

Stop Street Harassment

Oregon

A variety of forms of street harassment are illegal in Oregon, 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 Oregon, there are three laws that prohibit some form of verbal street harassment.

Disorderly Conduct in the Second Degree

[Or. Rev. Stat. § 166.025](#)

In Oregon, it is illegal for anyone, with the intent of causing a public inconvenience or annoyance or alarm, to engage in threatening behavior, create a hazardous or physically offensive condition, or make unreasonable noise.

While this law does not specify typical street harassment behavior, you can use it to report a harasser who is:

- Threatening you
- Shouting loudly while harassing you and/or others
- Congregating with other harassers in a way that creates an alarming situation for you to pass them on the street or stand near them (such as if you're waiting for a bus).

Penalty: Disorderly conduct in the second degree is a Class B misdemeanor, punishable by up to six months in jail, a fine of up to \$3,500, or both.

Harassment

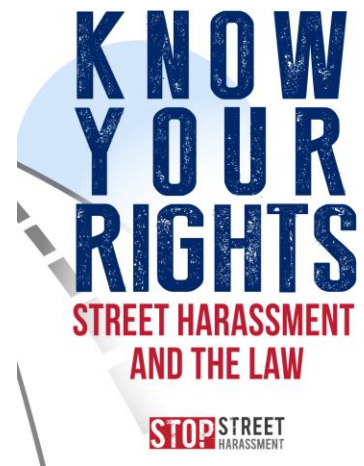
[Or. Rev. Stat. § 166.065](#)

Oregon's general harassment law is pretty narrow and does not address most types of street harassment. The aspects of the law most relevant to street harassment is "Publicly insulting such other person by abusive words or gestures in a manner intended and likely to provoke a violent response," and offensive physical contact.

The prohibition of public insults likely to provoke violence is what is known as 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 if a harasser public insults you. If enough people make a case for why it should be used, then it might be applied more often.

You can also report someone who makes any offensive physical contact with you, such as grabbing your arm or [groping you](#).

Penalty: Harassment is a Class A misdemeanor, punishable by up to one year in prison, up to a \$6,250 fine, or both.



Stop Street Harassment

Intimidation in the Second Degree

[Or. Rev. Stat. § 166.155](#)

This law prohibits intentionally alarming someone by threatening physical injury or property damage based on a person's:

- Race
- Color
- Religion
- Sexual orientation
- Disability
- National origin
- (Notably, sex and gender are excluded).

If someone is verbally harassing you and also makes threats related to your race, ethnicity, orientation, or another protected characteristic, you can report him/her.

Penalty: Intimidation in the Second Degree is a Class A misdemeanor, punishable by up to one year in prison, up to a \$6,250 fine, or both.

Unlawful Filming/Photographing

Invasion of Personal Privacy

[Or. Rev. Stat. § 163.700](#)

In Oregon, it is illegal for someone to photograph or film you without your consent if you are in a state of nudity and under circumstances when you would have a reasonable expectation of personal privacy. This includes filming and photographing in restrooms, dressing rooms, locker rooms, hotel rooms, and other similar locations.

While the law does not explicitly prohibit this, you can also report a street harasser who takes an up-skirt or down-blouse photo of you, or otherwise observes or photographs you in an inappropriate way,

Penalty: Invasion of personal privacy is a Class A misdemeanor, punishable by up to one year in prison, up to a \$6,250 fine, or both.

Indecent Exposure

Public Indecency

[Or. Rev. Stat. § 163.454](#)

It is illegal in Oregon for a person to intentionally expose his or her private parts, with the intent of sexual arousal, in any public place when others are present.

If a harasser flashes you or 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 Class A misdemeanor, punishable by up to one year in prison, up to a \$6,250 fine, or both. It rises to a Class C felony if the person is a repeat offender.

Stop Street Harassment

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

[Or. Rev. Stat. § 163.732](#)

A person can be convicted of stalking in Oregon if, on more than one occasion, s/he has unwanted contact with someone, including by following the person or speaking to the person, and that contact makes the person fear for his/her safety.

If a harasser follows you or approaches you to harass you at least two times and you feel scared or threatened, you can report him or her for stalking.

Penalty: Stalking is a Class C felony, punishable by up to five years in prison, up to \$125,000 fine, or both.

Groping

Sexual Abuse in the Third Degree

[Or. Rev. Stat. § 163.415](#)

It is illegal for anyone to subject another person to sexual contact without that person's consent. It is also illegal under this law for someone to purposely put blood, urine, semen, or feces on someone without that person's consent.

In Oregon, sexual contact means "any touching of the sexual or other intimate parts of a person" or causing someone to touch the harasser's intimate areas.

If a harasser grabs or touches you on the street, in a park, on a bus, or some other public place in a way that offends you, or ejaculates onto you, you can report him/her.

Penalty: Sexual Abuse in the Third Degree is a Class A misdemeanor, punishable by up to one year in prison, up to a \$6,250 fine, or both.

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 Portland, it is 503-823-3333 and in Salem, it is 503-588-6123. In Eugene, it is 541-682-5111. 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).

Stop Street Harassment

- 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, Section 163.454 Public Indecency. 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, [Portland](#) and [Eugene](#) allow you to submit an online report for crimes like suspicious activity or behaviors, or public disturbance and disorderly conduct. Eugene allows you to remain anonymous when filing these types of reports.
 - 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.
 - The state of Oregon has a Crimestoppers program, which allows you to do this by either calling 503-823-HELP, texting 823HELP + your tip to 274637 (CRIMES), or submitting via [webform](#).
 - 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.