

Stop Street Harassment

Oklahoma

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

Verbal Harassment

In Oklahoma, there are four laws that prohibit some form of verbal street harassment.

Disturbance by Loud or Unusual Noise

[Okla. Stat. Title 21, § 1362](#)

It is illegal in Oklahoma to willfully cause a disturbance in a public place through:

- Loud noise
- Abusive, violent, obscene or profane language
- Threatening violence
- Fighting or quarreling

You can report someone who is using racial, homophobic and sexist slurs or sexually explicit comments against you or someone else, or making threats to hurt you. You can also use this law if a harasser is shouting or loudly harassing you.

Penalty: Disturbance by loud or unusual noise is a misdemeanor, punishable by a fine of up to \$100, and/or imprisonment in the county jail for up to 30 days.

Disturbing the Public Peace

[Okla. Stat. Title 21, § 22](#)

Willfully engaging in acts that “outrage public decency” or “grossly disturbs the public peace” is illegal in Oklahoma.

Many actions and comments of street harassers make could qualify as outraging public decency when they involve sexually explicit remarks, sexual demands, and/or insults. If a street harasser is using this kind of indecent language toward you, you can report him/her.

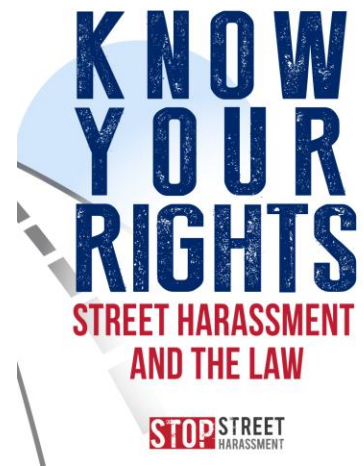
Penalty: Disturbing the public peace is a misdemeanor, punishable by a fine of up to \$100, imprisonment in the county jail for up to 30 days, or both.

Offensive Language

[Okla. Stat. Title 21, § 1363](#)

It is illegal to use profane, violent, abusive, and insulting language toward another person when it is intended to make that person angry or disturb the peace.

Calling someone a racial, sexist, or homophobic slur could fall under this law. If a street harasser is speaking to you this way, you can report him/her.



Stop Street Harassment

- Because it mentions making someone angry or disturbing the peace, it a “[fighting words](#)” law. 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: Offensive language is a misdemeanor, punishable by a fine of up to \$100, imprisonment in the county jail for up to 30 days, or both.

Soliciting Prostitution

[Okla. Stat. Title 21, § 1029](#)

Soliciting, inducing, or enticing someone to commit prostitution is illegal in Oklahoma. 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 prostitution is a misdemeanor, punishable by a fine of up to \$100, imprisonment in the county jail for up to 30 days, or both. If the person being solicited is younger than 16 years old, it is a felony and the Penalty can be up to 10 years in prison and a fine of up to \$5,000. It is also a felony to solicit prostitution within 1,000 feet of a church or school.

Unlawful Filming/Photographing

Peeping Tom

[Okla. Stat. Title 21, § 1171](#)

In Oklahoma, it is illegal for anyone to photograph or film a non-consenting person if the image exposes the private areas of his/her body and if it is done under circumstances when the person would expect that part of his/her body would not be visible to the public.

If a harasser films or photographs you someplace like a public restroom, dressing room, locker room, or hotel room, or if the harasser takes an up-skirt or down-blouse photo of you in a public place like a bus or a bar, you can report that person.

Penalty: Peeping Tom is a misdemeanor, punishable by up to a year in the county jail or a fine of up to \$5,000 or both.

Indecent Exposure

Indecent Exposure

[Okla. Stat. Title 21, § 1021 \(A04\)](#)

It is illegal in Oklahoma for a person to willfully expose his or her private parts in any public place when others are present who may be offended or annoyed.

Stop Street Harassment

If a harasser flashes or otherwise exposes him or herself to you in a public place, such as a park, on public transportation, or in a store, you can report that person.

Penalty: Indecent exposure is a felony, punishable by a fine of at least \$500 or by imprisonment for at least 30 days, or both.

Following

If you think someone is following you, you can call 911 right away, the first time it happens. You do not have to wait for that person to commit a crime.

Stalking

[Okla. Stat. Title 21, § 1173](#)

Stalking is illegal in Oklahoma. A person can be convicted of stalking if, on more than one occasion, s/he follows or harasses another person in a way that would cause a “[reasonable](#)” person to feel frightened, intimidated, threatened, or harassed and actually causes the person to feel these emotions.

This means, if at least two times a harasser follows you or approaches you to harass you and you feel scared or threatened, you can report him/her under the stalking law.

Penalty: Stalking is a misdemeanor, punishable by imprisonment in the county jail for up to one year or a fine of up to \$1,000, or both.

Groping

Sexual Battery

[Okla. Stat. Title 21 § 1123-J](#)

It is illegal for anyone to intentionally touch, mau, or feel a non-consenting person’s body in a lewd or lascivious manner.

If anyone touches you in a sexual way, such as grabbing your butt or breasts, against your will in a public place, you can report him/her.

It is also illegal for anyone to ejaculate upon or in the presence of anyone under 16 years old or force someone under 16 years old to look at or touch someone’s private parts. If you are under 15 years of age or younger and this happens to you (or to a young person you care for) you can report the harasser.

Penalty: Sexual battery is a felony, punishable by up to five years in the State Penitentiary. The imprisonment can be as long as 20 years if the harassed person is under 16 years old and the harasser is at least three years older.

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 Oklahoma City, it is 405-231-2121 and in Tulsa it is (918) 596-9222. In Norman, it is (405) 321-1600. 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, contact information, date of birth).
 - 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 Stalking, 21, § 1173. 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, for example, [Tulsa](#) and [Norman](#) have online reporting forms that allow you to report crimes such as harassment.
- Some police departments also allow you to anonymously text a tip about a crime, 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 Oklahoma City, you can do this by calling 405-235-7300 or 1-800-632-TIPS, texting 405-415-5666, or via [webform](#).
 - For the state of Oklahoma, [Crimestoppers](#) has a webform that allows you to report tips from over 15 counties in the state.
- Once you've reported a crime, if you've provided your contact information, within a few days, you will receive a call with a police report case number and may have to answer follow-up questions. Save a copy of the police report for your records.

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.