



2023 FINAL REPORT

Regional Bias Feasibility Study

BENTON, LINCOLN, AND LINN COUNTIES

ZILO
INTERNATIONAL GROUP
STRATEGIC CONSULTING

Zilo International Group LLC
3939 East Arapahoe Road, Suite 210
Centennial, CO 80122
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THANK YOU!

The Oregon Cascades West Council of Governments (OCWCOG) is a voluntary association of twenty cities, three counties, the Confederate Tribes of the Siletz Indians, and a port district. It serves as a forum for cross-jurisdictional cooperation connecting member governments, businesses, and individuals. The association provides a wide array of services and resources to aid community problem-solving.

As part of an Intergovernmental Agreements (IGA) among the Oregon public agencies of state, local or federal government, with the City of Corvallis, OCWCOG partnered with Zilo International Group LLC to research and facilitate discussions around the feasibility of a regional Bias Response System, and the subsequent public and regional support for a more localized system.

The research presented in this report includes an in-depth analysis of the development and implementation of a bias response program. Various programs exist at a federal and state level and provide resources on discrimination and hate crime reporting. However, a focus of this project was community engagement to understand the best methods to report and prevent bias incidents. The scope of work included a comprehensive understanding of existing trainings and the best methods to facilitate community forums in both rural and urban communities. The concluding recommendations help to best direct resources to best serve all residents and community members in the Tri-County area of Benton, Lincoln, and Linn.

It was our privilege to partner with OCWCOG on this project. We work closely with our clients and are invested in their success. We hope the information presented and our recommendations will benefit the entire community and provide for successful future planning. I want to thank all those who supported the combined efforts of OCWCOG and Zilo, in particular those who participated in the focus groups, summit, and throughout the project: a sincere thank you for your willingness to meet with our team and for sharing your experiences. A special thank you to Alicia Lucke, OCWCOG Program Manager for Community Services Programs, Nick Meltzer, OCWCOG Transportation Manager, Stephanie Nappa, OCWCOG transportation Planner, and all the Stakeholders and Committee Members for their hard work and commitment to the success of this project.

If you have any questions about the report, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,
Milena Zilo



Founder and Chief Executive Officer
Zilo International Group, LLC
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I. INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

The **Oregon Cascades West Council of Governments (OCWCOG)** is a voluntary intergovernmental Council formed by Benton, Lincoln, and Linn counties organized under Oregon Revised Statutes Chapter 190. The Council was chartered by the Federal Government as a Type B Area Agency on Aging in 1982 and is recognized by the State of Oregon as an Area Commission on Transportation (ACT) and a Type B Medicaid Transfer Agency. It is also designated as an Economic Development District (EDD), a U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) Revolving Loan Fund Coordinator, an U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Revolving Loan Agency, and staffs the two Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) in the Region. These diverse capacities and delegations enhance the ability of the OCWCOG to serve their communities' needs.

The OCWCOG manages local, State, and Federal programs to best serve residents, local governments, and businesses in the Tri-County Region. Its responsibilities include administration of, staffing, and participation in over 354 grants, projects, and contracts, divided amongst the organization's three main program areas - Senior and Disability Services, Community and Economic Development Services (including Lending and Transportation Services), and General Administration (including Human Resources, Finance and Accounting, and Technology Services). Funding for programs and administration is received under the Federal Older Americans Act, Oregon Project Independence, Social Security Act – Title XIX, federal grants and loans, State of Oregon programs, other local governments, fund raising, community groups and individual donations. A majority of funding received by OCWCOG is through the administration of specific services.

OCWCOG is required by State or Federal contract to provide certain programs and services as an Oregon intergovernmental entity. Supplementary to those mandated, the OCWCOG:

- ❖ helps businesses find appropriate capital;
- ❖ facilitates seniors and persons with disabilities plan for independent living;
- ❖ coordinates local road improvement priorities; and
- ❖ assists with administration and technical support for its member governments.

Each program works to achieve the mission of OCWCOG: *to promote a thriving region through service, connectivity, and innovation*. The purpose of the Council is to maintain knowledge of and facilitate communication regarding the physical and social condition of the region. This includes the ability to provide staff resources to local governments to assist in programs or activities deemed locally beneficial.

INTRODUCTION

OCWCOG PROGRAMMING



Community Development

These programs assist local governments and partners in planning for strong and resilient communities.



Community Services

These programs focus on food, delivery, volunteer services, financial coaching and more.



Economic Development

This program provides the Region's economic development strategy and promotes coordinated economic development efforts.



Lending

The Cascades West Business Lending Program provides a wide-range of loan options to businesses to meet their financing needs.



Transportation

These programs staff the two metropolitan planning organizations and the Area Commission on Transportation; administer the non-emergent medical transportation program; run the carpool/vanpool programs; and several other transportation programs for the Region.



Senior and Disability

These programs serve the Region's aging population and people with disabilities - our communities most vulnerable citizens.



Veterans Services

These programs serve the Veterans in Benton County.

PROJECT OVERVIEW

As part of an IGA with the City of Corvallis, OCWCOG partnered with Zilo International Group LLC to research and assess how community members experience bias in their day to day lives. While various programs exist at a federal and state level related to discrimination and hate crime reporting, there is interest in exploring how to prevent issues rising to this magnitude. For this project, OCWCOG staff assisted with the project administration and oversight, while Zilo led the efforts of public engagement, collecting qualitative data, and aggregating data into this final report.

The Oregon Cascades West Council of Governments is a member based organization and there are varying levels of enthusiasm for this work across our collective region. As such, this project is grounded in being exploratory in nature, and focuses on those communities where there is local support for the effort. In this sense, the end result may not be applicable to all of our member communities.

The scope of services is as follows:

Task 1: Project Management

The project was staffed by a combination of Community Service Program (CSP) and Community and Economic Development (CED) Department staff. Project management team meetings were held every other week.

Task 2: Research and Catalogue Existing Practices and Demographic Data

Research into existing practices from across the country was conducted to understand areas of opportunity as well as challenges.

In addition to bias response examples, we also spent time reviewing the demographics in the three counties to help illustrate the diversity present in the community. We led this effort, with input and review from OCWCOG staff, and catalogued the research results.

Task 3: Stakeholder and Issue Identification (Focus Group)

We reached out to numerous organizations and stakeholders to include them in the process as much as possible. OCWCOG staff supported us throughout the project.

Task 4: Listening Sessions

We conducted two focus groups in each county. Participants received a \$50 Visa gift certificate for their time and the insight they provided on their lived experiences. Simultaneous interpretation in Spanish was provided for those that requested it.

Task 5: Solution Identification (Focus Group)

The listening sessions, served as a foundation basis for the recommendations. Questions and conversations were focused on bias vs. hate crime. We asked participants to share their experience with bias in the community and how the community can prevent and reduce the frequency and number of bias incidents.

Task 6: Staff and Elected Official Survey

A staff and elected officials survey was conducted, and feedback from the focus groups was shared. The intent of the survey was to gain their perspectives and ensure that goals are in alignment.

Task 7: Virtual Summit

A regional summit was held to share feedback from the focus groups, and the survey. All were welcome to attend.

Task 8: Draft Report

A draft report documenting the research, public engagement, solution identification and virtual summit was prepared. The draft report was available for review and comments for 30 days.

Task 9: Final Report

The final report was completed with the recommendations in mind. In addition a presentation summarizing the report findings and recommendations was held for the board.



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In response to the rise in bias incidents across our nation, the Oregon Cascades West Council of Governments (OCWCOG) partnered with Zilo International Group to conduct a research study about the creation of a regional Bias Response System to address bias within the Benton, Lincoln, and Linn region. This study established the best practices to reduce and prevent bias within communities, particularly incorporating feedback and perspectives from community members, stakeholders, and relevant experts in the following capacities:

Stakeholders: Following the focus groups, regional staff and elected officials were invited to complete a confidential survey regarding their observation and knowledge of bias incidents in their communities. These responses, in addition to feedback from focus group discussions, were instrumental in determining recommendations.

Community members: Zilo International Group hosted a series of Bias Response Focus Groups during August 2022 in six different locations and collected community perspectives and experiences related to bias.

Expert recommendations: Researchers at Zilo International Group reviewed the feedback regarding the feasibility of a regional Bias Response System and gauged public and regional support for a more localized system within the geographic boundaries of Benton, Lincoln, and Linn Counties. This report encapsulates those findings, in conjunction with additional research on bias response programs, existing trainings, facilitating community forums, and staff scheduled events focusing on Diversity, Equity, Racial Justice, and Bias.

Initial research was conducted on the existing bias response resources within Benton, Lincoln, and Linn counties. Zilo reviewed those specific practices, processes, policies, procedures, and communications related to reporting requirements, community and equity assessment. In addition, we researched the Tri-County demographics, including racial, ethnic, and linguistic characteristics.

An assessment was developed, integrating research with identification of optimal opportunities for improvement. We employed an interactive process with various stakeholders which enabled continuous feedback on areas of improvement, with particular intent to build on the strengths of existing resources.

A major goal of the project was to engage all segments of the population and cultivate a sense of community ownership and cooperation. Throughout the community engagement, we met with key stakeholders, committee members, community advocates, residents, and other stakeholders across Benton, Lincoln, and Linn counties to:

- ❖ assess direct experiences with bias
- ❖ address challenges and opportunities; and
- ❖ provide oversight during implementation.

We aggregated the feedback and insight we received and shared it at the bias response summit. The intent was to give everyone an overview of the discussions and data that was collected, as well as a more thoughtful approach moving forward with the study.

Public engagement and outreach efforts were developed with the intent to:

- ❖ amplify underserved and marginalized community members voices;
- ❖ more fully meet the needs and capture the goals of the OCWCOG community;
- ❖ lead with the equity goals and align with the community-driven vision;
- ❖ seamlessly integrate all services provided by the different communities; and
- ❖ incorporate an implementation framework built for equitable decisions, continual change, and sustainability.

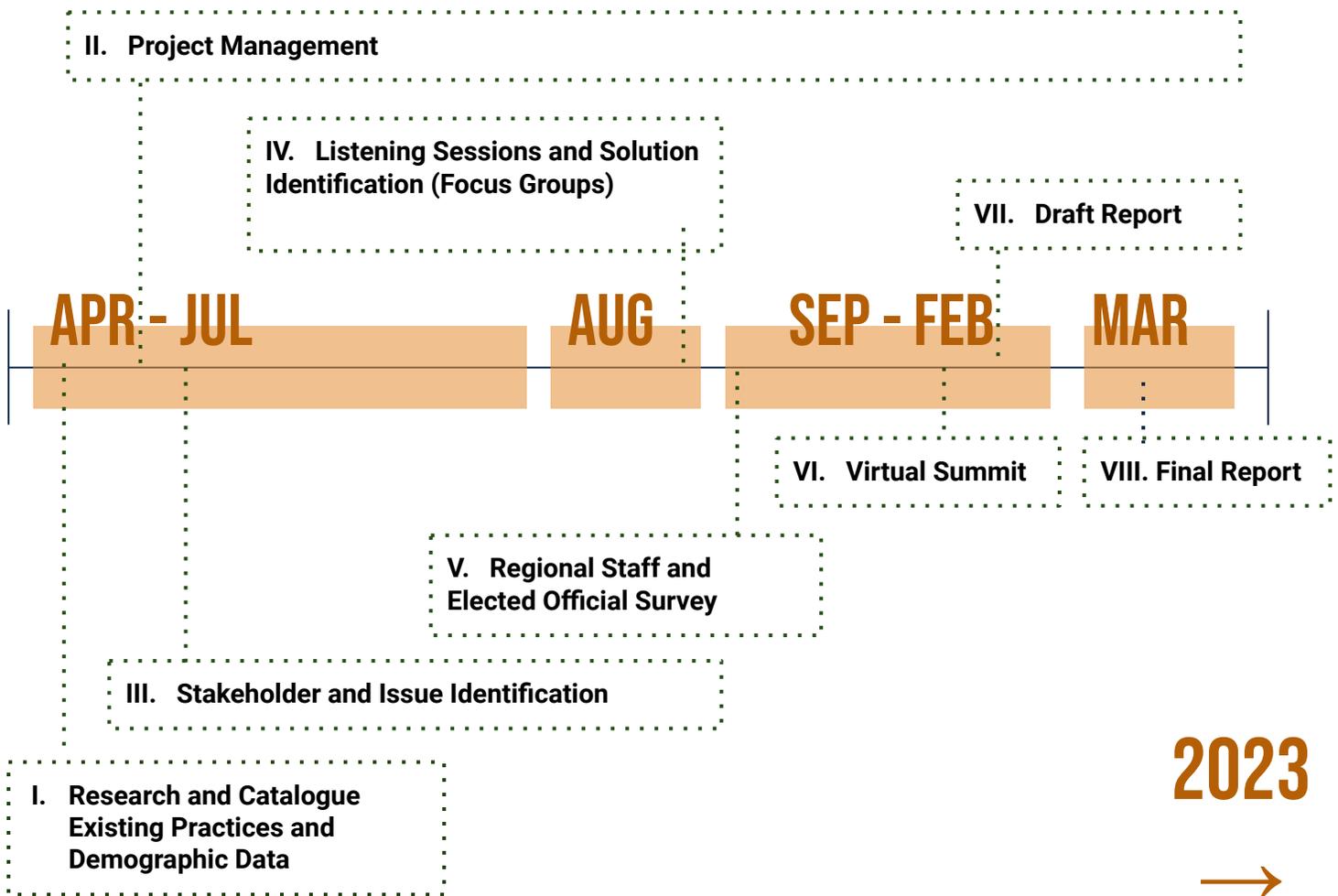
The focus groups were only available in-person. The feedback and participation of the attendees demonstrated the success of the outreach efforts. The event was promoted through print, online and social media marketing, direct email, and phone call outreach. The conversations focused around bias and were intended to provide an open-ended model in which participants felt comfortable to communicate their thoughts and experiences. Overall, community members were very courteous to one another and respectful of each others experiences. Attendees were open to learning and expressed genuine curiosity about the experiences discussed, which covered topics of homelessness, mental health issues, linguistic challenges, and a lack of resources for certain individuals and minority groups.

