



Eugene Equity & Human Rights

## Memorandum

Date: March 6, 2015

To: Equity and Community Consortium

From: Michael Kinnison, Human Rights and Neighborhood Involvement

Subject: 2014 Hate and Bias Report

### 2014 Hate and Bias Report

According to the City of Eugene's Hate and Bias Incident Response Plan, the Human Rights and Neighborhood Involvement Office is responsible for collecting statistical information on both criminal and non-criminal hate and bias activity and providing victim support and community response to hate and bias activity in the City of Eugene.

The attached report is an effort to provide a more comprehensive view of both criminal and non-criminal bias activity that was reported through both the Eugene Police Department and also the Human Rights and Neighborhood Involvement Office.

This is the third year a comprehensive report has been issued. This report covers January through December of 2014, in total there were 69 bias crimes and non-criminal incidents reported.

While a small data set limits our ability to draw strong conclusions from the results, it is clear that race continues to be the leading motivating factor for all reported hate and bias activity in 2014, and that African Americans were particularly targeted. Reports of activity based on sexual orientation are higher for a consecutive year and include some incidents of significant physical violence. Incidents motivated by perceived national origin were notably higher as well, targeting the Asian Pacific Islander population in particular.

While homelessness is not a protected class, incidents were reported and flagged for specifically targeting people because they were unhoused. Both criminal and non-criminal incidents were reported including physical violence and intentional destruction of property. This type of activity has not been officially reported until this year.

For more information about this data or reporting hate and bias activity contact Human Rights and Neighborhood Involvement Manager Michael Kinnison at 541-682-5177 or [Michael.j.kinnison@ci.eugene.or.us](mailto:Michael.j.kinnison@ci.eugene.or.us).

### Attachments

- A. 2014 Hate and Bias Report
- B. How to Report Hate and Bias Activity

## 2014 Hate and Bias Report

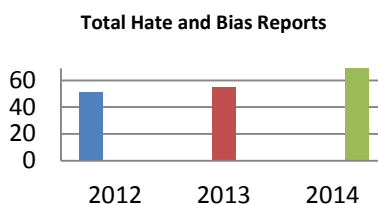
### Introduction

In accordance with the City of Eugene's Hate and Bias Incident Response Plan<sup>i</sup> the Human Rights and Neighborhood Involvement Office (formerly the Equity and Human Rights Office) provides victim and community support for both bias crimes and non-criminal bias incidents, along with tracking and reporting of hate activity. Hate and bias activity are reported to the Human Rights office in a variety of ways, including victim or witness initiated contact, referral from community agencies, and referral from other City departments such as the Eugene Police Department (EPD).

Bias crimes can include all classes of crime motivated by prejudice based on actual or perceived race, color, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, gender identity, or disability. In addition to statutory reporting of state and federally classified hate crimes, EPD also tracks bias-related crimes motivated by perceived or actual age, economic status, social status, citizenship, marital status, or political affiliation or beliefs, membership or activity in or on behalf of a labor organization or against a labor organization to monitor community relations.

This is the third annual report focusing on hate and bias incidents and response which has been compiled through partnership between the Human Rights and Neighborhood Involvement Office and the Eugene Police Department. The data collection methodology and format of reporting has been replicated from the 2012 report which serves as a baseline for evaluation of hate and bias activity.

This report covers January through December of 2014. In total there were 69 hate crimes and non-criminal incidents reported in 2014. According to the Department of Justice's most recent Hate Crime Victimization Report it was estimated that between 25-42% of hate crimes were reported to police nationally<sup>ii</sup>. Given this information, it is probable that the reported incidents represent only a small percentage of the actual activity occurring in Eugene.



