

Frequently Asked Questions

Bias Reporting and Supports

- 1. Who serves as a Bias Response Team Coordinator?**
 - a. The Bias Response Team coordinators are currently Harvard Chan administrators who oversee the coordination, strategy and implementation of bias response practices, and tracking of reported incidents in the school.
- 2. Why do we have a Bias Response Team?**
 - a. We have a Bias Response Team at Harvard Chan because we maintain a commitment to addressing bias and providing education on critical issues of identity that often manifest in words, comments or actions motivated by bias. We also know that while we strive to create a welcoming environment on campus, incidents of bias can still occur and so it is important to have a system in place to provide support and education in response to such incidents.
- 3. Who responds to reported incidents?**
 - a. Response is performed by a member of the Bias Response Team. Our coordinators respond to the impact of bias on campus following a reported incident by meeting with individuals directly involved in the incident that was reported.
- 4. Who can make a report?**
 - a. All members of the Harvard Chan community, students, employees, faculty, and academic appointees are encouraged to use the system. Non-Harvard/Harvard Chan affiliates can also use the system if the incident involves the Harvard Chan community.
- 5. Why should I report if I witness or experience a bias incident?**
 - a. Every member of the Harvard Chan community should be able to feel that their experiences reflect the School's values of diversity, equity, and inclusion. Your sense of belonging, values, and safety are deeply important. The bias-related incident reporting system is one step toward promoting that we, as an institution, live out these values. The reporting system allows for you to safely and anonymously report an incident you may have experienced or witnessed, receive support, and explore options for resolution.
 - b. The system allows the Harvard Chan School to address bias-related incidents on an ongoing basis and keep a systematic record of the numbers and types of such incidents as a potential school-wide performance indicator. This information will help to further inform and refine school-wide diversity and inclusion efforts.
- 6. What if I am not sure if I want to remain anonymous?**
 - a. Any member of the Harvard Chan community who is not sure if they want to remain anonymous should contact the Bias Response Team to understand what a typical process for follow up entails. This can be an opportunity to ask questions, explore hypothetical situations, and learn more about how the Bias Response team generally operates, what steps are normally taken, and what resources and supports are available to those who report incidents of bias anonymously and those who do not.
- 7. Is the Bias Response Team's follow up a formal investigation?**
 - a. No. The process coordinated by the Bias Response Team is not an investigation. The focus of the conversations with the individual(s) involved in a reported incident is to understand the central issue, provide support and to explore pathways and resources for growth and understanding on the issue at the core of the incident. Incidents requiring a formal investigation will require alternative follow up measures that may

involve interviewing involved parties and witnesses, gathering information and fact finding, and making a determination on policy violations.

8. How do I submit a report?

- a. A report can be submitted in a variety of ways. Our current system allows for individuals to make an [online report](#), either with their name or anonymously. Additionally, individuals can contact the Bias Response Team coordinators via email by emailing us at odi@hsph.harvard.edu.

9. What is a bias incident?

- a. A bias incident is an action committed against a person or group that is motivated in whole or in part by bias.

10. What if I am unsure that an incident was in fact a bias incident?

- a. If you are not sure whether or not an incident was in fact a bias incident, you have the option to consult with a member of the Bias Response Team. This conversation can be an opportunity for education on related issues and can also help individuals understand how we are defining a bias incident within the context of our work.

11. Can telling a joke be considered a bias incident?

- a. As it relates to jokes that are of concern, the Bias Response Team is primarily focused on jokes that both target an individual's social identity(ies) (e.g. race, gender identity, religion, socioeconomic status, etc.) in addition to protected classes, **and** that are also derogatory, demeaning, and/or that perpetuate stereotypes about that particular group. By better understanding which jokes are of concern, individuals can make better choices about which jokes they can tell, and which ones to avoid.

12. Should I make a report if I am a third party that was not directly involved in the incident?

- a. Even if you do not directly experience an incident but you witness such an event that can be described as a bias incident, act of discrimination or hate crime, for example, you can still make a report to the school's Bias Response Team. Once we have the information, we will ensure that appropriate steps are taken.

13. Is this a confidential process?

- a. The conversations between a Bias Response Team member and community members are private conversations. The goal of our work is to provide support, education and resources for growth on related issues. Our Responders are not hearing officers and are not trained to conduct formal investigations. Instead our work is focused on our ability to engage in dialogue on issues of bias, offering support, raising awareness, and providing education on bias that often manifests in words, comments or behaviors.

NOTE: *As mandated reporters, and for liability purposes, our Bias Response Team members will also disclose prior to engaging in conversation that if an individual admits to having committed a crime, hate crime, and/or behaviors that reflect discrimination, harassment, assault, or a Title IX concern (e.g. sexual assault), that information must be communicated to appropriate entities at the School.*

14. Is the anonymous reporting feature truly anonymous?

- a. Yes. When using the anonymous reporting feature, the bias-reporting system will not record any information about you or the device used to report the incident. You will have the option to identify yourself in your report if you would like to be contacted directly. If you decide to remain anonymous, you will be able to check on the status of your report by using the PIN the system generates. This will allow you to securely view and respond to communication about your reported incident without having to identify yourself.

15. What are the outcomes of the Bias Response process?

- a. The intended outcome of the bias response process is to provide support to individuals who are impacted by acts of bias, and to make any necessary referrals when appropriate. Additionally, for those who make comments or exhibit behaviors motivated by bias that impact others, we intend to provide a process that leads to deeper knowledge and understanding on the central issue and greater awareness of resources and pathways for ongoing personal development and growth on these issues.

16. What happens after I make a report?

- a. Please review the [Bias Response Flow Chart](#) for an illustration of the pathways once a report is made. In general, once a report is made it is reviewed by a team of administrators. Based on the nature of the report, it will be assigned to either the Bias Response Team, a Title IX Resource Coordinator, or Dean of Academic Affairs for follow up. As for the follow up, within 72 hours of receiving the report, if the identity is known, the person who made the report will be contacted communicating an opportunity to meet with one of our Bias Response Team coordinators and regarding the next steps that they can expect.

17. What happens after I meet with a Bias Response Team member?

- a. After the meeting, the Bias Response Team coordinator will send a closing communication summarizing steps taken and offering opportunities for future conversations and additional support.

18. How long does the bias response process take to be completed?

- a. The amount of time it takes to complete the bias response cycle (from submitted report to follow up, and then to closing) varies and depends on the availability of the involved individual(s) in relation to meeting times. On average, it can take anywhere between one week to 16 days to complete this cycle depending on coordination of schedules.

19. How do I get access to more resources?

- a. If you are interested in accessing more resources related to bias, its impact and pathways for growth on key issues, please contact the Bias Response Team at odi@hsph.harvard.edu. We will also look to make resources available on our webpage.

20. Is there anyone who can assist me with making a report?

- a. Yes. There are several individuals, groups, and offices at the Harvard Chan School that can help. Staff members in the Offices of Diversity and Inclusion and Student Affairs are knowledgeable about additional resources.
- b. Additional Resources:
 - i. Ombuds Office
 - ii. Office of Diversity and Inclusion
- c. Additional Resources for Students:
 - i. Office of Student Affairs
 - ii. Harvard University Counseling and Mental Health Services
- d. Additional Resources for Staff:
 - i. Harvard Chan HR
 - ii. Employee Assistance Program
- e. Additional Resources for Faculty/Academic Appointees:
 - i. Harvard Chan Faculty Affairs
 - ii. Employee Assistance Program