

# Audit of Antisemitic Incidents 2023

## Executive Summary

- Each year, ADL (Anti-Defamation League) tracks incidents of antisemitic harassment, vandalism and assault in the United States. Since 1979 we have published this information in an annual Audit of Antisemitic Incidents.
- In 2023, ADL tabulated 8,873 antisemitic incidents across the United States. This represents a 140% increase from the 3,698 incidents [recorded in 2022](#) and is the highest number on record since ADL began tracking antisemitic incidents in 1979. In fact, ADL tracked more incidents in 2023 than in the previous three years combined.
- Incidents increased in all major Audit categories. Assault incidents increased by 45% to 161 incidents, vandalism increased 69% to 2,177 incidents and harassment increased 184% to 6,535 incidents.
- The dramatic increase in incidents took place primarily in the period following the [October 7 terrorist attacks in Israel](#). Between October 7 and the end of 2023, ADL tabulated 5,204 incidents -- more than the incident total for the whole of 2022. Fifty-two percent of the incidents after October 7 (2,718) included references to Israel, Zionism or Palestine.
- However, even prior to October 7th, there were monthly increases in February (402), March (471), April (432), May (437) and September (513). Each of these months broke the prior record for most incidents recorded in a single month, set in November 2022 (394).
- After October 7<sup>th</sup>, ADL observed explicitly antisemitic and anti-Zionist rhetoric at 1,352 anti-Israel rallies across the United States. Leaving out all Israel-related incidents, antisemitic incidents still rose by 65% to 5,711 over the 3,457 non-Israel-related incidents recorded in 2022.
- Antisemitic incidents also increased year-over-year in all major location categories. Incidents at K-12 schools increased by 135% to 1,162 incidents. Incidents at Jewish institutions jumped by 237% to 1,987, driven mostly by massive waves of hoax threats directed at synagogues and other institutions in the summer, fall and winter. And incidents on college and university campuses spiked by a staggering 321% to 922 incidents, most of which occurred after the October 7 terrorist attacks.
- ADL's 2023 Audit numbers contain 1,350 incidents included due to a post-October 7 methodology update (see Major Findings below). Excluding incidents included under the methodology update, ADL tabulated 7,523 incidents, a 103% increase in antisemitic incidents from the incident total in 2022.
- In response to the historic rise in antisemitic incidents, ADL urges Members of Congress to cosponsor and pass the Countering Antisemitism Act and Governor and state leaders to create and adopt State Strategies to Counter Antisemitism following the framework of the U.S. National Strategy to Counter Antisemitism.

## Major Findings

In 2023, ADL tabulated 8,873 antisemitic incidents across the United States. This represents a 140% increase from the 3,698 incidents recorded in 2022 and is the highest number on record since ADL began tracking antisemitic incidents in 1979. This represents a remarkable reversal from the early 2010s, when antisemitic incidents were at some of the lowest levels in the history of the Audit. Beginning in

2014, annual incident totals have increased year-over-year, breaking records in 2019, 2020, 2021 and 2022, and now again in 2023.

1,350 of these incidents (15% of the total) were included as a result of a methodology update that ADL implemented after the October 7 Hamas attack on Israel, when we saw an explosion of anti-Israel activism that incorporated expressions of opposition to Zionism, as well as support for resistance against Israel or Zionists that could be perceived as supporting terrorism or attacks on Jews, Israelis or Zionists. When they occur during public activism (such as at protests), in confrontations between individuals or in the form of vandalism (such as graffiti), these expressions constitute an implicit attack on the great majority of American Jews who view a relationship with Israel to be an important part of their religious, cultural and/or social identities. Such rhetoric can be traumatizing to many American Jews and has led to their exclusion from some spaces simply because of that element of how they define and express their Jewishness. (See “Methodology” section below for details.) Excluding incidents included under the methodology update, ADL tabulated 7,523 incidents, a 103% increase in antisemitic incidents from the incident total in 2022.

**Harassment:** Of the total, ADL categorized 6,535 incidents as harassment, defined as cases in which one or more Jewish people (or people who were perceived to be Jewish) were harassed verbally or in writing with antisemitic slurs, stereotypes or conspiracy theories. Acts of harassment increased 184% from 2,298 in 2022. 1,279 incidents of harassment were included due to the post-October 7 methodology update.

**Vandalism:** Another 2,177 incidents were categorized as vandalism, defined as cases where property was damaged in a manner that incorporated evidence of antisemitic intent or which had an antisemitic impact on Jews. Swastikas, which are widely interpreted by Jews to be symbols of antisemitic hatred, appeared in 1,117 of these incidents, up 41% from last year. Acts of antisemitic vandalism increased 69% from 1,289 in 2022. Seventy-one incidents of vandalism were included due to the post-October 7 methodology update.

**Assault:** A total of 161 incidents were categorized as assault, defined as cases where Jewish people (or people perceived to be Jewish) were targeted with physical violence accompanied by evidence of antisemitic animus. Antisemitic assaults increased 45% from 111 in 2022. Most antisemitic assaults (141 out of 161) were perpetrated without the use of a deadly weapon, and there were no assaults perpetrated against the Jewish community that resulted in mass casualties. Orthodox Jews were targeted in 34% of the assault incidents nationally. The 161 assaults resulted in 196 victims, none of whom died. None of the assault incidents fell under the post-October 7 methodology update.