## Non- Criminal Bias Incidents

There are many behaviors and attitudes that, while not criminal, have a detrimental impact on our community. Often, the non-criminal incidents reported to the Human Rights and Neighborhood Involvement Office fall under the protections of free speech. However, when appropriate Human Rights staff in cooperation with the Human Rights Commission and community allies provide support and engage in the important work of tracking and making visible this type of activity. The goal is to project a clear message that hatred and bigotry are not acceptable, to stand in solidarity with impacted communities, and increase safety and inclusivity in Eugene.

There were a total of 22 non-criminal bias incidents reported to the Human Rights and Neighborhood Involvement Office in 2014.

Race continued to be the most frequently reported motivating factor in 2014, consistent with previous years. People who are African American continue to be most frequently targeted.

While people who are experiencing homelessness are not technically a protected class, activity specifically targeting some homeless community members was reported. Additional criminal activity targeting people who are homeless is also detailed below.

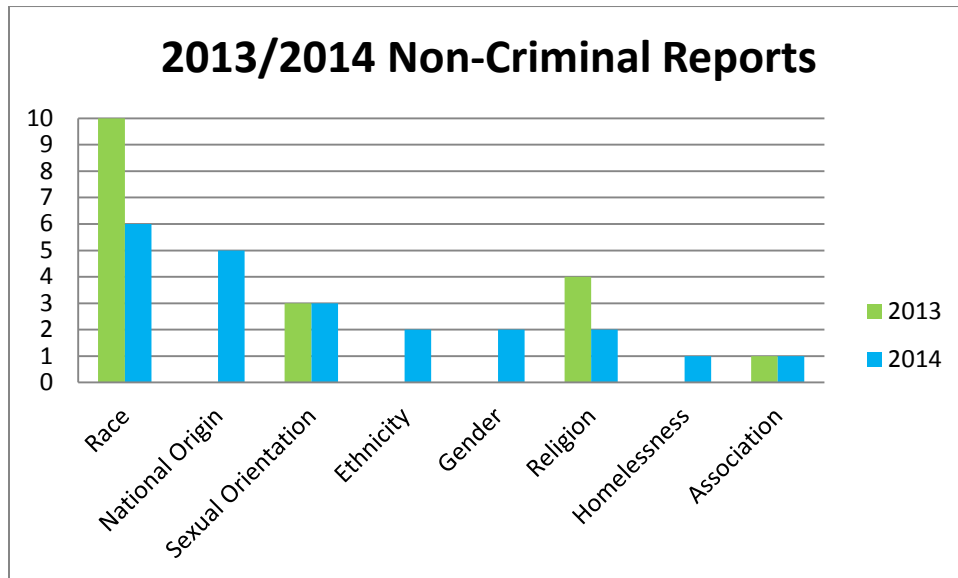
Several of the reports made to the Human Rights and Neighborhood Involvement Office may have been criminal in nature but the victims or witnesses refused to file police reports and so these reports have been captured in the non-criminal numbers.

<b>2014 Non-Criminal Reports Total</b>	<b>22</b>
Race	6
National Origin	5
Sexual Orientation	3
Ethnicity	2
Gender	2
Religion	2
Homelessness	1
Association	1

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For the sake of comparison, there were a total of 18 non-criminal bias incidents reported to the Human Rights and Neighborhood Involvement Office in 2013. Reported activity related to race in 2014 was lower than 2013 reports and overall more consistent with 2012 reports. A significant change from the 2013 report is the rise in reports of bias activity targeting people based on their national origin. Visitors from Asian countries, including international students,

and also Asian Pacific Islander Americans account for all but one report, which targeted a person who is Mexican-American.



