

Documenting Bias Incidents

The 2016 Diverse Learning Environments survey reported that 42.3% of queer-spectrum college students frequently witnessed discrimination, though 84.7% had never reported an incident to a campus authority. Often, incidents are instead shared with friends and in LGBTQ student groups. Keeping an accurate record of bias-related incidents or acts of discrimination becomes a powerful tool when advocating for safer campuses. **This guide is not intended to replace your campus' bias-incident report system; it is an additional tool for advocacy and memory.**

Create a spreadsheet with the following information fields:

- Name of person reporting
- Is the person reporting on behalf of someone else?
- Date of incident
- Time of incident
- Location of incident
- Names of all witnesses to the incident
- Detailed description of incident
- Response to incident (e.g. follow-up conversation, report filed)

Keep in mind:

- **Always respect the reporter's confidentiality.** They should feel free to provide as much or as little information as they are comfortable sharing.
- **The document of records should be private** to either your organization's advisor, executive board, or membership. Everyone who reports should be told who exactly will have access to the information. Protect the data to make sure it cannot be accessed by unauthorized people (e.g. password-protected, only stored on one computer).
- **The document of records is not a weapon.** Use it as an advocacy tool to ask for campus changes or to help inform and keep organization members safer. Do not use it to attack others. If someone needs to be held accountable for acts of discrimination, get help from your advisor or campus administrators.