

Promoting Unity and Human Rights: A Commitment from the Vermont Human Rights Commission

For Immediate Release

November 30, 2023

Contact: Amanda Garcés
Director of Policy, Education and Outreach
Amanda.Garces@vermont.gov; 802-828-2580

Montpelier, VT—In the face of discrimination and hate crimes driven by bias and prejudice, the Vermont Human Rights Commission (VHRC) stands unwaveringly in its commitment to fostering full civil and human rights in Vermont. Our mission is rooted in creating a society where every individual is treated with dignity, regardless of race, color, religion, ethnicity, national origin, sexual orientation, gender, or gender identity.

Recent events, such as the horrific shooting of three Palestinian college students—Aliahmad, Abdalhamid, and Awartani—in Burlington, underscore the urgent need for collective efforts to combat discrimination and hate crimes.

To our communities enduring the impact of shootings and indefensible attacks on human rights, know that you are not alone. The VHRC is here to work to protect individuals from unlawful discrimination in housing, state government employment, and any place that serves the public.

We declare unequivocally that acts of violence should not be tolerated, and we must stand together against injustice. The VHRC works diligently to enforce anti-discrimination laws, educate the public, and provide vital information and referrals. Our vision is of a society where people treat each other with respect and work collaboratively to eliminate discrimination.

Together, let us strive for a Vermont where inclusivity prevails, understanding flourishes, and discrimination and hate have no place. We are committed to this vision, and we invite all community members to stand up against hate, learn about each other, take classes with us, and bring claims of discrimination to be investigated.

In recognizing the complexity of these issues, we emphasize that harassment, even if it doesn't escalate to the level of a hate crime, remains unacceptable and should be reported. As a state agency immersed in addressing discrimination cases daily, we want to be a resource for those facing injustice.

Furthermore, we acknowledge the pivotal role played by the Office of the Vermont Attorney General Civil Rights Unit in investigating hate crimes in our state. Their charge aligns with our shared goal of creating a community that values diversity and upholds human rights. Please see their resources around hate crimes here: [Hate Crimes | Office of the Vermont Attorney General](#).

Additionally, we recommend exploring resources from the [United States Department of Justice, which](#) offers some translated resources to further support our collective efforts.

###