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## Bias Crimes

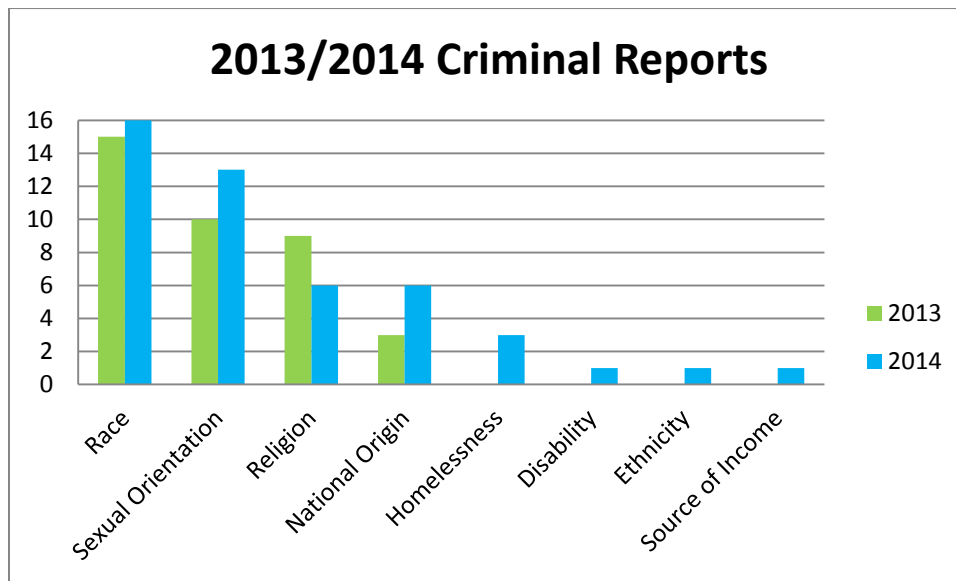
During 2014, 47 hate crimes were reported to the Eugene Police Department. In a few of these situations more than one criminal charge was associated with a single event. For the purposes of this table the event as a whole has been counted as opposed to individual charges. As a result of investigation, five of these complaints were deemed unfounded and in eight cases arrests were made.

<b>2014 Criminal Reports Total</b>	<b>47</b>
Race	16
Sexual Orientation	13
National Origin	6
Religion	6
Homelessness	3
Disability	1
Ethnicity	1
Source of Income	1

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By comparison, there were 37 hate crimes reported in 2013 with two cases deemed unfounded. Race was still the leading factor consistent with the

previous two years. However there was a continued upward trend of crimes related to sexual orientation climbing from four reports in 2012 to ten in 2013 and reaching 13 during 2014. In March of 2014 City Council voted to amend the City of Eugene Human Rights Code to include gender identity in the protected class definition of sexual orientation<sup>vi</sup>. This harmonized City of Eugene Code with the State of Oregon protected class definitions. There were 2 incidents reported by people who were targeted based on their gender identity, these are included in the numbers regarding sexual orientation in this report.



