MONTGOMERY COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF POLICE

2024 ANNUAL REPORT ON BIAS INCIDENTS

MARCH 12, 2025

Prepared by

The Policy and Planning Division

TABLE OF CONTENTS

01

INTRODUCTION

A Message From the Chief 2
History 4
Hate Crime Statistics Act 5
Introduction 6
Report Overview 8

COUNTY OVERVIEW

Last Year's Numbers and Statistics 9
County Overview 10
Bias Motivation 11
Bias Type 12

02

03

STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

Community Statistics 13
- Age Comparison Chart 14
- Race/Ethnicity Comparison Chart 15
- Notable Analysis and Trends 16

School-Related Statistics 17
- Age Comparison Chart 19
- Race/Ethnicity Comparison Chart 20
- Notable Analysis and Trends 21

CONCLUSION

Education and Outreach 22
Summary 23
Appendix A 24

04

A Year's Overview

MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF

This is my first report to the community on bias incidents in our county since becoming Chief of Police. My top priority is ensuring that we provide the highest-quality police interactions that support community well-being and prevent, detect, and deter crime. While it is disheartening to note that the unfortunate trend of increasing bias incidents we've observed over the past few years continues, my goal is to make certain that every event is documented so that we have the best chance of identifying trends and charging violators.

Montgomery County is not immune to the broader increase in bias-related incidents seen nationwide, and globally. Tragic events, such as the ongoing conflict in the Middle East, have only intensified these concerns. However, our commitment to transparency and thoroughness in reporting reflects the values we hold dear in Montgomery County.

It's important to acknowledge a positive development: more people feel empowered to report biased incidents. This is a crucial step in addressing these issues. Many agencies do not track or report such incidents, but the fact that we do—and that our community feels comfortable coming forward—places us as a leader in the nation in combating hate and discrimination.

As we continue working together to strengthen our multicultural community with understanding, inclusion, and compassion, addressing these incidents remains a challenge that we must take seriously. One way we're demonstrating our commitment to combating hate is through the growth of the Nonprofit Security Grant program, which increased from $700,000 in FY 2022 to $1.2 million in FY 2025. These funds help improve security and deter hate crimes at nonprofits, including faith-based organizations, which are at risk of such attacks.

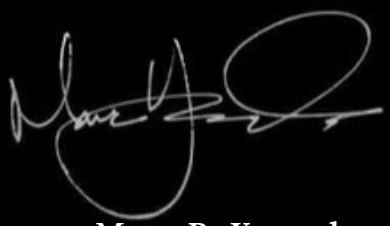
Another priority of mine is addressing youth-related safety concerns. As part of that, we continue to distinguish between school-related incidents and those in the broader community. This change was made in response to the revised reporting policies by Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS), which now include all bias-related incidents, regardless of whether a criminal offense occurred.

In 2024, 483 bias incidents were reported. Of these, 291 (60%) were school-related. Among these, 154 (53%) were directed at individuals, and 137 (47%) targeted school grounds or property. Disturbingly, 60 of these incidents involved swastikas.

Vandalism and graffiti made up 72 incidents, most of which were motivated by religion and race. Of the 49 religion-based incidents, all were anti-Jewish, and 19 of 20 race-based incidents were anti-Black. Middle schools experienced the most incidents, followed by high schools and elementary schools.

In the broader community, 192 incidents were reported, showing a slight increase from 2023. While the combined data from school and community-based incidents present a troubling picture, it's important to note that changes in reporting processes and definitions may account for some of the increase.

While these numbers are concerning, they also underscore the fact that we continue to prioritize our efforts to combat bias and build a more inclusive, compassionate community for all. Rest assured, the Department takes all acts of hate and bias seriously, and I encourage everyone to report bias-related incidents. We remain committed to upholding all our residents' civil and human rights.



Marc R. Yamada
Chief of Police

HISTORY

In 1990, 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, and the U.C.R. 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.

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

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.

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.'

(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

"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.

"(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."

INTRODUCTION

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. 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 Department of State Police (MDSP) 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 the reporting of hate crimes at both 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).

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 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 resulted from 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 of bias and hate on an individual or a community. It records all incidents in which bias is present. In 2024, the department recorded 483 bias incidents. Contrary to previous years, there were no incidents reported in Takoma Park (the Montgomery County Police Department does not report Takoma Park incidents to the state or F.B.I.). This is a 4% increase over the 464 incidents reported in 2023. The state and federal governments track and report these incidents differently. The FBI focuses on hate crime data, while Maryland collects data on both hate crimes and non-criminal hate bias incidents.As a result, the department's documented events are generally higher than those reported at the state and federal levels.

Due to differences in reporting at the local, state, and federal levels illustrated above and changes 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.

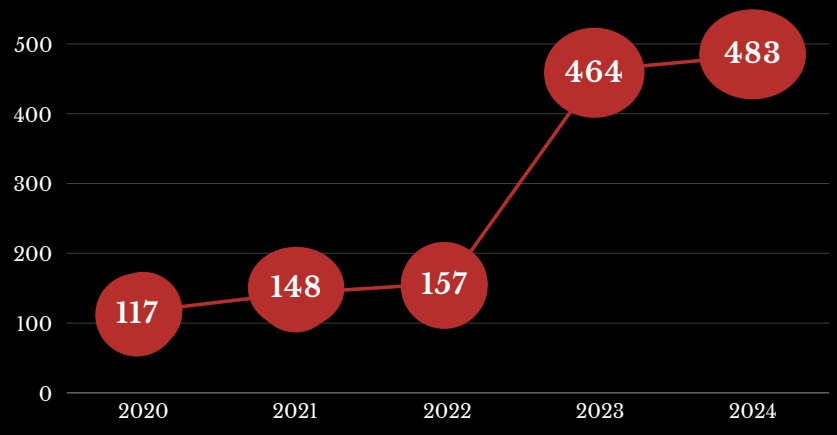
While many bias incidents may not constitute criminal acts, the MCPD understands that acts demonstrating and depicting bias do profoundly impact the community and may lead to criminal acts. Montgomery County residents are encouraged to report all incidents, including non-criminal events, which may single 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.

2024 ANNUAL REPORT

In 2023, there was a significant increase in the number of reported bias events compared to previous years. This dramatic increase is largely due to a change in reporting procedures within the Montgomery County Public School (MCPS) system in 2023. To enhance communication, cooperation, and transparency between agencies, MCPS now reports all bias/hate incidents regardless of whether or not a criminal offense was committed.

It is important to note that the increase does not necessarily mean that more incidents are occurring within schools; it simply means that more incidents are now being reported to the police. Because of the changes implemented, bias data, 2023 and onward, will be analyzed differently than in prior years. The following report will provide a separate analysis of school-related and community-related incidents to provide a more comprehensive analysis. School-related incidents account for 60% (291) of all bias events reported in 2024.

Due to a large emphasis placed on education and restorative justice, the Montgomery County State's Attorney's Office has partnered with the MCPS to provide youth training related to hate and bias events.



MCPS ROLE

MCPD and MCPS Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) Effective April 4, 2022

Offenses termed "critical incidents" on MCPS property (e.g., school buses, MCPS sponsored events including extra-curricular activities) shall be reported to the appropriate law enforcement agency immediately.

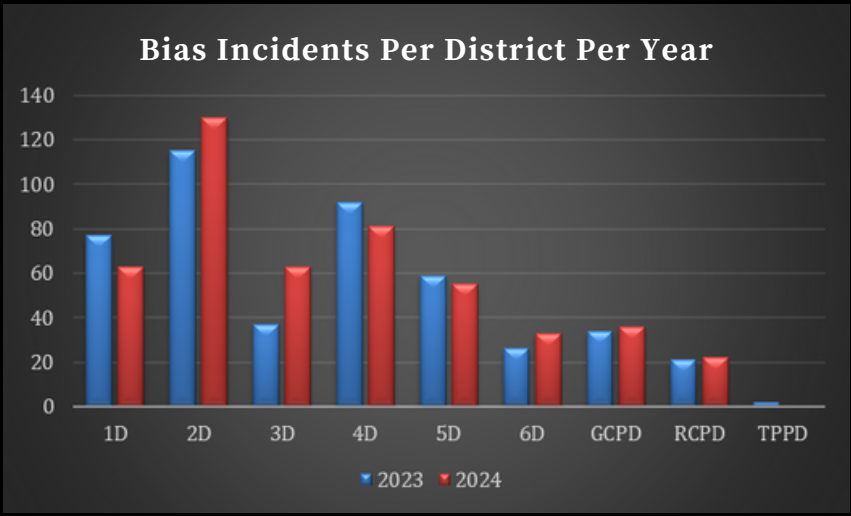
Critical incidents include (but are not limited to) Hate crime - committing any crime, including harassing a person or damaging the property of a person motivated by the victim's race, color, national origin, religious beliefs, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, homelessness, or disability.