**Monthly Totals and the Post-October 7 Increase:** Even before October 7, ADL recorded notable increases in monthly totals of antisemitic incidents when compared with 2022. Before 2023, the record for the total number of antisemitic incidents recorded in a single month was set in November of 2022, when ADL recorded 394 incidents. In 2023, February (402), March (471), April (432), May (437) and September (513) all broke that record.

However, following Hamas’s October 7 terrorist attack on Israel and the resulting war, antisemitic incidents skyrocketed to a level unprecedented in the history of ADL’s tracking of antisemitism. From October 7-8, when Israel was still repelling the Hamas incursion into its territory, ADL recorded 89 antisemitic incidents, a 585% increase from the same period in 2022. (Thirty-two of those incidents were included as a result of our post-October 7 methodology change; if those incidents had been excluded

the increase would have been 375%.) Extremely high levels of antisemitic incidents persisted throughout the period before Israel's ground incursion into Gaza; from October 7 through October 27, ADL tabulated 1,431 incidents (439 of which were included due to the post-10/7 methodological update), for an increase of 538% compared to the same period in 2022.

ADL tabulated 1,813 incidents in October, 1,575 in November and 1,938 in December. This means that in the three-month period between October 7 and the end of 2023, ADL recorded more incidents than in any full year on record.

**A Large Percentage of Incidents Included References to Israel or Zionism:** For years ADL has tracked antisemitic incidents where perpetrators made references to Israel or Zionism, such as graffiti that included a swastika or an antisemitic slur and phrases like "F--k Israel." In the past, those incidents made up a relatively small percentage of the Audit incident totals. For example, in 2022, ADL tracked 241 antisemitic incidents that included references to Israel or Zionism, constituting 7% of the incident total. In comparison, ADL tracked 3,162 antisemitic incidents that included references to Israel or Zionism in 2023, constituting 36% of the incident total. In the wake of October 7<sup>th</sup>, Israel-related incidents rose dramatically. For the first time since ADL started tracking references to Israel in antisemitic incidents, these cases constituted the majority of incidents in the months of October (59%) and November (60%).

A significant portion of post-October 7 Israel-related incidents occurred at anti-Israel/pro-Palestinian rallies, where ADL observed antisemitic and anti-Zionist rhetoric in the form of signs, chants and speeches from protest leaders. In the months of October, November and December, ADL tracked 1,352 incidents associated with anti-Israel rallies. In 172 cases, incidents at anti-Israel rallies included classic antisemitic elements, such as swastikas and claims that Jews control the media. An additional 1,180 anti-Israel rally-related incidents were included due to the 2023 methodological revisions to reflect the context of the worst attack on Jews since the Holocaust. Incidents at anti-Israel rallies will be examined in more detail later.

Incidents associated with anti-Israel rallies made up 43% percent of all Israel-related incidents in 2023. Anti-Israel rhetoric was an element in 1,174 additional incidents of harassment, as well 603 incidents of vandalism and 33 incidents of assault.

**Threats Against Jewish Institutions Increased Dramatically:** Another major driver of the spike in incidents in 2023 were threats against synagogues and Jewish institutions. 2023 saw the largest antisemitic bomb threat spree ever recorded by ADL. The ADL Center on Extremism tabulated a total of 1,009 antisemitic bomb threats in 2023, the vast majority (906) of which targeted synagogues. In December alone, synagogues received 747 bomb threats. In addition, in July, August and September, the ADL Center on Extremism tracked a series of at least 66 [swatting](#) hoaxes perpetrated by a ring of extremist individuals who contacted law enforcement and crisis hotlines with false claims of imminent violent threats at Jewish institutions (a total of 104 swatting incidents were recorded at Jewish institutions over the course of the year).

**Incidents Spiked on College and University Campuses:**

A total of 922 antisemitic incidents (10% of all incidents) took place on college and university campuses, a 321% increase over the 219 incidents recorded in 2022. Three hundred sixty-eight campus incidents were included due to ADL's post-October 7 methodology change. If those incidents had been excluded, campuses would have recorded 554 incidents, a 153% increase.

**Top States and Cities:** Incidents took place in all 50 states as well as the District of Columbia. The states with the highest number of incidents were California (1,266), New York (1,218), New Jersey (830), Florida (463) and Massachusetts (440). Combined, these five states account for 48% of the total incidents.

On a per capita basis, the states with the highest concentration of antisemitic incidents were New Jersey – with 8.93 incidents per 100,000 residents – followed by Vermont (6.64), Massachusetts (6.28), New York (6.23), Maryland (5.49) and Connecticut (5.09). On the city level, two cities – Manhattan (26.84 per 100,000) and Washington, D.C. (25.75 per 100,000) – stood out with far and away the highest levels of incidents per capita. Brooklyn, New York stood out specifically in terms of physical assault incidents, with 1.16 assaults per 100,000 residents.