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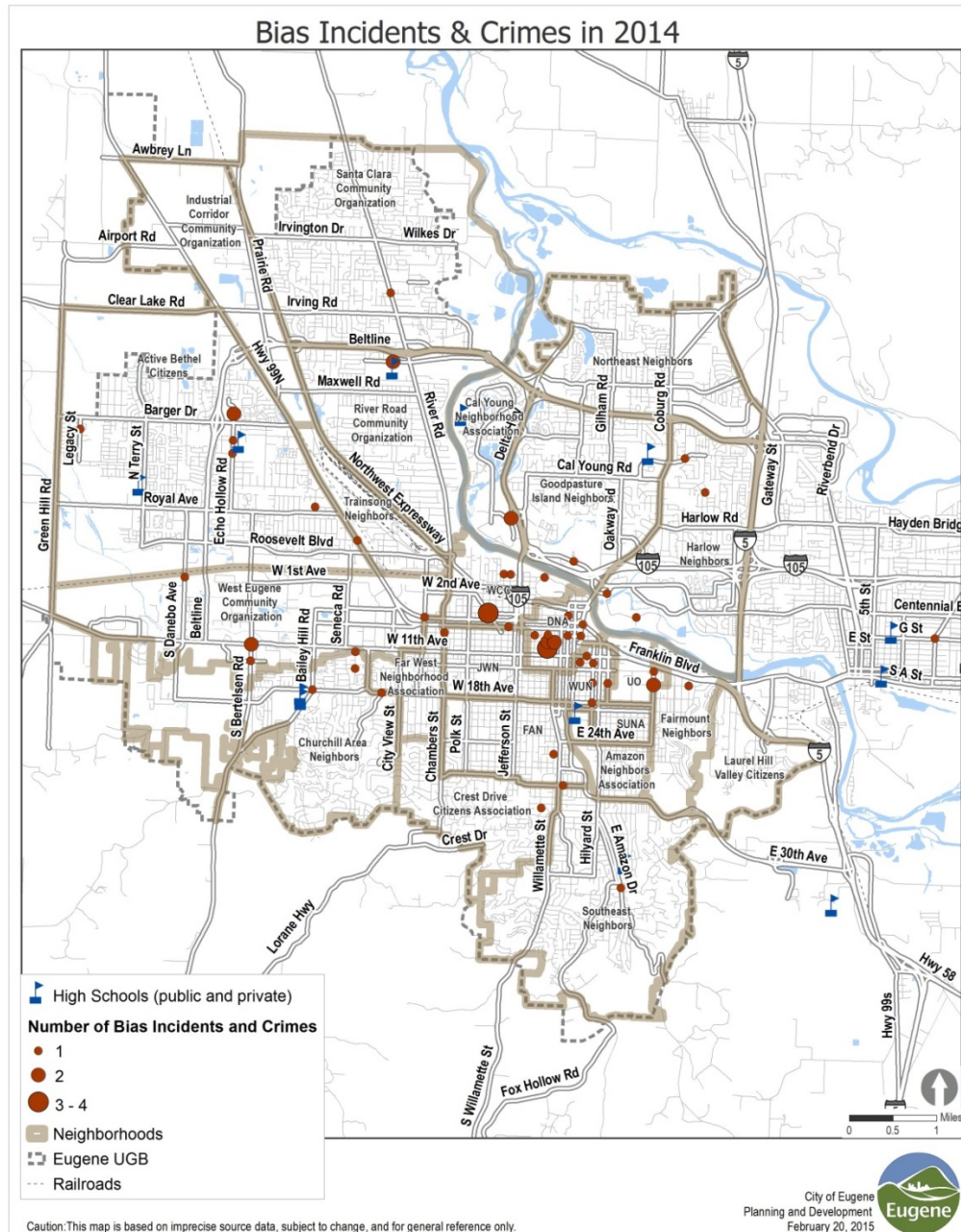
The most common hate crime charge was Intimidation 2 accounting for roughly 35% of criminal charges in 2014<sup>viii</sup>. Often when language or activity goes beyond the protections of free speech it becomes criminal intimidation.

There were five incidents involving physical violence. These assaults targeted two people because of their sexual orientation, two people because of their homelessness, and one person because of their race (African American).

Of the hate crimes reported, five of them were reported in schools with the assistance of school resource officers. The majority of this activity involved offensive vandalism, though one incident included the charges of Harassment and Disorderly Conduct and was cleared by arrest.

## Geographic Distribution

Consistent with previous years, hate activity was reported throughout Eugene, leaving most neighborhoods affected by at least one incident. In comparison with last year however there are some notable changes. The Downtown and West University neighborhoods experienced an increased concentration of reported activity. The Churchill area had a decrease in reported activity.



## **Response**

The City responds in a variety of ways to hate and bias activity. The response is victim directed and protects victim confidentiality when requested. Various people provide support depending on the circumstances and the express wishes of the victim. The Human Rights and Neighborhood Involvement Office, Eugene Police, the Human Rights Commission, and community agencies regularly collaborate on response in the form of letters to the victims and their families, listening to victims' stories, Op-Ed articles and letters to the editor, hate free zone leafleting, alerts in neighborhood association newsletters and social media sites, assistance connecting victims with the media, and criminal investigation where warranted.