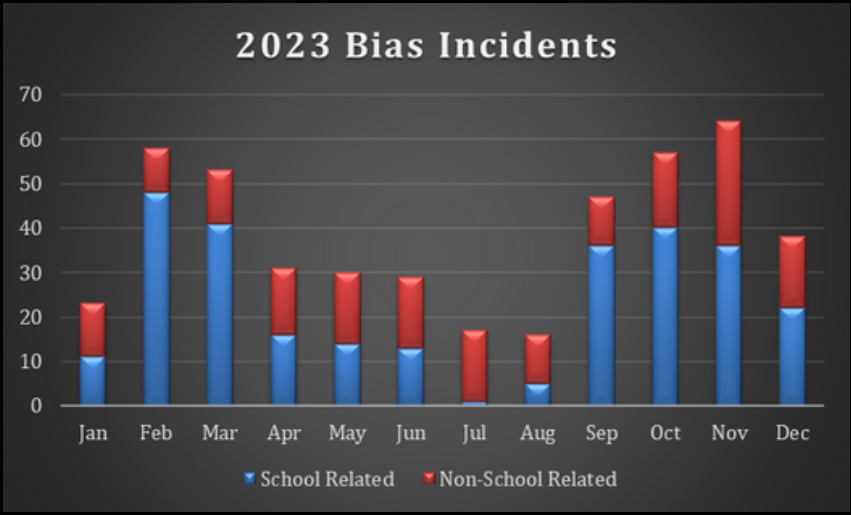
Mandatory police reporting does not mean that police will take enforcement action in every situation. However, police must be immediately notified of the incidents in the agreement.

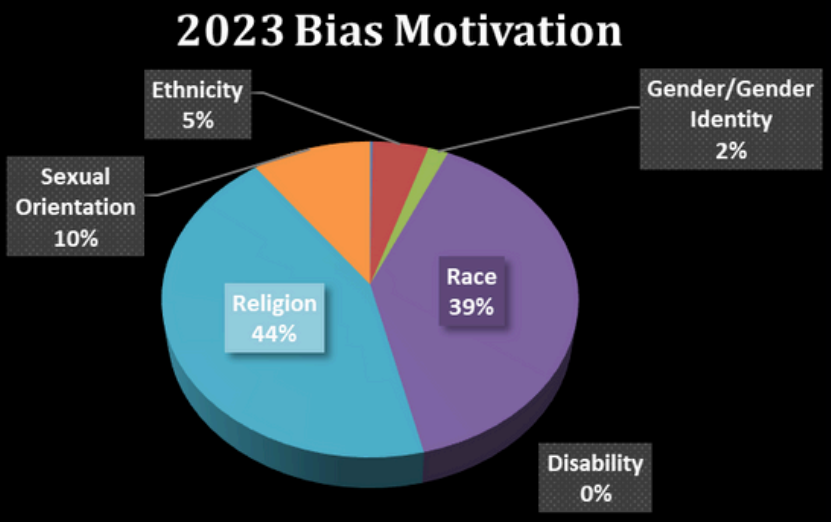
Last Year's

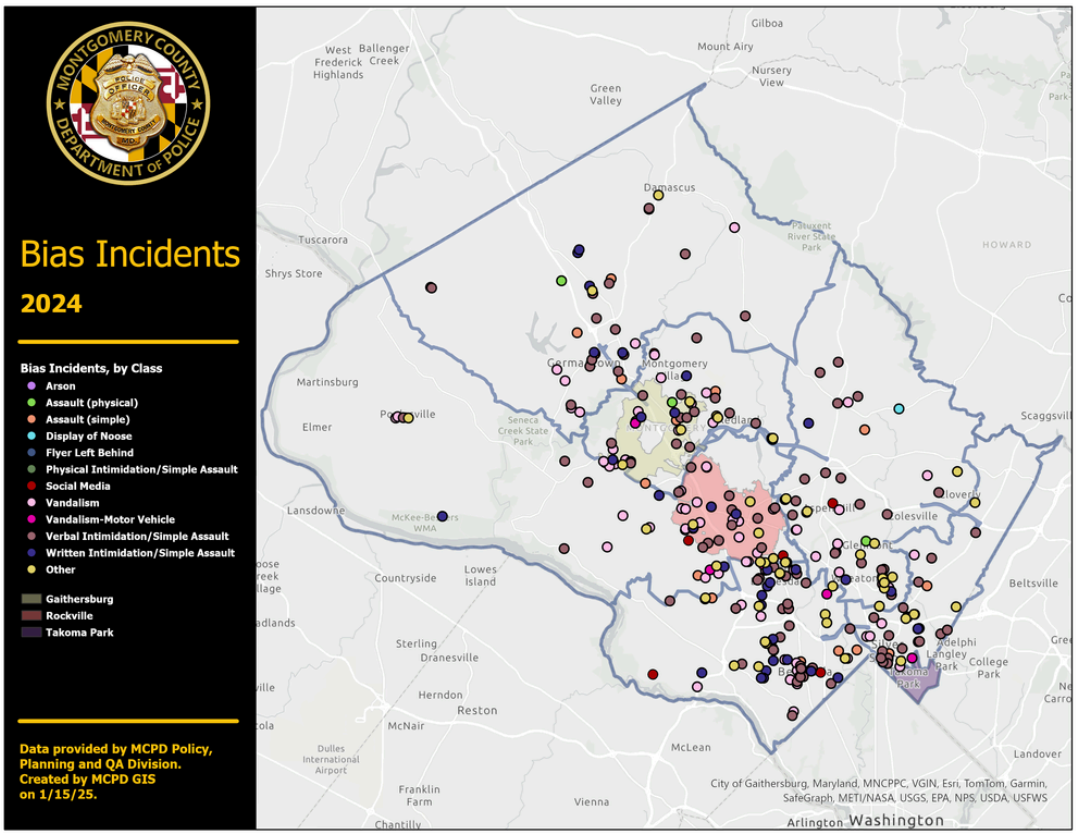
NUMBERS & STATISTICS

The charts on this page provide a brief overview of the distribution of bias incidents and motivation from 2023. Historically, race and religion are the two leading motivators of bias events.





