

Stop Street Harassment

Nevada

A variety of forms of street harassment are illegal in Nevada, including verbal harassment, up-skirt photos, indecent exposure, following, groping, and hate crimes. Here are the laws and reporting procedures you need to know.

Verbal Harassment

There are nine laws in Nevada that prohibit some form of verbal street harassment.

Assembling to Disturb the Peace or to Commit an Unlawful Act

[§203.020](#)

If two or more people “assemble for the purpose of disturbing the public peace, or committing any unlawful act,” such as engaging in street harassment, a law enforcement officer has the right to order them to disperse.

If two or more people are harassing you, you can report them for assembling to disturb the peace and enlist the aid of a police officer in asking them to disperse.

Penalty: Assembling to disturb the peace and failing to disperse upon the order of a law enforcement officer is a misdemeanor in Nevada, punishable by a fine of up to \$1,000 and/or up to 6 months in jail.

Breach of Peace

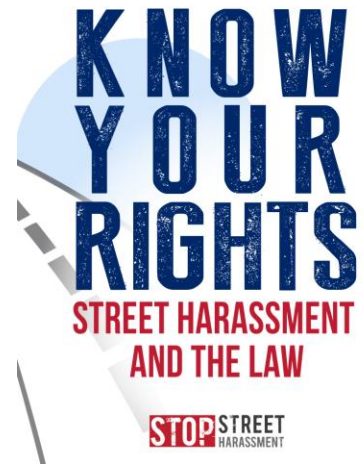
[Nev. Rev. Stat. § 203.010](#)

It is illegal in Nevada for anyone to “maliciously and willfully disturb the peace or quiet” of any neighborhood, person, or family by:

- Loud or unusual noises
- Tumultuous and offensive conduct
- Threatening
- Traducing (speaking badly of or telling lies about someone so as to damage his/her reputation)
- Quarreling
- Challenging to fight
- Fighting

If a street harasser is using offensive language or gestures, speaking badly about you, causing a scene, threatening you or others or challenging you to a fight, or otherwise disturbing the peace, you can report him/her.

Penalty: Breach of the peace is a misdemeanor, punishable by a fine of up to \$1,000 and/or up to 6 months in jail.



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Coercion

[Nev. Rev. Stat. § 207.190](#)

Nevada law specifically protects people from threats made to coerce him/her into doing or not doing something, or threats that make the person fear any retaliation for a lawful act.

An actual act of violence is considered assault, but if a street harasser makes a serious threat of violence that comes with any kind of ultimatum – “if you do/don’t do this, I will...” – you can report him/her.

Penalty: Coercion is a misdemeanor, punishable by a fine of up to \$1,000 and/or up to 6 months in jail. If a harasser uses or threatens physical force, coercion is a category B felony, punishable by a fine of up to \$5,000 and/or between 1 and 6 years in prison.

Harassment

[Nev. Rev. Stat. § 200.571](#)

The general harassment law in Nevada covers any threat to cause bodily injury, property damage, “physical confinement or restraint” of the person threatened, or some other act that will cause substantial harm to the person’s physical or mental health or safety.

If a street harasser makes a threat against you – such as threatening rape or sexual assault – and his/her words or actions put you in reasonable fear that the threat will be carried out, you can report him/her.

If you believe someone has committed either the crime of harassment or stalking against you, you have the right to ask the court for a [restraining order](#) to prevent further harassment.

Penalty: Harassment is a misdemeanor, punishable by a fine of up to \$1,000 and/or up to 6 months in jail.

Loitering about School or Public Place Where Children Congregate

[Nev. Rev. Stat. § 207.270](#)

In Nevada, it is illegal for a person who has no legitimate business to be there to loiter at or near the premises of schools or other public places where children congregate, like parks.

If you see someone hanging out near one of these facilities and s/he is harassing you or other passersby, you can report that person.

Penalty: Loitering about a school or public place where children congregate is a misdemeanor, punishable by a fine of up to \$1,000 and/or up to 6 months in jail.

Offenses in Public Conveyances

[Nev. Rev. Stat. § 203.100](#)

It is illegal in Nevada for anyone to “use profane, offensive or indecent language or engage in any quarrel in any public conveyance, or interfere with or annoy any passenger therein.”

