

# **MONTGOMERY COUNTY POLICE DEPARTMENT**



## **2022 ANNUAL REPORT ON BIAS INCIDENTS**

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2022 M.C.P.D. Annual Report on Bias Incidents compiled by the Policy and Planning Division  
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## A MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF

It is disappointing and dispiriting to report an increase in bias crime incidents in Montgomery County. As we work to build our multicultural county with understanding, inclusion, and compassion, we have seen the trend since the 2016 election continues to be a blight on our County.

In 2022, there were a total of 157 reported bias incidents, nearly 10% more than the number reported in 2021 (143). This is the highest number of bias-related incidents reported to the MCPD since internal reporting processes changed in 2015. On average, the department recorded 13 bias incidents per month.

Of the 77 incidents motivated by bias towards a race, 74% (57) were considered anti-black, and 12% (9) were anti-Asian. There were also 11 multi-racial incidents (vandalism, intimidation), of which four referenced white supremacist groups.

Of the 53 incidents motivated by bias towards religion, 91% (48) were considered anti-Jewish, despite Jewish persons making up only 10% of the population. The most frequent type of vandalism/graffiti reported was motivated by anti-Semitism.

Hate and prejudice have a profoundly negative impact on our community. The Montgomery County Department of Police (MCPD) remains committed to upholding the civil and human rights of all residents. That is why we encourage everyone to report hate crimes and bias incidents. It is why the County has allocated \$1.5 million in grants over the last two years to religious institutions to upgrade their safety equipment and buildings and why the MCPD works with those organizations to make certain no one of any race or religion should worship in fear. We are the only local jurisdiction in the country to provide such grants.

Bias incidents that do not take place in Montgomery County can still affect how we deploy our resources. When there is an attack on a house of worship in another part of the country, we work with our government and community partners to guard against similar events happening here.

As I write this at the beginning of 2023, I note that this year is starting in a similar dispiriting way. There have already been many incidents of anti-semitism and racially motivated vandalism across the county and in our schools, from Bethesda to Derwood to Kensington to Gaithersburg. We must all be vigilant to protect our thriving, diverse County from the forces of hate and prejudice.



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. G. Jones'.

Marcus G. Jones  
Chief of Police

# HATE CRIME STATISTICS ACT

AS AMENDED, 28 U.S.C §534

§ "[Sec. 1.] (a) This Act may be cited as the 'Hate Crime Statistics Act.'

## Defining a Hate Crime

For the purposes of collecting statistics, Congress has defined a hate crime as a "committed criminal offense that is motivated in whole or in part, by the offender's bias(es) against a race, religion, disability, sexual orientation, ethnicity, gender, or gender identity." Hate itself is not a crime—and the FBI is mindful of protecting freedom of speech and other civil liberties. Retrieved from [www.fbi.gov](http://www.fbi.gov)

"(b) (1) Under the authority of section 534 of title 28, United States Code, the Attorney General shall acquire data, for each calendar year, about crimes that manifest evidence of prejudice based on race, gender and gender identity, religion, disability, sexual orientation, or ethnicity, including where appropriate the crimes of murder, non-negligent manslaughter; forcible rape; aggravated assault, simple assault, intimidation; arson; and destruction, damage or vandalism of property.

"(2) The Attorney General shall establish guidelines for the collection of such data, including the necessary evidence and criteria that must be present

for a finding of manifest prejudice and procedures for carrying out the purposes of this section.

"(3) Nothing in this section creates a cause of action or a right to bring an action, including an action based on discrimination due to sexual orientation. As used in this section, the term 'sexual orientation' means consensual homosexuality or heterosexuality. This subsection does not limit any existing cause of action or right to bring an action, including any action under the Administrative Procedure Act or the All Writs Act [5 U.S.C.S. §§ 551 et seq. or 28 U.S.C.S. § 1651].

"(4) Data acquired under this section shall be used only for research or statistical purposes and may not contain any information that may reveal the identity of an individual victim of a crime.

"(5) The Attorney General shall publish an annual summary of the data acquired under this section, including data about crimes committed by and directed against juveniles.

"(c) There are authorized to be appropriated such sums as may be necessary to carry out the provisions of this section through the fiscal year 2002.

"Sec. 2. (a) Congress finds that—

"(1) the American family life is the foundation of American Society,

"(2) Federal policy should encourage the well-being, financial security, and health of the American family,

"(3) schools should not de-emphasize the critical value of American family life.

## [Matthew Shepard & James Byrd, Jr., Hate Crimes Prevention Act of 2009 \(18 U.S.C. § 249\)](#)

This statute gives the FBI authority to investigate violent hate crimes, including violence directed at gay, lesbian, bisexual, and the transgender community.

"(b) Nothing in this Act shall be construed, nor shall any funds appropriated to carry out the purpose of the Act be used, to promote or encourage homosexuality."

## HISTORY

In 1990, the U.S. Congress passed the *Hate Crime Statistics Act* and, as a result, the F.B.I. Uniform Crime Reporting (U.C.R.) Program created a hate-crime data collection system to comply with this mandate. Lawmakers amended the *Hate Crime Statistics Act* with the *Violent Crime and Law Enforcement Act of 1994* to include bias against persons with disabilities. Finally, in 2009, Congress passed the *Matthew Shepard and James Byrd, Jr. Hate Crimes Prevention Act of 2009*. The U.C.R. program expanded its data collection categories for race and ethnicity and began accepting data on motivated crimes by gender and gender identity bias in 2013. The Montgomery County Police Department voluntarily reports statistics to this program.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Montgomery County Police Department's ***Annual Report on Bias Incidents*** is a compilation that provides statistical data about all of the incidents and criminal offenses that may be motivated by an offender's bias against a race, national or ethnic origin, religion, sex, mental or physical disability, sexual orientation, or gender identity<sup>1</sup>. In Maryland, Public Safety Article §2-307 adds *homelessness* to the list of protected classes and tasks all law enforcement agencies in the state to provide the Maryland State Police (M.S.P.) with information related to bias-motivated incidents.

In 2020, Section 10-304 of the Criminal Law Article was amended to include the 2nd Lieutenant Richard Collins, III's Law, which states physical assaults and destruction of property "motivated either in whole or substantial part" by hate bias against one of the protected classes. A second bill added Section 10-305.1 of the Criminal Law Article, which prohibits affixing or inscribing an item or symbol of hate, including an actual or depicted noose or swastika, on real or personal property that is publicly or privately owned without the express permission of the owner or occupant with the intent to threaten or intimidate any person or group of persons.

