

MONTGOMERY COUNTY POLICE DEPARTMENT



2021 ANNUAL REPORT ON BIAS INCIDENTS

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2021 MCP 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 biased 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 continue to be a blight on our county.

In 2021, there were 143 reported bias incidents, 22.2% more than the number of bias incidents reported in 2020 (117). This is the highest number of bias-related incidents reported to the MCPD since internal reporting processes changed in 2015 and is a 16.3% increase from the second-highest total in 2017 when 123 incidents were reported. On average, the department records 11.9 bias incidents per month.

Of the 79 incidents motivated by bias towards a race, 60.8% (48) were considered anti-black, and 20.3% (16) were anti-Asian. The county also saw 2021 a staggering increase in the number of Asian victims in bias incidents. There were also seven multi-racial incidents (vandalism, intimidation), of which two referenced white supremacist groups.

Of the 34 incidents motivated by bias towards religion, 85.3% (29) were considered anti-Jewish, despite Jewish persons making up only 10% of the population.

The most frequent type of vandalism/graffiti reported was racially motivated, a shift from previous years in which the swastika and other anti-Semitic phrases/statements were predominant. Recent political and social justice movements likely influenced this change. Anti-Semitic and Anti-homosexual phrases and images are also frequently reported.

Hate and prejudice have a profoundly negative impact on our community. No one should live in fear. That is why we encourage everyone to report hate crimes. The MCPD remains committed to upholding all of our residents' civil and human rights.

I add as a final note that bias incidents that do not occur 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.



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

"(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 this section uses, 'sexual orientation' means consensual homosexuality or heterosexuality. This subsection does not limit any existing cause of action or right to take action, including under the Administrative Procedure Act or the All Writs Act [5 USCS §§ 551 et seq. or 28 USCS § 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 crimes 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 healthy-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, Congress passed the *Hate Crime Statistics Act*, and the FBI as a result. Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR.) The 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 UCR Program expanded its data collection categories for race and ethnicity and began accepting data on crimes motivated 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 report 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. 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 (MSP) 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.

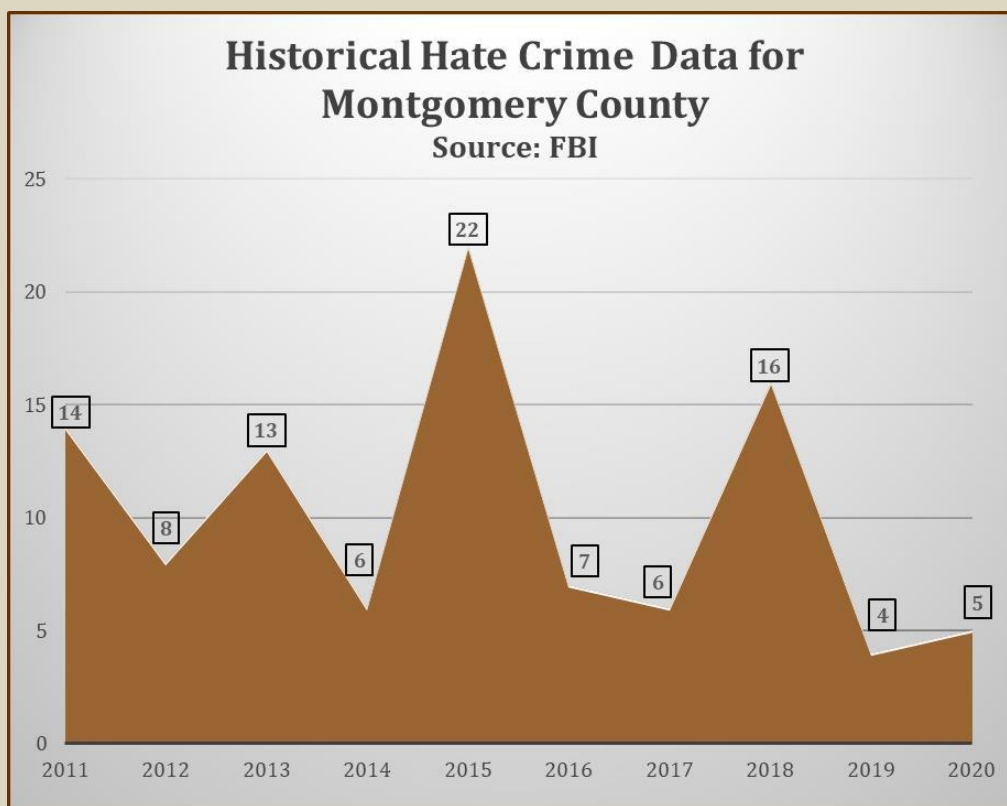
In 2021, the COVID-19 Hate Crimes Act, Pub. L. 117-13 was signed into law, which "addresses hate crimes throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, with particular emphasis on the increase in violence against Asian Americans." The bill requires the Department of Justice (DOJ) to expedite the review of reported hate crimes related to COVID-19 and 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 (FBI) under the Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) program's *Hate Crime Statistics* program. Hate crimes are not separate, distinct crimes but traditional offenses motivated by 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).