Zilo International Group LLC recognizes the enormous impact that the research and recommendations behind this study can have. It was an honor to have partnered with OCWCOG on this project.

REGIONAL BIAS RESPONSE STUDY TIMELINE



2022



2023





ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Zilo International Group expresses a special acknowledgement to the following individuals who provided instrumental support to this initiative: Our study benefited from the knowledge, experience, and perspectives shared by these individuals.

OCWCOG STAFF



Alicia Lucke
*OCWCOG Program
Manager*



Nicholas Meltzer
*OCWCOG Transportation
Manager*



Stephanie Nappa
*OCWCOG Transportation
Planner*

STAKEHOLDERS



Chief Marcia Harnden
Albany Police Chief



David Collier
*Lincoln County Director of Human
Resources*



Joe Hahn
*Benton County Equity, Diversity,
and Inclusion Coordinator*



Fay Stetz-Waters
*Department of Justice Civil Rights
Director*



Johanna Costa
*Department of Justice Bias
Response Coordinator*

II. TERMINOLOGY

KEY POPULATIONS AND SETTINGS

This report references various populations and settings of interest as **communities of color and other underserved populations**, considering where people live, work, and learn. This includes, but is not limited to:

Racial/Ethnic Groups

- Indigenous and Native Americans
- Asian/Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islanders
- Black/African Americans
- Hispanic/Latino

Other Marginalized Groups

- Immigrants, refugees, and asylees
- LGBTQIA+ people
- People with low income
- People experiencing homelessness
- Veterans or military personnel and their families
- Women and girls

Medically Underserved

- People with disabilities
- People with chronic medical conditions
- People with behavioral health conditions, including substance use disorder and mental health conditions
- People with long-term mental illness
- People who require long-term services and supports
- People who are uninsured or underinsured

Special Age Populations

- Children (younger than 12)
- Youth (12-17)
- Young adults (18-25)
- Older adults (65 and older)

Geographic Areas

- Rural
- Remote
- Tribal
- Territorial

Other Relevant Settings

- Businesses
- Childcare facilities (e.g. Head Start, Early Head Start, in-home daycare)
- Health care facilities and ambulatory care
- Schools (early childhood, K-12, and postsecondary educational institutions)
- Transportation (e.g. public transportation, private transportation, ride hailing, paratransit)
- Essential workers and frontline workers



DEFINITIONS

An effective and useful bias incident response system is dependent on a deep understanding of several definitions related to bias. The US Department of Justice establishes these definitions for reference at a national level.



Bias is a complex human trait resulting from our subconscious need to classify individuals into categories during our methods to process information and make sense of the world.

Typically, these information processes occur unconsciously and humans develop schemas, or 'mental maps', that assist with the automation of our information processing. These maps are not necessarily a negative concept, the brain is simply sorting people, items, information into easily recognizable groups. The combination of these groupings with attitudes, defined as positive or negative feelings and attributes towards a person or thing, provides the basis for implicit bias.

Implicit Bias involves all subconscious feelings, perceptions, attitudes, and stereotypes; however, it does not require hostility, merely knowledge of a stereotype to produce discriminatory action.

Although everyone has implicit biases, research demonstrates that they can be reduced through the process of discussing and recognizing them, counter-stereotyping methods, and positive contact with stereotyped groups⁵.

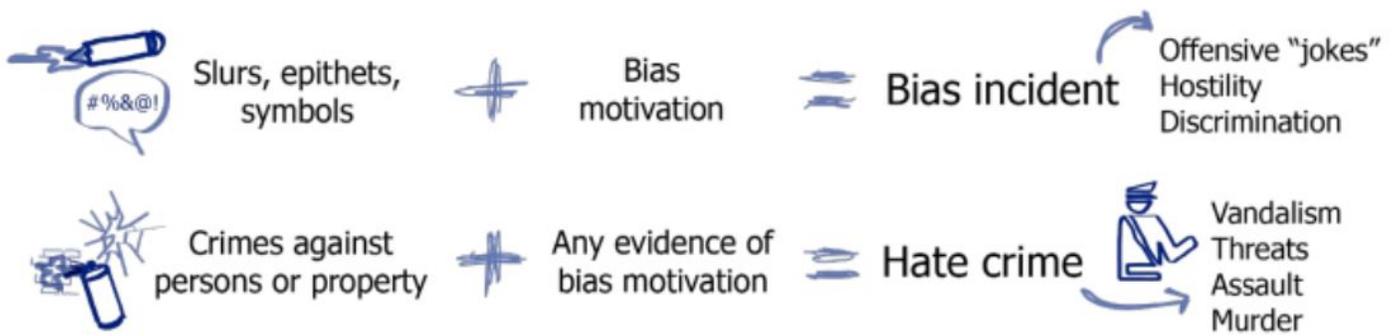
Explicit bias is the outward, conscious expression of implicit biases in which the individual is aware of their prejudices and attitudes towards certain groups. The United States Department of Justice equates explicit bias to the term *bias*.

The State of Oregon Department of Justice recently redefined a **bias incident** as "a person's hostile expression of animus towards another person, relating to the other person's perceived race, color, religion, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability or national origin, of which criminal investigation or prosecution is impossible or inappropriate".

Examples of bias incidents provided by the Oregon DOJ include: “name calling; using a racial, ethnic, or other slur to identify someone; use of degrading language; creating derogatory graffiti or images; imitating someone with a disability or their cultural practice; assaulting, injuring, or even touching someone in an offensive manner because of their perceived protective class; threatening to physically harm a person, their family or their property based on their perceived protective class”. These incidents can escalate into greater crimes of hate, thus reporting and addressing these problems are one of many steps in ensuring equity and peace for all.

Bias or Hate Incident: Acts of prejudice that are not crimes and do not involve violence, threats, or property damage.

Hate Crime: At the federal level, defined as a crime motivated by bias against race, color, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, or disability.



In simplest terms, a hate crime must include both “hate” and a “crime.”



A **microaggression** is a comment or action that negatively targets a marginalized person or group. A microaggression can be intentional or accidental. It is a form of discrimination.

Harassment is any unwelcome conduct based on race, color, religion, sex (including sexual orientation, gender identity, or pregnancy), national origin, older age (beginning at age 40), disability, or genetic information (including family medical history). Harassment becomes unlawful when: (a) the offensive conduct becomes a condition of continued employment, or (b) the conduct is severe or pervasive enough to create a work environment that a reasonable person would consider intimidating, hostile, or abusive.

A **stakeholder** refers to any person or group with an interest in or is affected by the action or process in question.

Stakeholders include residents, business operators and owners, property owners, non-profit, public and private agencies and organizations. Identifying the full spectrum of stakeholders is one of the early and critical steps in developing an effective public engagement strategy.

Public engagement is the act of intentionally empowering community members to effectively engage in deliberation, dialogue, and action on public issues and in the design and delivery of public services.

Inclusion is a state of being valued, respected, and supported. Inclusion should be reflected within the culture, practices, and relationships in an organization that support a diverse environment for all people to achieve their full potential.

Diversity is the quality of being different or unique at the individual or group level. This includes age; ethnicity; gender; gender identity; military status; language differences; nationality; parental status; physical, mental, and developmental abilities; race; religion; sexual orientation; skin color; socio-economic status; work and behavioral styles; and the perspectives of each person shaped by that individual's nation, experiences, and culture. Even when people appear the same on the outside, they are different.



III. COMMUNITY OUTREACH

ENGAGEMENT INITIATIVES

Our priority in the engagement process was to achieve equitable and impactful participation of community members and stakeholders. We achieved this through a balanced and diverse combination of different outreach techniques to hear the many voices in the community. The engagements were informative and served as preparatory aids for the decision making process and recommendations. We conducted focus groups, a staff and elected officials survey, an online summit, and one-on-one interviews to involve a wider demographic and bridge the gap between the county governments and residents.

As part of the outreach, we utilized numerous community engagement platforms and awareness campaigns including social media, local print news channels, websites, emails, and phone calls to grassroots organizations and stakeholders. We used inclusive language and material was translated into Spanish. Spanish interpreters were available as requested for the focus groups and during the online summit. Examples of community outreach efforts are attached below:

Oregon Cascades West Council of Governments and Zilo International Group LLC present

BIAS RESPONSE SUMMIT




Join us as we discuss the findings of the August Bias Response focus groups in Benton, Lincoln, and Linn Counties related to the feasibility of a regional bias response system.

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 2
12:00pm - 1:00pm

Register for this webinar:
https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_PBdypNoJrfClSYRKO1OYkg

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the webinar.

Oregon Cascades West Council of Governments y Zilo International Group LLC presentan

PREJUICIOS Y ESTIGMAS CUMBRE




Únase a nosotros mientras discutimos los hallazgos de los grupos de enfoque de respuesta prejuicios y estigmas de agosto en los condados de Benton, Lincoln, y Linn relacionados con la viabilidad de un sistema regional de respuesta prejuicios y estigmas.

MIÉRCOLES 2 DE NOVIEMBRE
12:00pm - 1:00pm

Regístrese para este seminario web:
https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_PBdypNoJrfClSYRKO1OYkg

Después de registrarse, recibirá un correo electrónico de confirmación con información sobre cómo unirse al seminario web.



BIAS RESPONSE FOCUS GROUPS

Discussion topics:

- Bias incidents observed or experienced within the community
- Key elements of an effective bias and response system
- Ways to best support victims of bias

AUGUST 22, 2022
CENTER FOR HEALTH EDUCATION
740 SW 9TH STREET
NEWPORT, OR 97365
5PM-7PM

THIS EVENT IS NOT AFFILIATED WITH SAMARITAN HEALTH SERVICES.

PARTICIPANTS WILL RECEIVE A \$50 VISA GIFT CARD. DINNER WILL BE PROVIDED.

PLEASE RSVP AT BIASRESEARCH@ZILOINTERNATIONAL.COM OR CALL 720-295-0054

We appreciate your time and willingness to share your thoughts and experiences.