## **Conclusion and Next Steps**

It is critical to recognize that communities of color, including African Americans and Asian Pacific Islanders in particular, were significantly impacted by hate and bias activity in 2014. Race was the motivating factor in 35% of all reported hate crimes and 23% of all reported non-criminal bias incidents. Incidents reported based on sexual orientation were 50% higher than those reported in 2013, continuing the upward trend from 2012. It is also worth noting that two of the five assaults reported were based on sexual orientation.

For the first time since 2012 crimes and incidents were reported based on actual or perceived homelessness. Homelessness is not a protected class at the local, state or federal level. However, the State of Oregon requires that law enforcement track, investigate and report crimes targeting people because of their actual or perceived socio-economic status. Both the criminal and non-criminal incidents reported which targeted people because of their perceived or actual homelessness were violent. Due to the vulnerability of people experiencing homelessness the Human Rights Commission is exploring options for improving protections against the unhoused from crimes targeting them because of their homelessness.

Continuing to pay attention to geographical context for hate and bias activity has helped identify areas that are experiencing activity and direct resources more efficiently. Continued, targeted response in 2014 has involved close coordination between City staff, community leaders in our neighborhoods, schools, businesses, community agencies, and the Human Rights Commission.

In cases where there has been repeated activity in the same location EPD has also assisted victims in improving their safety through proactive measures.

While the number of criminal and non-criminal hate and bias incidents continues to climb it is highly likely that this type of activity continues to be underreported. Improving knowledge and sense of safety in community to report hate activity, both through EPD and the Human Rights and Neighborhood Involvement Office is essential to improving anti-hate work. Continuing the ongoing training of Police Officers in the proper identification and documentation of hate crimes is also of great importance.

For Eugene to be safe, vibrant, and welcoming it is essential to continue to provide support to victims of bias activity and to develop and implement strategies to reduce this activity and the underlying attitudes that perpetuate it. It is also critical to create an environment where it is understood that bias activity is not welcome and will be met with strong community and organizational response.

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<sup>i</sup> <http://www.eugene-or.gov/DocumentCenter/Home/View/536>

<sup>ii</sup> <http://www.bjs.gov/index.cfm?ty=pbdetail&iid=4614>

<sup>iii</sup> Equity and Human Rights Office Bias Activity Log, compiled February 4, 2015

<sup>iv</sup> Equity and Human Rights Office Bias Activity Log, compiled February 3, 2015

<sup>v</sup> EPD ICAPBIAS Report, January – December 2013, queried January 23, 2014

<sup>vi</sup> City of Eugene Code, 4.615: **Sexual orientation.** Actual or perceived heterosexuality, homosexuality, bisexuality, or gender identity.

<sup>vii</sup> EPD ICAPBIAS Report, January-December 2012, queried January 25, 2013 and EPD ICAPBIAS Report, January – December 2013, queried January 23, 2014

<sup>viii</sup> 4.731 Intimidation in the Second Degree

(1) A person commits the crime of intimidation in the second degree if the person:

(a) Tamper or interferes with property, having no right to do so nor reasonable ground to believe that the person has such right, with the intent to cause substantial inconvenience to another because of the person's perception of the other's race, color, religion, national origin or sexual orientation;

(b) Intentionally subjects another to offensive physical contact because of the person's perception of the other's race, color, religion, national origin or sexual orientation; or

(c) Intentionally, because of the person's perception of race, color, religion, national origin or sexual orientation of another or of a member of the other's family, subjects such other person to alarm by threatening:

1. To inflict serious physical injury upon or to commit a felony affecting such other person, or a member of the person's family; or

2. To cause substantial damage to the property of the other person or of a member of the other person's family.

(2) For purposes of this section, "property" means any tangible personal property or real property, and "sexual orientation" means heterosexuality, homosexuality or bisexuality.