In 2021, the COVID-19 Hate Crimes Act, Pub. L. 117-13 was signed into law, which "addresses hate crimes throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, with particular emphasis on the increase in violence against Asian Americans." The bill requires the Department of Justice (DOJ) to expedite the review of reported hate crimes related to COVID-19 and to enable greater accessibility for reporting hate crimes at the local and state levels.

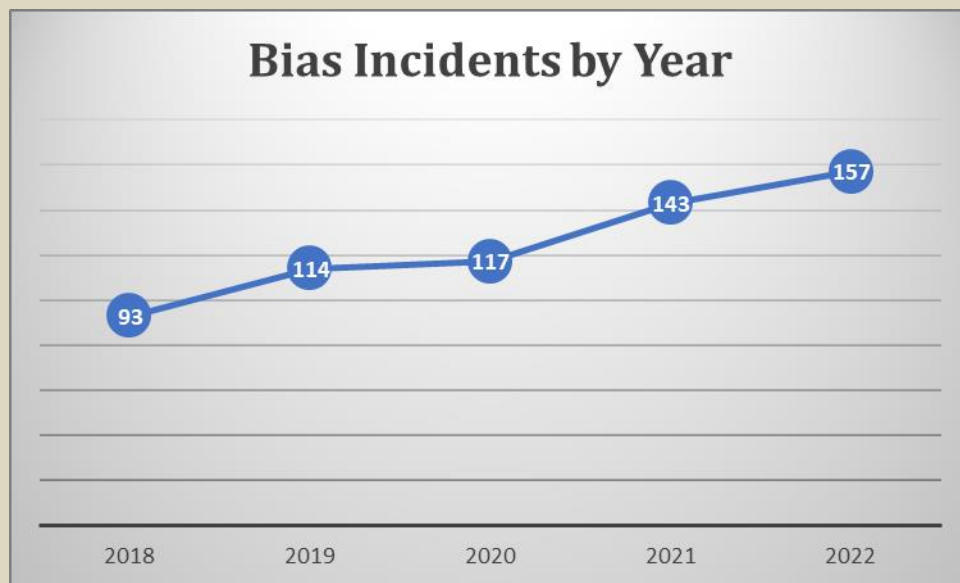
The Montgomery County Police Department voluntarily reports offense data to the Federal Bureau of Investigation (F.B.I.) under the Uniform Crime Reporting (U.C.R.) program's *Hate Crime Statistics* program. Hate crimes are not separate, distinct crimes but rather traditional offenses motivated by the offender's bias. Under the FBI UCR program, hate crime reporting applies to the following offenses: homicide, rape, robbery, aggravated assault, burglary, larceny, motor vehicle theft, arson, simple assault, intimidation, destruction/damage/vandalism of property, and human trafficking (commercial sex acts and involuntary servitude).

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<sup>1</sup>Current information can be found at [MCPD Bias Incidents | Open Data Portal \(montgomerycountymd.gov\)](https://montgomerycountymd.gov/MCPD-Bias-Incidents-Open-Data-Portal)

The mere fact that the offender is biased against the victim does not mean that a hate crime occurred. Rather, the offender's **criminal** act must have been motivated, in whole or part, by their bias against a race, ethnicity, religion, sex, mental or physical disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, or homelessness. Motivation is subjective; therefore, in most incidents, it is difficult to know with any degree of certainty whether a crime was the result of an offender's bias. The comments and/or actions of an offender (if known) are the most significant factors determining whether an incident is motivated by bias or hate.

The Montgomery County Police Department recognizes the impact that bias and hate may have on an individual or a community and records all incidents in which bias is present. In 2022, the department recorded 157 bias incidents, including one Takoma Park incident (the Montgomery County Police Department does not report Takoma Park incidents to the state or F.B.I.). This is almost a 10% increase over the 143 incidents reported in 2021. The state and federal governments track and report these incidents differently. As a result, the number of events documented by the department is generally higher than those reported at the state and federal levels. The following chart illustrates the F.B.I.'s reporting of hate crimes in Montgomery County. It is important to note that the F.B.I. only reports hate crimes; it does not track bias incidents.



Statistics compiled from the [FBI UCR Hate Crime website](#).

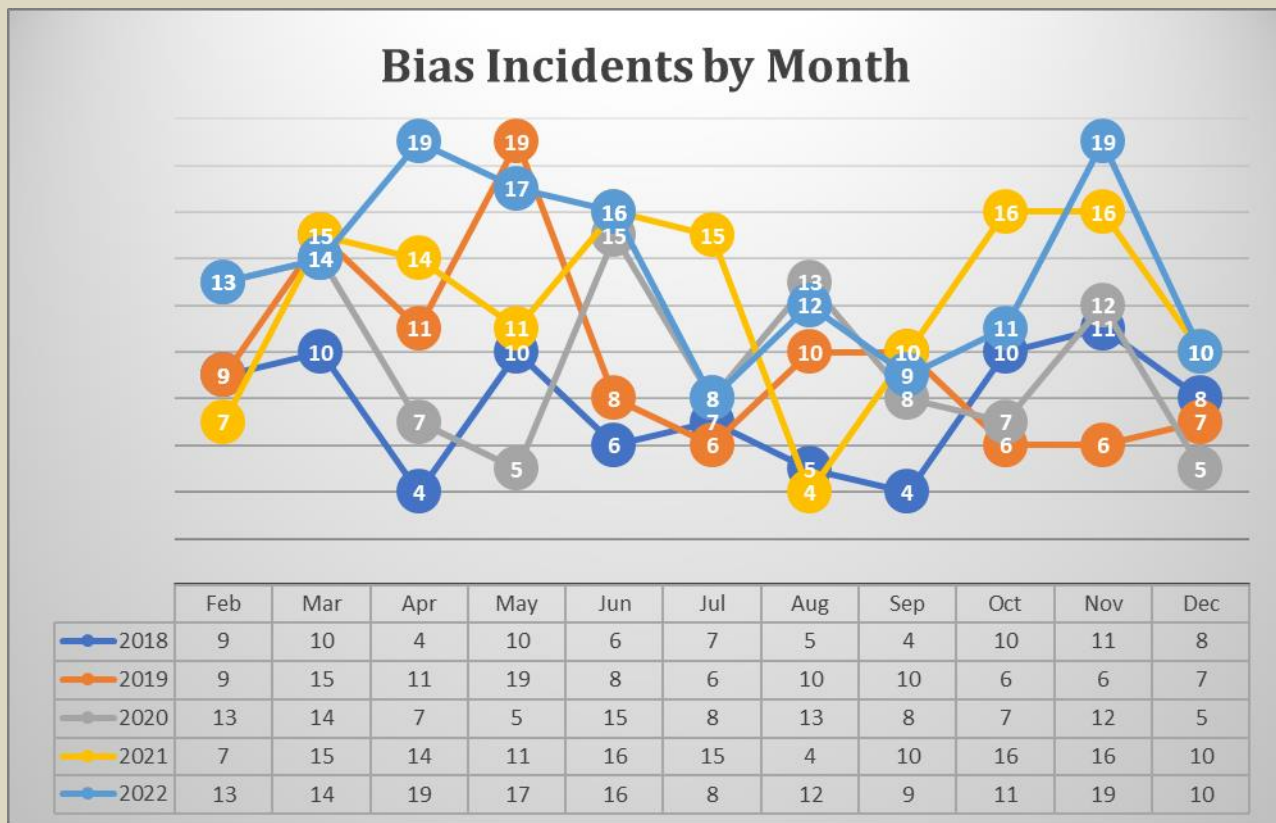
Due to differences in reporting at the local, state, and federal levels illustrated above and changes that have been made internally, there is little comparative data available. Readers are cautioned against simplifying comparisons between multiple years, data, and/or other reports from agencies that might utilize different reporting methodologies. Furthermore, many bias incidents go unreported due to fear or embarrassment, making it difficult to track incidents accurately and establish trends.