## Themes and Trends

### Israel-and Zionism-Related Incidents

Of the 8,873 incidents tabulated in 2023, 3,162 (36% of the total) contained elements referencing Israel or Zionism. Of these, 1,350, or 43%, were included due to the post-October 7 methodological update, which is explained in the Methodology section.

The majority (2,526) of Israel-related incidents took the form of harassment, including 1,352 incidents that took place at anti-Israel protests. An additional 603 incidents took the form of vandalism, and 33 Israel-related incidents were physical assaults.

Israel-related antisemitic incidents most frequently occurred in public spaces (1,540). For example, a Jewish person wearing a kippah was accosted in Philadelphia on October 10 by an individual who yelled, "Take that thing off your head" and "The war was provoked." In Washington, D.C. on October 13, an individual yelled, "Fuck the Jews, Free Palestine" at a group of visibly Jewish people walking home from a Shabbat dinner.

Another 644 Israel-related incidents took place on by college and university campuses. In August, a University of Illinois at Chicago student spat at a Jewish student and said, "You fucking Zionist" during an argument. On November 28<sup>th</sup>, a Jewish Queens College student received a series of threatening text messages, including one that said, "Go back to Germany for real. No Hitler and a safe place for the terrorist Zionists to dominate the world."

Jewish institutions were targeted in Israel-related incidents on 377 occasions. On October 7 at a synagogue in Clifton, New Jersey, an individual yelled, "Long live Hamas." On October 13, a synagogue in Norfolk, Virginia received an email reading, "Praise Allah! Praise Hamas! Death to Israel! Burn the Jews!"

At businesses, where 255 Israel-related incidents occurred in 2023, Jewish customers and employees experienced antisemitic harassment. In December, two visibly Jewish people were verbally accosted at a store in Manhattan, New York after an employee heard them talking about Israel. The assailant allegedly yelled, "Get the fuck out of my store, you fucking Jewish pieces of shit, you should all die. You bomb hospitals and should all be killed." On November 11 in Denver, Colorado, an individual at a gym called an employee who was wearing an IDF shirt a "baby killing Jewish coward."

K-12 schools were the site of 156 Israel-related incidents. In December, graffiti was found in a girl's high school bathroom in Maplewood, New Jersey that read, "Kill the Jews" alongside "Free Palestine." In Miami, Florida, on October 31 a teacher commented to a student, "Hamas will kill you."

The remaining 190 Israel-related incidents took place at homes, Jewish-owned businesses, non-Jewish places of worship, or cemeteries. A Manhattan apartment building was vandalized in June with the words "Zionist Jews exploded the towers." A Seattle-based Jewish-owned business received a message on social media that read, "You can't hide...Muslims in King County outnumber Jews. Righteous anti-Zionist free people outnumber Zionists."

Of the 3,162 antisemitic incidents that related to Israel or Zionism, 57% met the criteria prior to the October 7 methodological update - which still represents a high-water mark for such type of incidents.





### Incidents at Anti-Israel Protests

Beginning immediately after the [October 7 Hamas massacre](#), several anti-Israel organizations held protests across the United States to express solidarity with the Palestinians. Many of these protests included rhetoric that [celebrated the brutal terrorist attack](#). From October 7 through December 31, ADL reviewed more than 1,800 anti-Israel protests, and while a fraction of these protests focused on legitimate criticism of the state of Israel, 1,352 included elements that qualified as antisemitic incidents.

The rhetoric used at the protests in the early days and weeks after October 7 set the tone for the anti-Israel protests that continued through the end of 2023, including the promotion of classic antisemitic tropes, unapologetic support for terrorism and extreme anti-Zionism. Protesters repeatedly held Jews around the world collectively responsible for the Israeli military's alleged actions. Though many protests were seemingly motivated by anti-Israel animus or anger over Palestinian suffering, the impact of the rhetoric at these protests included in the Audit was undeniably antisemitic.

The [primary organizers of these protests](#) included [American Muslims for Palestine \(AMP\)](#), [Jewish Voice for Peace \(JVP\)](#), Freedom Road Socialist Organization (FRSO), Palestinian Youth Movement (PYM), Party for Socialism and Liberation (PSL), Samidoun, Students for a Democratic Society (SDS), [Students for Justice in Palestine \(SJP\)](#), U.S. Palestinian Community Network (USPCN), [Within Our Lifetime-United for Palestine \(WOL\)](#) and others.

#### *Rhetorical themes*

Numerous protests featured signs and comments from speakers that qualified as antisemitic incidents due to their promotion of classic antisemitic tropes, including allegations that Jews or Zionists control the media, financial institutions or the U.S. government. Another type of classic antisemitic signage

frequently seen at anti-Israel protests equated Judaism or Zionism with Nazism. Other signs referenced classic antisemitic conspiracy theories, including about the [USS Liberty](#) and [alleged Jewish or Israeli involvement in 9/11](#).

The post-October 7 protests also saw the [resurgence](#) of the [blood libel](#) — a classic antisemitic trope whose [origins](#) date back to the Middle Ages. This antisemitic trope accuses Jews of murdering non-Jewish children to use their blood to perform religious rituals. In a post-October 7 context, it [manifested](#) in conspiratorial accusations about Israel “harvesting” [Palestinian organs](#) or graphic imagery depicting Israelis drinking Palestinian blood.