The fact that the offender is biased against the victim does not mean that a hate crime occurred. Instead, the offender's **criminal** act must have been motivated, in whole or in 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 (if known) are the most significant factors determining whether an incident is motivated by prejudice 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 2021, the department recorded 143 bias incidents, including five Takoma Park incidents (the Montgomery County Police Department does not report Takoma Park incidents to the state or FBI). This is a 22.2% increase over the 117 incidents reported in 2020. 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 chart² illustrates the FBI's reporting of hate crimes in Montgomery County. It is important to note that the FBI only reports hate crimes; it does not track bias incidents.



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

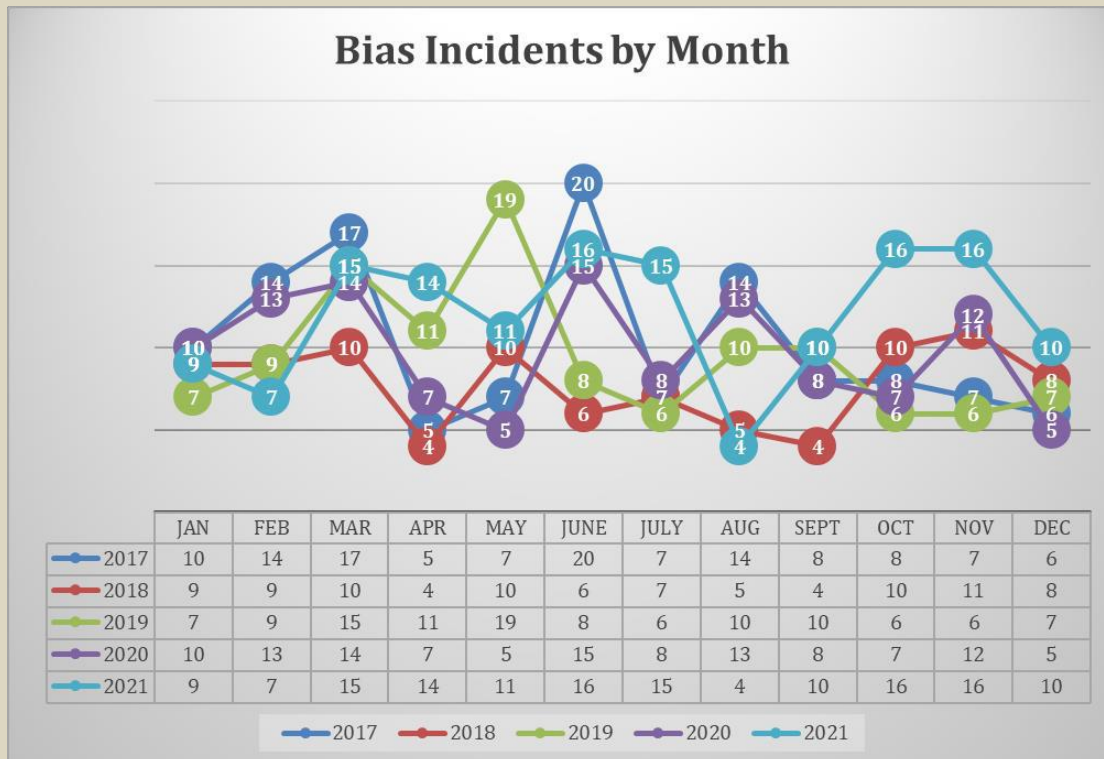
² Statistics were compiled from the [FBI UCR Hate Crime website](#).

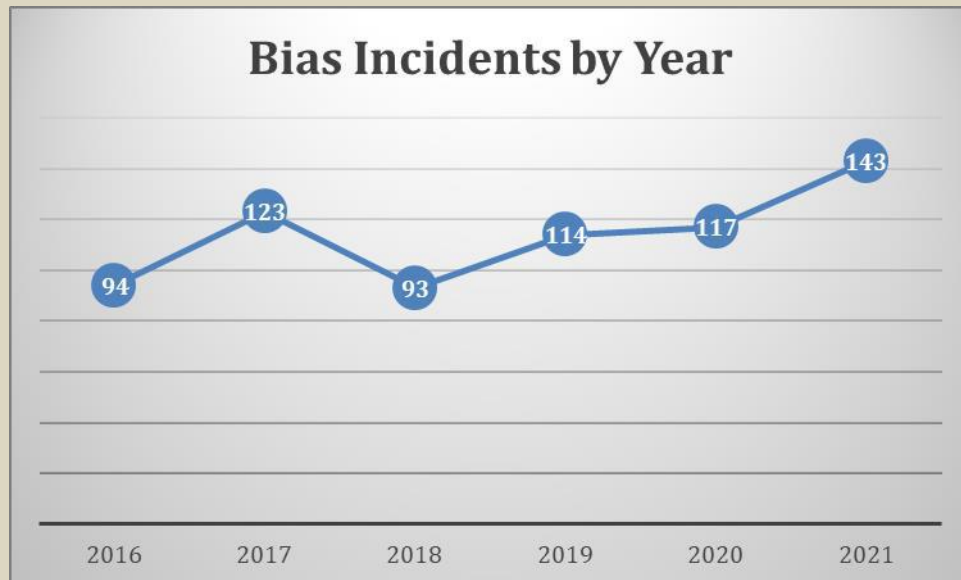
unreported due to fear or embarrassment, making it challenging to track incidents accurately and establish trends.

While many bias incidents may not constitute criminal acts, the MCPD understands that actions demonstrating and 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 the most effective areas. Likewise, other community organizations will be better able to respond to the needs of victims.