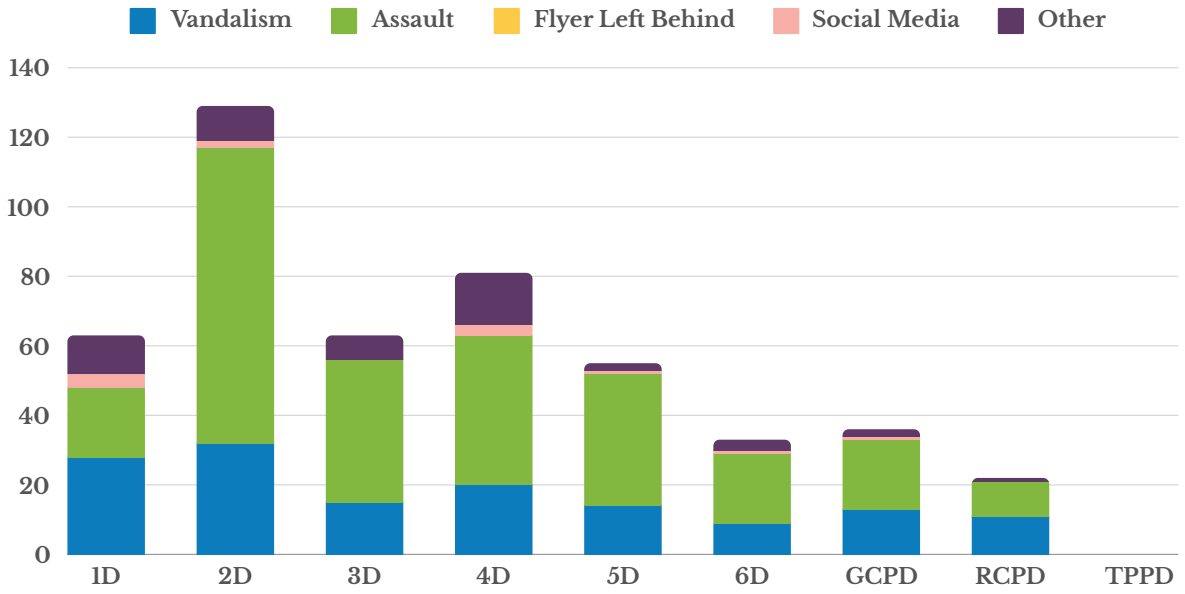




INCIDENTS BY DISTRICT

Overall, the proportion of bias incidents within each district remained consistent with those of the previous year.

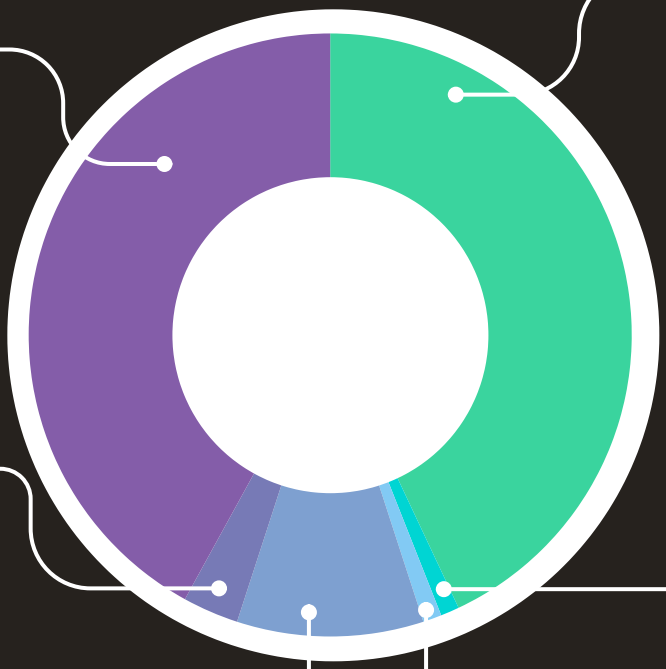
The 2nd and 4th Districts experienced the highest reported bias incidents, with 130 and 81, respectively. These two districts account for 44% of the total reported incidents in 2024, a 1% decrease from the 45% combined total in 2023.



COUNTY OVERVIEW 2024

The charts above provide an overview of bias incidents throughout the county and the types of incidents per district. A more detailed breakdown of bias motivation and bias type is provided in the charts on the next two pages.

BIAS MOTIVATION



42%
Race / Ethnicity
- 34% Anti-Black
- 5% Anti-Asian
- 2% Anti-Hispanic
- 1% Anti-White
- 1% Anti-Multi-Racial

43%
Religion
- 39% Anti-Jewish
- 2% Anti-Islamic
- 1% Anti-Other Christian
- <1% Anti-Catholic
- <1% Anti-Buddhist

3%
Ancestry
- 1% Anti-Hispanic
- 1% Anti-Black
- <1% Anti-Asian
- <1% Anti-White
- <1% Anti-Other Ethnicity

1%
Disability
- 1% Anti-Mental Disability
- <1% Anti-Physical Disability

10%
Sexual Orientation
- 5% Anti-Homosexual
- 3% Anti-Male Homosexual
- 1% Anti-Female Homosexual

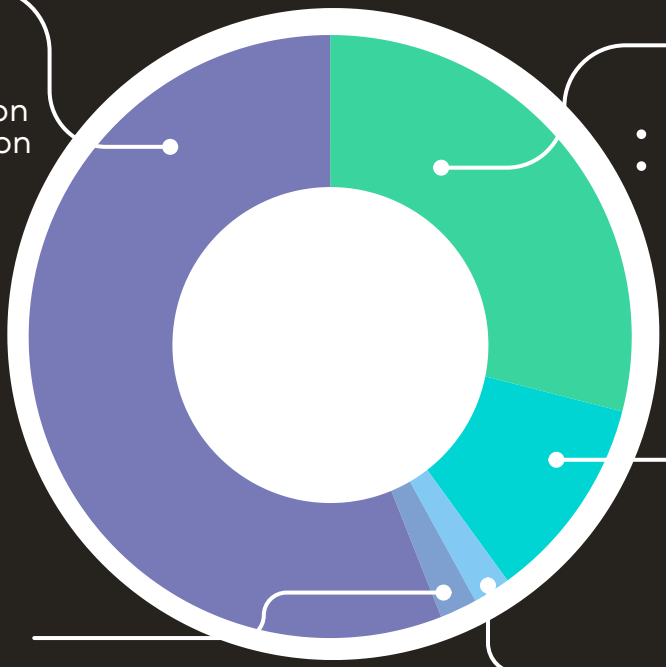
1%
Gender/Gender Identity
- 1% Anti-Transgender
- <1% Anti-Cisgender

Montgomery County proudly consists of a diverse racial community, with 60% 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.

Thirty-six of the 483 total bias incidents recorded in 2024 reflected multiple bias motivations. Religion and race continue to be the primary bias motivators (207 and 192 incidents, respectively), then sexual orientation (46 incidents). Ancestry and ethnicity had 14 and 11 incidents respectively. Gender bias was a motivation in seven incidents, and six incidents involved disability.

The statistics presented in the chart above will be further analyzed in the following sections of this report and broken down into community-related and school-related incidents.

BIAS TYPE



56% Assault (Simple/ Intimidation)
- 5% Assault
- 40% Verbal Intimidation
- 11% Written Intimidation