GRUPOS FOCALES SOBRE PREJUICIOS Y ESTIGMAS

Temas de discusión:

- Incidentes de prejuicio observados o experimentados en la comunidad
- Elementos clave de un sistema eficaz de respuesta a los prejuicios
- Métodos de apoyo a las víctimas de discriminación

22 DE AGOSTO 2022
CENTER FOR HEALTH EDUCATION
740 SW 9TH STREET
NEWPORT, OR 97365
5PM-7PM

ESTE EVENTO NO ESTÁ AFFILIADO A SAMARITAN HEALTH SERVICES

LOS PARTICIPANTES RECIBIRÁN UNA TARJETA REGALO VISA DE 50 DOLARES. SE PROPORCIONARA LA CENA.

POR FAVOR CONFIRMAR ASISTENCIA ENVIANDO UN MENSAJE A:
BIASRESEARCH@ZILOINTERNATIONAL.COM LLAME A 720-295-0054

Agradecemos su tiempo y disposición para compartir con nosotros sus opiniones y experiencias.




Across our nation, bias incidents are on the rise. The Oregon Cascades West Council of Governments (OCWCOG) has partnered with Zilo International Group to conduct a research study about the creation of a regional Bias Response System to address bias within the Linn, Benton, and Lincoln region.

BIAS RESPONSE FOCUS GROUPS

PARTICIPANTS WILL RECEIVE A \$50 VISA GIFT CARD. FOOD WILL BE PROVIDED.

Discussion topics will include:

- Bias incidents you have observed or experienced within the community
- Key elements of an effective bias and response system
- Ways to best support victims of bias

TUESDAY, AUGUST 23
11AM-1PM

PHILOMATH COMMUNITY LIBRARY
1050 APPLGATE ST
PHILOMATH, OR 97370

RSVP or EXPRESS INTEREST at BIASRESEARCH@ZILOINTERNATIONAL.COM
or Call 720-295-0054

We appreciate your time and willingness to share your thoughts and experiences.




En toda nuestra nación, los incidentes de discriminación y prejuicios están aumentando. El Consejo de Gobiernos de las Cascadas del Oeste de Oregon se ha asociado con Zilo International Group para llevar a cabo un estudio de investigación sobre la creación de un sistema regional de respuesta a la discriminación y prejuicios para hacer frente a los mismos en las regiones de Linn, Benton y Lincoln.

GRUPOS FOCALES SOBRE PREJUICIOS Y ESTIGMAS

LOS PARTICIPANTES RECIBIRÁN UNA TARJETA REGALO VISA DE 50 DÓLARES. SE PROPORCIONARÁ EL ALMUERZO

Temas de discusión:

- Incidentes de prejuicio observados o experimentados en la comunidad
- Elementos clave de un sistema eficaz de respuesta a los prejuicios
- Métodos de apoyo a las víctimas de discriminación

MARTES 23 DE AGOSTO
11AM - 1PM

PHILOMATH COMMUNITY LIBRARY
1050 APPLGATE ST
PHILOMATH, OREGON 97370

POR FAVOR CONFIRMAR ASISTENCIA ENVIANDO UN MENSAJE A:
BIASRESEARCH@ZILOINTERNATIONAL.COM LLAME A 720-295-0054

Agradecemos su tiempo y disposición para compartir con nosotros sus opiniones y experiencias

OPCIONES DE CONEXIÓN VIRTUAL




Across our nation, bias incidents are on the rise. The Oregon Cascades West Council of Governments (OCWCOG) has partnered with Zilo International Group to conduct a research study about the creation of a regional Bias Response System to address bias within the Linn, Benton, and Lincoln region.

BIAS RESPONSE FOCUS GROUPS

PARTICIPANTS WILL RECEIVE A \$50 VISA GIFT CARD. DINNER WILL BE PROVIDED.

Discussion topics:

- Bias incidents you have observed or experienced within the community
- Key elements of an effective bias and response system
- Ways to best support victims of bias

THURSDAY, AUGUST 23
5PM-7PM

C3
2601 NW TYLER AVE,
CORVALLIS, OR 97330

RSVP or EXPRESS INTEREST at BIASRESEARCH@ZILOINTERNATIONAL.COM
or Call 720-295-0054

We appreciate your time and willingness to share your thoughts and experiences.




En toda nuestra nación, los incidentes de discriminación y prejuicios están aumentando. El Consejo de Gobiernos de las Cascadas del Oeste de Oregon se ha asociado con Zilo International Group para llevar a cabo un estudio de investigación sobre la creación de un sistema regional de respuesta a la discriminación y prejuicios para hacer frente a los mismos en las regiones de Linn, Benton y Lincoln.

GRUPOS FOCALES SOBRE PREJUICIOS Y ESTIGMAS

LOS PARTICIPANTES RECIBIRÁN UNA TARJETA REGALO VISA DE 50 DÓLARES. SE PROPORCIONARÁ LA CENA

Temas de discusión:

- Incidentes de prejuicio observados o experimentados en la comunidad
- Elementos clave de un sistema eficaz de respuesta a los prejuicios
- Métodos de apoyo a las víctimas de discriminación

JUEVES 25 DE AGOSTO
5PM-7PM

C3
2601 NW TYLER AVE,
CORVALLIS, OREGON 97330

POR FAVOR CONFIRMAR ASISTENCIA ENVIANDO UN MENSAJE A:
BIASRESEARCH@ZILOINTERNATIONAL.COM LLAME A 720-295-0054

Agradecemos su tiempo y disposición para compartir con nosotros sus opiniones y experiencias




We are proud of the many attempts we made to keep the public and stakeholders informed about the project and increase engagement through transparency and open communication. The community was empowered to take action and participate in the project.

LOCAL COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS

Below are all the local community organizations we invited to participate in the Focus Groups.



Arc of Benton County

The Arc provides advocacy and programs for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families in Benton County.



Black Rural Network

The Black Rural Network provides outreach to engage existing and emerging Black leaders in rural Oregon communities.



Casa Latinos Unidos

Casa Latinos Unidos is the leading organization in Benton and Linn County working towards strengthening the Latino community through collaboration and action.



Community Outreach Inc.

COI delivers appropriate services to help people help themselves and others lead healthy, productive lives.



Disability Rights Oregon

DRO's mission is to promote and defend the rights of individuals with disabilities.



The Corvallis Multicultural Literacy Center

The Corvallis Multicultural Literacy Center has a mission to provide a safe, equitable, cross-cultural learning community providing educational and community resources.



Garfield Elementary School Parent Teacher Association

The Garfield Elementary School parent teacher association (PTA) supports school programs and activities for all students.



Lincoln County School District

LCSD serves students from all areas in the county. Our guiding philosophy of "every child, every day, future ready" is intended for all who touch our district.



Linn Benton NAACP

The mission of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People is to ensure the political, educational, social, and economic equality of rights of all persons and to eliminate race-based discrimination.



Linn-Benton Hispanic Advisory Committee

The Linn-Benton HAC's mission is to promote collaborative efforts to improve the quality and availability of resources and services for the Hispanic/Latino communities of Linn and Benton Counties.

LOCAL COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS



Lincoln County Coastal Equity and Inclusion Committee

The Coastal Equity and Inclusion Committee provides local events, news, and resources for the community in Lincoln County.



The Olalla Center

The Olalla Center has provided mental health and community services in Lincoln County since 1978.



Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs LGBTQ+ Coordinator

The LGBTQ+ Veteran Coordinator office works to build a strong community of and for LGBTQ+ veterans in Oregon, while also helping shape Oregon laws for the LGBTQ+ and veteran communities through advocacy and direct recommendations to the Legislature.



Old Mill Center for Children and Families

Since 1977, Old Mill Center has focused on providing critical services to children and families in our community.



Oregon Advocacy Commissions Office

The OACs research issues, educate the public, and provide advice to state policy and decision makers, including the Governor, legislators, and state agency leadership.



Oregon State University Extension Service

OSU Extension partners with local communities to provide trusted expertise and science-based knowledge to address critical issues and help every Oregonian thrive.



PFLAG Corvallis-Albany

PFLAG is the first and largest organization dedicated to supporting, educating, and advocating for LGBTQ+ people and their families.



Rural Organizing Project

Rural Organizing Project is a state-wide organization that supports a multi-issue, rural-centered, grassroots base in Oregon.



Strengthening Rural Families

Strengthening Rural Families uses a collaborative approach to promote the health and well-being of individuals and families in rural communities through education, advocacy, coalition building and community connections.



Vina Moses

Vina Moses Center helps people through times of hardship, engaging the community to build resilience and improve wellbeing.

DEMOGRAPHICS AND FOCUS GROUPS LOCATIONS

BENTON COUNTY



The population of Benton County is 95,184, with the demographics:

- 86.6% White
- 1.3% Black/African American
- 1.0% American Indian/Alaskan Native
- 6.6% Asian
- 0.3% Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander
- 4.1% Two or More Races
- 8.2% Hispanic or Latino

Focus groups were held in Corvallis and Philomath with a total attendance of 26 people.

LINCOLN COUNTY



The population of Lincoln County is 50,395, with the demographics:

- 89.1% White
- 0.9% Black/African American
- 4.1% American Indian/Alaskan Native
- 1.5% Asian
- 0.2% Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander
- 4.1% Two or More Races
- 10.0% Hispanic or Latino

Focus groups were held in Newport with a total attendance of 14 people.

LINN COUNTY



The population of Linn County is 128,610, with the demographics:

- 92.1% White
- 0.9% Black/African American
- 1.8% American Indian/Alaskan Native
- 1.3% Asian
- 0.2% Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander
- 3.7% Two or More Races
- 10.2% Hispanic or Latino

Focus groups were held in Albany and Lebanon with a total attendance of 21 people.

FOCUS GROUPS HIGHLIGHTS

The objective of the focus groups was to maintain an open-ended conversation and promote sharing of experiences or perspectives related to bias. Zilo International Group LLC constructed a series of questions and structure to provide guidance and support to the discussion as needed. The agenda consisted of sections:

Introduction & Welcome (15 minutes)

- ❖ Review project objectives and key terms;
- ❖ Review difference between bias incidents and hate crimes.

Have you experienced bias within the community? (20 minutes)

- ❖ What was the situation and what did you do?
- ❖ What did other bystanders do?
- ❖ Did you report the incident? How?
- ❖ What support did you receive?
- ❖ What type of support would have been helpful and why?
- ❖ What could be done to prevent it from happening again?

Have you experienced bias incidents within the community? (20 minutes)

- ❖ What was the situation and what did you do?
- ❖ What action or inaction did others take?
- ❖ Do you know if the incident was reported?
- ❖ Are you aware of any support that was provided to the affected individual?
- ❖ What support would have been helpful and why?
- ❖ What could be done to prevent it from happening again?

How can the community prevent and reduce the frequency and number of bias incidents? (20 minutes)

- ❖ Provide any details related to probing, tracking, education, etc., if possible;
- ❖ How likely would you be to contact the state hotline if you experienced a bias incident?
- ❖ How likely would you be to contact a local support system within the Tri-County area if you experienced a bias incident?

In reducing and/or preventing bias, how would you describe the role of:

- ❖ Individuals in the community?
- ❖ Businesses in the community?
- ❖ Governmental agencies?
- ❖ Indigenous tribal organizations?
- ❖ Public schools? Others?

The open-ended conversation model of the focus groups proved successful as participants shared their thoughts and experiences. All attendees were courteous and engaged with the experiences of others. Stories were engaging, some difficult to hear as participants shared their own experiences with bias, and a lack of support and resources, particularly the marginalized community groups.

Critical thinking questions: What is bias? What does it mean to you? What is the difference between bias & hate crime? What is being done or could be done to address bias within the community?

Gender bias refers to a person receiving different treatment based on the person's real or perceived gender identity.

Some individuals experienced **gender bias**, such as women feeling as though their opinions were not seriously considered and they were being shut down. Other examples from the healthcare community, in which male patients or patient's family members did not respect female doctors and/or exhibited rude behavior towards them.

Racial bias is a personal and sometimes unreasoned judgment made solely on an individual's race.

Other individuals experienced **racial bias**, and/or racial **microaggressions**. Members from the Black community very often experience unwanted touching of their hair. Others shared instances of strangers making unwarranted comments based on race, such as negative comments towards children of mixed races. Attendees shared that bystanders generally do not intervene when something is wrong. Rather, most onlookers were interested in how the affected individual would respond to (de)escalate the situation.

