ADL: Reported antisemitic incidents up 140% in 2023, shattering records

April 16, 2024

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Jewish News Syndicate

<https://www.jns.org/adl-reported-antisemitic-incidents-up-140-in-2023-shattering-records/>

In part due to the unleashing of Jew-hatred in the aftermath of Hamas’s Oct. 7 massacre, antisemitism in the United States spiked by a record 140%, according to figures released by the Anti-Defamation League on Tuesday.

[Nearly 9,000 incidents](https://www.adl.org/resources/tools-to-track-hate/heat-map) of assault, harassment and vandalism—including more than 5,000 in the post-Oct. 7 period—were reported across America last year. The figure not only blew away the totals from 2022—itself a record year—but outpaced the marks from the previous three years combined. The ADL began tracking relevant data in 1979.

The numbers in the ADL Audit of Antisemitic Incidents bear out a staggering 24 incidents of Jew-hatred per day in the United States.

That only includes examples which are reported. According to the American Jewish Committee, nearly four in five Jews who experience antisemitic harassment don’t report it to law enforcement or media, mainly for fear of ongoing harassment.

‘Antisemitism is nothing short of a national emergency, a five-alarm fire that is still raging across the country and in our local communities and campuses,’ said Jonathan Greenblatt, ADL CEO. ‘Jewish Americans are being targeted for who they are at school, at work, on the street, in Jewish institutions and even at home.’

The rise was particularly felt on college [campus](https://www.jns.org/americas-elite-universities-failing-jewish-students-per-adl-report/)es, where reported antisemitic activity increased by 321% from 2022. Hamas supporters have turned out for demonstrations across the country on campuses after Oct. 7, often calling for violence against Jews and reveling in the massacre.

That particular phenomenon has led to congressional hearings and the subsequent ouster of the presidents of [Harvard](https://www.jns.org/harvard-resignation-is-a-dei-debacle/) and the University of [Penn](https://www.jns.org/embattled-penn-president-resigns-board-chair-follows-minutes-later/)slyvania for failure to condemn calls for the genocide of Jews, despite many opportunities to do so.

The tide appears to be turning, though, at least on some campuses. This week, the University of Southern California canceled the planned commencement speech of its valedictorian. While the official reason given was to maintain campus security and safety, critics pointed to the student’s antisemitic social media postings, including the labeling of Zionism as a ‘racist-settler colonial ideology.’

Meanwhile, a tenured political science professor at Hobart and William Smith colleges was removed from the classroom following the publication of an essay celebrating the events of Oct. 7 and calling them ‘exhilarating.’

Thirty-six percent of the 8,873 reported incidents of antisemitism last year contained elements referencing Israel or Zionism, compared with 6.5% in 2022, the ADL says.

Even excluding all Israel-related incidents, though, antisemitic incidents still rose by 65% to 5,711 incidents recorded in 2023.

And the pre-Oct. 7 period was not quiet, either, with monthly year-over-year increases in February, March, April, May and September. Each of these months broke the previous monthly record for most incidents, set at 394 in November 2022.

**Elementary schools**

Grade schools also became a breeding ground for antisemitism, with the 1,162 incidents there marking an increase of 135%. The ADL cited K-12 school incidents including ‘swastikas scrawled on desks, playgrounds and school buildings; antisemitic images AirDropped to large groups of unwitting students; harassment directed at visibly Jewish students; and teachers saying Jews are rich, powerful and control banks.’

Peggy Shukur, vice president of the east division of the Anti-Defamation League, said last week that ‘unvetted curriculum is being developed, sometimes created through teacher unions or other groups with some kind of ideological agenda, resulting in the existence of curricula that is biased and sometimes antisemitic.’

Incidents of vandalism, bomb threats and swatting against synagogues and Jewish institutions also skyrocketed in 2023, according to the ADL data.

Oren Segal, vice president of the ADL Center on Extremism, said these incidents were ‘all aimed at terrorizing the community by disrupting services and activities’ at sites where Jews congregate.

‘Our tracking of a swatting network enabled ADL to offer crucial intelligence to law enforcement, ensuring accountability for perpetrators, while also preemptively alerting targeted communities and mitigating potential harm,’ said Segal.

The ADL on Tuesday issued a call to state governors across America to enact individual, state-level versions of the Biden administration’s National Strategy to Counter Antisemitism.

‘This crisis demands immediate action from every sector of society and every state in the union,’ said Greenblatt. ‘We need every governor to develop and put in place a comprehensive strategy to fight antisemitism, just as the administration has done at the national level.’

The Biden administration has been criticized, though, for a failure to include enforcement mandates in its national plan and to, in large measure, fulfill existing mandates to take action for violations of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act.

‘Despite these unprecedented challenges, American Jews must not give in to fear,’ Greenblatt said. ‘Even while we fight the scourge of antisemitism, we should be proud of our Jewish identities and confident of our place in American society.’