While many bias incidents may not constitute criminal acts, the M.C.P.D understands that acts demonstrating and/or depicting bias may lead to criminal acts and profoundly impact the

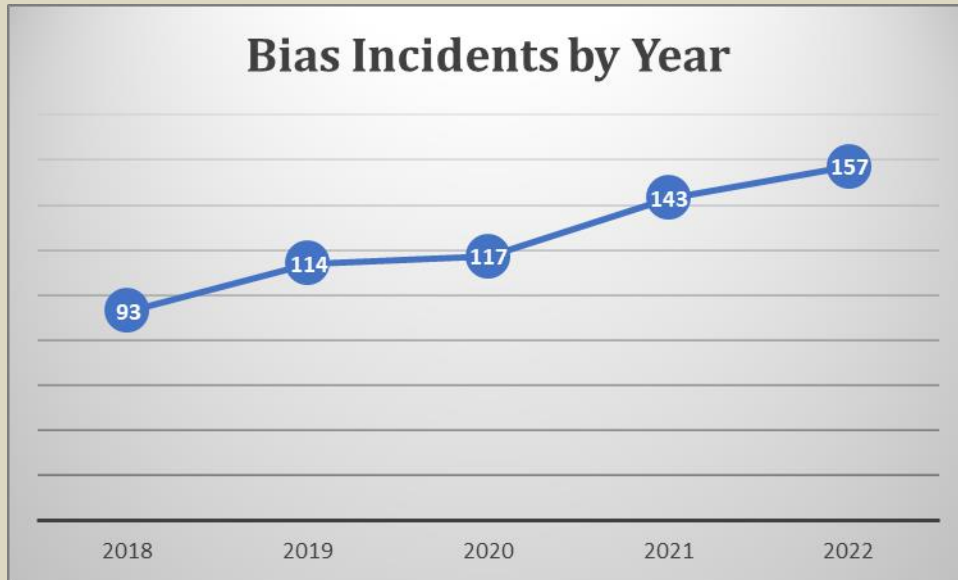
community. Montgomery County residents are encouraged to report all incidents, including non-criminal events, which may single out someone because of their perceived race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, physical handicap, or homelessness. This will allow the department to quantify resource needs and direct resources to areas where they will be most effective. Likewise, other community organizations will be better able to respond to the needs of victims.

## REPORTED BIAS INCIDENTS

There were 157 reported bias incidents in 2022, 10% more than the number reported in 2021 (143). This is the highest number of bias-related incidents reported to the MCPD since our internal reporting processes changed in 2015 and represents a 69% increase over the past five years. In 2022, the department recorded an average of 13 hate and bias incidents per month.







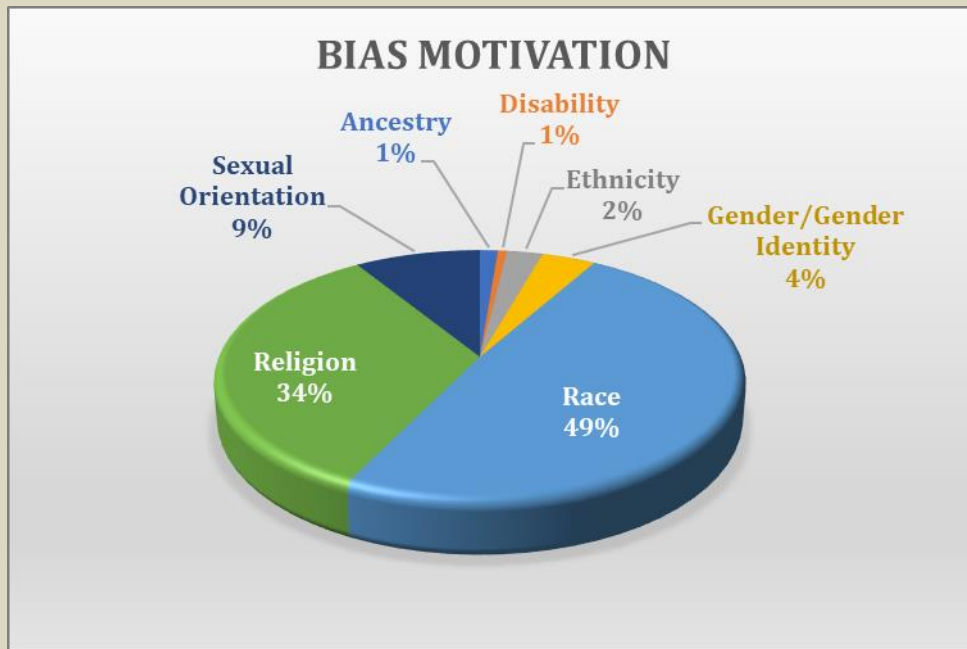
## BIAS MOTIVATION

Montgomery County proudly consists of a diverse racial community, with 53% of its residents identifying as non-white. Census data indicates that over 1.05 million people reside in Montgomery County, and its population continues to increase and become more diverse.

Twenty-two incidents of the 157 total bias incidents recorded in 2022 reflected multiple-bias motivations. Race and religion continue to be the primary bias motivators (77 and 53 incidents, respectively), then sexual orientation (14 incidents) and gender bias (6 incidents). Ethnicity was a motivation in four incidents. Within these categories, the following points should be considered:

- Of the 53 incidents motivated by bias towards religion, 91% (48) were considered anti-Jewish, despite Jewish persons making up only 10% of the population<sup>1</sup>. The next largest religious bias motivator was anti-Islamic, of which there were four reports this year.
- Of the 77 incidents motivated by bias towards a race, 74% (57) were considered anti-black, and 12% (9) were anti-Asian. There were also eleven multi-racial incidents, of which four referenced white supremacist groups.
- Of the four incidents motivated by ethnicity bias, three were anti-Hispanic, two fewer (40% decrease) than the number reported in 2021.