Attendees from some focus groups shared that people from their community may not be accustomed to seeing people from diverse races and/or backgrounds. This leads to implicit biases or assumptions being made about these minority groups.

Individuals with disabilities also experienced bias incidents, they in various aspects of life, such as employment, education, housing, and social interactions.

Law enforcement officials also shared varying experiences with bias, such as appreciation from community members as well as contrasted with verbal attacks towards those in uniform.

Critical thinking questions: How do different groups experience bias differently? How does a lack of access or certain resources impact certain community groups?

Members of the community shared the different barriers they face in accessing resources. At the focus groups, many of the attendees spoke Spanish and interpreters were available to assist sharing their stories. Some Individuals expressed the need to travel to larger, wealthier communities to access resources that are unavailable where they live..

We recognize that the attendees were not directly representative of *all* constituents of Benton, Lincoln, and Linn counties. However, the outcomes of these focus groups were instrumental in shaping our recommendations and provided valuable insight into the feasibility of developing a Regional Bias Response program. We extend our gratitude towards the individuals and organizations that were able to attend the focus groups. We would not have been able to gather these perspectives and stories without them.

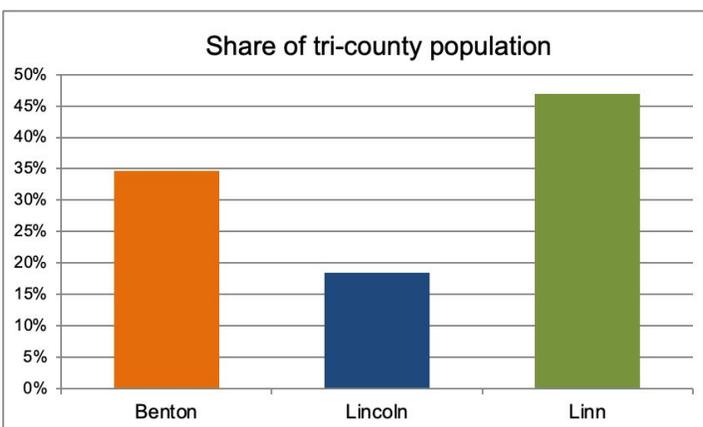
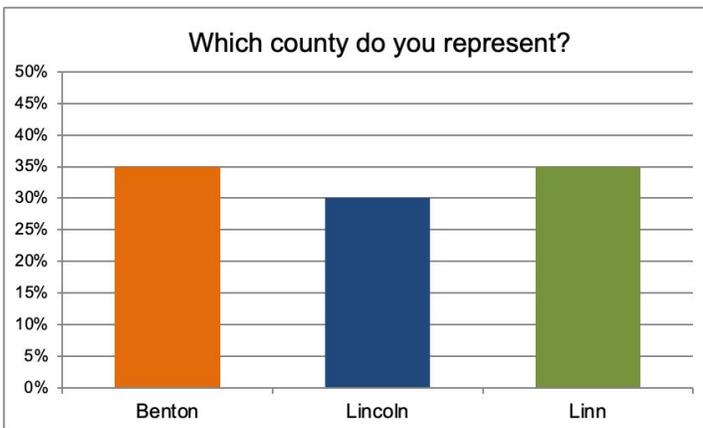
SURVEY FOR STAFF & ELECTED OFFICIALS

Following the focus groups for community members, a survey was conducted of current staff and elected officials of Benton, Lincoln, and Linn Counties.

The survey covered current resources and understanding of bias in the community, challenges faced and feedback response, and potential next steps through a mix of multiple choice, ranked, and open-response questions. The questions were:

1. Are you an elected official or a staff person?
2. How would you rate your community in terms of being welcoming and inclusive of all members?
3. What actions have you taken over the last year to ensure your community is welcoming and inclusive for all members?
4. What education and/or training resources are provided to local officials and law enforcement to support them in creating a welcoming and inclusive community for all members?
5. What are the biggest challenges you have encountered in fostering a welcoming and inclusive culture within your community?
6. What resources are provided to support minority members of your community in feeling welcome and included?
7. What is your reaction to themes discussed and issues raised in the listening sessions? Note: Themes from the listening sessions will be summarized within this question.
8. Based on the feedback from the listening sessions, what actions could the region take to respond to the themes and issues raised?
9. What additional resources would be helpful to you in your role as a government official to contribute to a more welcoming and inclusive environment within your community?
10. Would you support a regional solution or program? Please elaborate on your response.
11. Is there anything else you would like to share?

We received 40 responses in total, 33 elected officials and 7 members of staff. Responses varied greatly and provided insight to the range of support for a bias response initiative in Benton, Lincoln, and Linn County. While some questions elicited specific anecdotes and/or examples from local leaders, the survey was conducted entirely anonymously. We will share some of these responses while maintaining anonymity throughout this report.



The survey was available September 30, 2022 through October 14, 2022. The list of elected officials and staff was provided by OCWCOG. Numerous emails were sent out encouraging participation and interest in the survey. All responses were anonymous and each question was optional. The responses we received offered valuable and detailed feedback.

Among the 40 responses, 35% represented Benton County, 30% represented Lincoln County, and 35% represented Linn County.

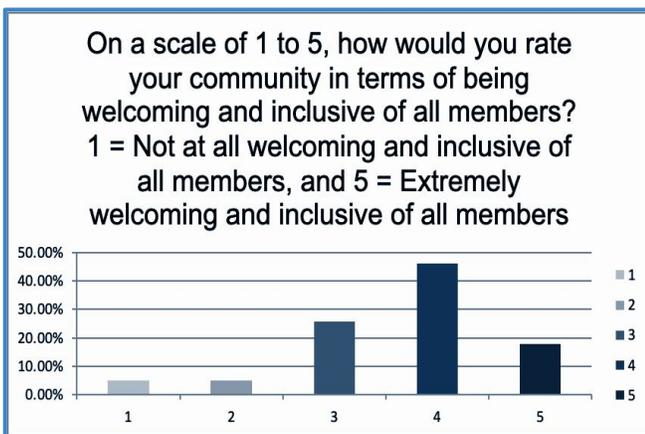
We were pleased with the participation and it was great to see all three counties equally represented. Statistically Benton County constitutes roughly 35% of the total population in the Tri-County, Lincoln County constitutes roughly 20% of the total population in the Tri-County, and Linn County constitutes roughly 45% of the total population in the Tri-County.

Current Offerings and Understanding

To gain awareness of the current resources and to better understand bias in the community, the survey contained the following questions:

- ❖ How would you rate your community in terms of being inclusive of all members?
- ❖ What actions have you taken over the last year to ensure your community is welcoming and inclusive for all members?
- ❖ What education and/or training resources are provided to local officials and law enforcement to support them in creating a welcoming and inclusive community for all members?
- ❖ What resources are provided to support minority members of your community in feeling welcome and included?

90% of respondents rated their community a “3” or greater in terms of being welcoming and inclusive of all members.



Actions to ensure this environment included:

- ❖ supporting the LBTQIA+ community, the disabled community, bilingual/non-English speaking community members, and for various racial groups;
- ❖ attending DEI trainings;
- ❖ ensuring everyone feels included.

- ❖ initiatives, such as Pride Weekend celebrations, the creation of Inclusivity Committees, the installation of wheelchair accessible ramps, and expanded translations and interpretation services

Of the responses that indicated “1” or “2”, explanations included:

- ❖ a lack of initiative or opportunity;
- ❖ a belief that the community is and always has been inclusive; and
- ❖ an understanding of inclusivity as tied to a certain political agenda– and therefore not wanting to be involved.

About **one-half** of respondents cited specific training resources for local officials or law enforcement, such as department accreditations, crisis intervention trainings, DEI training, and implicit bias workshops.

The other half of respondents were either unsure, aware of training for law enforcement, but not for local officials, or stated that they did not have training resources for local officials and law enforcement.

To welcome and include minority members of the community, some respondents cited specific local resources such as the availability of interpreters and translations, educational trainings through the library, community festivals, and the hiring of certain positions.

In addition, other respondents referenced outside organizations in the community (churches and nonprofits) as the primary source of these resources.

Respondents also shared that budget constraints or a lack of interest in providing resources specifically for certain groups prevented them from instituting these resources.

Encountered Challenges and Feedback Response

The following questions postulated any obstacles faced by respondents and to gauge reactions to the topics in the focus groups:

- ❖ What are the biggest challenges you have encountered in fostering a welcoming and inclusive culture within your community?
- ❖ What is your reaction to themes discussed and issues raised in the listening sessions (focus groups)?

The responses to these questions provided insight into the multifaceted nature of the experience of and response to bias.

Respondents noted a lack of engagement or indifference concerning issues related to potential bias in the community. Others noted an unwillingness to explore implicit biases personally or in the community, and a lack of familiarity with the experience of bias. In addition, there were systemic issues such as language barriers, minimal community meeting infrastructure, and a lack of reporting mechanisms.

The majority of respondents acknowledged the issues and were in favor of positive change.

About a *quarter* of respondents acknowledged the issues, but were hesitant to directly address them.

One-tenth of respondents did not acknowledge the issues raised.

A majority of respondents were aware of the issues discussed by other members of the community during the focus groups. Their responses expressed willingness and intention to expand resources and enact change in response to the viewpoints shared by others.

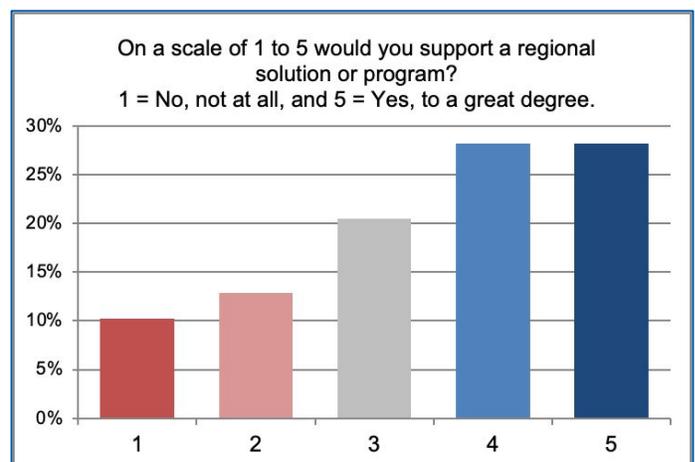
However, some respondents noted underlying systemic issues that could prevent lasting, impactful change. For example, a lack of diversity within the community or unfamiliarity towards the meaning of bias, microaggressions, etc., was a larger issue that is difficult to address.

Lastly, a small portion of respondents had a firm belief that bias did not exist within their communities. For these individuals, positive personal experiences impacted these beliefs that their entire community is free of bias.

Moving Forward

The final set of questions provided an opportunity for respondents to elaborate on their ideas for potential next-steps in their communities. These questions were:

- ❖ Would you support a regional solution or program?
- ❖ Based on the feedback from the listening sessions, what actions could the region take to respond to the themes and issues raised?
- ❖ What additional resources would be helpful to you in your role as a government official to contribute to a more welcoming and inclusive environment within your community?
- ❖ Is there anything else you would like to share?



56% of respondents supported a regional program addressing bias. 21% of respondents were indifferent and 23% of respondents did not support this type of program.

Other possible actions and initiatives that respondents offered included:

Community events including everyone from different cultures, backgrounds, abilities, experiences, etc.

Expanded services: hotlines, financial resources or infrastructure.

Education through listening sessions, cultural events, and staff and officials training. In addition, fostering a culture of respect when interacting with each other and keeping an open-mind.

Other respondents maintained the sentiment that the underlying systemic issue was insurmountable and were unsure if it could be addressed as a regional issue.

Respondents indicated additional, helpful resources would be:

Information distribution to allow easier access to resources through online and in-person channels.

Stronger leadership or partnerships with external organizations.

Expansion of **language services**

A proposed **roadmap** to provide guidance and examples of positive action.

Less than half of respondents provided additional comments at the end of the survey when asked if there was anything else they wanted to share. Those who did answer had strong sentiments regarding bias response initiatives.