Another [common theme](#) in the antisemitic incidents recorded at anti-Israel protests was the glorification of groups and individuals recognized by the U.S. government as [Designated Foreign Terrorist Organizations \(FTOs\)](#) and [Specially Designated Global Terrorists \(SDGTs\)](#), including some who call for the death of Jews not just in Israel but worldwide. Groups like [Hamas](#), [Hezbollah](#), the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) and the [Houthis \(Ansar Allah\)](#) were celebrated by anti-Israel protesters in the U.S. and their symbols were prominently displayed on flags, headbands, and signs at many protests.

A particularly disturbing recurring example of support for terrorist groups and their violence against civilians came in the form of paraglider imagery — a direct reference to Hamas’s use of paragliders to infiltrate Israel on October 7, killing approximately 1,200 people and kidnapping 240 hostages. Paraglider images appeared on signs at protests in such cities as Berkeley, CA; Chicago, IL; Madison, WI; and Washington, D.C.

Other common examples of antisemitic rhetoric at protests included extreme anti-Zionist slogans and statements that went beyond focusing on Palestinian rights to also call for the destruction of the state of Israel, the expulsion of Jews from Israel and the explicit exclusion of “Zionists” from public life around the world. The [chant](#) “From the river to the sea, Palestine will be free” is fundamentally a call for a Palestinian state extending from the Jordan River to the Mediterranean Sea, territory that includes the State of Israel, which would mean the dismantling of the Jewish state. An even more explicit version of this slogan in Arabic was also present at many rallies: “Min il-maya lal maya, Falasteen Arabiye” — which translates to “from water to water [from the Jordan River to the Mediterranean Sea], Palestine is Arab.” Chants like “Hey hey, ho ho; Zionism has got to go” and “Say it loud, say it clear; we don’t want no Zionists here” also rang out at protests nationwide. These chants essentially call for the exclusion of Jews, since the overwhelming majority of Jews identify in some way with Zionism or identify with Israel.

### *Trends over time and place*

Between October 7 and December 31, antisemitic incidents took place at anti-Israel protests in all 50 states plus Washington, D.C. October saw the highest number of antisemitic incidents at protests at 521, while November had 452 and December had 379.

Certain days saw particularly high levels of concerning activity. One notable date in antisemitic protest activity was November 4, when tens of thousands of participants from hundreds of organizations across the U.S. took part in a [national march in Washington, D.C.](#) While the official demands published before the protest included some more moderate political criticisms of the state of Israel, attendees — like at so many other post-October 7 anti-Israel protests — went much further than that and leaned into problematic, antisemitic rhetoric.

Specific dates, identified by anti-Israel organizers as national or global “days of action,” caused spikes in protest-related antisemitic incidents on multiple occasions. These days of action included the two dates with the highest number of antisemitic incidents at protests: October 25 and November 9. The volume of antisemitic incidents on these two dates was bolstered by particularly high levels of activity on college campuses. [October 25](#) saw 69 total antisemitic incidents at anti-Israel protests, 62 of which occurred on college campuses. November 9 marked the first in a series of “Shut It Down for Palestine” days of action, and included 90 total antisemitic incidents at protests, 48 of which were on college campuses. Overall, 319 (23.6%) of the 1,352 antisemitic incidents that took place at post-October 7 anti-Israel protests occurred on college campuses.

November 24 was another date with a significant number of antisemitic incidents (43) at anti-Israel protests. The activity on this date demonstrated a broader trend in protest-related antisemitic incidents post October 7, as anti-Israel protesters often attempted to co-opt an existing holiday or other event — such as Black Friday — to promote their messages.

Most (823) incidents recorded at anti-Israel rallies took place in public areas, such as on the street, in parks and in town squares. Anti-Israel protests convened at city council meetings and other public forums, sometimes spreading antisemitic, anti-Zionist and pro-terror narratives. Speakers depicted Hamas terrorists as freedom fighters who must be supported unconditionally and compared Zionism to Nazism. Speakers also regularly invoked traditional antisemitic tropes, including decrying purported Zionist financial power, calling Israelis and Zionists “bloodsuckers” and “parasites” and perpetuating blood libel myths of organ harvesting.

Behind public spaces and, as noted above, college campuses (319), business establishments (152) represented the third most frequent location type for antisemitic incidents recorded at anti-Israel protests. Specific locations within this category included shopping malls, businesses that protesters alleged manufacture weapons for the Israeli military and businesses which are targeted by the [Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions \(BDS\) movement](#). A concerning number of protest-related antisemitic incidents took place at Jewish institutions and schools or Jewish-owned businesses. For example, a Jewish and Israeli-owned business in Philadelphia was targeted in December by protestors who chanted at the owner: “...what do you say? How many kids did you kill today?”