*(Section 4.731 added by Ordinance No. 18826, enacted July 13, 1981; amended by Ordinance No. 19462, enacted April 13, 1987, and Ordinance No. 19686, enacted May 14, 1990.)*





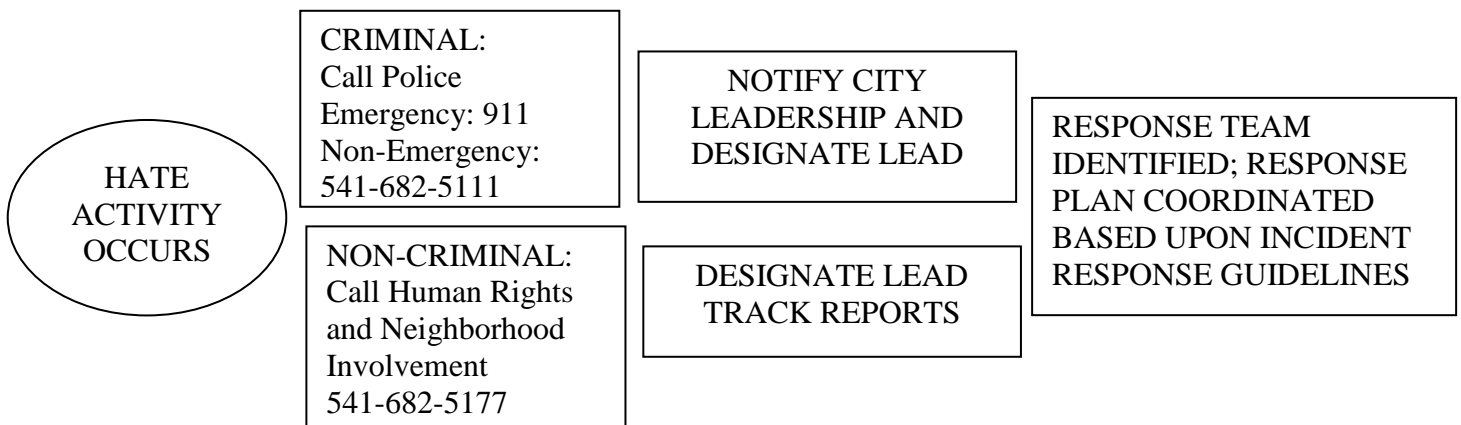
# How to Report Hate & Bias Activity

Attachment B

Hate and bias incidents instill fears and distress to victims and communities, and may have far-reaching negative consequences. Hate activity impacts the community at large, and requires specific attention and sensitive response. The City of Eugene has a strong commitment to responding to hate activity, as well as contributing to hate activity prevention strategies. Any acts or threats of violence, property damage, harassment, intimidation or other offenses are viewed as a very serious matter by the City and police. We encourage community members to report this activity promptly. Response will be victim driven and handled with the utmost sensitivity and care.

**Non-Criminal Hate Activity:** This type of hate activity includes biased or bigoted acts that target a group of people, individuals, or property, that do not involve crimes. While non-criminal hate activity is often protected by free speech, it should still be reported. Non-criminal acts can include rallies, offensive signs or t-shirts, leafleting and flier distribution, and group meetings.

**Criminal Hate Activity – Bias Crimes:** Bias crimes are often referred to as “hate crimes” and include any *criminal* act against a person, group of people or property motivated by bias or prejudice. Bias crimes are not stand-alone crimes, rather the term “bias” is used to describe the nature of crimes and distinguish those crimes that are motivated by prejudice and bias against designated protected classes. Crimes can range from telephonic harassment, graffiti, property damage, to physical assault or murder. Criminal mischief, intimidation and assault are common bias crimes in Eugene.



**Always inform Eugene Police Department of possible crimes as soon as possible.  
Call 911 during a crime. Call 541-682-5111 to report a non-emergency crime situation.**

**Information about other hate activity should be directed to Human Rights and Neighborhood Involvement at 541-682-5177 or [eugene-or.gov/humanrights](http://eugene-or.gov/humanrights)**