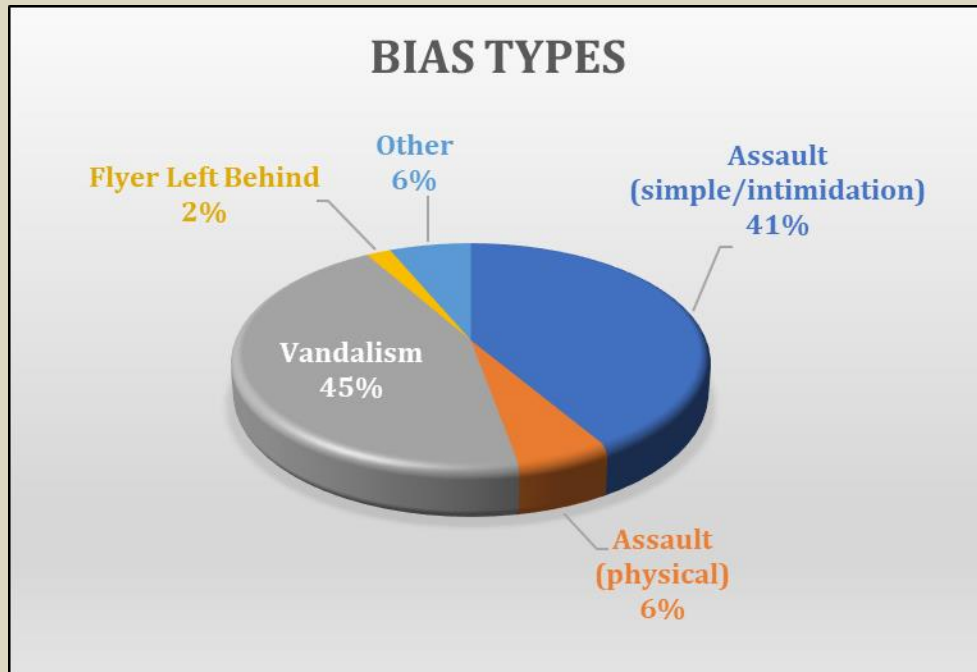
<sup>1</sup> The 2017 Greater Washington, DC Jewish Community Demographic Study (2018). Retrieved from <https://www.shalomdc.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/DCJewishCommunityStudy021118.pdf>



## TYPES OF BIAS INCIDENTS

For statistical purposes, bias incidents are classified into additional separate and distinct categories from offense classifications.

Approximately 45% of the reported bias incidents fall into the category of vandalism/graffiti (70 incidents, 79% more than the number of vandalisms in 2021). However, twenty (29%) of the 70 reported vandalism incidents involved individual private property. The most frequent type of vandalism/graffiti reported was motivated predominantly by religion and race (33 and 31 incidents, respectively). This is consistent with previous years in which racial slurs and swastikas, and other antisemitic phrases/statements were predominant. Anti-homosexual phrases and images are also frequently reported.

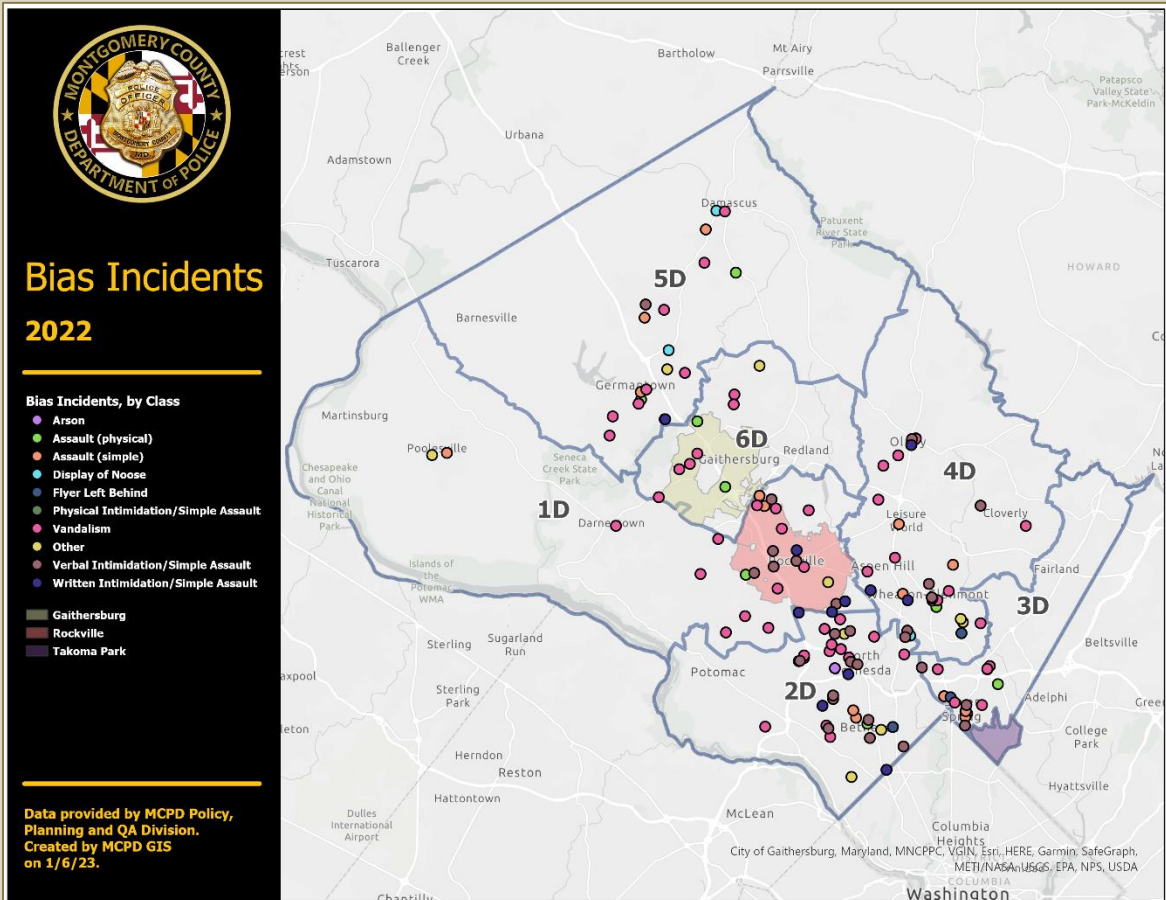
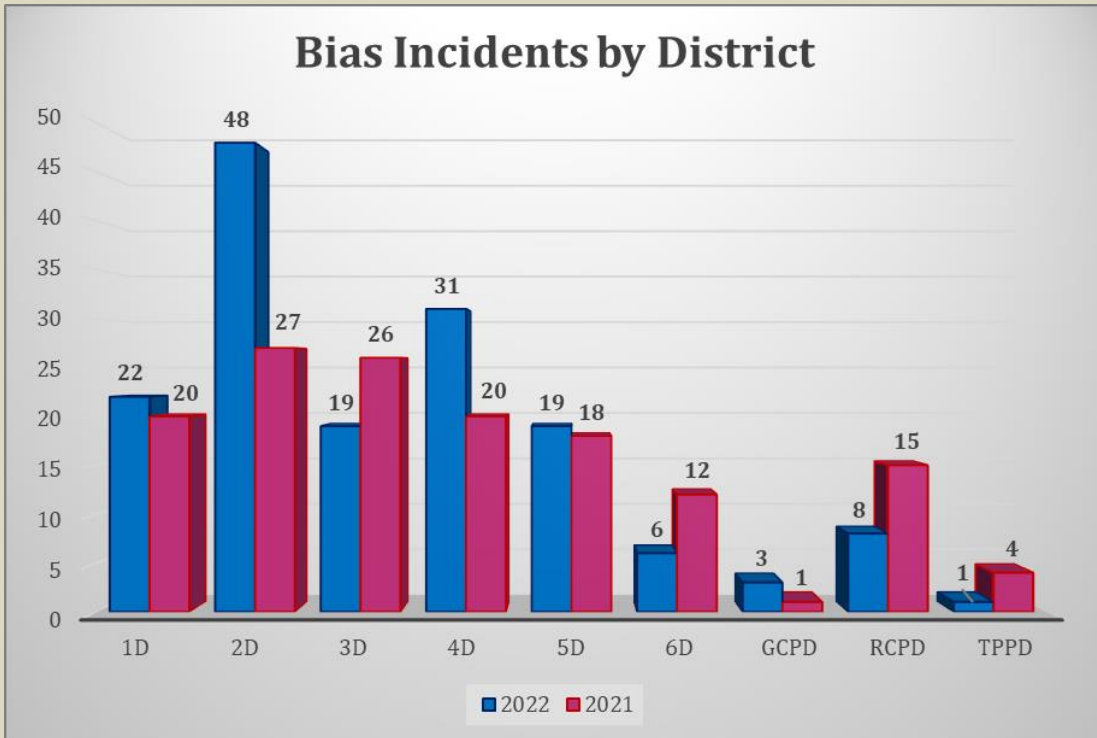