## Jewish Institutions

Jewish institutions, including Jewish schools, community centers and synagogues, were targeted with 1,987 antisemitic incidents in 2023. In total, this represents a 237% increase from the 589 incidents targeting Jewish institutions in 2022. This large increase is due in part to the dramatic spike in antisemitic bomb threats, the vast majority of which (906 of 1,009) targeted synagogues. In total, synagogues experienced 73% (1444 out of 1987 incidents) of all incidents impacting Jewish institutions in 2023.

Of the 1,987 incidents targeting Jewish institutions, 1,830 were incidents of harassment, 148 were incidents of vandalism and nine were incidents of assault. Of the 1,830 incidents of harassment, 321 were Israel/Zionism related, an increase of 249% from the 92 incidents tabulated in 2022. Most acts of vandalism took the form of graffiti, usually with a swastika or other antisemitic message. Other cases involved religious artifacts being desecrated or damaged, including menorahs being kicked over or vandalized with graffiti. One example is in February 2023, when a menorah was kicked and pushed over



outside of a yeshiva in Los Angeles. Of the 148 vandalism cases, 32 involved swastikas and 55 included references to Israel or Zionism. Eight of the nine incidents of assault at Jewish institutions took place at synagogues. Of the nine assaults, three took place in New York and there was one assault each in the following five states: Florida, Indiana, Maryland, New Jersey, and Texas, as well as one in Washington, D.C.



### **Bomb Threats**

In 2023, ADL tracked 1,009 antisemitic bomb threats, a massive increase over the 91 bomb threats logged in 2022 and the highest annual number on record. ADL archives indicate that the previous high [occurred in 2017](#) when 169 incidents were recorded for the year. With one exception (an inert grenade found at a Holocaust memorial in Brooklyn), no explosives were discovered at any of the affected Jewish institutions, but the threats resulted in police investigations, evacuations and disruptions to programming and Jewish life.

These threats were called in or emailed to a range of Jewish institutions, including cemeteries, synagogues, businesses and schools. Five non-Jewish schools and colleges received bomb threats that included antisemitic language. Bomb threats were recorded in 45 states and the District of Columbia with the highest level of activity (from most to least active) in New York, Florida, California, Arizona and Pennsylvania.

The majority of the threats occurred after October 7, and December was by far the most active month, with more than 800 Jewish institutions receiving emailed bomb threats that month. The messages

typically included death threats and a claim that explosives -- set to go off with in a few hours -- had been placed or hidden on site.

## **Swatting Incidents**

While swatting campaigns are not new, in 2023 [swatting](#) was used increasingly as a tactic to intimidate and harass marginalized communities, including 101 swatting incidents targeting Jewish institutions. Swatting is the deliberate and malicious act of reporting a false crime or emergency in order to provoke an aggressive response from law enforcement to a target's location.

During the summer months of 2023, the ADL Center on Extremism (COE) [tracked](#) a small group of online trolls across multiple social media platforms who were swatting a wide range of religious, public and educational institutions. This group's primary target was the Jewish community, and they were responsible for than 60 percent of the year's antisemitic swats.

COE's visibility into this swatting ring's methodology and activities allowed ADL to disrupt many of the swatting attempts in real time and share critical intelligence that informed law enforcement investigations. On December 13, 2023, an individual was arrested for their role in the swattings and the [FBI press release](#) noted ADL's assistance in the investigation.

## [White Supremacist Incidents](#)

### **Propaganda Distribution and Events**

Organized efforts by white supremacists to share antisemitic propaganda, mostly through distributing fliers with antisemitic messages, accounted for 1,160 incidents in 2023, up from 852 in 2022.

2023's notable rise in antisemitic propaganda was largely due to [Patriot Front](#)'s return to the use of antisemitic messaging in its propaganda after a four-year hiatus. Patriot Front, a white supremacist group, was responsible for 427 antisemitic propaganda incidents, or 37% of the year's total incidents. Explicitly antisemitic Patriot Front propaganda often included the phrase, "No Zionists in government, we serve one Nation." Given the group's neo-Nazi roots, there is little question that when Patriot Front mentions "Zionists" in their propaganda, they mean Jews. On several occasions, the group also displayed banners with the antisemitic phrase, "Merchants have no nation," meaning "Jews have no nation."

The October 7 Hamas attack on Israel also featured in the white supremacist propaganda. As white supremacist leaders applauded Hamas and violence against Israelis online, ADL recorded an uptick in antisemitic anti-Israel and anti-Zionist white supremacist propaganda on the ground. "No more wars for Israel," the common theme in many post-October 7 incidents, is a longstanding antisemitic slogan embraced and used primarily by antisemites on the far right (such as white supremacists). The slogan falsely implies that Jews/Israel effectively control U.S. foreign policy, and that U.S. military involvement in Iraq, Afghanistan and elsewhere has been solely or primarily for the benefit of Israel. This feeds into the age-old antisemitic trope that Jews have excessive power, and relies on historical claims of Jews controlling global affairs.

In other instances, the propaganda was more explicit and included the phrases, "Our tax \$ fund Israeli blood lust," "Zionism = Terrorism," "Death to Israel," "Jews aren't worth dying for" and "End Jewish Terror."