REPORTED BIAS INCIDENTS

There were 143 reported bias incidents in 2021, 22.2% more than the number of bias incidents reported in 2020 (117). This is the highest number of bias-related incidents reported to the MCPD since internal reporting processes changed in 2015 and is a 16.3% increase from the second-highest total in 2017, when 123 incidents were reported. On average, the department records 11.9 bias incidents per month.





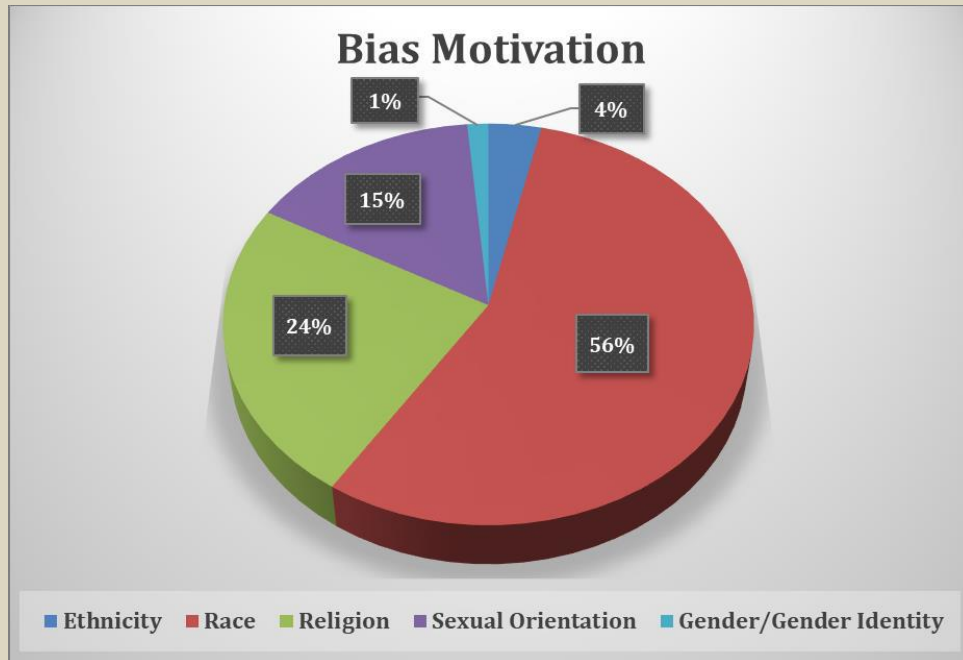
BIAS MOTIVATION

It is well-known that Montgomery County is a majority-minority community, and the residents are proud that the population continues to increase and become more diverse. In 2021, more than 1.05 million people were living in Montgomery County.

Seventeen of the 143 total bias incidents recorded in 2021 reflected multiple bias motivations. Race and religion continue to be the primary bias motivators (78 and 34 incidents, respectively), then sexual orientation (22 incidents), and ethnicity (6 incidents). Gender bias was a motivation in two incidents. Within these categories, the following points should be considered:

- Of the 34 incidents motivated by religious bias, 85.3% (29) were considered anti-Jewish, despite Jewish persons making up only 10% of the population¹. The next most significant religious bias motivator was anti-Hindu, of which there were only two reports this year.
- Of the 79 incidents motivated by bias towards a race, 60.8% (48) were considered anti-black, and 20.3% (16) were anti-Asian. There were also seven multi-racial incidents (assault, intimidation), of which two referenced white supremacist groups.
- Of the five incidents motivated by ethnicity bias, four were anti-Hispanic, one fewer than those reported in 2020.

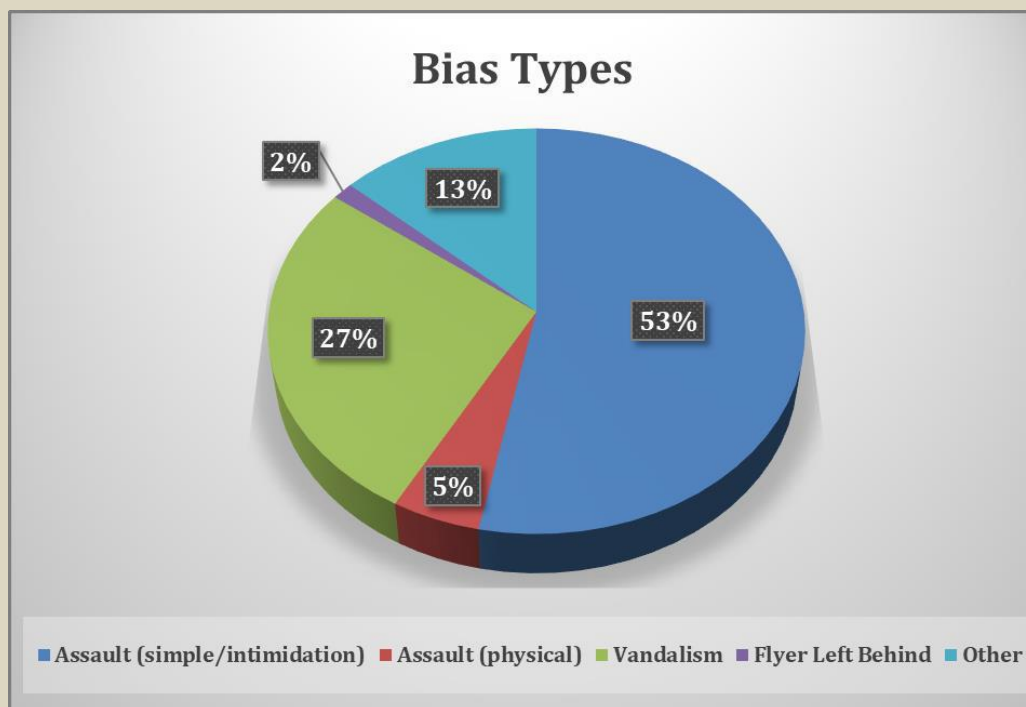
¹ The 2017 Greater Washington, DC Jewish Community Demographic Study (2018). Retrieved from <https://www.shalomdc.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/DCJewishCommunityStudy021118.pdf>