Verbal intimidation (19%) and simple assault (13%) were the next most frequent bias incidents reported. Overall, 65 incidents involved some form of intimidation (this category is represented as *Assault (Simple/Intimidation)* in the graph above). This includes the use of a noose to intimidate in three incidents. In 2020, Maryland passed [HB 0005](#), making it illegal to place an item or symbol, such as a noose, intending to threaten or intimidate. Social media, electronic mail, and/or phone text message use continue to contribute to many of the intimidation incidents; 58 of the 65 intimidation reports (89%) involved threats or bias-based language directed towards an individual or an organization. Electronic communication allows the sender to remain anonymous by using applications that can create fake account profiles or telephone numbers, thus concealing the user's true identity.

The number of physical assaults reported in 2022 (9 assaults, 15 victims) showed increases (29% and 67%, respectively) from the numbers reported in 2021 (7 assaults, nine victims). Six of the fifteen victims were White, six were Black, and three were Hispanic.

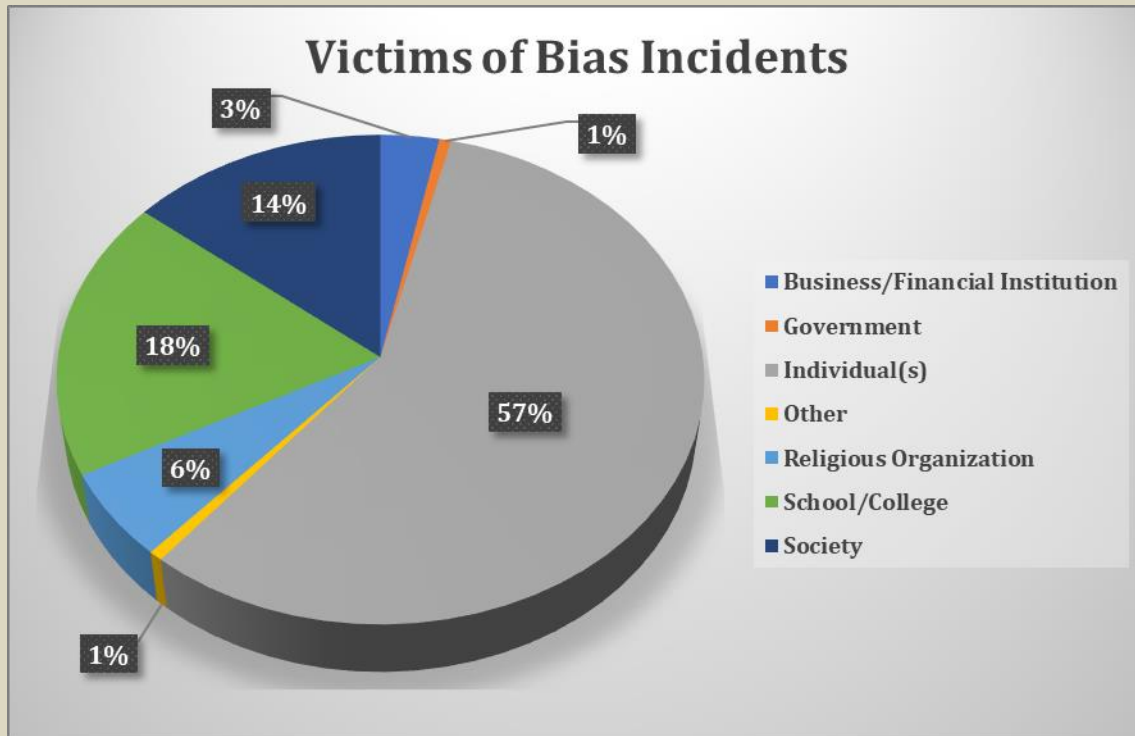
### INCIDENTS BY DISTRICT

The 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Districts experienced the highest reported bias incidents, with 48 and 31, respectively. These two districts account for 50% of the total reported incidents in 2022. The number of reported bias incidents decreased in district 6D to 6 (-50%) and district 3D to 19 (-27%). The charts illustrate these figures on the next page.