Some respondents expressed hope for unity and understanding of different groups, with a desire to teach “acceptance” rather than only a baseline of “tolerance.” These sentiments were strengthened by others who believed in a need for more initiatives that would build a stronger and more welcoming community.

The alternative sentiment was that the issue of bias was too complex to address on a regional level. This viewpoint was not the same as those who were against having a regional bias response system. Respondents who shared this viewpoint held a belief that such initiatives would reinforce division within the community.

Overall, the survey provided valuable insight into the various perspectives on bias held by both staff and elected officials. The survey in conjunction with our research and focus groups introduced us to the wide diversity of opinions about bias response initiatives. Our recommendations were determined by taking into account extensive research from the expert field, as well as personal input from community members and leaders.



BIAS RESPONSE SUMMIT



Zilo International Group LLC hosted a Bias Response Summit on November 2, 2022 to share the findings of both the focus groups and the survey of elected officials with the community at large.

The summit was presented by Zilo and live Spanish interpretation was provided.

Community members were notified of the summit through flyers, social media posts, and email blasts. All communications were sent in both English and Spanish.

The summit was 45 minutes long and there were 38 attendees who remained engaged and asked questions and clarifications throughout the event. Additionally, there were one on one meetings with those individuals that wanted to further discuss the data gathered and share their personal experience in more detail with the existing Bias Response Hotline and the Sanctuary Promise Hotline.

During the summit we also shared the development and planned release of this report. We are proud of the following recommendations and the extensive research that was conducted.



IV. RESEARCH HIGHLIGHTS

RESEARCH HIGHLIGHTS

What is a Bias Response System?

A Bias Response System (BRS) is a system implemented by organizations to respond to reports of bias incidents. It provides a mechanism to individuals who have been a victim or witnessed an incident. Bias Response System serve as data collection methods where individuals can submit reports of the incident, which are then reviewed by trained professionals who investigate the report and further assess the situation. It can inform education priorities and remedy implicit bias in certain areas.

The goal of a BRS is to create a safe and inclusive environment for all members of the community and to address incidents of bias or discrimination in a fair and constructive manner. The BRS can also provide support and resources for individuals who have been affected by the incident. The ultimate aim of a BRS is to promote diversity, equity, and inclusivity, and to foster a culture of respect and understanding within the organization.

The existing Bias Response Hotline in Oregon provides information and resources for groups and individuals in the state. The Hotline is an intermediate between law enforcement and the community, enabling comfort in bias reporting for marginalized groups.

It is important to approach incidents of bias or discrimination with a constructive and educational mindset.

Consideration 1: Should OCWCOG create a Bias Response System (BRS)?

Many organizations, particularly college campuses, have Bias Response

Systems (BRS) that respond to bias incidents. During our research we uncovered a wide spectrum of attitudes towards BRS from institutional leaders as well as different stakeholders.

These systems can provide a pathway for those who experience or witness bias to report and thus gather data on patterns of bias and discrimination. The data can be used to inform future policies and practices in promoting diversity and inclusion and spreading awareness to the local community.

Some may argue that a BRS can create a culture of "cancel culture" and censorship, and can lead to unintended consequences such as the stifling of free speech and the creation of a "thought police." Additionally, if not implemented carefully, a BRS can be misused or abused, potentially leading to false accusations and reputational harm.

These concerns have become a reality for many communities who have found that bias incidents were better handled through other existing divisions, rather than through the creation of a BRS. It is important to carefully consider the potential benefits as well as the drawbacks of a BRS and involve a range of stakeholders in the decision-making process.

Based on the discussions in the focus groups and the results of various other community outreach initiatives indicated that there is a need for understanding, reporting, and working to mitigate bias and bias incidents in the region, at this time we do not recommend the creation of a Regional Bias Response rather utilizing the existing resources and working in partnership with the existing Hotline.

Consideration 2: Should OCWCOG rely on police to respond to bias reports?

In the region, bias crimes are investigated and addressed by police departments, sheriff's offices, the FBI, the Oregon State Police, and through the Oregon Department of Justice's bias crime hotline. It is important to acknowledge that the police is not always the most appropriate or effective response to bias incidents. In some cases involving the policies escalates the situation and may even make the victims feel unsafe.

The Department of Justice recommends **community engagement** as a main way to address bias incidences.

It is important for counties to have a range of options for responding to bias reports, including non-police options. The following series of actions were listed as recommendations for local governments:

- ❖ prioritizing community-based responses and partnerships;
- ❖ engaging healthcare providers, clinics and health systems;
- ❖ prioritizing cultural competence and language access;
- ❖ promoting allyship and understanding intersectional community identities;
- ❖ speaking out against hate incidents;
- ❖ creating public awareness campaigns.

The police do have an important role to play in responding to bias incidents, particularly when they involve criminal activity such as hate crimes. The most effective approach is to prioritize the safety and well being of all community members, which also recognizing the limitations and potential biases of any single response option.

While police forces should not be the primary tool to address and investigate bias incidents, police-community collaboration is essential to include efforts such as encouraging mutual respect, recognizing the harm done by bias incidents, responding early so problems do not grow, making reporting structures more accessible, improving communications between community and law enforcement, and generally combating bias and racism.

Consideration 3: What obstacles should the OCWCOG expect to encounter?

In comparison to other local governments who have developed a bias response processes we looked closer at California and New Jersey. Similarly their focus is to:

- ❖ improve the identification of hate crime victims;
- ❖ better understand and reflect victims' experiences;
- ❖ increase confidence in the reporting process;
- ❖ increase the ability of groups to identify hate crime victimization; and
- ❖ record more accurate data.

The victim of a bias incident endures a complex experience that often requires the support of various entities. Creating a system that can adapt to each unique situation and provide trauma-informed support to the victim is crucial. However, the ability to report means nothing if the systems are not continually evolving to reduce bias in conjunction.

In addition, underreporting has been one of the most prevalent obstacles to the creation of an efficient bias response system. Underreporting has been attributed to fear and expectations of mistreatment of the victim. People in underrepresented groups often feel that they cannot trust the police.

Underreporting can be attributed to:

- ❖ mistrust of law enforcement;
- ❖ sentiment that bias/crime is not important enough to report;
- ❖ a lack of understanding of what constitutes a bias incident, or what steps to take to report it; and
- ❖ a lack of language translation and interpretation services.

Visibility of these incidents, as well as understanding of resources and support available to all victims is of the utmost importance. Having a more local source for reporting can encourage people to report. These events can cause tension and distress all throughout communities and undermine the unity that the counties represent. Incorporating community groups into these incident response systems enables the establishment of various connections that can enhance and advocate for the diverse assets of the community as a whole.

Sometimes, bias response measures fail. In Addison County, Vermont, a bias incident reporting system was implemented after a wave of hate crimes against migrant workers. Eight months after its launch, the initiative has not lived up to its intended purpose. Attorney General TJ Donovan explains that a gap in the system existed where calls reporting incidents would often start and end at police dispatch, as these incidents often did not meet the criteria to qualify as a crime.

By creating a safe and inclusive environment for all members of the community, bias response systems can help foster a sense of belonging and promote social cohesion. It is important to continue promoting equity and social justice, and can help to ensure that all members of the community are treated with respect and dignity.

Consideration 4: What resources are currently being offered?

According to the U.S. Department of Justice, hate crimes and incidents have risen to the highest level in twelve years. There are various federal civil rights laws that provide protections against certain non-criminal acts of discrimination on the basis of race, color, sex, disability, religion, familial status, age, genetic information, national origin, or citizenship status. These protections include:

- ❖ The Civil Rights Act of 1964
- ❖ Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972
- ❖ The Fair Housing Act
- ❖ Anti-discrimination provision of the Immigration and Nationality Act
- ❖ The Age Discrimination Act of 1975
- ❖ The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990
- ❖ The Rehabilitation Act of 1973
- ❖ The Religious Freedom Restoration Act of 1993
- ❖ The Religious Land Use and Institutionalized Persons Act
- ❖ Section 1557 of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act
- ❖ The Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act of 2008
- ❖ The COVID-19 Hate Crimes Act

In May 2022, the Department of Justice announced a series of actions to deter and confront hate crimes and other bias-related incidents, including:

- ❖ issuing new guidance with the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) aimed at raising awareness of hate crimes during the COVID-19 pandemic;
- ❖ releasing grant solicitations for programs to create state-run hate crime reporting hotlines and to support community-based approaches to prevent and address hate crimes;

The Oregon Bureau of Labor and Industries offers a quiz in English and Spanish that can be used to file a complaint if one's rights are being violated at work or in Oregon. The Bureau of Labor and Industries administers and enforces Oregon laws about wages, working conditions, civil rights, and anti-discrimination.

The Oregon Department of Justice offers guidance on specific nondiscrimination statutes and regulations such as Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, The Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, and partnerships with other neighborhood organizations.

Consideration 5: What can we learn from other local governments/organizations?

The following examples have been thoroughly researched and vetted to ensure that they are excellent models of community-led bias response processes.

The Health Equity Initiative (HEI) is a member-driven nonprofit membership organization that has partnered with the Diversity and Equity Task Force of Sustainable New Jersey to address the impact of bias in New Jersey. Their role is to:

- ❖ initiate and lead an action plan to confront implicit bias in local government systems;
- ❖ develop the language, space, and tools for anti-bias work;
- ❖ analyze how implicit bias impacts resource allocation and other decisions at the local government level.

The King County Office of Equity and Social Justice (OESJ) in King County, Washington,

recently formed the Coalition Against Hate & Bias (the Coalition). The Coalition is a community-led initiative to address hate and bias incidents by strengthening and networking communities who experience racist and bigoted treatment and all forms of oppression. The Coalition was formed as the OESJ recognizes that:

- ❖ historically law enforcement remedies disproportionately affect communities of color;
- ❖ hate and bias crimes and incidents go largely under-reported and the data collected is limited in its utility;
- ❖ visibility and community empowerment have deterrent effects on hate and bias crimes.

With this in mind, the Coalition was formed with the following defining characteristics:

The Coalition is community-led to allow coalition partners to use their relationships with community and cultural acuity to lead this work in ways that will truly serve and benefit their communities.

While law enforcement plays an important role in combating hate and bias crimes, the Coalition operates separate and apart from the police to strength communities through reporting and education.

The Coalition recognizes the complex experience of being subject to a hate crime and can provide support beyond local administration through referrals and networking.

Education and visibility are used as deterrent effects on hate and bias. The Coalition recognizes the critical role of art in messaging as well as highlighting the vibrance of a community.

The City of Decorah in Iowa uses an online bias incident report form to provide support to any individual or community affected by a bias incident, a hate act, a hate crime, harassment, or discrimination in the Decorah Community. Reports are evaluated to determine if further investigation is required for potential violations of criminal law. The response team is not responsible for adjudicating or sanctioning any individuals named in the report. Rather, they seek to advise the reporter of the options they have available through the legal processes. The team may be directly involved when education and follow-up conversations may be requested or are a reasonable response.

Locally in Oregon, the City of Eugene in Lane County, developed a system of reporting non-criminal hate and bias cases. The Office of Equity and Community Engagement (OECE) collects statistical information regarding bias activity and provides victim support and community response. In addition, they partner with community organizations to combat hate and bias within the city.

In collaboration with the Eugene Police Department, the OECE releases an annual Hate and Treach in conjunction with the EPD to update Bias Crime Policies to include bias incidents with an emphasis on creating protocols for victim's assistance. As of 2022, this system is currently working in conjunction with the system provided by the State of Oregon, as to not duplicate efforts and to unify into a cohesive statewide system.

The Office of Institutional Diversity at the Oregon State University coordinates the university's Bias Response System (BRS) which is responsible for applying the Reported Bias Incident Response Protocol. This protocol provides a process to address bias incidents that affect Oregon State University students, faculty and staff. The mission of Oregon State University's bias response process is to contribute to the creation and maintenance of a more inclusive, welcoming and safe Oregon State University for all students, faculty and staff.