29% Vandalism
- 28% Vandalism
- 1% Vandalism - motor vehicle

0% Flyer Left Behind

2% Assault (Physical)
- 1% Physical Assault
- <1% Physical Intimidation

11% Other
- 10% Other
- <1% Display of noose

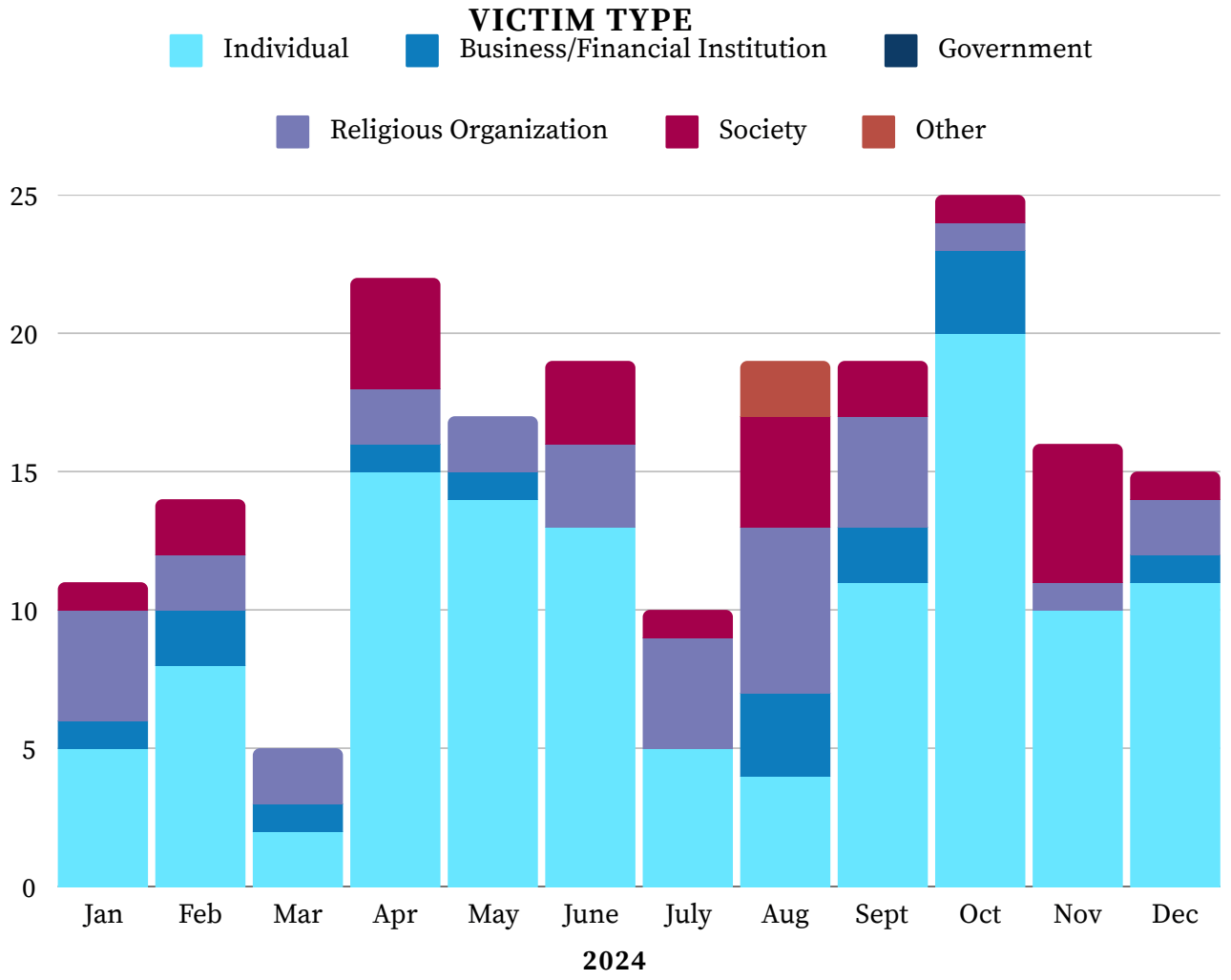
2% Social Media
- Facebook, Twitter (X), Snapchat, Instagram, etc.
- Messaging apps
- Gaming apps

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

Approximately 51% of all bias incidents involved some form of intimidation, with verbal intimidation being the most prevalent (40%). Written intimidation typically involves electronic mail, letters, or phone text messages. Due to the rise in the use of virtual platforms, a separate category represented as *Social Media* was created to capture additional forms of written communication.

Vandalism was the second most frequent bias incident reported (28%). Of the 136 incidents of vandalism, 51 (38%) included the image of a swastika, a 1% increase from 2023.

The statistics presented in the chart above will be further analyzed in the following sections of this report and broken down into community-related and school-related incidents.



Community statistics exclude all incidents in which a school or student was the victim. School-related incidents are addressed in the next section of this report.

COMMUNITY STATISTICS

In 2024, there were 192 community-related bias incidents. 7% more than in 2023 (180).

Of the 192 incidents, 119 were committed against individuals (62%), 17 of which had multiple victims. Overall, there were 139 individual victims.

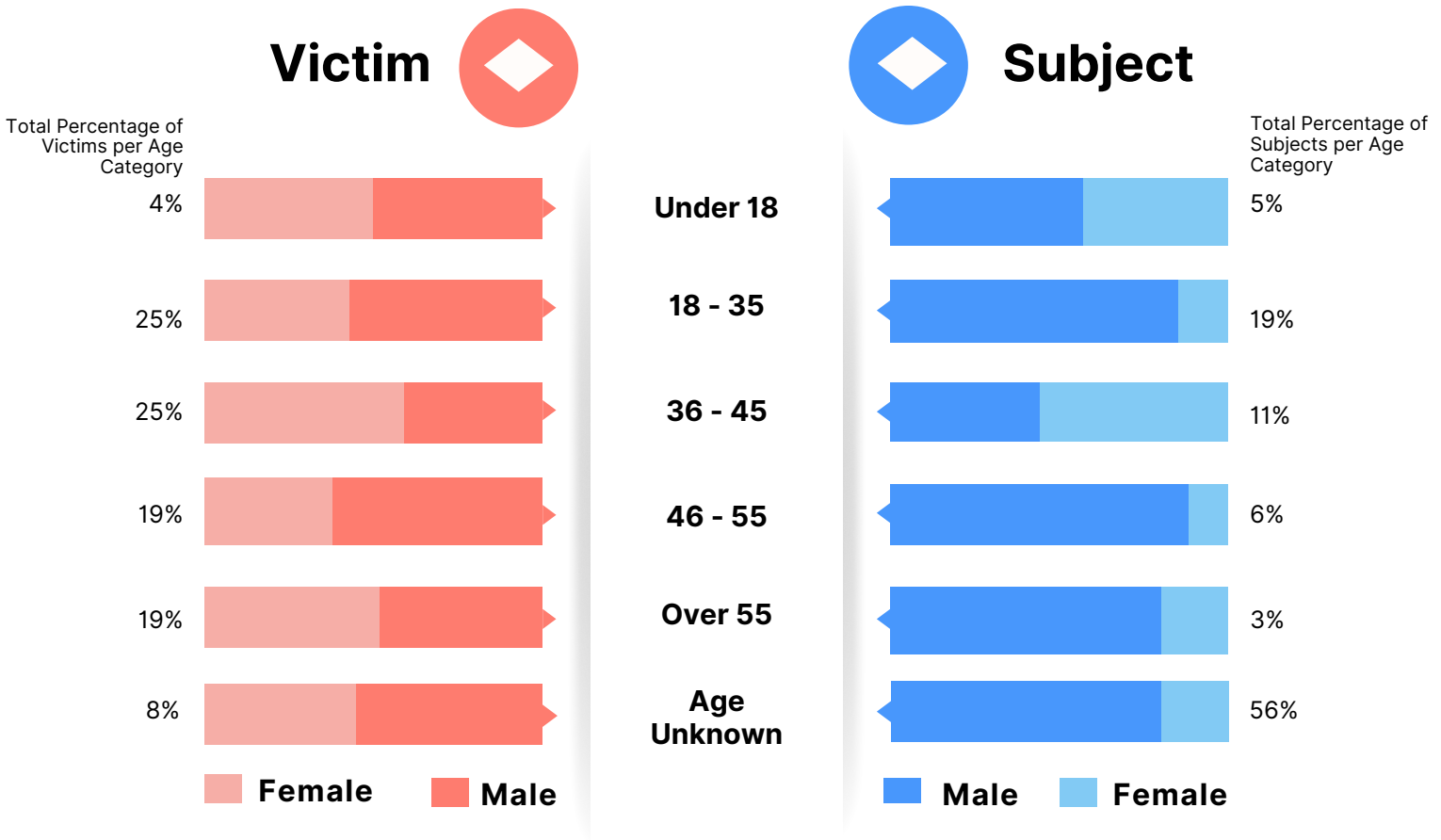
The remaining incidents were committed against religious organizations (33, 17%), society (24, 13%), business/financial institutions (15, 8%), and other entities (2, 1%).

October had the highest number of incidents per month (25) and showed an increase in incidents committed against individuals, however, there was a decrease in incidents committed against religious organizations, compared to the rest of the year. Similar to 2023, the increase during October is likely attributed to current political and faith-based disharmony worldwide.

Sixty-six (66) incidents involved vandalism of property (34%), 42 of which were antisemitic in nature.

AGE DEMOGRAPHIC CHART

COMMUNITY



For statisitcal purposes, all persons (including transgender) are documented as the gender they were assigned at birth, as opposed to the gender to which they currently identify.

Amongst those cases where specific individuals were victims (139 victims total), there were 67 female and 72 male victims.

Of the individual victims identified, 6 (4%) were under 18 and were not at school or identified as students at the time of the incidents.