## VICTIMS OF BIAS INCIDENTS

Of the 157 incidents reported in 2022, 90 incidents were committed against individuals (57%); twenty-two (22) of those incidents had multiple victims. Overall, there were 130 individual victims of bias incidents in 2022. The remaining incidents were committed against schools, society, business/financial institutions, religious organizations, and government entities.



The number of incidents in which the school was the victim or target of a bias incident (e.g., vandalism) increased by 383% from 2021 (6) to 2022 (29). Of the 29 incidents, 23 (79%) involved vandalism, of which 52% were motivated by anti-Semitism. Two school vandalism incidents involved the same subjects, and both cases were closed by arrest.

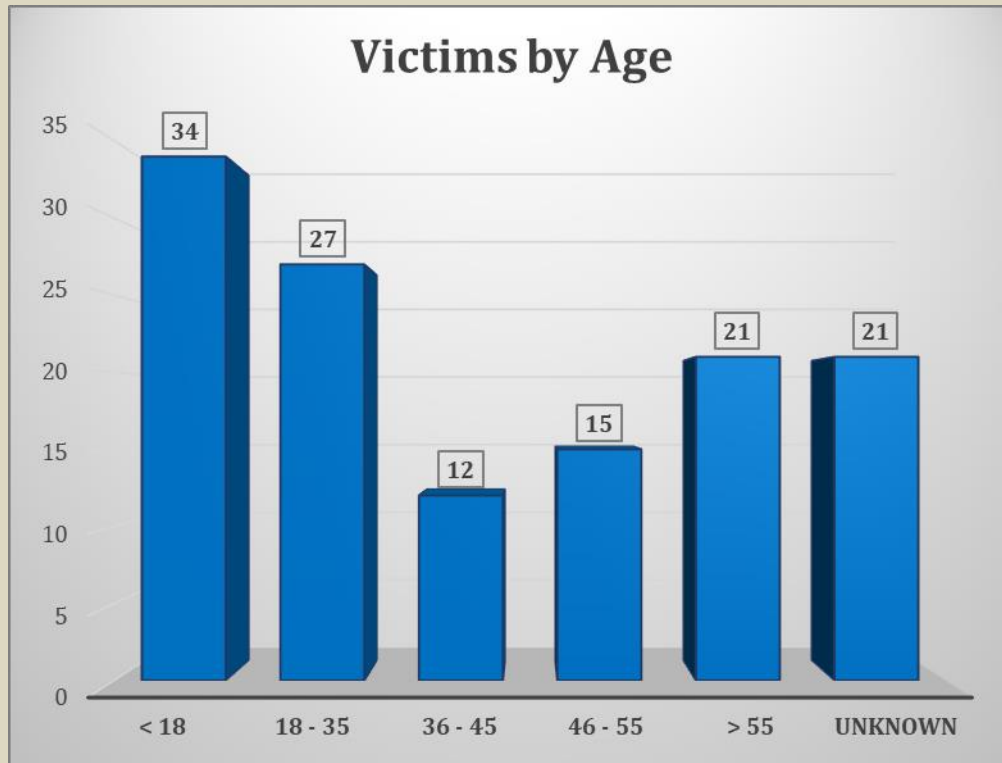
Alternatively, the number of incidents in which religious organizations were named victims decreased in 2022 (31%). Bias incidents against an individual also declined by 7%, while incidents against society rose by 29% compared to 2021. Resembling the school incidents, the majority of bias offenses against society involved vandalism (59%), with race and religion (44% and 33%, respectively) being the prime motivators.

### **Victim Demographics**

Among those cases in which specific individuals were victims (130 victims, total), 56 were female victims, and 74 male victims.

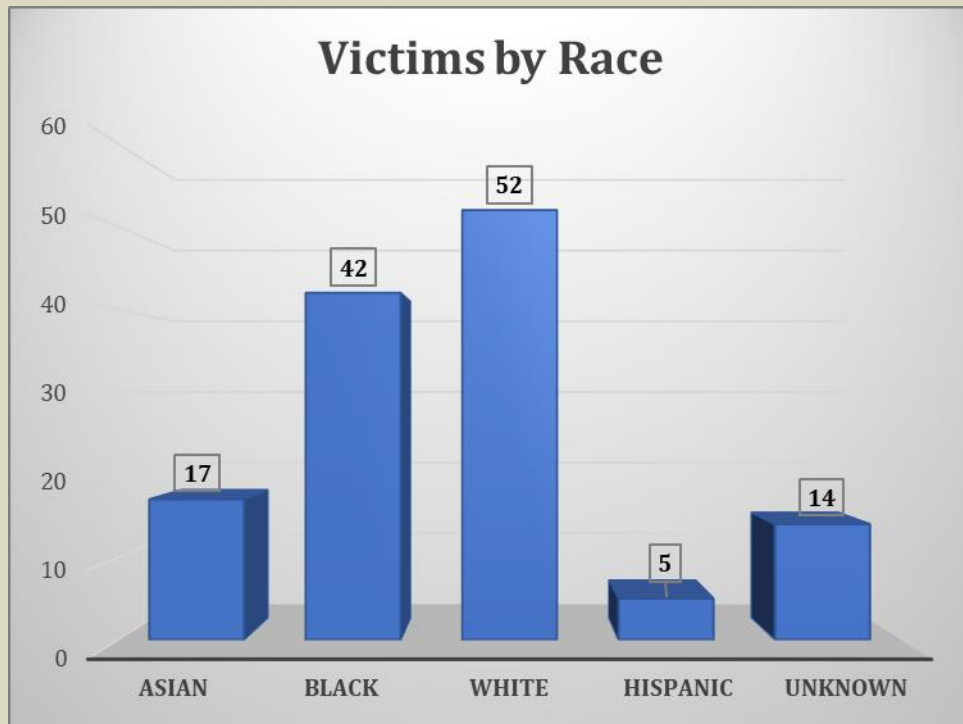
Of the individual victims identified, 34 (26%) were under age 18, a 183% increase from 2021. Of the 34 child victims, 30 (88%) were victims of assault/intimidation at or during school by other students.

There were decreases in all other age categories, with the most significant among victims aged 46-55 (36%). Historically, victims over age 55 were among the highest victim age categories; however, in 2022, this category declined by 16%.



In 2022, 37% of victims identified as White, while only 11% identified as Black, contrasting with the equal distribution in 2021. It is important to distinguish that although several incidents involving Black victims solely involved using a widely used yet derogatory term for Persons of Color, some of the incidents *also* involved anti-homosexual and anti-religion (Jewish) factors.