TYPES OF BIAS INCIDENTS

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

Approximately 27% of the reported bias incidents fall into the category of vandalism/graffiti (39 incidents, 4.9% fewer than the number of vandalisms in 2020). However, fifteen (38.5%) of the 39 reported vandalism incidents involved individual private property. The most frequent type of vandalism/graffiti reported was racially motivated, a shift from previous years in which the swastika and other anti-Semitic phrases/statements were predominant. Recent political and social justice movements likely influenced this change. Anti-Semitic and Anti-homosexual phrases and images are also frequently reported.

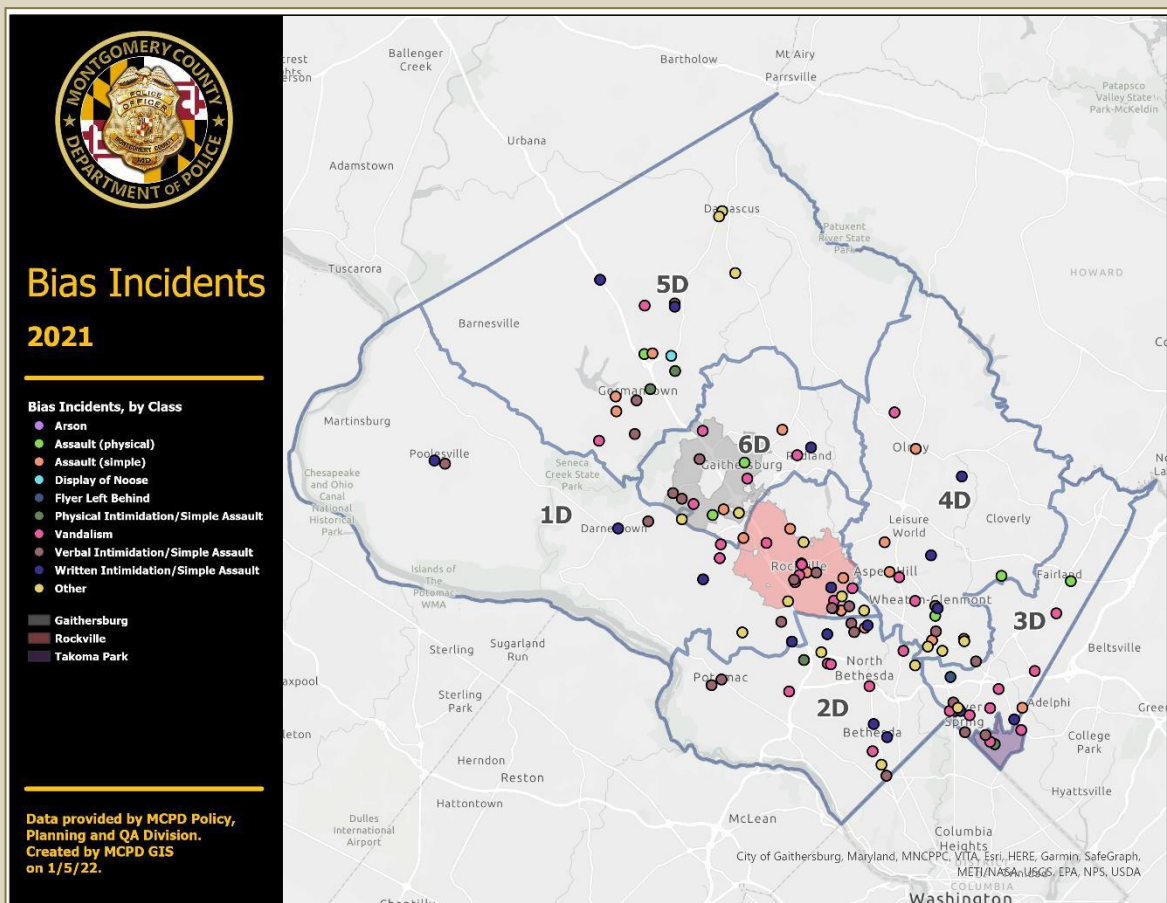
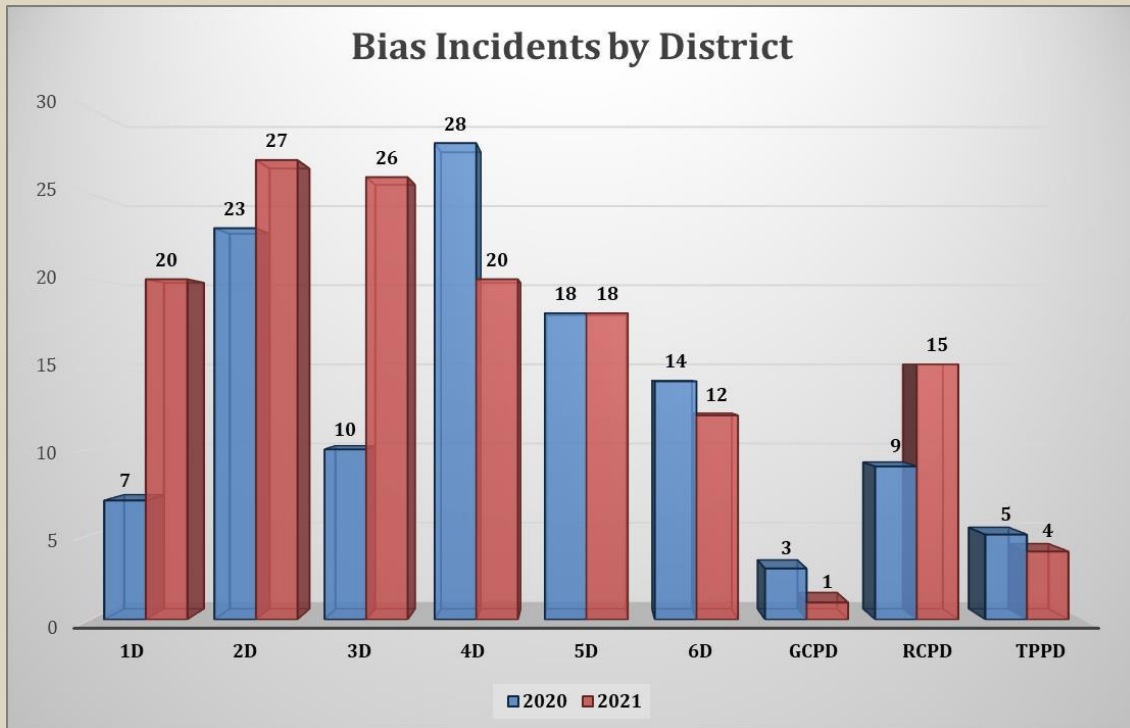