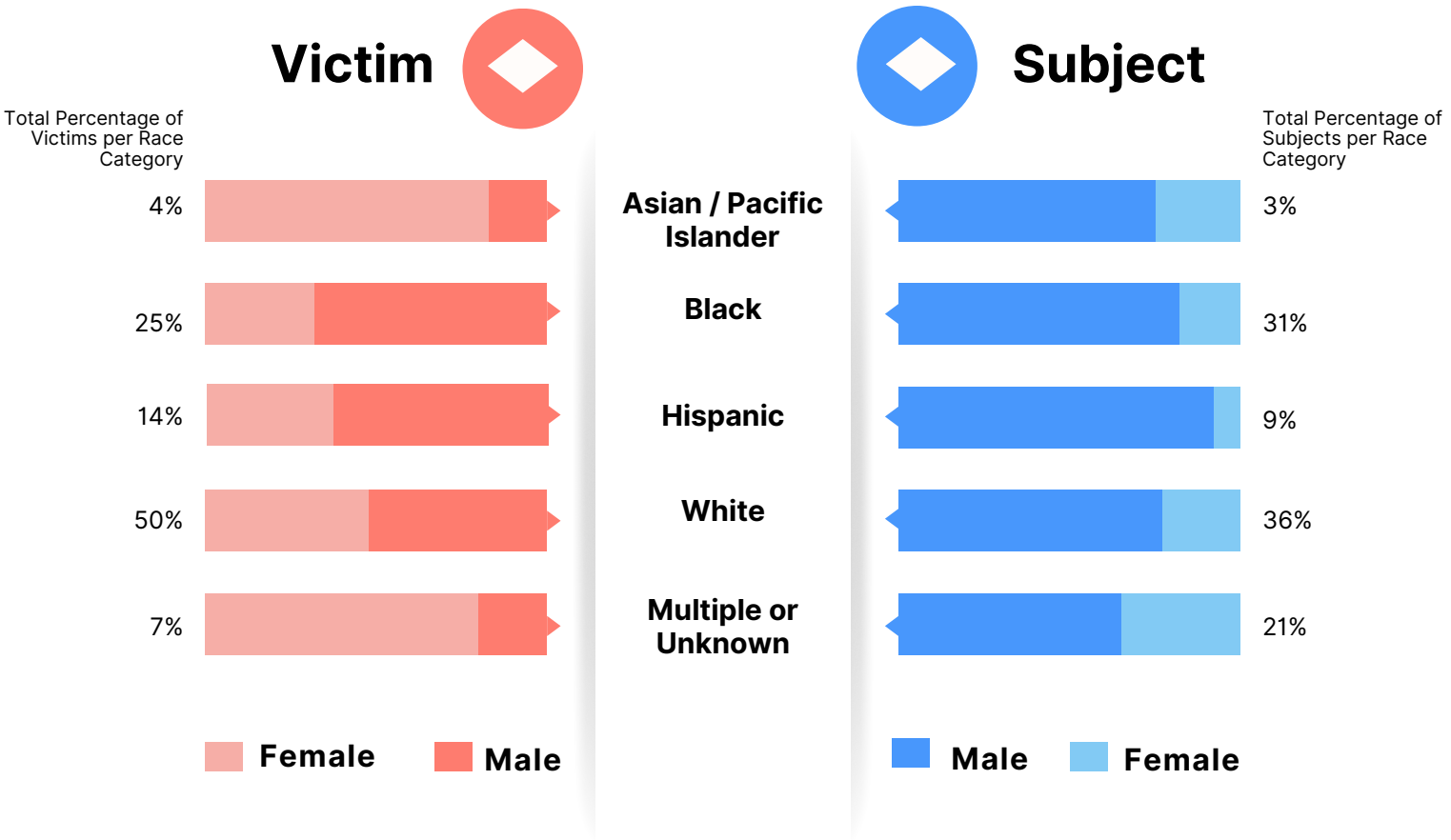
Over half the victims in the 36-45 age group were female, while the 46-55 age group had predominately male victims. These age groups represented 25% and 19%, respectively, of total victims.

It is often very difficult to identify suspects of bias incidents, as many incidents occur without any witnesses present. In contrast, others occur without the victim present, such as in bias-motivated graffiti or vandalism. In 2024, victims could provide suspect information for 90 incidents and partial suspect information in 24 additional incidents. The total number of subjects was 146, with 111 male, 32 female, and 3 of unknown (or unreported) gender.

Males represented the majority of offenders within each age group, except 36-45 where females represented 56%.

RACE / ETHNICITY DEMOGRAPHIC CHART

COMMUNITY



In 2024, 50% of victims identified as White, while only 25% as Black. It is important to distinguish that although several incidents involve the widely used yet derogatory term for persons of color, victims described as Black were also victims of incidents that involved anti-homosexual and anti-religion (Jewish) factors.

Victims across most races were predominantly male. However, the majority of Asian victims and victims whose race was unknown were female.

For statistical purposes, Asian includes persons of Eastern, Western and Southern Asian heritage.

Historically, the MCPD has recorded more White offenders involved in bias-related incidents than any other race/ethnicity. This was consistent in 2024, and within all racial categories, offenders were largely male.

It is important to note that some individuals may identify as more than one race. Such cases are captured in the multiple or unknown category. Additionally, some victims or subjects may decline to provide demographic information when interviewed, resulting in only partially recorded information. This may occur when individuals are interviewed over the telephone or are unable to provide proper identification.

NOTABLE ANALYSIS AND TRENDS

In 2024, among individual victims, verbal intimidation was the most frequent type of bias incident reported (45%), followed by written intimidation and simple assault, each with 11%.

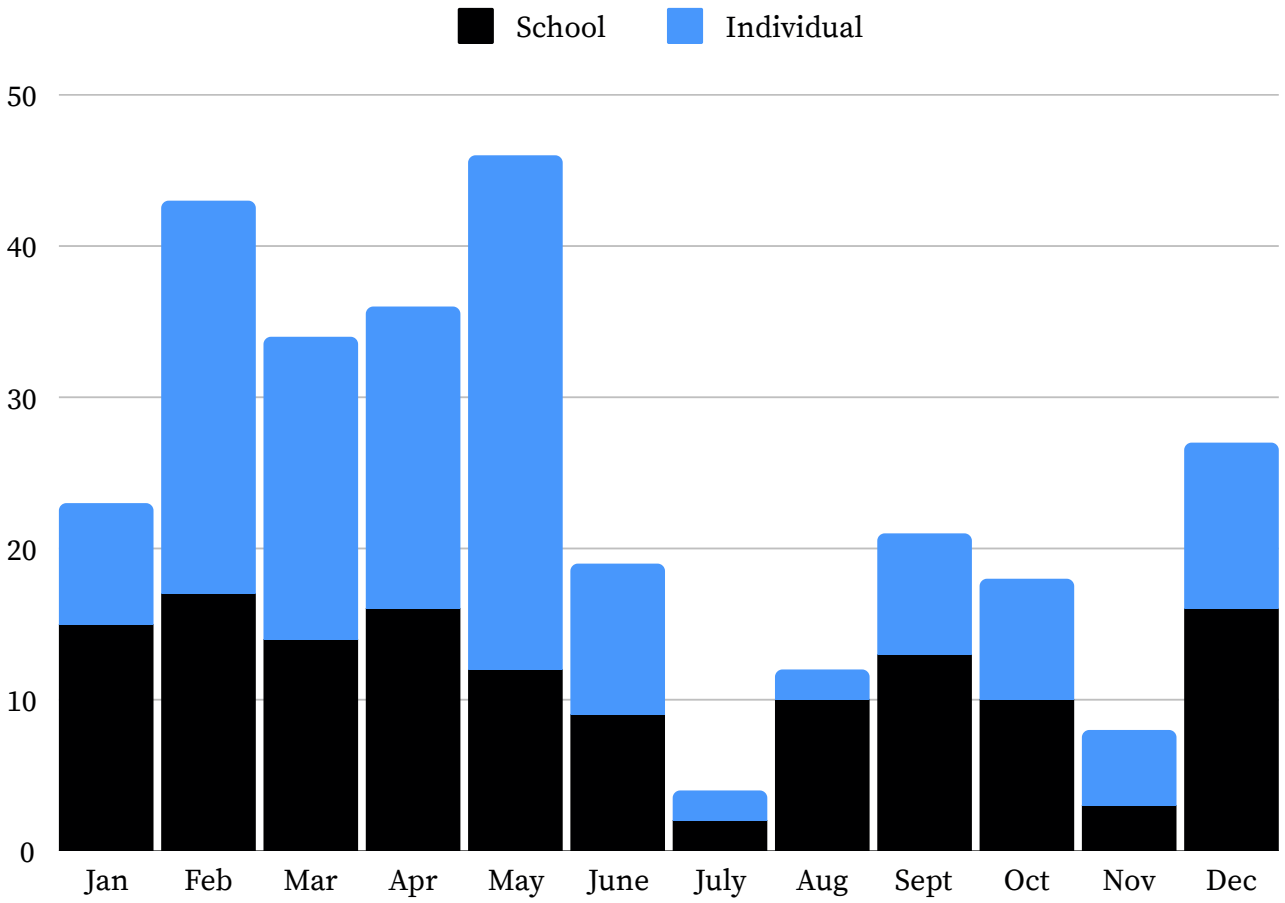
Six incidents (5%) involved physical assault/intimidation, with a total of 7 victims (5 male, two female) and 7 subjects (6 male, one female).