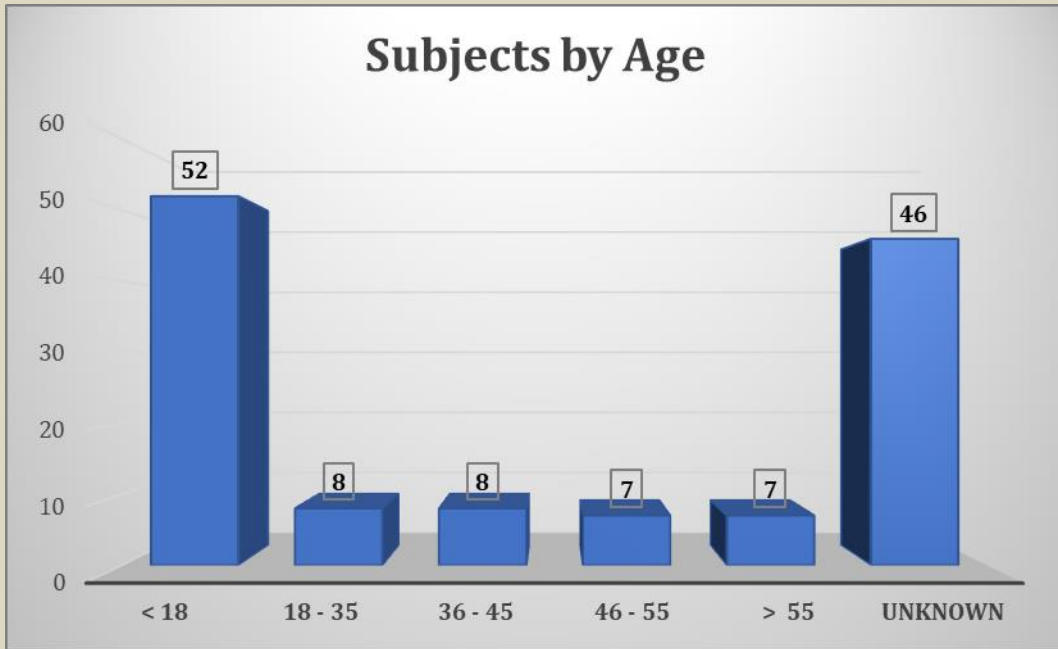
The number of Hispanic and Asian victims declined by 44% and 41%, respectively, from 2021 statistics. Five victims who identified as Asian (31%) were of Indian descent.



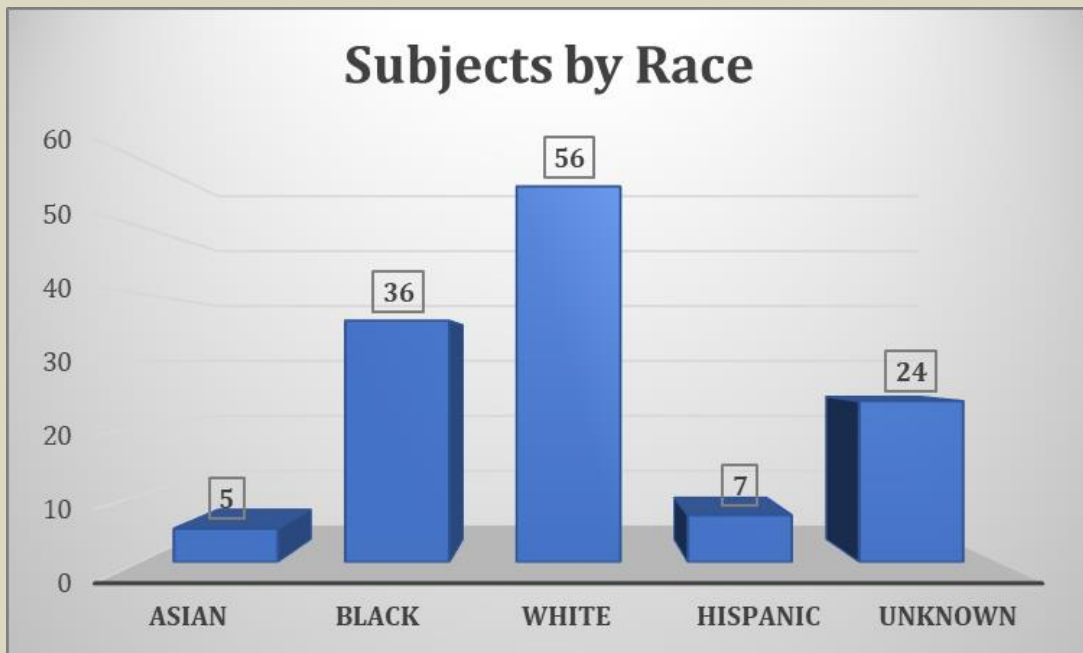
### **OFFENDERS OF BIAS INCIDENTS**

It is often very difficult to identify suspects of bias incidents, as many occur without witnesses. Moreover, many bias incidents occur without the victim being physically present, as in bias-motivated graffiti or vandalism. In 2022, victims provided suspect information in 31% (48) of the 157 incidents, most of which were for intimidation. There was partial suspect information provided in thirty-three additional incidents. Overall, there were 128 subjects developed and/or identified in these 81 incidents. Of the 128 subjects, 74% (95) are male. Fourteen subjects (nine males and five females) were arrested, closing nine cases, one of which was a verified hate/bias crime.

Additional demographics of the 128 subjects (including partial descriptions) are presented in the next two charts.



There was a significant (550%) increase in the category of offenders under age 18; from eight in 2021 to fifty-two in 2022. The drastic increase in this age category corresponds with that of the victims, in which many incidents occurred among students of similar ages at or during school. Offenders of an unknown age also increased. All other age categories decreased, with the most significant decrease (-58%) being offenders ages 36-45, from nineteen in 2021 to eight in 2022. In light of these increased incidents involving children, the Community Outreach Team from the Montgomery County State's Attorney's Office partnered with the Montgomery County Public Schools to provide Hate-Bias and Bullying School Presentations.





Historically, the MCPD has recorded more White offenders involved in bias-related incidents than any other race/ethnicity. This was consistent in 2022, although there was a 47% increase in reported White offenders. Black offenders also increased by 20% from the number reported in 2021. Asian and Hispanic offenders decreased by 17% and 13%, respectively.

## EDUCATION & OUTREACH

Montgomery County is a diverse yet inclusive community that does not tolerate hatred. Throughout the county, efforts are made to educate and engage the community in matters that foster understanding while repudiating ignorance. The [Montgomery County Office of Human Rights](#) helps create a culture of service and a climate of fairness and inclusion at the county government's highest levels. It promotes trust and inclusiveness amongst minority communities through outreach and engagement, such as through the [Committee on Hate/Violence](#). This advisory group educates residents about bias/hate and promotes respect for cultural and social diversity.

