



City of Portland Crime Prevention Program

Safety in Public in this Tense Post-election Climate

According to the Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC), 867 incidents of hateful intimidation and harassment have been reported in the United States following the election (through November 18th). Thirty-three of these have been reported in Oregon. Most of these occurrences do not involve physical contact.

The Portland Police Bureau (PPB) defines bias crime as “any criminal act that targets a victim based on the suspect’s perception of the victim’s race, color, religion, national origin or sexual orientation.” According to the PPB, they investigate all reported incidents of bias crimes and encourage any member of our community who is the victim of such a crime to contact law enforcement.

The City of Portland’s Crime Prevention Program remains committed to serving all community members of Portland, including the undocumented community. The City has a long-standing commitment to serving all residents regardless of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, marital status, age or disability.

During this time of unrest, we encourage you to build community, maintain a healthy awareness over your environment, take steps to protect yourself and look after community members.

Safety Planning for Public Places

Many people will not encounter hateful incidents. However, it is a good idea to consider personal safety while out in public. Some steps you can take:

- Be alert and aware of your surroundings while in public. Lengthy distractions such as using your phone can draw your attention away from your surroundings.
- Follow your intuition and act on it. Listen to that feeling or voice telling you that something is unsafe.
- Protect your personal space. As advised by the Portland Police Bureau’s WomenStrength* Program, “Displaying a confident and decisive attitude can communicate that our personal space will not be violated easily.”
- Identify potential allies that you can turn to in a time of need in public. This may include a bus driver, a store clerk and other pedestrians.
- Alter plans when necessary to escape or avoid a bad situation. For example, if you are driving and someone is continuing to yell at you from another vehicle, change your direction or stop at a place where help is available.
- If you have a regular route you travel every day, identify places and people you can turn to for support.
- Get angry if people try to harm you. WomenStrength states, “You have the absolute right to live your life free of violence. Your anger can help you to overcome fear and has the potential to scare off an attacker.”

- Call 9-1-1 for an immediate threat to life or property or a crime in progress. If it is not an immediate threat, you can contact the police non-emergency number at 503-823-3333.

Helping Others

If you see someone harassing or making racist remarks to another person, do what you can do to support the affected individual. Here are some tips:

- Assess the safety of the situation and your intuition to determine how you will be involved. Can you intervene to help this person? Is there someone else in the environment that you can alert for help? Do you need to call the police? safe place if the aggressor remains in the area.
- Engage in unexpected behavior. The aggressor expects the victim and bystanders to engage in a heated exchange or cower. A helpful technique that has been widely shared involves a bystander:
 - Approaching and engaging the victim in a calm and friendly conversation on a random subject while ignoring the aggressor.
 - Building a safe space by continuing the conversation, maintaining eye contact and continuing to ignore the aggressor.
 - Escorting the victim to a safe place if the aggressor remains in the area.
- Interrupt aggression with communication:
 - Say something. Depending on the situation, that may be a forceful statement to stop the behavior.
 - Do something. If it feels too dangerous to speak up, nonverbal interactions can be impactful. For example, you can stand by the individual under attack and make eye contact with him or her, so that it is clear you are a support. In some situations, brief, serious, direct eye contact with an aggressor may make them reconsider their actions.

If you need crime prevention assistance, please contact us. We need to look out for one another during this challenging time.

*WomenStrength is a program through the Portland Police Bureau offering free self-defense courses in English and Spanish for women and co-ed personal safety classes for community groups.