For the second straight year, [Goyim Defense League \(GDL\)](#), an antisemitic network that has significant crossover with other white supremacist groups and movements, distributed more antisemitic propaganda than any other group or network. Our data shows the GDL was responsible for 529 incidents, representing 46 percent of the year's total.

Since at least September 2023, individuals associated with the GDL adopted the harassment tactic of mailing antisemitic post cards and propaganda to the homes and offices of public officials and Jewish leaders around the country.

GDL has stated that its overarching goal is to expel Jews from America. To that end, their propaganda casts aspersions on Jews and spreads antisemitic myths and conspiracy theories in hopes of turning non-Jewish Americans against Jewish people. GDL's 2023 propaganda made baseless charges about Jewish power, and blamed Jews for a range of perceived social ills, including immigration, pornography, abortion and gun laws.

In addition to propaganda distributions, there were 49 recorded antisemitic white supremacist events in 2023. Approximately 18% of 2023's white supremacist events included at least one element of antisemitic harassment, from chants and written propaganda/signage to Hitler salutes, swastika flags and demonstrations targeting Jewish institutions.





## Public Forum Disruption

In 2023, ADL recorded 131 incidents nationwide in which public forums such as city council or school board meetings were [disrupted](#) by antisemitic speech. Extremists and bigots are using the public comment portion of these events, especially those with the option to call in virtually, to push antisemitic, anti-Zionist and white supremacist narratives.

The vast majority of these incidents are the work of individuals associated with the antisemitic Goyim Defense League (GDL). In September 2023, these efforts became more organized when a California-based GDL associate created a group called the City Council Death Squad (CCDS).

The magnitude and persistence of the CCDS harassment has prompted some city councils to discontinue remote or virtual public comments. In December, CCDS responded by creating a GiveSendGo fundraiser so that members can attend the 2024 meetings in person, saying, "They can shut us down on zoom [sic], but they can't stop us in person."

## Incidents on College and University Campuses

A total of 922 antisemitic incidents (10% of all incidents in 2023) took place on college and university campuses, a 321% increase over the 219 campus incidents recorded in 2022. College or university campus incidents included 695 incidents of harassment, 215 incidents of vandalism and 12 assaults. Three hundred sixty-eight (40%) of campus incidents were included due to the post-October 7 methodology update.

The post-October 7 spike in antisemitic incidents was particularly acute on college and university campuses. ADL recorded 732 campus-based antisemitic incidents (of the 932 annual total) between October 7 and the end of 2023 alone. This was a staggering 1,062% higher than the same two-month period in 2022, when ADL recorded only 63 incidents. Eighty-four percent of campus incidents after October 7 involved mentions of Israel, Zionism or Palestine. Of the post-October 7 campus incidents, 319 took place at anti-Israel rallies, and another 293 incidents were other Israel-related incidents of harassment, vandalism or assault. The remaining 120 antisemitic incidents on campuses recorded between October 7 and the end of the year were unrelated to Israel or Zionism. Removing incidents included due to the 2023 methodology update, incidents on college campuses still increased by 478% between October 7 and December 31, compared with the same period in 2022.

ADL recorded antisemitic incidents at over 300 universities across 43 states and the District of Columbia. The campuses with the most incidents in 2023 were Columbia University (17), The University of Michigan (15), Stanford University (14), Rutgers University (14) and the University of Washington (12).

Jewish students were targeted in campus residence halls on several occasions. For example, in February, mezuzot were removed from the doorframes of several Jewish students' residences at the University of Denver. Pork products were also glued to Jewish students' doors. In May, swastikas made of feces were smeared in a residence hall bathroom at the University of California, San Diego.

Campus antisemitism also extended into classrooms and lecture halls. At Simmons University in January, a professor allegedly praised Hitler during class. And in May, a University of Arizona student allegedly declared during a class that: "Zionists are basically as cruel as Nazis."

Immediately after Hamas's terrorist attacks in Israel, students, faculty and staff on several campuses praised the violence and demonized Zionists and Jewish students. On October 7<sup>th</sup>, a residence hall leader at Wellesley College sent an email to students living in a campus dorm that read, "[There] should be no space, no consideration, and no support for Zionism within the Wellesley College community." A student group at Portland State University released a statement on October 7 that declared: "Our hearts are with the brave Palestinian liberators fighting collectively for their homeland and people...they have the absolute right to defend themselves by any means necessary." And on October 10<sup>th</sup>, a University of California, Davis professor used their social media to call for physical violence against "Zionist journalists." The ADL Audit includes these as antisemitic incidents because of the negative impact they may have on Jewish students and Jewish life on campus.

In the weeks and months following the October 7 attacks, antisemitic rhetoric continued to permeate campus communities. ADL tracked 39 cases of antisemitic literature with anti-Israel themes being posted or distributed on campuses. For example, a flier was found on the UC Berkeley campus that read, "The media is Jewish" and "Who are the real terrorists?" alongside graphic images of dead and injured Palestinians. On the campus of the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, fliers were posted that read, "Nothing but Hate for Israel and Zionism. Nothing but love for Palestine and Liberation. From Gaza to the Americas, decolonization means attack!" Several incidents of graffiti also included violent antisemitic



and anti-Zionist messages. For example, graffiti was found in a restroom at San Francisco State University on November 28 that read, “Kill all Zionists.” Two weeks later “Kill the Jews” was again graffitied on a wall of the campus.