A total of 29 subjects were arrested (26 males, three females), closing out 31 cases. Seven of the 31 cases were connected to the same subject. There were seven verified hate crimes, which resulted in nine arrests. One verified case remains open and is pending further investigation. Details of the verified cases can be found in Appendix A on pages 24-25.

In 2024, the MCPD investigated reports of bomb threats against one religious organization and one individual. A third unrelated incident involved a subject making threats against various locations within Montgomery County as well as in other states. The first two incidents were motivated by religion (Jewish) and the third involved sexual orientation. There was also one shooting threat involving gender identity.

Eleven of the 192 reported incidents involved more than one bias type, with religion and race /ethnicity being the most common combination (6 incidents). Other factors included ancestry, disability, and sexual orientation.

In 2024, religion and race represented 74% of bias incidents. Of the 192 incidents, 94 (49%) involved religion, of which 86 incidents (91%) were anti-Jewish. Fifty-three (53) incidents involved anti-Israel/pro-Palestine language or imagery and seven incidents, all vandalism, involved a swastika. Of the 49 incidents involving race, 24 (49%) incidents included the use of a racial slur commonly associated with persons of color.



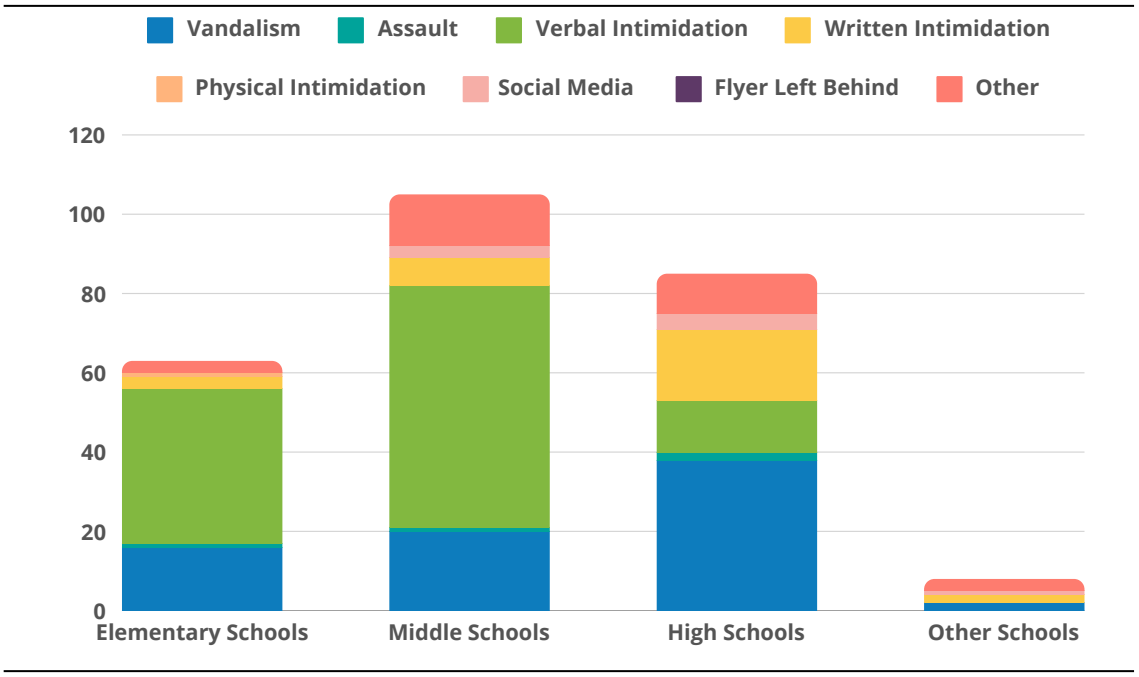
School refers to physical property or items belonging to a school, including school grounds and buses. Individual refers to persons associated with the school such as students and teachers.

SCHOOL-RELATED STATISTICS

In 2024, there were 291 school-related bias incidents, which averages 1.6 incidents per school day. Of the victims, 53% (154) were individuals, and 47% (137) were incidents in which the school grounds or property were impacted.

The Montgomery County Public School System has over 200 schools within the county:

- Elementary (grades preK-5): 137
- Middle (grades 6-8): 40
- High (grades 9-12): 27
- Special Schools: 5
- Alternative Programs: 1
- Early Childhood Learning Centers: 2



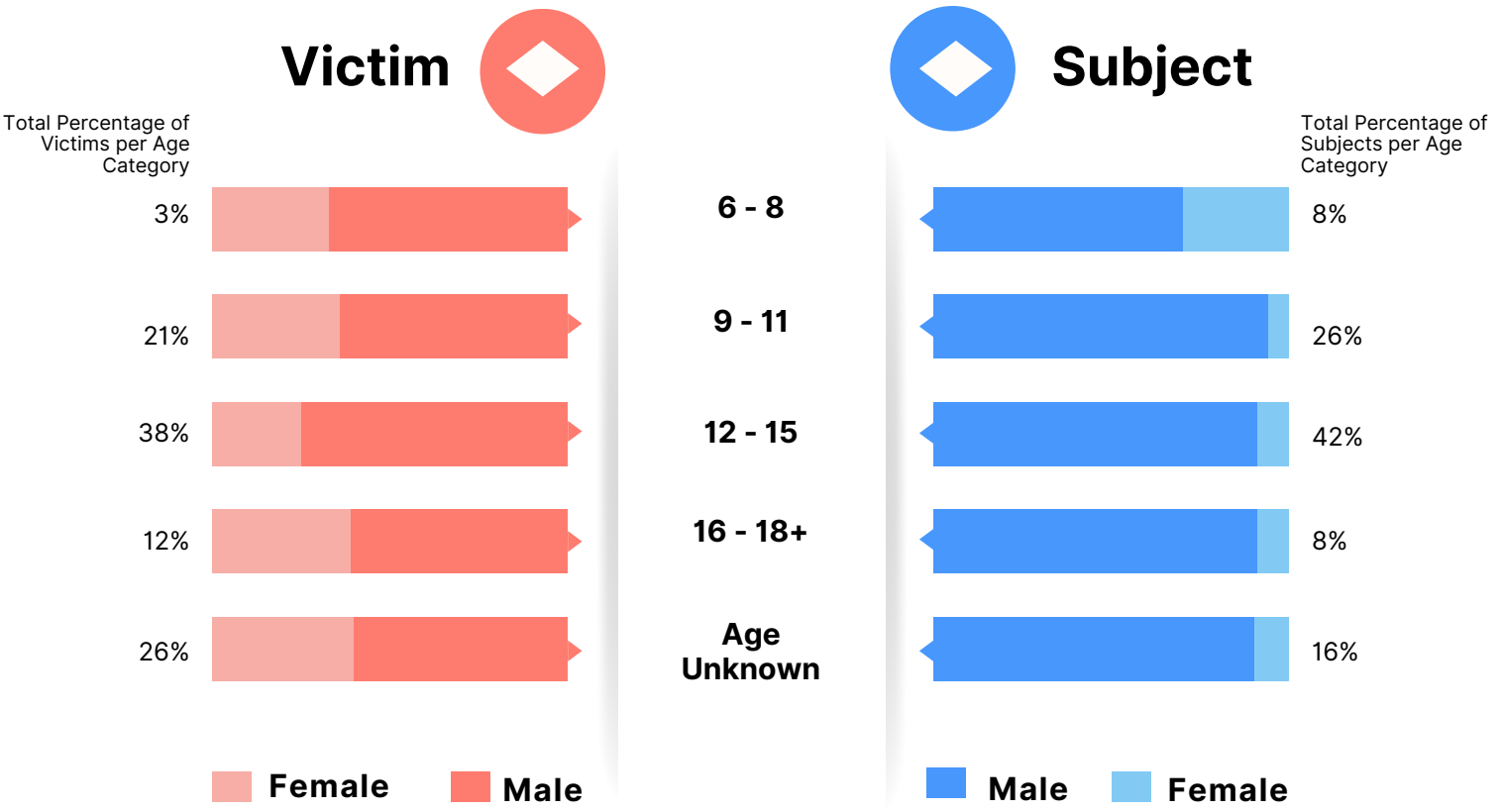
Vandalism/graffiti accounted for 53% (72) of incidents impacting school property, with the majority occurring in high schools, and was motivated predominantly by religion and race. All 49 incidents motivated by religion were anti-Jewish, and 19 of the 20 incidents motivated by race were anti-Black. This is consistent with previous years in which racial slurs, swastikas, and other antisemitic phrases/statements were predominant. Anti-homosexual phrases and images are also frequently reported.