Vandalism (27.3%) followed by verbal intimidation (19.6%) were the following most frequent types of bias incidents reported. Overall, there were 76 incidents involving some form of intimidation (this category is represented as *Assault (Simple/Intimidation)* in the graph above). This includes the use of a noose to intimidate in one incident. Social media, electronic mail, and/or phone text message use continues to contribute to many of the intimidation incidents; 18 of the 76 intimidation reports (23.6%) 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 2021 (7 assaults, nine victims) showed decreases (30% and 25%, respectively) from the numbers reported in 2020 (10 assaults, 12 victims). Five of the nine victims were White.

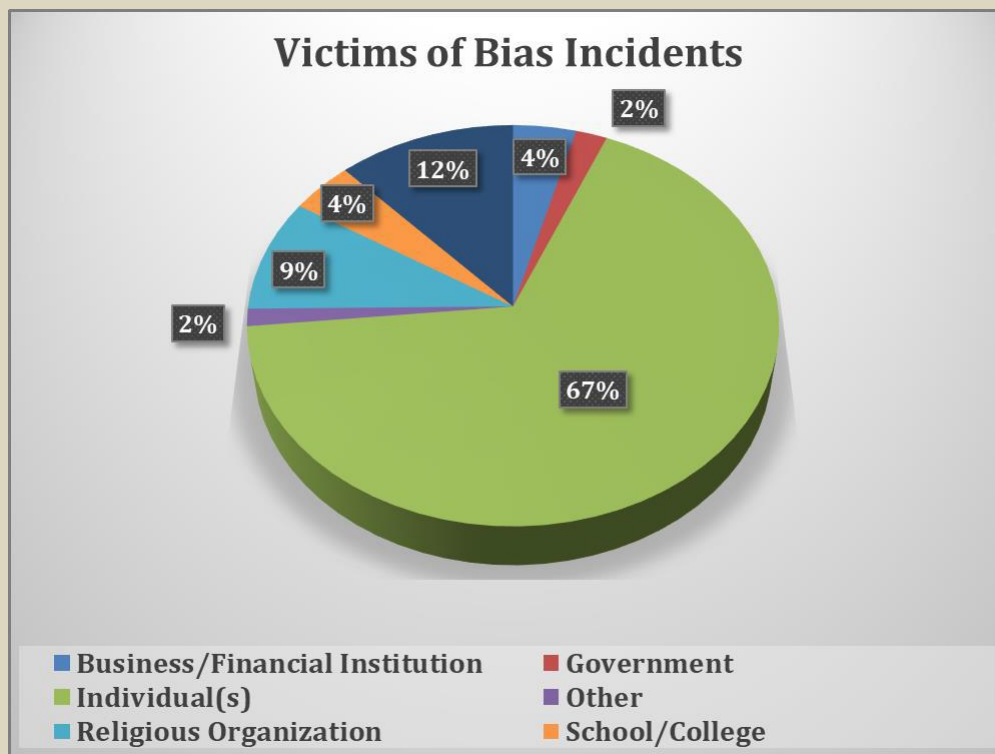
INCIDENTS BY DISTRICT

The 2nd and 3rd Districts experienced the highest reported bias incidents with 27 and 26, respectively. These two districts account for 37% of the reported incidents. The number of reported bias incidents increased in district 1D to 20 (+186%) and in district 3D to 25 (+150%); the charts illustrate these figures on the next page.