OSU clearly states what the BRS can:

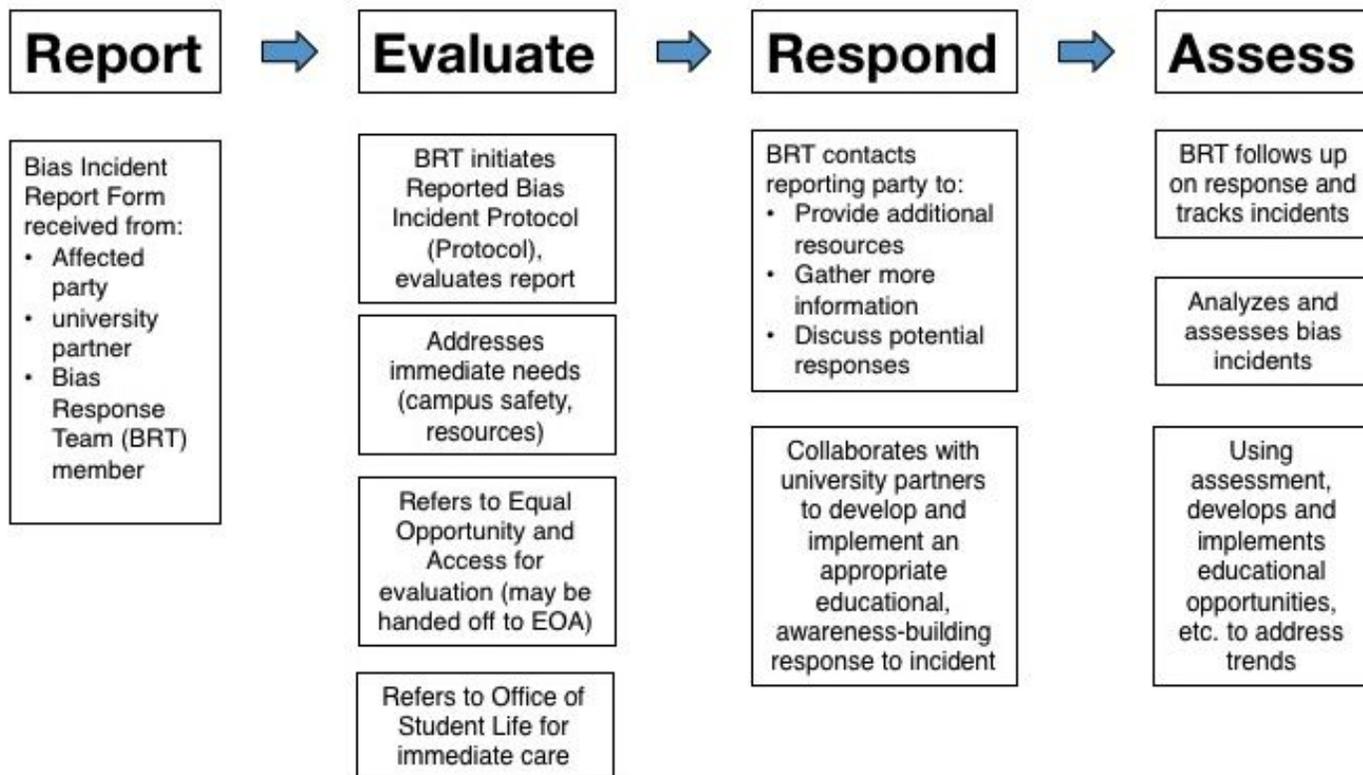
- ❖ carefully evaluate the report to identify needs and possible actions;
- ❖ provide care to those negatively impacted by bias;
- ❖ facilitate restorative processes to mend organizational and intergroup conflict; and
- ❖ utilize bias response data to inform policy and practice recommendations to mitigate the impact of bias;

and cannot do:

- ❖ propose or facilitate formal discipline of faculty, staff, or students;
- ❖ censor or punish people for offensive or repugnant comments that are protected speech;
- ❖ investigate or make any findings of fact; or
- ❖ replace hard conversations between faculty, staff, and students.

The response process is represented in the graphic on page 38.

Oregon State University Bias Incident Response Process



Consideration 6: How effective is the existing Bias Response Hotline?

On January 2, 2020, the State of Oregon created a bias incident reporting system administered by the Oregon Department of Justice. The Bias Response Hotline offers support in over 240 languages, in addition to trained professionals specializing in crisis intervention and trauma. The Hotline is accessible via telephone as well as through an online form. As a victim-driven system, its implementation has led to a reported 55% increase in the number of reports recorded by the system, according to the Oregon Attorney General, Ellen Rosenblum. In 2021, a similarly significant increase of 53% was recorded.

The increases in bias incident reporting demonstrates the accessibility and importance of the hotline. The increase in number does not necessarily translate into an increase in incidents.

The Bias Response Hotline has proven to be an **effective bias response process** both by DOJ research and the positive community response.

From 2020 to 2022, the Bias Response Hotline was maintained by a single employee. In 2022, six more full time employees were hired to staff the Hotline. Oregon is the first state in the USA to fund a Crime Victims' Compensation Program to provide counseling benefits to any victim.

The Bias Response Hotline and the online reporting system helps victims:

- ❖ understand their options;
- ❖ make choices about next steps; and
- ❖ receive support in the aftermath of experiencing or witnessing bias.

The process is as follows:

- ❖ informed consent from the victim containing details about date, time, identity markers, and what transpired;
- ❖ provided safety planning and support options;
- ❖ understanding the survivor’s perception of intent and the impact of the offense.

In 2022, there were a total of 2,509 reports to the hotline.

OREGON DOJ'S BIAS RESPONSE HOTLINE

Were you targeted with bias due to your race, color, national origin, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, or religion?
Make a report, receive support, learn about your options.



Call the Hotline

1-844-924-BIAS (2427)
240+ Interpreters/Languages
We Accept All Relay Calls



Live Operator

- Monday - Friday 9am - 5pm
- Receive support
- Options for next steps
- Options for community support



Leave a Voicemail

- After Hours
- Request a call back
- Leave as much or as little detail as you'd like

-OR-



Report Online

StandAgainstHate.Oregon.gov
8 Languages
Additional Languages Upon Request



- Make a report anytime
- Request a call back
- Leave as much or as little detail as you'd like

Consideration 7: How can the Bias Response Hotline be improved?

While the Oregon Bias Response Hotline has proven to be a success, there are limitations due to the current staff levels and budgets. A liaison to support the tri county region could be helpful to promote the initiative. To avoid creating a system that would lead to double reporting, the following measures are ways that a county BRS could fill existing gaps, such as:

- ❖ helping to promote the State system and helping victims in the county with support and understanding of the system;
 - by defining relevant points and terms, and providing clear points of contact for affected individuals or organizations
- ❖ enhancing community engagement to be able to extend a deeper reach into community groups and organizations.

BIAS RESPONSE HOTLINE

(non-emergency hotline)

1-844-924-BIAS (2427)

Monday-Friday 9am-5pm | Interpretation in 240+ languages

We accept all relay calls

Report online at StandAgainstHate.Oregon.gov

SANCTUARY PROMISE HOTLINE

1-844-924-STAY (7829)

Monday-Friday 9am-5pm | Interpretation in 240+ languages

We accept all relay calls

Report online at SanctuaryPromise.Oregon.gov

PROGRAMA DE PROMESA DE SANTUARIO

Línea directa en Español

1-844-6-AMPARO

1-844-826-7276

Lunes-Viernes 9am-5pm | Intérpretes disponible en más de 240 idiomas
Aceptamos llamadas de retransmisión | PromesaSantuario.Oregon.gov



OREGON IS TAKING A STAND AGAINST HATE AND BIAS.

Our state and our laws stand for inclusion, acceptance and civility. Against bias and bigotry, homophobia and xenophobia. Against violence and intimidation of any kind.

We're taking a stand together. For better tracking of data and new ways to share what we learn from it. More support for survivors. And more resources for law enforcement. So we can make a real difference.

It's a stand for our future. So no one has to be the victim of a hate crime. No matter their **protected class: race, religion, color, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability or national origin.** And everyone is safe, welcome, and free to be who they are.

Because we're all Oregonians. And taking a stand is what we do.

TALK TO US

Whether it happened to you or to someone else, we can all help track hate and bias incidents.

Non-Emergency Hotline
1-844-924-BIAS (2427)
Trauma-informed operators are standing by Monday through Friday, 9am to 5pm.
We accept all Relay calls
Interpretation in 240+ languages

Or you can report to us online any time at:

STANDAGAINSTHATE
.OREGON.GOV



What you need to know about Oregon's Hate Crimes and Bias Incidents Laws



Oregon Dept. of Justice's
Civil Rights Unit
1162 Court St. NE
Salem, OR 97301
503-378-6324



HATE IS ON THE RISE. Not only in Oregon, but all across the country, there's been an increase in hate crimes and bias incidents. **IT HAS TO STOP.**

OREGON'S LAWS:

In 2019, Oregon updated its existing hate crime laws to expand protections and improve reporting so that everyone in Oregon can feel safe in their community.

WHAT'S A BIAS CRIME?

In Oregon, the legal name for a hate crime is a **Bias Crime**. It is illegal to:

- Threaten a person, their family, or their property
- Tamper, interfere, or damage property
- Assault or put hands on a person
- Use a weapon against a person

Based on any biased motivation against a person's actual or perceived protected class.

$$\text{A CRIME} + \text{MOTIVATION BASED ON BIAS} = \text{A HATE CRIME}$$

BIAS INCIDENTS: WHAT ARE THEY?

In Oregon, a **Bias Incident** is defined as any hostile expression that may be motivated by another person's actual or perceived **race, color, disability, religion, national origin, sexual orientation or gender identity**. They can be verbal, physical, or visual.

Examples of common bias incidents are:

- ◆ Using racist, ethnic, homophobic, or transphobic slurs
- ◆ Spewing hate speech
- ◆ Mocking someone with a physical or mental disability
- ◆ Offensive "jokes"
- ◆ Telling someone they don't belong in this country

While bias incidents are not crimes, they may be civil rights violations and should be reported.

REPORT AN INCIDENT

Oregon's statewide, confidential **Bias Response Hotline** makes it easy to report all hate and bias, whether it happened to you or someone else.



Call our non-emergency hotline at **1-844-924-BIAS (2427)** to talk to a trauma-informed advocate. Monday - Friday 9am-5pm
After hours, messages will be returned. We accept all Relay calls
Interpretation in 240+ languages



Visit StandAgainstHate.Oregon.gov to make a report anytime.

REPORTING HATE: WHY DO IT?

Reporting hate crimes and bias incidents helps create a safer place for everyone.

The Bias Response Hotline is designed to:

- Support survivors
- Refer survivors to services that can help
- Track data



BIAS RESPONSE HOTLINE DATA

The following data from the Oregon DOJ displays bias incidents and bias crimes reported to the hotline. It does not include all bias incidents and bias crimes that occurred in the state as four local programs have separate bias data not reflected here. The full Bias Crimes (2021) Report can be found [here](#).

Table A3. Department of Justice Hotline Reported Incidents by County: 2020 vs. 2021

County	Incidents		Percent Change
	2020	2021	
Baker	1	0	--
Benton	136	45	-67%
Clackamas	62	247	298%
Clatsop	3	7	133%
Columbia	6	12	100%
Coos	21	3	-86%
Crook	19	1	-95%
Curry	25	2	-92%
Deschutes	44	47	7%
Douglas	18	16	-11%
Gilliam	1	0	--
Grant	0	0	--
Harney	2	0	--
Hood River	2	2	0%
Jackson	32	28	-13%
Jefferson	0	1	--
Josephine	3	11	267%
Klamath	19	63	232%
Lake	8	0	--
Lane	105	106	1%
Lincoln	11	11	0%
Linn	31	81	161%
Malheur	5	4	-20%
Marion	69	148	114%
Morrow	1	1	0%
Multnomah	271	489	80%
Polk	10	12	20%
Sherman	0	0	--
Tillamook	1	2	100%
Umatilla	7	7	0%
Union	26	13	-50%
Wasco	4	15	275%
Washington	61	144	136%
Wheeler	0	4	--
Yamhill	9	51	467%
Other/Unknown	88	110	25%
Total	1,101	1,683	53%

The following charts display the total number of reports in Oregon for the years 2020-2022. The link to the website can be found [here](#).

