

BLOOMINGTON HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION
HATE INCIDENTS REPORT

January 1, 2020 - December 31, 2020

****Warning: this report includes offensive language in order to provide an accurate portrayal of these incidents.**

In August, 1990, the Bloomington Common Council unanimously approved an amendment to the Bloomington Human Rights Ordinance which gave the Bloomington Human Rights Commission the explicit authority to collect data and issue reports on hate incidents within our community. We accept reports from police departments, individuals, groups and the media. We also accept anonymous reports. Our goal is not to investigate these incidents, as we do not have the authority to conduct that type of investigation. Rather, our goals are to serve as a referral resource and sounding board for victims, to work with community groups to coordinate responses to hate incidents when appropriate and to make our community more aware of the prevalence of hate incidents by updating this document on-line as we receive new reports.

Please note: Not all of these incidents constitute crimes, but all do indicate apparent bias.

--- In February, 2020, we received a report from BPD and other sources concerning an encounter between an African American man riding a scooter and a white man driving a car. The scooter rider said a white man driving a car closely followed him while he was riding his scooter on the road. The white man was yelling at him, so he stopped riding, leaving the scooter in the road. He and the white man argued a bit. Then the driver started to drive away, but the scooter was caught under this car. He backed up, removed the scooter and tossed it in the grass. The two argued some more. As the driver drove away, the African American man said that the driver called him a "dumb nigger." BPD investigated.

--In February, 2020, we received reports of an argument on an IU bus. The driver, a white woman, repeatedly told an African American male passenger to go to the back of the bus. When he did not, she called the police. An African American female passenger tried to talk to the driver; the driver yelled at her in turn. The driver was suspended.

--In February, 2020, we saw a report in the Indiana Daily Student about two African American students at the Intramural Center repeatedly being asked by staff to show their student ids. They said white students were not asked to do the same. One of the students said the staff person was very aggressive and gave contradictory reasons for the request.

--In February, 2020, we received an email about hateful, anti-Chinese messages being posted on a subReddit that has been quarantined. The message claimed that many of the Chinese students at IU come from the Wuhan province and that "many of them eat diseased animals like bats, monkeys and rats and that's how scientists say the virus [coronavirus] originated." The message urged people "to keep an eye out on Chinese who appear infected. Do not approach them do not go near them. Call the cops as soon as you see them and make sure you spread the word. The Chinese are very dirty and sick people. People watch out. God bless."

--In February, 2020, we received a report from BPD about a dispute between several men. A Black man said he had told people nearby that he was not feeling well and asked them to be quiet. One of the people nearby told the Black man to shut up and called him obscene names, including "nigger." He tried to tackle the Black man and others piled on. Another witness said the Black man had started the incident and had been calling another Black man "nigger." When others tried to intervene, the Black man struck them. Other witnesses concurred with the witness's account. The Black man was charged with disorderly conduct and battery.

--In February, 2020, we received a report about an alleged battery. Because juveniles were involved, we will not give details, but the allegations included the use of the term "Asian bitch" and questions about whether the Asian person had COVID-19.

--In May, 2020, we received a report from BPD about an incident in a park involving several juveniles. Because juveniles were involved, we will not give details. The juveniles had had conflicts in the past, and the incident reported to BPD involved some of the juveniles calling the other juveniles "African girls," "niggers" and "bitch." The incident escalated to include shoving and slapping. BPD investigated.

--In August 2020, we received a report from an individual that her Muslim neighbor's windows had been broken. They reported the incident to the police.

--In October, 2020, we received a report from the media about a person who drove by an outdoor Yom Kippur service and yelled anti-Semitic statements. The incident was reported to IUPD.