VICTIMS OF BIAS INCIDENTS

Of the 143 incidents reported in 2021, 96 were committed against individuals (67.1%); fourteen (14) incidents had multiple victims. Overall, there were 116 individual victims of bias incidents in 2021. The remaining incidents were committed against schools, society, business/financial institutions, religious organizations, and government entities.



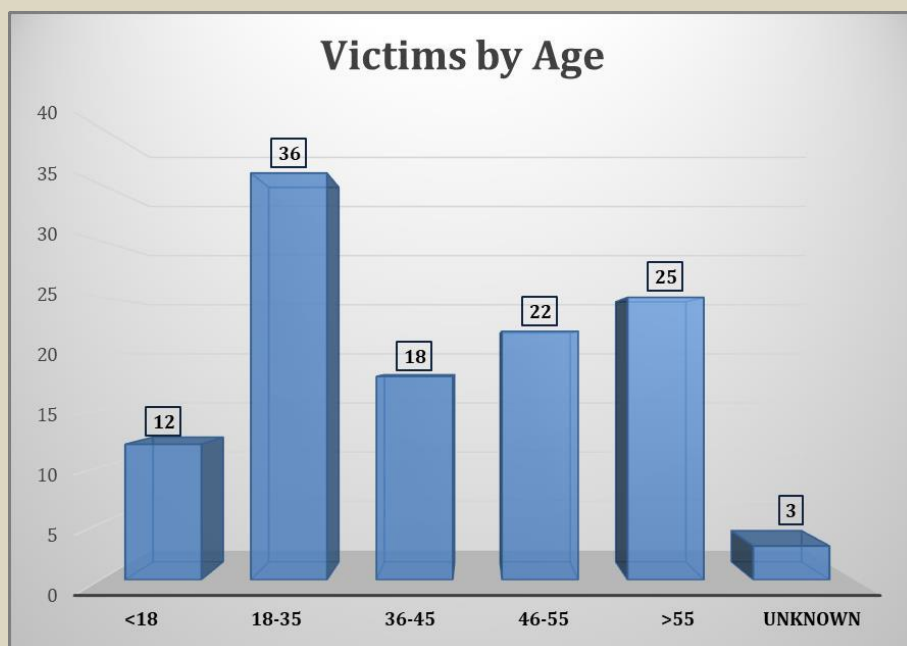
The number of incidents in which the school was the victim or target of a biased incident (e.g., vandalism) decreased by 70% from 2020 (20) to 2021 (6). This is most likely attributed to students returning to in-person classes instead of virtual learning during the COVID-19 pandemic. Business and financial institutions also saw a 33.3% decrease, likely due to increased employees returning to work, reducing opportunism for offenses such as vandalism.

Alternatively, the number of incidents in which religious organizations were named victims continued to rise in 2021 (30%). However, the most significant increase (50%) was bias against individual victims, with 96 incidents in 2021 compared to 64 in 2020. This is likely attributed to ongoing tensions regarding social, political, and pandemic-related issues. Race and religion contributed to 79% of the offenses against individual victims.

Victim Demographics

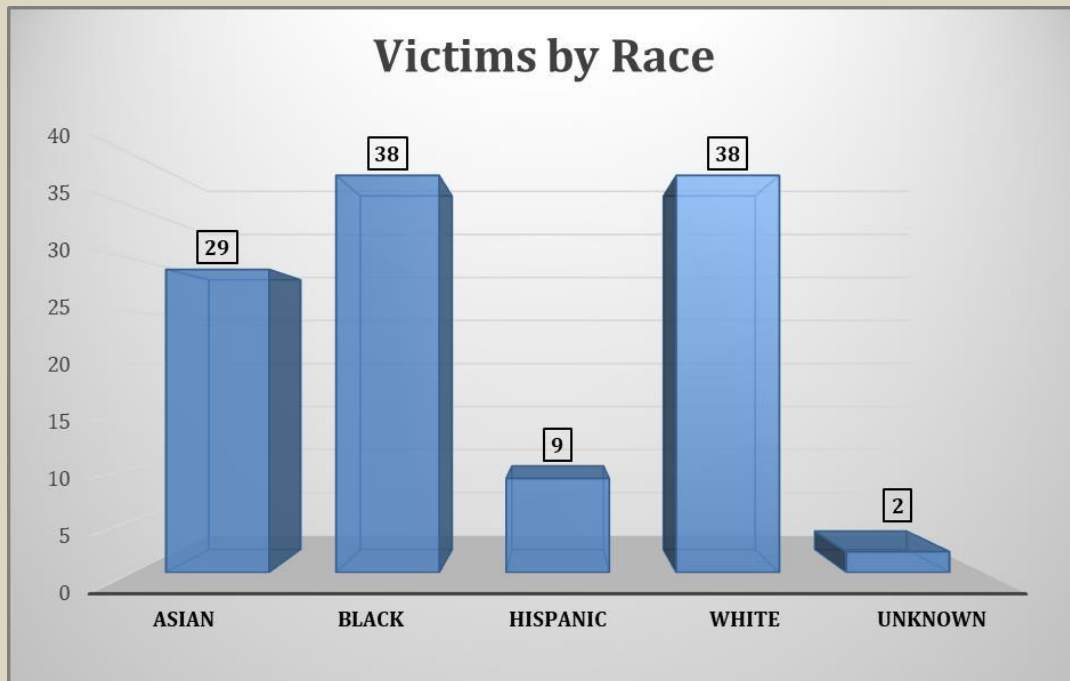
Amongst those cases in which specific individuals were victims (116 victims, total), there were 48 female victims and 68 male victims.