Verbal intimidation was the most frequent bias incident committed against an individual (110 incidents, 186 victims, 173 subjects). Verbal intimidation typically involved various forms of bullying, such as using racial slurs or insensistive historical references. Other forms of intimidation included threats or biased-based language through group chats, emails, and social media interactions between students. In elementary schools, various incidents involved students teasing each other using slang or other terms of which younger children may not fully comprehend the offensive nature or connotation.

There were 7 incidents of threats to commit violence against a school and/or particular students. Four incidents involved religious bias, two involved racial bias, and one involved sexual orientation.

AGE DEMOGRAPHIC CHART

SCHOOL



Due to sensitivity regarding age, some police reports intentionally withheld the victim and/or the subject's demographic or personal information although known to police or school personnel.

For statisitcal purposes, all persons (including transgender) are documented as the gender they were assigned at birth, as opposed to the gender to which they currently identify.

In 2024, there were 186 victims, 105 male, 50 female, and 31 of unknown gender. The 16-18 age group was expanded to include four adult victims over the age of 18.

Individuals ages 9-15 represented a combined total of 59% of all victims. Of the 154 incidents involving individuals, 25 involved multiple victims.

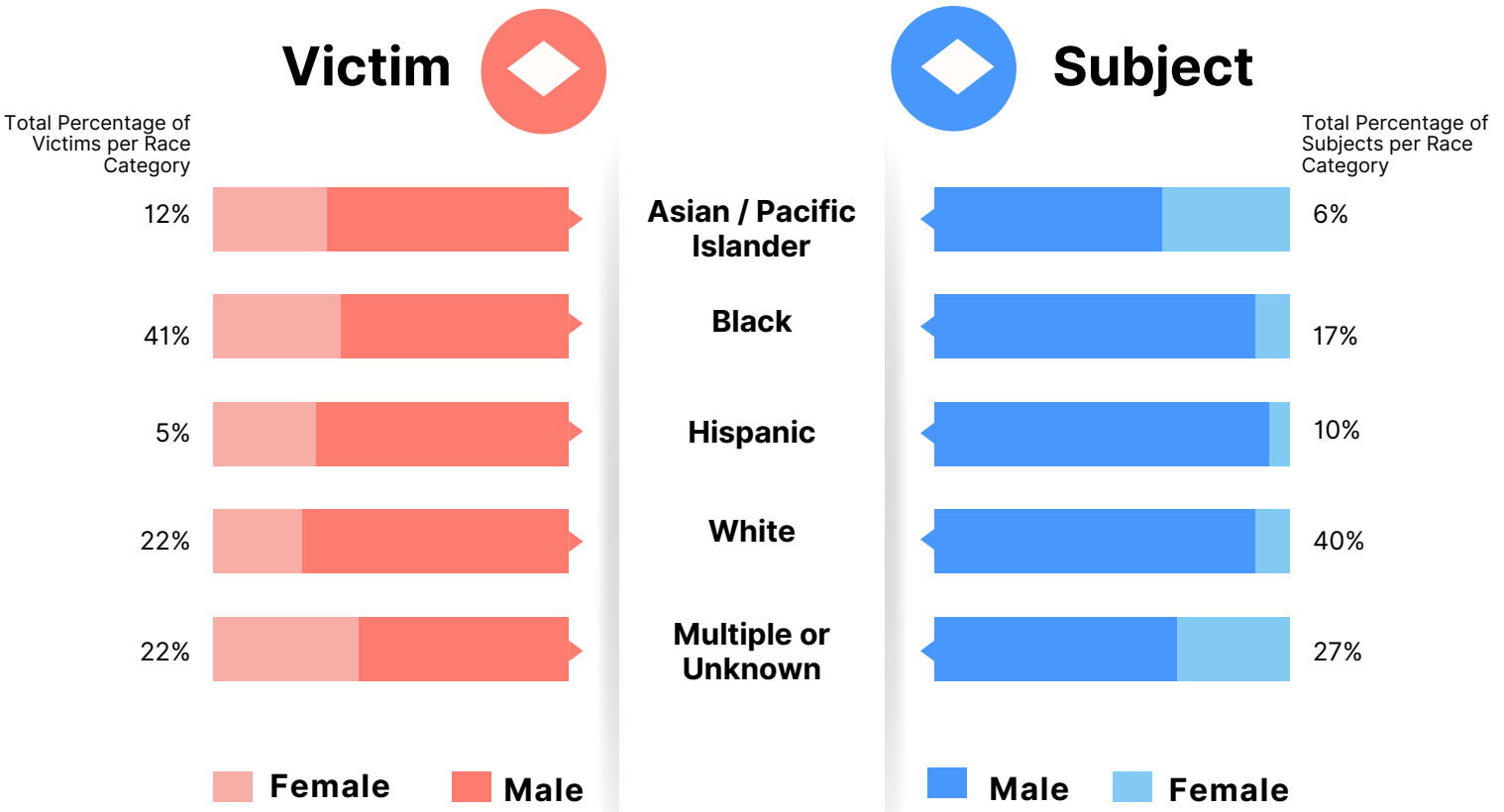
In all age categories, there were more male victims than female.

Of the 173 subjects, 139 were male (80%), 15 were female (9%), and nineteen were of unknown gender (11%).

Consistent with the victims, subjects in the 9-15 combined age bracket comprised 68% of all subjects.

Twenty-three (23) of the 154 incidents involved multiple subjects, 17 involving some form of intimidation towards the victims.

RACE / ETHNICITY DEMOGRAPHIC CHART SCHOOL



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For statisitcal purposes, all persons (including transgender) are documented as the gender they were assigned at birth, as opposed to the gender to which they currently identify.

Of the 186 victims, 80 (43%) identified as Black, and 39 (21%) identified as White. Asian/Pacific Islander and Hispanic victims represented 13% (25) and 4% (8) of victims, respectively. In all categories, victims were predominately male.

Eighty-four (84) incidents involved some form of intimidation in which race was the primary motivator. This is a 27% increase from 2023.

Six incidents involved derogatory racial slurs used by subjects towards victims of the same race or ethnicity.

Among the 173 subjects, 69 (40%) identified as White, 29 (17%) as Black, 17 (10%) as Hispanic, and 11 (6%) as Asian/Pacific Islander.

Consistent with the victims, the subjects were predominately male.

