

BLOOMINGTON HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION
HATE INCIDENTS REPORT
July, 2015 – June, 2016

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 in 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 training, authority or resources to conduct these types of investigations. 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 issuing these annual reports. We feel it's necessary to include the actual language used in order to convey the true nature of these incidents.

In July, 2015, we received a report from BPD about threatening and intimidating behavior. An African American man said a white man at a gas station called him "nigger" and threatened to blow him and his car up if he saw him again. The victim said he had investigated the white man's girlfriend as part of his job. BPD investigated.

In July, 2015, we received a report from an individual that she had been walking in front of several African Americans when five white passersby laughed and said, "Look at the niggers."

In July, 2015, we received a report from BPD about vandalism. A business person reported that someone shot the front of his house with a paint ball gun. On a nearby bridge, someone has spray painted "Fuck Jews." BPD investigated.

In August, 2015, we received a report from BPD about an assault. A gay man went to a party wearing compression shorts, no shirt and an emblem painted on his chest. One of the hosts of the party, a straight man, said "What the fuck is this? Get this faggot out of my house." After more conversation, the straight man shoved the gay man, and as the gay man left the party he was hit several times, but he was not sure by whom. He did not want to press charges.

In August, 2015, we received a report from BPD about vandalism. A man reported that someone had scratched his car, including scratching the word

"fag" into the paint. He found out later that he was apparently not parking in his assigned lot in his parking garage.

In September, 2015, we received a report from an individual that she had been the victim of street harassment because she was wearing an Islamic headscarf.

In September, 2015, we received a report of an assault. A Latino couple said they had been outside their hotel room, smoking and drinking, when they got into a verbal argument with two African American men who were drinking outside their nearby hotel room. Both couples went inside but then ended up outside again later. One of the black men said "insecure Mexicans," which made the Latino male angry. He called them "niggers" and "Negros." One of the black men then punched him in the mouth. BPD investigated; the hotel said the room supposedly rented by two black men was rented by an older white man.

In October, 2015, we received a report from BPD about an assault. A white man assaulted a Muslim woman by grabbing her by the neck, pushing her down and pulling on her scarf. He yelled "white power," "kill the police" and "fuck the niggers" before he approached the woman at her place of business. The attack occurred in front of the woman's young daughter. The woman's husband and a passerby pulled the man off of her. The white man threatened to kill the husband, passerby and police, and spat on them. The white man was intoxicated. He was arrested and charged. He called the officers "niggers" and "pussies" as he was being transported to jail.

In February, 2016, we received a report from BPD about an assault. A woman said she had been at a bar with four friends and one of them went missing. Bar management said the missing man had been told to leave the bar because he had been drinking. The missing man then called BPD to report he had been assaulted at the bar. He said he had gone to the women's restroom to check on his best friend, who was upset. He said management threw out him, calling him a "fag" as they did, and taking his phone. He said they tore his shirt and one of them put his hands around his neck. Management said the man had followed a woman into the restroom despite her telling him several times to go away. They said his shirt might have gotten torn as he resisted being told to leave, but they denied having touched his neck or taken his phone. The woman who had been in the restroom said she barely knew the man, even though he kept saying they were best friends. BPD investigated.

In February, 2016, we received a report from BPD about an assault. An African American man reported that he had been walking in the downtown area when a car with three white males passed him. Their brakes screeched. A person in the car yelled a racial slur at him, and someone threw a liquid at his back. Police investigated, including watching surveillance tapes from several businesses, but could not locate the suspects.

In March, 2016, we received a report from BPD about an assault. A man reported that he had been walking in the downtown area when several people said racial slurs and one of them threw a bottle at him, hitting him in the back of his head. He said the one who threw the bottle told him to "go back to his country" and that he "talked funny." BPD talked to the person who threw the bottle; he said he didn't throw it at anyone, but just threw it. He was intoxicated. He was aggressive towards the police for taking the word of a foreigner over his. He said he was military and so the officers should believe him. BPD investigated.

In April, 2016, we received a report from an individual that she had been walking with her daughter when a passenger in a passing car said, "almost as an aside, 'Nigger.'"

In April, 2016, we received a report from BPD about an assault. An African American man said he had been waiting with a white friend outside of a grocery store when he noticed a person acting in an erratic behavior, yelling and screaming as he walked through the parking lot. He asked the man if he was okay. The man then punched him in the nose and went into the grocery store. Officers found him in the restroom. He appeared to be intoxicated. He did not answer questions about the assault. Once arrested, he started yelling "white power" and claimed the altercation had involved three or maybe four African American men. He verbally attacked the officer for arresting him for attacking a black man.

In May, 2016, we received a report from a transgender individual that she was harassed at a bar for using the women's restroom.