If someone is using inappropriate language or harassing you on public transportation or on any bus, railroad, or other conveyance open to the public, you can report him/her.

Penalty: Offenses in a public conveyance are a misdemeanor, punishable by a fine of up to \$1,000 and/or up to 6 months in jail.

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Provoking a Commission of Breach of the Peace

[Nev. Rev. Stat. § 203.030](#)

It is illegal in Nevada for anyone to “willfully provoke, or attempt to provoke, another person to commit a breach of the peace,” by word, sign or gesture.

This is what’s known as a “[fighting words](#)” law, and it prohibits language or conduct likely to illicit an immediate violent response. Since street harassment rarely results in the harassed person fighting back, these laws usually have not been used to address street harassment. But you can still try using it, and if enough people make a case for why it should be used, then it might be applied more often.

Penalty: Provoking a commission of breach of the peace is a misdemeanor, a fine of up to \$1,000 and/or up to 6 months in jail.

Solicitation for Prostitution

[Nev. Rev. Stat. § 201.354](#)

Soliciting for prostitution is illegal in Nevada everywhere except in a licensed house of prostitution. If a street harasser solicits sexual activity from you, you can report him/her.

You can also make the case that harassers who yell, “How much?!” or offer you money, or anything else, for sex, even in jest, are soliciting prostitution.

Stop Street Harassment doesn’t oppose consensual sex work, but we do think it’s inappropriate for a street harasser to make assumptions about your sexual availability and make you feel uncomfortable.

Penalty: Soliciting for prostitution is a misdemeanor, punishable by a fine of up to \$1,000 and/or up to 6 months in jail.

Unlawful Contact with Child or Person with Mental Illness

[Nev. Rev. Stat. § 207.260](#)

It is illegal in Nevada for anyone to repeatedly harass a person under the age of 16 in a way “which would cause a reasonable child of like age to feel terrorized, frightened, intimidated or harassed.”

A course of conduct means “a series of acts over time that evidences a continuity of purpose directed at a specific person.”

If you (or a young person you care for) are 15 years of age or younger and a street harasser makes you feel terrorized, frightened, intimidated or harassed by following you, making repeated sexually explicit comments, threatening you, or through other inappropriate behaviors, you can report him/her.

Penalty: Unlawful contact with a child is a gross misdemeanor, punishable by a fine of up to \$2,000 and/or up to 364 days in jail.

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Unlawful Filming/Photography

Capturing an Image of the Private Area of Another Person

[Nev. Rev. Stat. § 200.604](#)

It is illegal in Nevada for anyone to “knowingly and intentionally capture an image” of the private area of a non-consenting person’s body when that person should have a reasonable expectation of privacy.

The private area of one’s body means “the naked or undergarment clad genitals, pubic area, buttocks or female breast [below the top of the areola].”

If a street harasser takes an “up-skirt” or “down-blouse” photo of you, or surreptitiously photographs you in a dressing room, locker room, restroom, or other place where you can typically expect privacy, you can report him/her.

It is also illegal for anyone to “distribute, disclose, display, transmit or publish” an image that was taken in violation of this law. If a street harasser takes an inappropriate photo of you and is charged with that crime, the law stipulates that any photo(s) contained in court records or other similar data shall not be released to or examined by the general public.

Penalty: Capturing an image of the private area of another person is a gross misdemeanor, punishable by a fine of up to \$2,000 and/or up to 364 days in jail.

Indecent Exposure

Indecent or Obscene Exposure

[Nev. Rev. Stat. § 201.220](#)

It is illegal in Nevada for anyone to make “any open and indecent or obscene exposure of his or her person, or of the person of another.”

An indecent or obscene exposure is not defined in the statute, but usually means exposing one’s genitals, buttocks, pubic area, or breasts.

If a street harasser exposes him or herself to you or flashes you, attempts to expose you, such as by lifting your skirt or dress, you can report that person.

Penalty: Indecent or obscene exposure is a gross misdemeanor, punishable by a fine of up to \$2,000 and/or up to 364 days in jail.

Open or Gross Lewdness

[Nev. Rev. Stat. § 201.210](#)

In Nevada, the law against open and gross lewdness prohibits any sexual contact in public. The statute doesn’t specifically define open and gross lewdness, but in other states, it usually means any public sex act.

You likely can use this law to report a street harasser for masturbating in a public place.