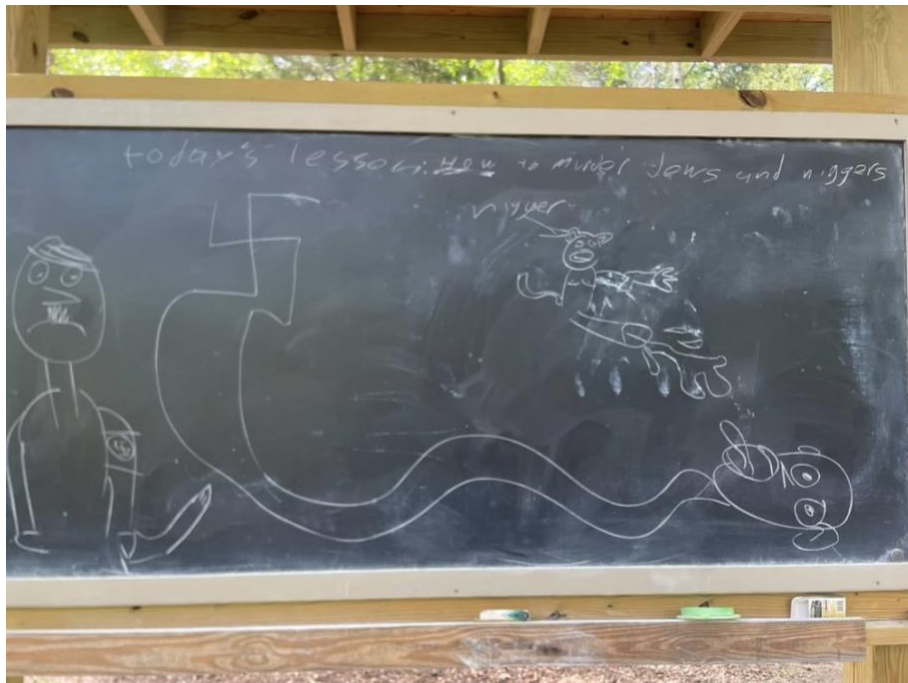
Jewish students were also directly heckled, harassed and in some cases even physically assaulted on and around campus. On October 19<sup>th</sup>, an individual shouted, “Fuck Israel” at a Jewish student wearing a Star of David necklace on the campus of the University of Houston. On October 25 an individual shouted, “Go back to Europe dirty Jews” at students on the campus of Northwestern University. On November 10<sup>th</sup>, a student at the University of Texas said, “Fuck the Jews” after overhearing two other students mention that they are Jewish. At Ohio State University, two Jewish students were punched by assailants who asked if they were Jewish and made antisemitic comments.

ADL tracked 61 incidents targeting Hillels and eight incidents targeting campus-affiliated Chabad centers. Both Hillel and Chabads are hubs of Jewish life on college campuses, making incidents targeting these institutions particularly sensitive and threatening to the Jewish community on campus. Incidents targeting Hillels and Chabads include the following:

- An object was thrown through a window of Purdue University’s Hillel building. (February 2023, West Lafayette, IN)
- A mural for the University of Arizona Hillel was vandalized. (April 2023, Tucson, AZ)
- A student yelled, “Fuck the Jews” in the University of Pennsylvania Hillel and vandalized property in the building. (September 2023, Philadelphia, PA)
- “From the river to the sea, Free Palestine” was written by a student on a chalkboard in the Hillel building at Rutgers University. (October 2023, New Brunswick, NJ)
- Two individuals vandalized Israeli flags and yelled anti-Israel threats inside of Ohio State University’s Jewish student center. (November 2023, Columbus, OH)
- Fliers raising awareness of Israeli hostages were torn from the walls of Chabad at ASU. (November 2023, Tempe, AZ)

Hillels and Chabads are categorized as Jewish institutions for purposes of the Audit. The 62 incidents targeting those institutions are in addition to the 922 targeting campuses generally.

death to  
zionists





## Incidents at K-12 Schools

In 2023 there were 1,162 antisemitic incidents tabulated in non-Jewish schools (mostly public schools). This is a 135% increase from the 495 incidents of 2021. Of the 1,162 K-12 school incidents, 672 were cases of harassment, 464 were cases of vandalism and 26 were cases of assault.

The 672 incidents of harassment in K-12 schools represent a 161% increase from the 257 incidents of harassment in 2022. Of the 672 incidents of harassment, 154 incidents (23%) included an image of a swastika (such as students drawing swastikas on classmate's notebooks or on classroom chalkboards and desks).

Additionally, of the 672 incidents of harassment in K-12 schools, 139 (21%) included references to Israel/Zionism. This is a dramatic increase compared to the nine Israel/Zionism-related K-12 incidents tabulated in 2022. Examples of these type of incidents include the following:

- A student yelled, "Fuck Jews! I hate Jews! I hate Israel" at a Jewish classmate on a school bus.
- An elementary school student approached a Jewish classmate and stated that "Jews are bad people" and "Israel is bombing everyone."
- A Jewish high school teacher was harassed by a student who stated, "You're a Jew" and "Your people need to stop killing babies."
- A middle school student stated to a Jewish classmate, "Go Hamas, Go Hezbollah....The Palestinians should kill all the Jews."

