

Equality and Human Rights Commission
Call for Evidence Questionnaire

Disability-Related Harassment Inquiry Call for Evidence

“There can be no more important human right than to live life in safety and with security. Its absence prevents us from living our lives to the full. And, for some, its absence has led to the loss of life itself. For many disabled people in Britain safety and security is a right frequently denied.”

Trevor Phillips – ‘Promoting the safety and security of disabled people, 2009’

Call for Evidence

The Commission is carrying out an Inquiry into disability-related harassment. The Inquiry includes bullying and hate crime and the harassment of disabled people, their families, friends or associates. We want to hear from anyone who has been harassed and from organisations that work for/with them, including voluntary and community sector organisations, public authorities (such as local councils, police, housing, social services and education) and public transport operators.

Your experience

If you have been harassed because of your disability, or someone close to you has been affected, we want to hear about your experience. We want to hear from people who are Deaf or disabled, including those with mental health conditions and long term health conditions, as well as their family, friends or associates. We want to know what happened and what public authorities and public transport operators did – or didn’t do – to help. Your experiences – positive or negative – will help the Commission to show what police, social services, schools, bus companies and other agencies can do to put an end to the harassment of disabled people in public places and behind closed doors. If you’re not sure what to tell us, we have a questionnaire (on page 6) to help get you started.

Your organisation's work

If your organisation works for people who are Deaf or disabled, including those with mental health conditions, or supports people who have been victim of harassment, we'd also like to hear from you. Your knowledge and experience in handling disability-related harassment, as well as any work you do towards its prevention or addressing the causes will be invaluable. We are seeking responses from:

- Organisations of and for people who are Deaf or disabled, including those with mental health conditions or long term health conditions
- Organisations in contact with people who have experienced disability-related harassment such as advice agencies, refuges and organisations offering support to victims of crime
- Public authorities
- Public transport operators
- Academics
- Individuals with knowledge and experience of this issue.

Giving evidence

There are a number of ways to provide evidence to the Inquiry:

- Send your response in Word or pdf format, in easy read or BSL format via post or by email
- Complete a questionnaire on our website, by email or via our helpline (this is for individual stories and experiences only)
- Telephone or textphone via one of our helplines.

Details about how to contact us are on page 5.

The deadline for providing evidence is **Friday 10th September 2010**.

Individuals who have experienced harassment

You can give your evidence anonymously but providing a name and contact details will help us if we need to contact you to find out more about what happened. Your personal information will be treated as confidential (please read our confidentiality statement at the end of this document).

Individuals wishing to submit evidence may prefer to complete our questionnaire, available at www.equalityhumanrights.com/disabilityharassmentfi or by contacting the helpline on the numbers given below or by request to disabilityharassmentfi@equalityhumanrights.com

If you require any reasonable adjustments that are not met by the above methods, please contact us to discuss your requirements.

Organisations and interested parties

We are specifically interested in finding out about:

- effective approaches to preventing and eliminating disability-related harassment
- addressing the causes of disability-related harassment including prejudice and negative attitudes
- involving disabled people in the prevention and elimination of disability-related harassment and addressing its causes
- enabling disabled people to effectively report disability-related harassment
- the diverse experiences and needs of disabled people related to their impairment type, age, gender, gender identity, race or ethnicity, religion or belief and sexual orientation.

Evidence does not have to address each individual point. For example, it can focus on addressing the causes of harassment or on the actions of a specific public body.

Submissions from organisations or public bodies should:

- state the name of the organisation
- include information about whether the organisation provides services to specific group/s
- include full postal address and contact details
- begin with a summary
- have numbered pages and paragraphs.

Where to respond to:

- by email to: disabilityharassmentfi@equalityhumanrights.com
- by fax to: 0161 829 8110 clearly marked for the attention of the Disability Harassment Inquiry

- by post to the following freepost address:

Disability Harassment Inquiry
Equality and Human Rights Commission
FREEPOST RLL-GHUX-CTRX
Arndale House, Arndale Centre
Manchester, M4 3AQ

- by telephone or textphone via our helplines:

England Telephone: 08456 046 610
Textphone: 08456 046 620

Scotland Telephone: 08456 045 510
Textphone: 08456 045 520

Wales Telephone: 08456 048 810
Textphone: 08456 048 820

Disability-Related Harassment Inquiry Response form

Your personal information will be kept confidential.

