

## What to do in case of aggression during public witnessing activity?

1) When to call the police: Immediately, whenever the brothers feel that they need protection. It is especially important to do so: If it is not the first time that the aggressor has attacked the brothers. If it is evident that the motive is religious hatred. If there has been physical aggression<sup>1</sup>. If significant material damage has been caused. If the brothers are being impeded from doing public witnessing. Or if there are good reasons to fear that it will happen again.

But what if the assailant is already gone? If it has not been possible to notify the police until the assault is over, then it is not advisable to notify the police if the assailant has uttered minor insults or threats, has caused minor damage (such as throwing a display stand to the ground without breaking it) and has run away. Since such minor events would not lead to a complaint, it would not be appropriate to call the police, as this would involve a waste of time and resources. However, if the situations described in the previous paragraph occur, the police should be called even if the aggressor has fled. In this case it is advisable to keep the scene as the aggressor has left it until the police arrive.

2) When the police arrive, they will try to restore order and ask the brothers who have suffered the aggression if they are going to file a complaint. Although it basically a personal decision on the part of the person assaulted, it is especially advisable to do so if, as indicated above: It is not the first time that the aggressor has attacked the brothers. If it is evident that the motive is religious hatred. If there has been physical aggression. If significant material damage has been caused. If there is fear of repetition. If it has prevented the brothers from carrying out their religious work. Or if the police insist on a complaint being filed. If the brother or brothers are not sure what to do at that moment, the police can be told that they will think about it. If the decision is to lodge a complaint, they will go to the pertinent police station.

3) If you file a complaint at the police station, what should you say?

- The complainants should identify the author as clearly as possible (name -if known-, physical appearance, clothing, etc.); relate facts, insults and specific threats; indicate if others were witnesses to what occurred (if possible providing identification data).
- Particularly noteworthy are those allusions or insults that clearly show that the underlying motive was religious hatred and that an act of worship sacred to Jehovah's Witnesses was interrupted.
- It should also be noted that whatever the profession and customary activity of the complainants, at the time of the aggression they were acting as ministers of the Testigos Cristianos de Jehová religious confession.
- If the carts have been damaged, the police will probably ask who owns them in order to facilitate the option of asking for compensation. In this case, complainants should not say that the carts are the property of the religious denomination or congregation. Like publications, carts should be reported as the property of the brothers involved in the incident.

4) As soon as possible, the scanned complaint should be sent to the Legal Department of the branch, with a copy to the Service Department (Desk SSI), through the email account [jwpub.org](mailto:jwpub.org), along with a detailed report of what happened, photos, contacts, a medical report, etc.

5) Wait for the Legal Department, or a brother designated by this department, to contact them<sup>2</sup> for further instructions.

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<sup>1</sup> If physical aggression takes place, the person assaulted should go to a emergency medical center. The report of the injuries suffered should be attached to the complaint.

<sup>2</sup> If the matter is of importance, the Legal Department will contact a collaborating lawyer to present a model complaint to the justice of the peace and follow up on the case, if necessary.