



A guide for organisations supporting LGBTI asylum seekers and refugees who have experienced hate crime

Micro Rainbow is an organisation that supports **lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI)** asylum seekers and refugees in the UK. This factsheet is designed to help organisations understand what a hate crime is and how to support an LGBTI asylum seeker or refugee if they experience a hate crime.

About LGBTI asylum seekers and refugees

71 countries in the world still criminalise homosexuality with some countries imposing life in jail or death sentence. LGBTI asylum seekers face persecution and various forms of abuse including and not limited to; imprisonment, beatings, arbitrary arrests, blackmail, forced marriage and corrective rape. LGBTI asylum seekers flee their country of origin in search of safety in the UK.

What is hate crime?

Hate crime is abusive behaviour committed towards or against someone because of their **identity**. It is a criminal offence, which is understood by the victim or someone else, to be driven by the offender's hostility and prejudice towards someone based on their:

- Sexual orientation or gender identity
- Race
- Religion/faith
- Disability

Hate crime and prejudice against LGBTI asylum seekers and refugees

LGBTI asylum seekers and refugees may experience specific types of hate crime because of who they are. This can be because of their sexual or gender identity, race, migrant/refugee status, religion/ faith and or disability. For example:

- Victims can be threatened, physically or verbally abused because of their race or migrant status.
- Blackmail and threats to 'out' or expose sexual or gender identity to the victim's family or community.
- Coercion to enter into marriage with the opposite sex.
- Physical, verbal or threats of physical abuse because of their sexual or gender identity (homophobic or transphobic abuse).

Impact of hate crime

The impact of hate crime on victims is very damaging, not only to the victim but to specific communities such as LGBTI refugee communities. Hate crimes spread fear, anger and have the potential to cause injury and distress to the victim affecting individuals' physical and emotional wellbeing. Hate crimes increase feelings of vulnerability, anxiety, anger, and sometimes shame.

Barriers to accessing help

There are several reasons LGBTI asylum seekers and refugees will not seek justice or help:

- Fear that seeking justice or approaching the criminal justice system will impact negatively on their asylum claim.
- Fear of reprisals if they remain close to or live with the perpetrator.
- Fear of being ostracised by family members or loyalty to the abusers.
- Lack of confidence in the justice system and fear of authorities due to previous traumatic experiences or persecution by the criminal justice system in their home country.

How to work with LGBTI asylum seekers and refugees when they report hate crime

If clients or service users you are supporting inform you that they have been threatened, harassed or attacked because of their sexual orientation, gender identity, race, religion and/or disability, they have experienced a hate crime. It is important to inform them that they have the right to report this abuse to the police.

It is important for organisations to have a more comprehensive understanding of the hate crimes LGBTI asylum seekers face. Their specific challenges, barriers in seeking support and the emotions hate crime cause and their effects.

Organisations can:

- Offer one to one support and explain their rights to justice.
- Understand the victims' immigration status and connect them to immigration solicitors if needed.
- Understand their challenges and reluctance in seeking justice.
- Offer emotional and advocacy support if the victim decides to report the hate crime.

Contact Micro Rainbow

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Telephone: 020 3559 6490

Website: <https://microrainbow.org/>

Other organisations

- [Galop](#)- Anti LGBT+ Hate Crime
- [Tell Mama](#)- Anti Muslim Hate Crime
- [CST](#)- Anti-Semitic Hate Crime
- [Monitoring Group](#)- Anti Race Hate Crime
- [Stay Safe East](#)- Anti Disability Hate Crime
- [CATCH](#)- Communities Against Hate