Whichever way you choose to present your evidence, it would be helpful if you could provide the information in section 1 below and base your response around the questions in section 2.

Section 1: Your contact details

It will really help us if you can provide your name and contact details in case we need more information. Naturally we will treat this information as confidential (please read our confidentiality statement at the end of this document).

If you wish to remain anonymous, please leave this section blank.

Name:
Full postal address:

Telephone/ Textphone:	Mobile:	Fax:
Email address:		
Are you responding on behalf of an organisation or as an individual?		
If responding on behalf of an organisation, what is the name of your organisation:		
Does your organisation provide services to specific group/s? If so which group/s?		

Section 2: Your evidence

We are particularly interested in receiving evidence in relation to the questions set out below. You do not have to respond to all the questions.

1. Please provide a summary of your response

2. Please tell us what you think are effective approaches to preventing and eliminating disability-related harassment

3. Please tell us what you know about addressing the causes of disability-related harassment including prejudice and negative attitudes

4. Please tell us your experience about involving disabled people in the prevention and elimination of disability-related harassment, addressing its causes and improving responses where it does occur

5. Please tell us what works in enabling disabled people to effectively report disability-related harassment

6. Please tell us what you know of the diverse experiences and needs of disabled people experiencing harassment related to their impairment type, age, gender, gender identity, race or ethnicity, religion or belief and sexual orientation

7. Please provide any further information or evidence here

Data handling and confidentiality

All information will be handled carefully and treated with sensitivity.

Individuals and organisations giving evidence do so on the understanding that it will be used by the Commission for the purposes of the Inquiry. The Commission is aware of its obligations in relation to personal information and privacy under the Data Protection Act and the Human Rights Act. Personal information will be treated as confidential and will not be used except for the purposes of the Inquiry.

Specific legal rules apply to evidence given to Inquiries. These mean that evidence which identifies an individual or organisation can only be disclosed by the Commission in limited circumstances. The Commission will only publish extracts from the evidence it receives where necessary for the purposes of the Inquiry. If we propose to publish evidence identifying you or your organisation, we will contact you beforehand to discuss this. Please highlight any aspect of your submission that you would not wish to be published.

More information about the Commission's position on confidentiality and disclosure of information is set out below.

If you still have concerns after reading this page and want to discuss these in confidence, please email the inquiry team at disabilityharassmentfi@equalityhumanrights.com

The Equality Act 2006 sets out specific rules relating to information received by the Equality and Human Rights Commission when carrying out an inquiry under section 16 of the Act:

- section 6 of the Equality Act says that information acquired by the Equality and Human Rights Commission in the course of an inquiry must not be disclosed by the Equality and Human Rights Commission except where any of the following apply:
 - with the consent of each person to whom the information relates

- in the report of the inquiry
 - for the purposes of carrying out the Equality and Human Rights Commission's functions in relation to its enforcement powers
 - in pursuance of an order of a court or tribunal
 - if the information is anonymised so that no one to whom the information relates can be identified
 - for the purposes of civil or criminal proceedings to which the Equality and Human Rights Commission is party
 - if the information was acquired by the Equality and Human Rights Commission more than 70 years before the date of disclosure.
- section 16 of the Equality Act sets out the rules which apply when the Equality and Human Rights Commission wants to record in its report of an inquiry evidence or findings of an adverse nature about the activities of a specified or identifiable person. These rules include giving that person the right to make written representations on the draft report.

We will not disclose information received from you or your organisation during the inquiry unless it falls within the limited circumstances set out in section 6 (3) of the Equality Act. However, we may include it in the report of the inquiry and this may be in a way which means that you or your organisation will be identifiable. If you do not wish us to include information about you or your organisation in the report of the inquiry then please contact us to discuss this. We will be sensitive to any concerns you have about disclosure and we hope that you will feel confident in reporting any issues to us, including sensitive human rights issues you might have experienced or know about.

www.equalityhumanrights.com/disabilityharassmentfi