

This guidance aims to help agencies complete the new Hate Incident Reporting Form, step by step, with a Frequently Asked Questions section at the end of the document. Further information, if required, can be obtained from Victim Support Sussex on 0845 38 99 528.

Information sharing

In the majority of cases it remains the victim's decision whether or not to refer the incident to the police. However, where an incident is so serious in nature that it presents a significant risk of harm to the victim (or others), agencies should refer to their internal and/or statutory protocols regarding information sharing in the context of adult/child protection.

Section A

Victim - the person who experienced the incident.

Witness - a person or persons who saw or heard the incident happening.

Third party – a member of the public **or** member of an agency/organisation (e.g. the police, youth worker, housing officer) who becomes aware that the incident happened.

A racist incident is any incident which is perceived to be based upon prejudice towards or hatred of the victim because of their race, colour, ethnic origin, nationality/national origins or religion, whether actual or perceived.

A homophobic incident is any incident which is perceived to be based upon prejudice towards or hatred of the victim because of their sexuality, where the victim is or is perceived to be lesbian or gay.

A biphobic incident is any incident which is perceived to be based upon prejudice towards or hatred of the victim because of their sexuality, where the victim is or is perceived to be bisexual.

A transphobic incident is any incident which is perceived to be based upon prejudice towards or hatred of the victim because of their gender identity, where the victim is or is perceived to be transsexual or transgender

A disablist incident is any incident which is perceived to be based upon prejudice towards or hatred of the victim because of their disability, whether actual or perceived

Box 1

Please state any action taken so far and/or any action planned: This refers to any action already taken or that will be taken by the victim or by another person or agency. For example – 'Incident reported to landlord who will contact the police and the district anti-social behaviour team'.

When did the crime/incident take place? If not known, please give the approximate date, e.g. month and year.

Where did the crime/incident take place? Please select the incident location. (Public Sex Environment describes any open space, public or private, that is habitually used for the purpose of consensual sexual activity with the same and/or opposite sex. This may include public toilets, car parks, lay-bys, parks, for example.)

Address and postcode of incident location: If not known, please give as much information as possible, e.g. street name and town.

Section C

This section records the victim's details. It can be completed by a witness or third party but should be about the victim only.

Date of birth: Where this is not known, please supply approximate age.

Occupation: For those not in employment, it would be helpful to state whether the victim is a student, unemployed, in receipt of sickness benefits, prohibited from working due to immigration status, etc.

Language: This information is to allow Victim Support to be aware of any interpreting/translating needs when or if they make contact. It does not form part of any statistical monitoring.

Religion/Faith, Ethnicity, Sexuality, Gender identity: Wherever possible, please allow the victim to self-select from the categories provided. Where witnesses or third parties are uncertain, please leave the relevant section(s) blank. *N.B. Schools may be able to refer to data on ethnicity collected by the Schools Information Management System (SIMS).*

Disability: Wherever possible, please allow the victim to consider if any description(s) in the list below apply to him/her. If you are uncertain and unable to ask the victim, please leave blank.

Hearing Impairment	Deaf BSL user
Visual Impairment	Physical Impairment
Learning Difficulty	Specific Learning Difficulty e.g. dyslexia
Mental or emotional distress (mental health issues)	
Long term health condition (e.g. diabetes, arthritis, HIV, MS)	

If the victim is able to identify their disability in the list above please tick the **YES** box and using one of the descriptions above, complete the following line on the HIRF: **If yes, please give details** _____.

If, after reading the list above, the victim does not consider him/herself to have a disability please tick the **NO** box and move on to section D of the HIRF.

Still unsure - cannot find a suitable description? If an appropriate description is not stated in the list above then please indicate in the victim's own words what s/he considers their disability to be by using the space provided. (Please remember to tick the **YES** box next to the question 'Do you consider you have a disability?')

Immigration Status – Wherever possible, please allow the victim to consider if any description(s) in the list below apply to him/her. If you are uncertain and unable to ask the victim, please leave blank.

Asylum seeker: A person who has left their country of origin and formally applied for asylum in this country but whose application has not yet been decided.

Refugee: Someone whose asylum application has been successful and who is allowed to stay in this country having proved they would face persecution back home.

Migrant worker: Someone who is not a UK national and has moved to this country to work.

Overseas student: Someone who is not a UK national and who is in this country wholly or mainly for the purposes of receiving education.

Tourist: Someone who is not a UK national and who is in this country for recreational and leisure purposes for up to 6 months.

Section D

This section is to obtain the victim's contact details and for him/her to state whether s/he wishes to be contacted by Victim Support for help in dealing with the incident. If the victim does not know the report is being made, **please do not** complete this section and go to Section E instead.

Additional notes:

Whilst in the majority of cases it remains the victim's decision whether or not to refer the incident to the police, where an incident is so serious in nature that it presents a significant risk of harm to the victim (or others), agencies should refer to their internal and/or statutory protocols regarding information sharing in the context of adult/child protection.

Frequently asked questions:

The victim's employer does not appear on the list in Section A. Why are there not more employers listed?

The employers listed are mostly statutory bodies which are working in partnership to promote hate incident reporting via the HIRF. They are particularly keen to be able to monitor incidents which happen at any of their workplaces so they can take steps to address any problems. People not working in the statutory sector should tick the private (i.e. commercial) or voluntary sector boxes.

What difference can completing the form make?

The details of the incident are entered onto a countywide database. The statistics from the database are used to compile quarterly reports on the level and type of incidents happening across East and West Sussex. This information is used by a variety of agencies and professionals, including East and West Sussex County Councils, to inform decisions about where support and resources to tackle hate incidents/crimes should be focussed. Completing a form helps to build up this picture, and the evidence it provides may result in preventative and educational initiatives.

Where does the form go?

In East and West Sussex, the HIRF goes to Victim Support Sussex. Victim Support Sussex have a contract with the Harm Reduction Team (part of the Community Safety Unit at WSCC) and with the East Sussex Safer Communities Partnership (part of East Sussex County Council) to record and monitor the reports received and to provide assistance to victims of incidents, if requested.

In Brighton & Hove, the HIRF goes to the Racial Harassment Service within the City Council.

Who else uses the HIRF?

The HIRF was set up by multi-agency forums in both East and West Sussex. The HIRF is designed to be used by as many agencies as possible, such as the police, local authorities, voluntary and community organisations and healthcare professionals as well as schools. It is also used by individuals who wish to report racist incident(s) they have experienced.

Why doesn't it request details about the perpetrator?

The nature of the incidents and the structure of the form mean that an alleged perpetrator's details could be held without him/her knowing of the allegation. Data protection regulations do not allow us to do this. In addition, not all agencies have a use for perpetrator information or have methods of recording perpetrator details. However, where they are able, some agencies, such as schools, may have decided to record perpetrator information themselves.