NOTABLE ANALYSIS AND TRENDS

Per the MOU between MCPS and the Police, parties agree that "*The vast majority of student misconduct is best addressed through classroom and in-school strategies that maintain a positive learning environment and allow students to learn from their mistakes, correct any harm that results from their behavior, and restore relationships disrupted by their conduct*." As a result of the MOU, these incidents are handled as teachable moments when possible.

Of the 291 school-related bias incidents reported, 60 incidents (21%) involved the image of a swastika, and 16 (5%) incidents included references to Hitler and/or the Nazi salute.

There were four incidents (2 schools) in which hateful and threatening messages were received through emails or the comments section of the school's online newspaper. All were antisemitic in nature. All comments were reviewed before being posted publicly, so none were published.

In 2024, there were two incidents of using a noose to intimidate. In 2020, Maryland House Bill 5 (HB0005) was enacted, making it illegal to place an item or symbol, such as a noose, intending to threaten or intimidate. One incident was deemed unfounded after an investigation revealed the noose represented suicide rather than race.

There were six incidents (14 victims) in which derogatory comments about being sent to a "plantation" or "picking cotton" were made. Ten victims (3 incidents) received a text message with the same message copy and pasted to each individual. These terms typically reference slavery and are offensive toward persons of color.

In 2024, seven school shooting threats were received, five threats against a school, and two threats against specific individuals. Three incidents involved religion (Jewish), two involved race (Black), one involved both race and religion, and one involved sexual orientation.

EDUCATION AND 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, an advisory group that 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 (OCP), 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 increased 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 (CED) 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 in the community.

In 2024, the MCPD attended 313 community events. Residents can view a list of community events via this Virtual Calendar. Montgomery County police officers and command staff attended 153 (49%) public safety events, including crime awareness and prevention events. 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 of restoring peace, stability, and understanding and alleviating fear, suspicion, and anger. 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, Maryland. 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 their victims more than other types of incidents. Furthermore, these incidents also have more serious side effects on society. A bias incident not only impacts an individual victim but can affect an entire group to whom the individual belongs, resulting in increased isolation, stress, and vulnerability. Timely and effective police response can have a very positive and lasting impact on the police and various communities' relationships, 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 callers do not have any information on the suspects and no physical injury or property damage. Callers should not destroy evidence of the crime; police may want to examine or keep any relevant letters, emails, or voicemails. Evidence of vandalism should not be cleaned up until the police arrive and investigate, which may also include taking photographs. The department's Victim Assistance Coordinators, available at each district station, can direct victims to other resources and put them in contact with human rights organizations. If callers would like more information about preventing bias incidents, contact the Community Engagement Division Director, who can coordinate the department's community services resources or direct callers to the most appropriate resource for their needs.

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

Parents: while monitoring all children's activities is not possible, there are things parents can do to prevent cyberbullying and protect their children from harmful digital behavior:
•Establish rules about appropriate digital behavior, content, and applications.
•Monitor 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 set up less invasive systems.

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.

APPENDIX A
SUMMARY OF 2024 BIAS INCIDENTS

Below is a summary of significant and verified bias incidents in 2024.

During a domestic altercation, the subject began saying racial slurs toward the victim. The subject also threatened and physically assaulted the victim. When interviewed, the subject admitted to and apologized for the racial slurs but denied any physical assault. The subject was charged and arrested for :
ASSAULT-FIRST DEGREE
ASSAULT-SEC DEGREE
RACE/RELIG CRIME: PERSON/GROUP (felony)
RACE/RELIG CRIME: PERSON/GROUP (misdemeanor)
MAL DEST PROP/VALU < $1,000

The victim was at a bus stop when the subject approached him. When the victim did not acknowledge the subject, the subject produced a knife and swung it at the victim multiple times. During the entire incident, the subject repeatedly made racial comments to the victim. The subject was arrested and admitted to making racial comments to the victim. The subject also admitted to having a knife. The incident was captured on video which confirmed the victim's statement.
The subject was charged with:
CR 2-206 **ATT 2ND DEG. MURDER** 2_0920
CR 3-202 **ASSAULT FIRST DEGREE** 1_1420
CR 3-403 **ARMED ROBBERY** 2_0705
CR 10-304 (1) **RACE/RELIG HARAS: PERSON** 1_0437

The victim and a witness were walking down the street when the subject approached the victim and struck him on the hand with a wooden stick. The subject tried to hit the victim again but was deterred by an approaching car. The events were corroborated by the witness and security video from the area. Both the victim and witness were dressed in suits with Tzitzits (Jewish Prayer Cords). The witness had on a Yamaka while the victim was wearing a black hat. The subject was arrested and charged with:
CR 3-202 Assault- First Degree
CR 2-203 Assault- Second Degree
CR 10-304 (1) Race/Relig Crime: Person/Group

The victim received a series of antisemitic phone calls and text messages from an unknown caller. The text messages also contained a variety of derogatory and racial slurs. The subject was identified and had two prior arrests for harassment-related offenses for leaving antisemitic and threatening messages. The subject continued to harass the victim after the victim blocked the subject's phone number.
The subject was arrested and charged with:
CR 3-804(a)(2) Telephone Misuse: Repeat Calls CJIS 1_0340
CR 3-804(a)(3) Telephone Misuse: Obscene CJIS 1_0341
CR 10-304 (1) Race/Religion Crime: Person/Group CJIS 1_0437
CR 3-805 (b)(1) Electronic Communication Harass CJIS 1_1712

APPENDIX A
SUMMARY OF 2024 BIAS INCIDENTS

Below is a summary of significant and verified bias incidents in 2024.

A Pride flag was stolen from a church. Due to several previous flag thefts/vandalism, the church sewed a tracking device into the flag. The flag was tracked to the address of a subject who resembled the subject seen in the surveillance video. The subject eventually admitted to stealing the flags multiple times. This arrest closed 6 other related cases.
The subject was charged with the following offenses:
Four counts CR 7-104(3) Theft Less Than $100 (CJIS 1_0521)
Eight counts CR 6-301 Malicious Destruction of Property (CJIS 3_4025)
Three counts CR 10-302 Religious Property: Deface (CJIS 1_0436)
Twelve counts CR 10-304(1) Race/Religious Crime: Person/Group (CJIS 1_0437)
Twelve counts CR 10-305(1) Race/Religious Property Damage: Institution (CJIS 2_0252)
Twelve counts CR 10-305(2) Race/Religious Harassment: Animosity: Institution (CJIS 2_0251)

There had been an ongoing dispute between neighbors. The subjects had repeatedly called the police with false claims about the neighbor. The victim had recently moved to the neighborhood and displayed Pride flags on their lawn. The victim felt they were being targeted due to their sexual preference and felt the subjects were trying to drive them out of the neighborhood.
The subjects were charged with:
-CR 10-304(1)(IV) - Motivated either in whole or in substantial part by another person's or group's race, color, religious beliefs, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, disability or national origin, or because another person or group is homeless,
-Make or cause to be made a false statement, report, or complaint that the person knows to be false as a whole or in material part, to a law enforcement officer of a municipal corporation about that person or group, with intent to deceive and to cause an investigation or other action to be taken as a result of the statement, report or complaint in violation of 9-501 (False Statement to a Law Enforcement Officer) of this article.

Two subjects physically assaulted two victims while yelling homophobic slurs. The victims felt their sexual orientation was the reason for the attack.
The subjects were charged with:
CR 10-304 (1) PENALTY SEC. CR 10-306 *1_0437***RACE/RELIG CRIME: PERSON/GROUP
CR 3-203 *1_1415***ASSAULT-SEC DEGREE**.
CR 10-304 (1) PENALTY SEC. CR 10-306 *1_0437***RACE/RELIG CRIME: PERSON/GROUP
CR 3-203 *1_1415***ASSAULT-SEC DEGREE**
CR 3-203 *1_1415***ASSAULT-SEC DEGREE**

Follow the Montgomery County Police on Facebook and X (aka Twitter).

Montgomery County Police Department District Stations

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

Questions may be directed to MCP.PolicyandPlanning@montgomerycountymd.gov.