2022 Reports

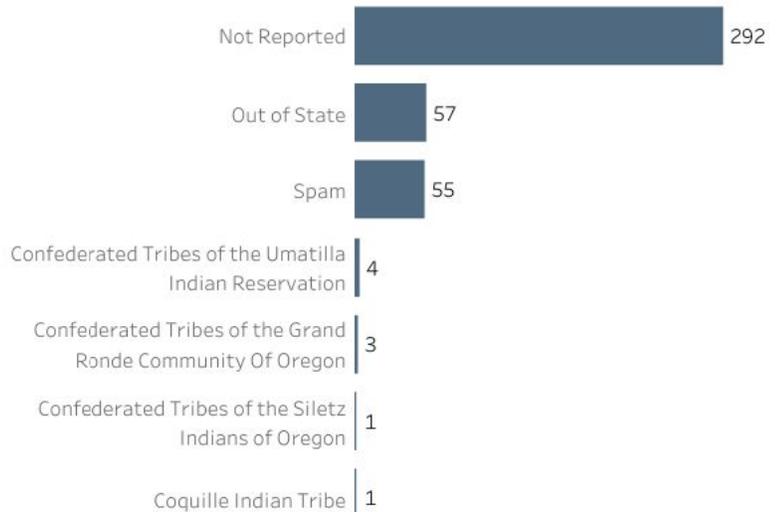
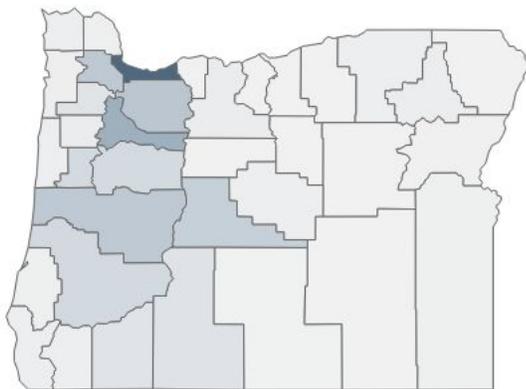
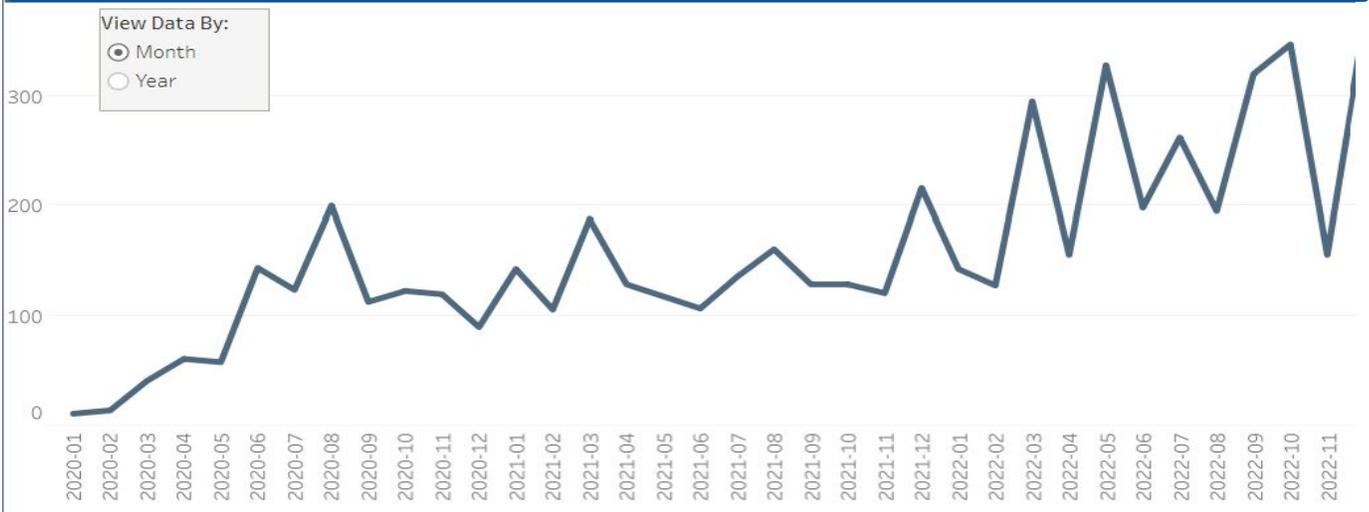
2,887

**Total
Reports**

241

**Monthly
Average**

Reports Over Time



The following definitions have been sourced directly from the Oregon DOJ's Bias Hotline Data website. Some definitions may differ from those found on page 17 of this report.

Definitions (Bias by Determination)

Bias Incident: A person's hostile expression of animus toward another person relating to the other person's perceived race, color, religion, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability or national origin, of which criminal investigation or prosecution is impossible or inappropriate.

Hate Crime: Criminal offenses that tamper with or damage property, harass, explicitly threaten, physically harm, or attempt to physically harm a person or member of their family because of the perception of that person's race, color, national origin, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, or disability,

Hate Crime (Misdemeanor): From January 2022, the DOJ began differentiating between felony and hate crimes. Bias Crime in the Second Degree is when someone: tampers with or damages property, puts their hands on another person, spits on another person, or threatens to harm someone, their family, or their property, AND their conduct is based in whole or in part on bias against the victim's actual or perceived protected class.

Bias Incident Against Class Not Protected Under ORS 147.380: The bias incidents in this data category are bias incidents against someone who is not protected under any other identity or class specified under ORS 147.380.

Bias/Hate Criteria Not Met: The information provided by the caller did not constitute bias.

Unable To Determine: The information provided by the caller to the hotline did not include enough information regarding the conduct and protected class involved.

Repeat: The information provided by the caller is a repeat report of the same incident by the same caller.

Definitions (Conduct)

Harassment: Language or conduct intended to alienate, offend, or degrade, including stalking, mimicking, mocking, threatens, and hate speech.

Institutional: System-wide excluding, offensive, degrading, or discriminatory conduct by a public or private sector organization, often resulting in loss of access to economic, social, and/or political resources.

Vandalism: Graffiti or damage to someone else's property.

Assault: Hands-on contact that causes offense or injury, including physical or sexual abuse.

Refused service/accommodation: Individual conduct intending to exclude or not meet stated needs; can be in a public or private business setting.

Doxing: Publicly publishing or sharing personal, private, or identifying information about another individual with malicious intent.

Swatting: Calling 911 on another person in an attempt to bring about unnecessary law enforcement response or consequence to that person, especially the dispatch of a large number of armed law enforcement to that particular person or address.

Definitions (Protected Class)

Gender: Primarily female or unspecified gender. Few are targeted for “male” gender.

Something Else: Includes bias against the following unprotected classes in declining order of frequency: addiction, crime victim, police/military, STI, Reproductive Rights Opponent, whistleblower, family, media, sex worker, and veteran.**Immigrant:** Includes persons targeted for unknown national origin or for perceived immigrant status.

Latin America: Includes in order of frequency: Mexico; Latin America, Unspecified Nation; and Guatemala.

Asia/Pacific Islands: Includes in order of frequency: Asia, Unspecified Nation; China; Japan; Korea; Philippines; Cambodia; Taiwan; and Vietnam.

AI/AN Nation: Includes in order of frequency: The Klamath Tribes; American Indian, Unspecified Nation; and Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation.

South Asia: Includes in order of frequency: India and Pakistan.

Africa: Includes in order of frequency: Africa, Unspecified Nation; Nigeria; Somalia; and South Africa.

Middle East: Includes in order of frequency: Afghanistan; Iraq; Saudi Arabia; Middle East, Unspecified Nation; Turkey; Iran; and Palestine.

Africa: Includes in order of frequency: Africa, Unspecified Nation; Nigeria; Somalia; and South Africa.

Eastern Europe: Includes in order of frequency: Russia and Romania.

Western Europe: Includes in order of frequency: Germany; Italy; Sicily; and the UK.

Benton County: Bias Response Hotline Data



The data below provides insight into the determination, conduct, and protected class of each report made in Benton County. The data was sourced on March 24, 2023 from the Oregon DOJ's [Bias Hotline Data Website](#). Definitions can be found on page 44-45.

2021 Reports	2022 Reports
45 Total Reports	45 Total Reports

2022 Reports

Bias by Determination		Conduct	
21	Bias Incidents	16	Harassment
0	Hate Crimes (Felony)	6	Institutional
19	Hate Crimes (Misdemeanor)	11	Vandalism
0	Bias Incident Against Class not Protected	4	Assault
1	Bias/Hate Criteria Not Met	1	Refused Service/Accommodation
4	Unable to Determine	1	Doxing
3	Repeat	1	Swatting

*The total count may exceed the number of reports, as individual victims may be targeted due to multiple intersecting identities. The breakdowns reflect a victim's targeted, perceived identity pursuant to Oregon bias crime and incident law, rather than a victim's actual identity.

Protected Class

The total count of protected classes will exceed the number of reports, as individual victims may be targeted due to multiple intersecting identities. The following breakdowns reflect a victim's targeted, perceived identity pursuant to Oregon bias crime and incident law, rather than a victim's actual identity. The numbers below reflect 2022 reports.

Race (21)

- 14 Black
- 3 Asian
- 3 Minority Race Unspecified
- 1 White

Multiple (17)

- 15 Race
- 14 Color
- 1 National Origin
- 2 Disability
- 2 Sexual Orientation
- 3 Gender Identity

Color (14)

National Origin (1)

- 1 Asia/Pacific Islands

Class Not Protected (1)

- 1 Language

Sexual Orientation (6)

- 4 LGBTQ+ unspecified
- 1 Lesbian
- 1 Gay

Disability (10)

- 10 Mental
- 1 Physical

Gender Identity (3)

- 1 Gender Expansive, Unspecified
- 2 Transgender

Religion (5)

- 5 Jewish

Lincoln County: Bias Response Hotline Data



The data below provides insight into the determination, conduct, and protected class of each report made in Lincoln County. The data was sourced on March 3, 2023 from the Oregon DOJ’s [Bias Hotline Data Website](#). Definitions can be found on page 44-45.

2021 Reports	2022 Reports
11 Total Reports	12 Total Reports

2022 Reports

Bias by Determination		Conduct	
8	Bias Incidents	4	Harassment
0	Hate Crimes (Felony)	3	Institutional
2	Hate Crimes (Misdemeanor)	0	Vandalism
0	Bias Incident Against Class not Protected	0	Assault
2	Bias/Hate Criteria Not Met	3	Refused Service/Accommodation
0	Unable to Determine	0	Doxing
0	Repeat	0	Swatting

*The total count may exceed the number of reports, as individual victims may be targeted due to multiple intersecting identities. The breakdowns reflect a victim’s targeted, perceived identity pursuant to Oregon bias crime and incident law, rather than a victim’s actual identity.

Protected Class

The total count of protected classes will exceed the number of reports, as individual victims may be targeted due to multiple intersecting identities. The following breakdowns reflect a victim's targeted, perceived identity pursuant to Oregon bias crime and incident law, rather than a victim's actual identity. The numbers below reflect 2022 reports.

Race (5)

2 Black
1 Hispanic
2 American Indian/Alaska
Native

Multiple (3)

3 Race
3 Color

Color (3)

National Origin (1)

1 Immigrant

Disability (2)

1 Mental
1 Disability Unspecified

Religion (2)

1 Jewish
1 Unknown Religion

Linn County: Bias Response Hotline Data



The data below provides insight into the determination, conduct, and protected class of each report made in Linn County. The data was sourced on March 3, 2023 from the Oregon DOJ's [Bias Hotline Data Website](#). Definitions can be found on page 44-45.

2021 Reports	2022 Reports
81 Total Reports	107 Total Reports

2022 Reports

Bias by Determination		Conduct	
45	Bias Incidents	70	Harassment
19	Hate Crimes (Felony)	6	Institutional
32	Hate Crimes (Misdemeanor)	10	Vandalism
1	Bias Incident Against Class not Protected	8	Assault
9	Bias/Hate Criteria Not Met	2	Refused Service/Accommodation
1	Unable to Determine	0	Doxing
8	Repeat	1	Swatting

*The total count may exceed the number of reports, as individual victims may be targeted due to multiple intersecting identities. The breakdowns reflect a victim's targeted, perceived identity pursuant to Oregon bias crime and incident law, rather than a victim's actual identity.

