover your property losses, medical expenses, lost wages, and other losses.

Say how the crime impacted you

Tell the court how the crime impacted your life before the defendant is sentenced.

Get information about the criminal case

Ask the prosecutor for certain information about the case.

Get orders from the court

The court can make orders that could help you, such as a **protective order** to keep the defendant away from you or an **order to pay attorney fees** if you hired a lawyer to help with your case.

The court may also order the defendant to pay you \$25,000 or more for violating your civil rights. (Talk to a lawyer about your rights under the Ralph Act and the Bane Act.)

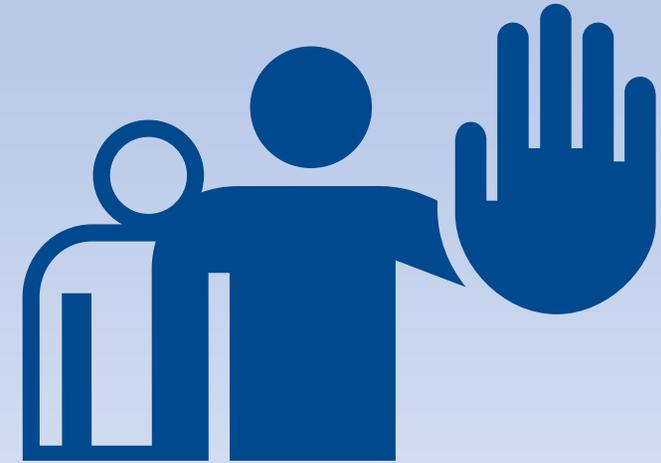
Where to find help

- California Attorney General's Victims' Services Unit
(877) 433-9069
TTY: (800) 735-2929
www.oag.ca.gov/victimservices
- California Department of Fair Employment and Housing
(800) 884-1684
TTY: (800) 700-2320
www.dfeh.ca.gov
- California Victim Compensation Board
(800) 777-9229
www.vcgcb.ca.gov
 - Find Your Local District Attorney's Office, Victim/Witness Assistance Center
www.vcgcb.ca.gov/victims/localhelp.aspx
- U.S. Department of Justice, Community Relations Services
(202) 305-2935
www.justice.gov/crs

For more information, or help with questions or concerns, contact:

California Attorney General's Office Victims' Services Unit

P.O. Box 944255
Sacramento, CA 94244-2550
(877) 433-9069
www.oag.ca.gov/victimservices



What You Need to Know to Protect Yourself and Others



California Attorney General's Office
Victims' Services Unit

In California, you can be a victim of a hate crime if you have been targeted because of your:

- » *race or ethnicity,*
- » *nationality, religion,*
- » *gender, sexual orientation,*
- » *physical or mental disability, or*
- » *your association with a person or group with one or more of these “actual” or “perceived” characteristics.*

Hate crime or hate incident?

It is important to know the difference between a hate *crime* and a hate *incident*.

A **hate incident** is an action or behavior motivated by hate but legally protected by the First Amendment right to freedom of expression.

Examples of hate incidents include:

- name-calling,
- insults,
- distributing hate material in public places, and
- displaying hate material on your own property.

The U.S. Constitution allows hate speech as long as it does not interfere with the civil rights of others. If a hate incident starts to threaten a person or property, it may become a **hate crime**.

A **hate crime** is a crime against a person, group, or property motivated by the victim’s real or perceived protected social group. The law protects against many classes of hate crimes.

What to do if you witness a hate crime

Report the crime to your local police or sheriff’s department. If hate crimes are not reported, the hate crimes may continue.

How to spot a hate crime

Here are signs of a possible hate crime:

- The criminal chose the victim or property because they belonged to a protected group, like a certain religion or gender.
- The criminal made written or verbal comments showing a prejudice.
- The crime happened on a date that is important for the victim’s protected group.
- There is a lot of organized hate activity in the area.

“When someone commits a crime motivated by hate, it is not just an attack on one innocent person, but an attack on the entire State.”

*Xavier Becerra
California Attorney General*

If you are a hate crime victim, you should:

- Contact the local police or sheriff right away!
- Get medical attention (if you need it).
- Write down the exact words that were said.
- Make notes about any other facts so you don’t forget them.
- Save all evidence (e.g., graffiti, egg shells, writing on victim’s vehicle). If safe, wait until law enforcement arrives and takes photos.
- Get the names, addresses, phone numbers, and emails of other victims and witnesses.
- Try to get a description from any eyewitnesses of the criminal or the vehicle.
- Call community organizations in your area that respond to hate crimes.

What you and your community can do

- Speak out against hate and intolerance.
- Have community rallies to support victims.
- Offer support and help to victims.
- Ask public officials to speak out against hate crimes.
- Establish a hate crime network that includes law enforcement, local government, schools, religious organizations and community organizations. Ask them to respond to hate crimes immediately when they happen and to promote prevention and awareness.