Of the identified victims, 31% were between 18 and 35, an 80% increase from 2020. There was an increase of 120% among victims ages 46-55 and increases in all other age categories. The category of victims over 55 years of age was again on the rise in 2021, representing 21.6%, and historically has remained one of the highest victim age categories.



In 2021, an equal proportion of victims, 32.8% each, identified as white or black. It is essential to distinguish that although several incidents involve the widely used yet derogatory term for persons of color, victims described as black were victims of incidents that involved anti-homosexual and anti-religion (Jewish) factors.

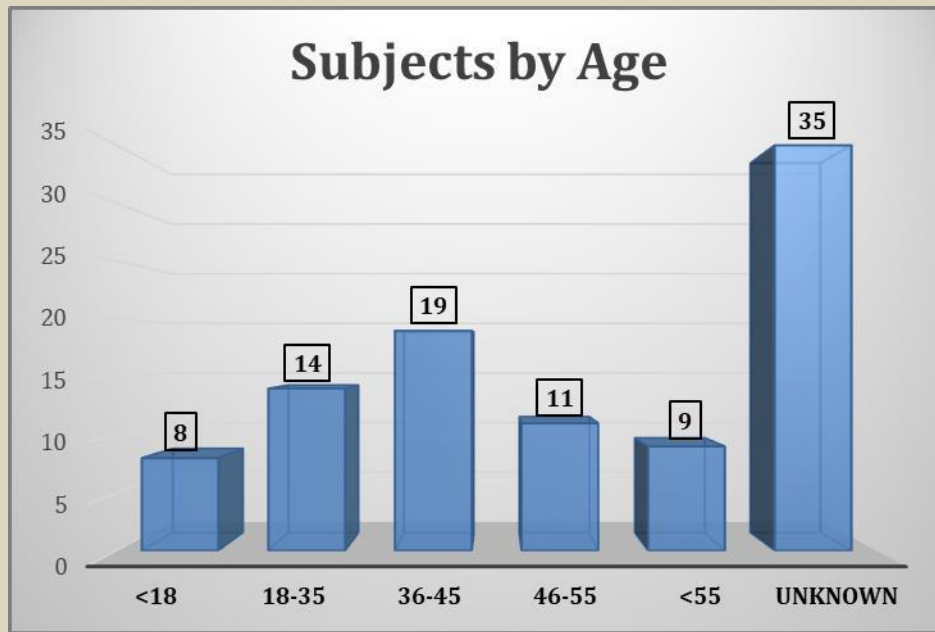
The number of Hispanic victims in 2021 remained consistent with 2020 statistics, but Asian victims increased by 222% from nine in 2020 to twenty-nine, all of which were anti-Asian incidents.



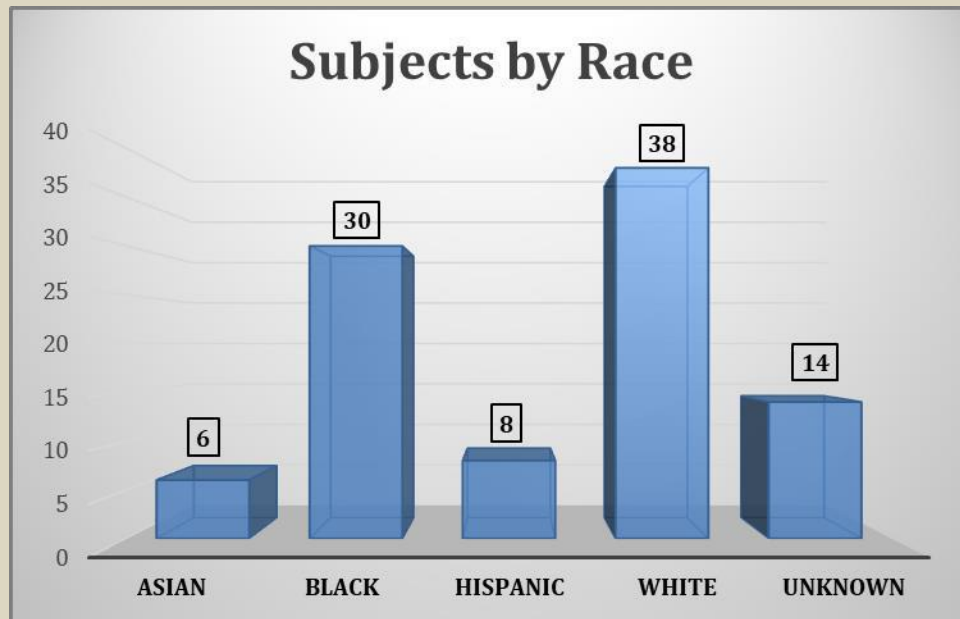
OFFENDERS OF BIAS INCIDENTS

It is often tough to identify suspects of bias incidents, as many occur without witnesses. Moreover, many bias incidents occur without the victim present, as in bias-motivated graffiti or vandalism. In 2021, victims could provide suspect information in 38% of the 143 incidents (54), most of which were for some intimidation. There was partial suspect information provided in twenty-six additional incidents. Overall, there were 96 subjects developed and/or identified in these 80 incidents. The subjects of these incidents continue to be predominantly male (73). Fifteen subjects (thirteen males and two females) were arrested, closing fifteen cases, four of which were verified hate/bias crimes.