Penalty: Open and gross lewdness is a category D felony, punishable by a fine of up to \$5,000 and/or between 1 and 4 years in prison.

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Following

If you think someone is following you, you can call 911 right away – you do not have to wait for that person to commit a crime.

Stalking

[Nev. Rev. Stat. § 200.575](#)

Stalking in Nevada is defined as “willfully or maliciously [engaging] in a course of conduct that would cause a reasonable person to feel terrorized, frightened, intimidated, harassed or fearful for the immediate safety of a family or household member,” and that does cause those feelings.

A course of conduct means “a pattern of conduct which consists of a series of acts over time that evidences a continuity of purpose directed at a specific person.”

If the same person repeatedly follows you, communicates with you without your consent, threatens you, or otherwise harasses you, you can report him/her.

If you believe someone has committed either the crime of stalking or harassment against you, you have the right to ask the court for a [restraining order](#) to prevent further harassment.

Penalty: Stalking is a misdemeanor, punishable by a fine of up to \$1,000 and/or up to 6 months in jail.

Groping

Open or Gross Lewdness

[Nev. Rev. Stat. § 201.210](#)

In Nevada, the law against open and gross lewdness prohibits any sexual contact in public.

If a street harasser touches you in a sexual or inappropriate way, you can report him/her.

Penalty: Open and gross lewdness is a Category D felony, punishable by a fine of up to \$5,000 and/or between 1 and 4 years in prison.

Lewdness with Child Under 14

[Nev. Rev. Stat. § 201.230](#)

It is illegal in Nevada for anyone to commit any lewd or lascivious act upon a child under the age of 14.

If you (or a young person you care for) are 13 years old or younger and a street harasser touches you in a sexual or inappropriate way, you can report him/her.

Penalty: Lewdness with a child under 14 is a category A felony, punishable by a fine of up to \$10,000 and/or between 10 years and life in prison.

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Hate Crimes

[Nev. Rev. Stat. § 207.185](#)

If an act of street harassment that qualifies as:

A breach of the peace

- Assembling to disturb the peace
- Provoking a breach of the peace
- An offense on a public conveyance
- Harassment
- Stalking

is committed because of your “actual or perceived race, color, religion, national origin, physical or mental disability or sexual orientation,” the charge is elevated to a gross misdemeanor.

Take note of any racial, religious, or homophobic slurs or other forms of hate that a street harasser uses, as you can report that information to the police as well as the crime committed.

Penalty: A gross misdemeanor in Nevada is punishable by a fine of up to \$2,000 and/or up to 364 days in jail.

Reporting Crimes to the Police

- Call 911 for help if:
 - The crime is in progress
 - You or someone else is physically hurt or have been threatened with physical violence
 - You can provide information about who may have committed a crime.
- Call the local police office’s non-emergency number to submit a report afterward. For example, in Carson City, it is (775) 887-2013 and in Las Vegas, it is 311, within the city limits. In Reno, it is (775) 334-2121. Be prepared to provide them with:
 - When it happened (date and time).
 - Where it happened (street location, store location, bus line or bus stop, park name, etc).
 - Who is reporting (your name and contact information).
 - A description of what happened.
 - The name and contact information of witnesses, if you spoke to any.
 - It can be helpful to include the law the crime falls under, such as harassment requiring a threat, [Nev. Rev. Stat. Ann. § 200.571](#). If you’re not sure which law you should use to report an incident of street harassment, just tell the police what happened and s/he or the district attorney’s office can determine the appropriate charges.
 - A description of the harasser/s.
- Many police departments also have online reporting forms by which you can submit the same information listed in #2. For example, [Reno](#) allows you to file a report online, for crimes such as harassment or disturbing the peace.

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- Some police departments also allow you to anonymously send a tip about a non-emergency incident, for example if you see a group of people routinely harassing passersby at the same location. Visit your local police department website for information.
 - In Las Vegas, you can do this by calling Crime Stoppers Tip Line (702) 385-5555 or by texting “CRIMENV” + your tip info to CRIMES (274637).
 - The entire state of Nevada allows you to submit your tip via [webform](#).

If someone tries to tell you that street harassment “isn’t a big deal,” or isn’t illegal, don’t buy it. You always have the right to be free from sexual harassment and assault in public.