Other organizations, such as the [Faith Community Advisory Council](#), a part of the Office of Community Partnerships, work hard to ensure the County Executive is well-informed and able to respond effectively to the needs and concerns of faith communities throughout the county.

It is also important for the police department to work closely within the community to confront hatred and overcome the fear and mistrust that may exist since bias crimes are more likely to create or exacerbate tension or conflict. Communication and interaction are often key factors in preventing tension or restoring peace. Every interaction with the public is an opportunity to build relationships and trust with the community. The department's Public Information Office helps prevent an increase in tension throughout the community by informing the public about each incident and including information about the offenders and the law-enforcement response. The MCPD Community Engagement Division oversees community and school, resource officers. It ensures that investigative follow-up, victim assistance (when applicable), and collaboration are provided in all bias-motivated events to mitigate bias and hate in the community immediately.

Montgomery County is again flourishing with activity after the lingering COVID-19 pandemic closures and public event limitations during 2021. In 2022, the MCPD attended 541 community events, some of which were still held virtually. Residents can view a list of community events via this [Virtual Calendar](#). Montgomery County police officers and Command Staff were present at 44% (239) community engagement events presented during 59 crime awareness and prevention events (24%). MCPD was also present at various townhall-style events and training/prevention programs and engaged with community groups that could potentially be victims of a bias-motivated incident or that may already be concerned or in fear because of national and worldwide events (i.e., African American and Hispanic committees, faith communities, etc.).

Although many community organizations seek to promote acceptance and respect and build relationships with those of different religious, racial, and other backgrounds, creating a more just and balanced community, many opportunities remain to combat bias and stereotypes that lead to bias

incidents. Timely and accurate reporting can significantly increase the likelihood that peace, stability, and understanding will be restored and fear, suspicion, and anger will be alleviated. That is why the MCPD encourages all community members and organizations to report any incident in which some perceived bias element is present. The MCPD is committed to ensuring equity, opportunity, and inclusion for all people of Montgomery County. Hate and prejudice profoundly impact our community, and no one should live in fear. The MCPD will not tolerate intolerance, exclusion, indifference, or open intimidation and asks that everyone report any incident of bias or hate crime.

## SUMMARY

Bias incidents may disproportionately impact their victims more than other types of incidents. Furthermore, these incidents also have more serious side effects on society. A bias incident impacts an individual victim and can affect an entire group to whom the individual belongs, resulting in increased isolation, stress, and vulnerability. Timely and effective police response can positively and negatively impact the police and various communities' relationship, influencing other public safety aspects.

Anyone who believes a bias/hate crime has occurred is requested to call 301-279-8000, or dial 911 in an emergency, to report the incident to the MCPD immediately. The Montgomery County Office of Human Rights can also be contacted at 240-777-8450, even if you do not have any information on the suspects or no physical injury or property damage. Do not destroy evidence of the crime; keep any letters, emails, or voicemails. Do not clean up any vandalism until the police arrive and conduct the investigation, which may include photographs. The department's Victim Assistance Coordinators, available at each district station, can direct you to other resources and put you in contact with human rights organizations. If you would like more information about how you can prevent bias incidents, please consider contacting the Director of the [Community Engagement Division](#), who will be able to coordinate the department's community services resources or direct you to the most appropriate resource for your need.

The Montgomery County Police Department receives numerous reports involving inappropriate activity conducted through social media outlets (Facebook, SnapChat, Instagram, etc.), including bullying and other threatening behavior that displays indifference, discrimination, and hatred towards both specific individuals and groups of people. Although this is perpetuated by subjects of all ages, the MCPD frequently receives reports of social media improprieties involving middle and high school students.

Parents, while you may not be able to monitor all your child's activities, there are things you can do to prevent cyberbullying and protect your child from harmful digital behavior:

- Establish rules about appropriate digital behavior, content, and applications.
- Monitor your child's social media sites, applications, and browsing history.
- Follow or friend your teen on social media sites or have another trusted adult do so.
- Know your child's user names and passwords for email and social media.
- Review or reset your child's phone location and privacy settings.

Parents who want to protect their children from cyberbullying, harmful digital behavior, and exposure to adult content can use parental controls and monitoring software, such as *Bark*, *Qustodio*, or *WebWatcher*, to help them set up systems that are less invasive to their children.

Montgomery County residents are encouraged to call their district station and speak to a Community Services Officer for strategies to prevent cyberbullying, or visit [StopBullying.gov](#) for tips on recognizing it.



Follow the [Montgomery County Police](#) on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [Instagram](#).



### Montgomery County Police Department District Stations

1 <sup>st</sup> District – Rockville	240-773-6070
2 <sup>nd</sup> District – Bethesda	240-773-6700
3 <sup>rd</sup> District – Silver Spring	240-773-6800
4 <sup>th</sup> District – Wheaton	240-773-5500
5 <sup>th</sup> District – Germantown	240-773-6200
6 <sup>th</sup> District – Montgomery Village	240-773-5700

## **APPENDIX A: SUMMARY OF 2022 SIGNIFICANT BIAS INCIDENTS**

Below is a summary of significant and verified bias incidents in 2022.

The victim oversaw the subject's finances while in a healthcare facility. The subject claimed a mistake was made on a financial document for which the subject now owed money. The subject threatened to kill the victim, blaming the victim for the mistake. The subject had made anti-Semitic comments about the victim in the past and continued to do so when interviewed by police.

The assistant principal reported a sexual offense at school. The victim disclosed they were inappropriately touched by two other students. The subjects have a history of bullying the victim because of the victim's gender identity. In addition to inappropriately touching the victim, the subjects also made jokes about the victim's sexuality. No criminal charges were pursued. The matter was handled administratively through MCPS.

Various students placed an application on their phones that made a whipping sound. Two students directed the whipping sound toward an African American student, and a third student made racially discriminating remarks toward the victim. Three other students also had the application on their phones but directed the whipping sound to non-minority students. The school disciplined all students involved.

While off school-grounds, several Middle School students were involved in a significant physical altercation in which five subjects assaulted two victims. The assault was in retaliation for an alleged racist comment made by the victims. The five subjects were each charged with two counts of assault (one for each victim): Assault in the second degree in violation of CR 3-202.

Two cases of vandalism occurred at a Middle School which involved spray-painted images and words, including swastikas, racial epithets, and homophobic messages. Two juvenile subjects were arrested concerning both incidents, subsequently closing both cases.