

# What is Bias?

*Bias incidents are expressions against a person or group because of the person's or group's age, color, disability, gender (including pregnancy), gender identity, gender expression, genetic information, national origin, political affiliation, race, religion, sexual orientation, veteran status, or any other basis protected by law.*

The following questions should be considered in determining whether or not an incident is bias-related:

- Does it seem the incident is bias-motivated?
- Does it violate university policy?
- Does it violate the shared values and expectations of university community members?
- Who is affected by the incident?
- Are there legal consequences?
- Might the incident be investigated as a hate crime?

Examples of bias-related conduct include:

- words or actions that contradict the spirit of the **Principles of Community**
- jokes that are demeaning to a particular group of people
- holding a “date” or “slave” auction
- performing a skit in which participants use blackface or other ethnic group makeup or props
- hosting a culturally themed party
- assuming characteristics of a minority group for advertising
- posting flyers that contain demeaning language or images

Virginia Tech recognizes two categories of bias incidents. An incident does not need to meet all criteria listed below:

**Localized bias incident:**

- seen or heard by few people
- no violation of university policy
- no interest from media
- cannot be investigated as a hate crime

**Community bias incident:**

- seen or heard by many
- violates university policy
- Media and/or interest from outside the university community
- can be investigated as a hate crime

[Report a Bias-Related Incident](#)