The following two charts present additional demographics of the 96 subjects (including partial descriptions).



There was a significant decrease in offenders under 18 (50%), and offenders of an unknown age also declined. Substantial increases (1800%) in offenders ages 36-45 and (266.7%) in the 46-55-year-old category were noted. This could be attributed to a nationwide divisional perception of political, social, and pandemic-related issues among older and younger generations.



Historically, the MCPD has recorded more white offenders involved in bias-related incidents than any race/ethnicity. This was consistent in 2021, although there was a 5.6% increase in reported white offenders. Black offenders remained compatible with the number registered in 2020. Asian and Hispanic offenders increased by 500% and 100%, 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. This advisory group educates residents about bias/hate and fosters 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 responds effectively to the needs and concerns of faith communities throughout the county.

It is also essential for the police department to work closely within the community to confront hatred and overcome the fear and mistrust since bias crimes are more likely to create or exacerbate tension or conflict. Communication and interaction are often critical 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 Division helps prevent increased tension throughout the community by informing public attitudes about such incidents, 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 immediately mitigate bias hate in the community.

After the COVID-19 pandemic and various political and social justice events, 2021 was still a year of challenges. Fluctuating health guidance and restrictions at businesses and religious organizations and the temporary closure of schools significantly impacted the number of community events held within the county. MCPD. Attended 354 community events in 2021, many of which were held virtually. Montgomery County police officers and command staff were present at 172 (49%) community engagement events and 72 crime awareness and prevention events (20%) in light of ongoing limitations. 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 have a profound impact on 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 victims more significantly than other types of incidents. Furthermore, these incidents also have more severe side effects on society. A biased 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.

If you believe a bias/hate crime has occurred, please call 301-279-8000, or dial 9-1-1 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 have no 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 Captain of the [Community Engagement Division](#), who will be able to coordinate the department's community services resources or direct you to the most appropriate help for your need.

The Montgomery County Police Department receives numerous reports involving inappropriate activity conducted through social media outlets (Facebook, SnapChat, Twitter, 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.

Montgomery County Police Department District Stations

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

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

APPENDIX A: SUMMARY OF 2021 BIAS INCIDENTS

Below is a summary of significant bias and verified hate crime incidents in 2021.

The suspect was involved in a parking lot collision with another motorist resulting in the suspect's vehicle blocking several additional vehicles. When the victims asked the suspect to move his vehicle to leave, he became angry and started shouting racial slurs at the victims. The suspect charged toward one victim and spat on her. He also shoved and spat on another victim. The subject was arrested and charged with:

- (2) Counts: CR 3-203 Assault Second Degree
- (2) Counts: CR 10-304 Race/Religion Harassment: Person

The suspect asked the victim if he was gay before threatening and violently assaulting the victim by punching him in the face and pushing him to the ground. The victim was transported to the hospital for treatment. The suspect was arrested and charged with:

- (1) Count: CR 3-203 Assault Second Degree
- (1) Count: CR 10-304 Race/Religion Harassment: Person

The suspect approached a random table at a restaurant and began yelling at two victims while holding a knife. He grabbed one victim's cell phone, pointed the knife in the victim's face, and yelled for the victims to "go back to their own country." The suspect grabbed the second victim by the neck, threatened him with the knife, and smashed cups and plates on the victim's table. The suspect was arrested and charged with:

- (2) Counts: CR 10-304 Race/Religion Harassment: Person
- (2) Counts: CR 3-202 Assault First Degree
- (2) Counts: CR 3-203 Assault Second Degree
- (1) Count: CR 7-104 Theft \$100 under \$1500

After a video was circulated depicting the male victim kissing another male, a classmate threatened to fight the victim. The suspect called the victim a derogatory name and punched the victim in the face. The subject was charged with:

(1) Count: CR 3-203 Assault Second Degree

(1) Count: CR 10-304 Race/Religion Harassment: Person

A business owner reported that the suspect called the store and threatened to shoot and kill all the team members after a black male patron allegedly harassed the suspect's girlfriend. The suspect used anti-black racial slurs and stated that he would shoot and kill any black customers inside the store. The subject was charged with:

(1) Count: CR 3-1001 Threats of Mass Violence

(1) Count: CR 10-304 Race/Religion Harassment: Person

Multiple calls were received for "Anti-Semitic" COVID-related fliers distributed throughout a neighborhood during overnight hours. A witness reported seeing a vehicle occupied by two unknown subjects throwing plastic bags containing anti-Semitic propaganda onto all homes in the area. Several streets were affected. Witnesses were unable to obtain the vehicle tag number.

A Hebrew organization received threatening messages through social media, including threats of harm during religious holiday services. The organization researched the social media account and discovered the subject to be a former client who had been recently arrested in August 2021 in Berkeley, California, for hate crime charges. The subject had entered a temple and shouted antisemitic slurs. This event proceeds a history of antisemitic threats dating back to 2011. Three weeks later, the same organization received a five-page letter with anti-black and anti-Jewish statements and a picture of a swastika. The sender (subject) had been charged with hate crimes in the past, including arson, and the business is working with an investigation group to investigate the subject. It is unclear whether the two incidents or subjects are related.