Protected Class

The total count of protected classes will exceed the number of reports, as individual victims may be targeted due to multiple intersecting identities. The following breakdowns reflect a victim's targeted, perceived identity pursuant to Oregon bias crime and incident law, rather than a victim's actual identity. The numbers below reflect 2022 reports.

Race (64)

- 49 Black
- 7 Hispanic
- 3 American Indian/Alaska Native
- 3 Multiple
- 5 Asian
- 2 Minority Race Unspecified

Multiple (40)

- 37 Race
- 33 Color
- 7 National Origin
- 1 Disability
- 4 Religion
- 4 Sexual Orientation
- 1 Gender Identity

Color (33)

National Origin (17)

- 8 South Asia
- 4 Immigrant
- 2 Latin America
- 3 Asia/Pacific Islands

Class Not Protected (1)

- 1 Political

Sexual Orientation (12)

- 1 LGBTQ+ unspecified
- 1 Lesbian
- 10 Gay

Disability (4)

- 2 Mental
- 2 Disability Unspecified

Gender Identity (1)

- 1 Transgender

Religion (12)

- 3 Jewish
- 8 Muslim
- 1 Jehovah's Witness

V. RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATIONS

As outlined in Section IV, pg. 39, “Consideration 7: How can the Bias Response Hotline be improved?” an effective Bias Response System must enhance community engagement to be able to extend a deeper reach into community groups and organizations. This can be achieved through leveraging existing relationships with culturally- and population-specific community-based organizations. From 2020 to 2021, the Bias Response Hotline experienced a 650% increase in referrals from community partner agencies. This demonstrates that there is an opportunity for OCWCOG to act as a liaison to the Hotline, bridging the gap between the community, organizations, and solutions for victims.

The pairing of improved reporting with educational resources for anti-bias is uniquely powerful in attacking both implicit and explicit bias in all areas of OCWCOG.

The recommendations below are based on the findings and research throughout the project and in collaboration with stakeholders. We are thankful to all those that participated and worked with our team in identifying challenges, generating solutions, and helped guide us in making recommendations.

Recommendations:



Hire one FTE as a support/liason for the Tri-County to the Hotline

This individual will work with the current employees of the Bias Response Hotline and support with DEI initiatives for the Tri-County.



Prioritize cultural barriers and language access

Ensuring that governments have access to linguistic tools and resources that are professional and culturally appropriate for the communities they serve.



Invest in training and education

Investing resources into enhancing educational and proactive training initiatives which will support a culture of inclusivity in the community.



Promote allyship between the different communities in the regions

Allowing the communities to take an active role in their Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion efforts and provide a sense of Belonging.



Support and expand community-based responses and partnerships

Expanding and prioritizing community-based partnerships will enhance the Bias Response Process.



Endorse public awareness campaigns

Increasing awareness about the hotline and ensure communities know about available resources and how to report bias incidents.

The OCWCOG plans to continue the partnership with Zilo International Group LLC to implement some of these recommendations in FY2023. We hope to move in a positive direction whilst maintaining goals focused on raising awareness and engagement with currently available initiatives.



Hire one FTE as a support/liason for the Tri-County to the Hotline

We recommend the addition of one full time employee to provide long term support and act as a liaison for the Tri-County to the Hotline. Rather than creating a new bias response system, we believe that it is most effective to take advantage of the existing BRS in the State of Oregon and improve its operation. The goal is to hire an individual with a relevant background to work with the current employees of the Bias Response Hotline to:

- ❖ respond to bias incidents that occur in the region.
- ❖ contribute to the development and growth of educational programs.
- ❖ work with grassroots and other community-based organizations.

We strongly encourage the hiring of an FTE to support the sustainability of the Bias Response System. The FTE will go through all the necessary training and serve the specific needs of the region. We recommend they be familiar with the demographic, culture, and nature of the Tri-County region.



Invest in training and education

We recommend investing resources into enhancing educational and proactive training initiatives which will support a culture of inclusivity in the community. Consistently educating the community on bias will help avoid incidents and help shift bias response work towards being proactive, rather than reactive. Common educational initiatives include town halls, mediation, and restorative justice services. Engaging in these activities may require additional resources, the establishment and formalization of community partnerships, or identifying the appropriate individuals to organizations to lead such initiatives.

In addition, promoting greater understanding of the impact of historical responses to crises that have caused an increase in hate crimes and unlawful discrimination can help prevent similar responses in the future.

Bias is often unconscious, and people may not even realize they are acting or thinking in a biased manner. Training and education can help individuals become more aware of their biases and how they impact others. By understanding these biases, individuals can take steps to overcome them and act more fairly .It can help create a more inclusive and equitable society, where everyone is treated fairly and has the opportunity to succeed.

Law enforcement training is also critical to ensure community trust, which is essential to increasing victim reporting of hate crime and hate incidents.

Law enforcement training is helpful in understanding the different experiences and intersectionality of the identities of communities targeted by hate crimes and hate incidents, and to conduct investigations.



Support and expand community-based responses and partnerships

Building relationships with community organizations and leaders is crucial in supporting and expanding community-based responses and partnerships. This involves actively seeking out partnerships and engaging with community members to understand their needs and concerns. Providing resources and support can help strengthen their capacity to address bias in the community. This can include providing funding for programs or initiatives, offering training or technical assistance, and sharing best practices and research.

Collaboration between community organizations, local government, and other stakeholders can help build a collective response to bias. Encouraging collaboration and partnerships can lead to more effective and sustainable solutions. It is important to center the voices of those who are most impacted by bias in community-based responses and partnerships. This means actively listening to and involving members of impacted communities in decision-making and solution development.

Expanding and prioritizing community-based partnerships will enhance the Bias Response Process. By supporting and expanding community-based responses and partnerships, we can work towards creating a more inclusive and equitable society where everyone is treated with dignity and respect.

Community-based organizations (CBOs) can engage with the local community on a much more direct level to address the social and economic needs of individuals and groups. CBOs can also help bridge the gap between services and specific communities that may feel they are facing additional barriers to receiving services, such as income level, ethnic group, religion, language barrier, age, disabilities, health issues, gender identity and sexual orientation, or other factors. CBOs can develop and implement programs that address bias in their communities. This can include mentoring programs, community dialogues, and initiatives that promote diversity and inclusion.

Examples of CBOs include:

- ❖ churches, mosques, temples;
- ❖ youth development groups;
- ❖ services for elderly individuals;
- ❖ LGBTQIA-specific agencies;
- ❖ culture- and ethnicity-based orgs.;
- ❖ domestic violence and sexual assault groups; and
- ❖ immigrant and day labor groups.



Prioritize cultural barriers and language access

Ensuring that governments have access to linguistic tools and resources that are professional and culturally appropriate for the communities they serve. It requires deploying the most effective manner and means of resource delivery for impacted communities and may also require eliminating technological barriers. Language accessibility is often critical to reaching affected communities, and often requires more than literal translations and should take into account cultural contexts of specific words and symbols. In addition, translated resources should use language that is accessible to people with different educational backgrounds and different levels of experiences.

Organizations can address issues related to culture in a number of ways, including:

- ❖ ensuring services are available in the languages spoken by dominant cultural and ethnic groups;
- ❖ ensuring written material in low English language literacy levels;
- ❖ employing providers and staff that reflect the diversity of the population served; and
- ❖ implement policies and procedures designed to eliminate bias and discrimination.

Together, cultural and linguistic competence can be defined as behaviors, attitudes, and policies that come together in a system, agency, or among professionals that enables effective work in cross-cultural situations. It implies having the capacity to function effectively as an individual and an organization within the context of the cultural beliefs, behaviors, and needs presented by individuals and their communities. Both language access and culturally competent approaches should include understanding of

the customary time, place, and methods for effective communications.

To be culturally and linguistically competent, individuals and organizations should:

- ❖ identify, understand, and respect differences in communities' cultural beliefs, behaviors, and needs;
- ❖ respond appropriately to communities based on their culture and language needs, which may include making referrals or asking for help (e.g. getting interpretation and translation services); and acknowledge, respect, and accept cultural differences among communities.



Promote allyship between the different communities in the regions.

Promoting allyship between different communities in the regions can be a valuable step towards creating a more inclusive and equitable society. Allyship starts with listening to and learning from the experiences and perspectives of those from different communities. This involves actively seeking out opportunities to engage with members of different communities and understanding their experiences and challenges. It requires acknowledging and using the privileges one has to advocate for and support those from marginalized communities.

It is important to recognize one's own privilege and use it to elevate the voices and experiences of those who may not have the same opportunities. Speaking out against oppression and discrimination, even when it may not directly impact oneself. It is important to call out acts of bias and discrimination, and take action to support those who are marginalized. Building relationships with members of different communities is key to promoting allyship.

Allyship involves supporting and amplifying the voices of those from marginalized communities. This can include sharing their stories, advocating for their rights, and using one's platform to raise awareness about their experiences and challenges.



Endorse public awareness campaigns

Public awareness campaigns are another effective method to increase awareness. Public awareness campaigns may be conducted through messaging, videos, outreach, media, stakeholder meetings, and more. When public awareness campaigns are conducted by federal, state, local, Tribal, or territorial governmental entities, they also can communicate a clear message that the needs of the communities are being heard, that it is safe and that the government is prioritizing efforts to address bias incidents. Public awareness campaigns should be conducted through a comprehensive effort and the use of multiple components and strategies, incorporating principles of language access, cultural competence, and community education.

Engaging in dialogue with others about the importance of addressing bias and the impact it has on individuals and communities. This helps create a culture of understanding and promotes the value of inclusivity. It inspire action towards creating a more inclusive and equitable society.

It is important to show support for communities that are affected by bias by attending their events, participating in their initiatives, and offering support and resources. This helps build bridges between communities and promotes mutual understanding and respect.

Public awareness campaigns should be conducted through a comprehensive effort and the use of multiple components and strategies, incorporating principles of language access, cultural competence, and community education.

Inclusive Public Engagement

Inclusive public engagement is about building strong and sustainable relationships and partnerships. One of the key components of making our public engagement processes responsive, inclusive, and culturally appropriate was to focus on enhancing relationships and engagement, enriching knowledge gathering, and embracing organizational change. The goals of public engagement are to:

- ❖ empower communities to make decisions for themselves;
- ❖ release the capacity and potential of communities; and
- ❖ change relationships between service providers and communities.

The six essential strategies for inclusive public engagement:

- ❖ build personal relationships with racial/ethnic community,
- ❖ develop alternative methods for engagement,
- ❖ partner with diverse organizations and agencies,
- ❖ maintain a presence within the community,
- ❖ increase accessibility, and
- ❖ create a welcoming atmosphere

An effective community engagement strategy can build trust, empower community members, provide access to multiple perspectives and expertise, create a culture of communication, and improve communication.

Some community engagement ideas include:

- ❖ Community trainings that address critical topics related to: Inclusive Leadership, Unconscious Bias, Bias Awareness and Microaggressions, or Effective Allyship in the community.
- ❖ A community storytelling for underserved members of the community to share their personal stories and/or journeys of success.
- ❖ Education on culturally appropriate models for how underrepresented communities can safely and successfully interact with representatives and regional processes in meaningful ways that add value to both their communities and the region.
- ❖ Roundtables to discuss leadership opportunities to increase representation on City advisory committees, boards and commissions, neighborhood associations, and other public involvement opportunities. Discuss critical issues citizens are facing related to bias and share their experiences about how to make the community more welcoming.
- ❖ A regional calendar about community events and activities.
- ❖ Creative photo contests, idea or design competitions and community art projects, encourage community members to get creative when it comes to identifying and addressing local issues.
- ❖ Community events highlighting different cultures, entertainment, and/or food/ cuisine.
- ❖ Events to support small and/or underserved businesses in the region.
- ❖ Conduct community surveys.



Thank you!

Zilo International Group, LLC is held to the highest standard of excellence when committing to our clients' success.

We are honored to have partnered with OCWCOG on this important project. It is our hope to build a long-term relationship and assist you in other areas as well.

ZILO
INTERNATIONAL GROUP

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