

## 5. Seek Support

Dealing with Islamophobia or racial abuse can be emotionally distressing. You can reach out to Action Against Islamophobia (AAI) support line for referrals to our service partners who can provide culturally safe mental health support and legal advice. You can also:

- Contact Lifeline (13 11 14) or Beyond Blue (1300 22 4636) for mental health support.
- If you want to explore legal options, you can contact organisations like the NSW Community Legal Centres or the Australian Human Rights Commission.

### If you are a witness or a Bystander:

- In cases of emergency or urgent attention- call the Police on 000.
- Report the incident to the Action Against Islamophobia website.
- Report the incident to local authorities.
- If you see something. Say something. Speak up in defence of others.
- It is important to consider supporting the victim via a written statement to the relevant authorities explaining the situation and what you saw/heard.

• The Challenging Racism Project (CRP) provided by Western Sydney University also provides a list of actions you can consider taking when you witness racism:

- Confronting or disagreeing with the perpetrator
- Calling it “racism” or “discrimination” (if it is safe or productive to do so)
- Interrupting or distracting perpetrator
- Comforting the person(s) targeted
- Expressing upset feelings
- Seeking assistance from friend, teacher, manager, coach etc.
- Reporting the incident to authorities

### Action Against Islamophobia

Support Line

 (02) 8377 4199

 support@actionagainstislamophobia.org.au

actionagainstislamophobia.org.au



# What to do if you Experience Hate in a Public Space

5 Effective Actions and Guidance

Empowerment | Advocacy | Empowerment

# What to do if you Experience Hate in a Public Space

Unfortunately, Islamophobia does occur in public spaces, indicating that perpetrators are not deterred by the fact that they are in a public setting.

Islamophobia manifests in various ways, from verbal abuse and harassment to physical violence.

Muslims may be subjected to derogatory comments, taunts, or even physical attacks.

Property belonging to Muslims can also be damaged or defaced, and offensive literature promoting hatred against Muslims and Islam can be distributed. Online platforms are also used to harass and discriminate against Muslims.

Misidentification and negative stereotyping further exacerbate the problem. Despite the presence of crowds, CCTV cameras, and security personnel, these incidents often occur in public spaces such as shopping centres and train stations.

## 1. Stay Calm and Safe

- Remove yourself from the situation if it feels unsafe or could escalate. If possible, move to a different part of the bus, train or ferry.
- Ignore the perpetrator if they are attempting to provoke a response. Your safety is the priority, not engaging with the person.

## 2. Seek Help

- Call the police: If the situation feels dangerous or escalates, dial 000 for emergency services. Provide details about your location and the nature of the assault.
- Alert the driver or transport staff: On buses, trains, or ferries, notify the driver, guard, or any available staff. They can help intervene or contact the police if necessary.
- Ask for assistance from bystanders: If it feels safe, you can ask nearby passengers for help. They may act as witnesses or intervene by calling authorities.

## 3. Document the Incident

- Record the details: If possible, make a note of the date, time, location, and description of the incident. Write down what the assailant said or did.
- Take photos or videos: If it's safe, use your phone to record the perpetrator and the situation. This can be important evidence.
- Note witness contact details: If anyone witnessed the assault, ask for their contact information in case they are needed to provide statements later.

## 4. Report the Incident

- File a report with the NSW Police by visiting a police station or calling the Police Assistance Line on 131 444. Ensure you give a full account of what happened and provide any evidence (e.g., photos, videos).
- If the assault involved racial abuse and/or religious vilification, you can file a complaint with the Anti-Discrimination Board of NSW. They can provide advice and may help you take further legal steps here: [www.antidiscrimination.nsw.gov.au/complaints/how-to-make-a-complaint.html](http://www.antidiscrimination.nsw.gov.au/complaints/how-to-make-a-complaint.html)
- You can report the incident to Transport for NSW by calling 131 500 or via their Complaints and Feedback form on their website [www.transportnsw.info/contact-us/feedback](http://www.transportnsw.info/contact-us/feedback)
- If the incident took place in a shopping centre or car park, request staff from the nearest retail store to contact security or centre management for assistance. If you were the victim of racial or religious discrimination by a member of staff, you can make a complaint to the Shopping Centre Council of Australia . The Council has published a Code of Conduct for Fair Service Provision in Shopping Centres “on the basis of age, gender, country of origin, sexual orientation, skin colour, religion, marital status, veteran status or disability”.
- Report the incident to the Action Against Islamophobia (AAI) website: [www.actionagainstislamophobia.org.au](http://www.actionagainstislamophobia.org.au)