School-based harassment in 2023 also included one-off incidents such as when a middle school administrator received a note containing antisemitic death threats or when a high school student threatened their Jewish classmates stating that if they supported Israel, they would beat them up. Harassment incidents also included recurrent antisemitic bullying, such as classmates taunting Jewish students with Holocaust jokes and references as well as anti-Zionist comments.

The 464 incidents of antisemitic vandalism in K-12 schools in 2023 represents a 100% increase from the 232 incidents tabulated in 2022. Of the 464 vandalism cases recorded, swastikas were present in 87% of

K-12 vandalism cases (402 incidents). Vandalism incidents included graffiti such as “Fuck the Jews Hitler was Right (sic),” “We hate Jews” and “I like what the Nazis Did, I hate Jews.”

The 26 incidents of antisemitic assaults in K-12 schools in 2023 represents a 360% increase from the five incidents tabulated in 2022. Assault incidents included one-off cases of Jewish students being shot at a high school with a bb gun, a Jewish and non-verbal autistic student returning from school had a swastika carved on his back and a student pushed a Jewish classmate while on a school bus and stated, “You have to go sit up front. K\*kes can’t sit in the back.”

Given the insidious nature of bullying, compounded by the fact that many children may not feel empowered to report their experiences, it is likely that the actual number of school-based antisemitic incidents was significantly higher than the data reported in the Audit.



### Incidents of Physical Assault

In 2023 there were 161 reported antisemitic assaults in the U.S. This is an increase of 45% compared to the 111 incidents of 2022. Twenty of the 161 assaults were perpetrated with a deadly weapon like a gun, knife or vehicle. Orthodox Jews were targeted in 34% of the incidents nationally.

Antisemitic assaults took place in 25 states plus Washington D.C. Seventy percent of the assaults occurred in the following states New York (51), California (29), New Jersey (17), Massachusetts (8) and Florida (7). Thirty-two percent of the total assaults nationwide took place in New York, with 94% reported in four of the five boroughs of New York City: 30 in Brooklyn, 13 in Manhattan, seven in Queens and one on Staten Island. Visibly Orthodox Jews were targeted in 61% (31 out of 51) of the assault incidents in New York City.



A total of 196 victims were directly targeted in antisemitic assaults in 2023. This does not include bystanders or passersby who were not directly targeted. This is a 41% increase over the 139 victims of antisemitic assaults in 2022. There were 131 victims in 2021, 41 victims in 2020 and 95 victims in 2019.

In 2023 there were no assaults perpetrated against the Jewish community that resulted in a fatality. Of note, out of an excess of caution, we have not currently counted in the Audit a fatality of a pro-Israel demonstrator: [Paul Kessler](#), a 69-year-old Jewish man who died during a confrontation between pro-Israeli and pro-Palestinian demonstrators in Ventura County, California, on November 5, 2023. Loay Alnaji, a computer science community college professor, was subsequently arrested and charged with involuntary manslaughter and battery. The circumstances immediately preceding the encounter between Kessler and Alnaji are currently under investigation, and this incident may be added to the Audit in the future depending on facts that emerge at trial.

Examples of antisemitic assaults recorded in 2023 include:

- A group of individuals made antisemitic comments, including: “Let’s go, fucking Jew,” and “Yeah, do it for Kanye,” to a victim, whom they punched and robbed at a grocery store. (January 2023, Gaithersburg, MD)
- On February 15, 2023, [Jamie Tran](#) allegedly shot and wounded a visibly Jewish person who had just left a synagogue, apparently intending to kill the victim. The following day, Tran approached another visibly Jewish individual and shot and wounded the victim. Tran had a long history of making antisemitic comments and threats. (February 2022, Pico-Robertson neighborhood of Los Angeles, CA)
- After noticing a victim’s Star of David necklace, a group of approximately 20 individuals [assaulted three Jewish teenagers](#) near Rockaway Beach. (July 2023, Queens, NY)
- A group of orthodox school children were assaulted while walking to school. (September 2023, Brookline, MA)
- An [Israeli student at Columbia University was assaulted](#) by an individual who was pulling down posters that raised awareness about the Jewish hostages in Gaza. (October 2023, Manhattan, NY)
- An individual allegedly stated, “You think you’re so tough waving a flag, Zionist shitbag, let’s see how tough you are when I’m out here!” to a Jewish UMass student, before [punching the student](#), taking their Israeli flag and spitting on it. (October 2023, Amherst, MA)
- An individual broke into a Jewish family’s home and said, [“I’m going to kill you because you are Jewish,”](#) before physically assaulting one of the family members. The individual reportedly was armed with a kitchen knife. (October 2023, Studio City, CA)
- At Wayne State University, a Jewish student was harassed, shoved and called a “Fucking Zionist” while painting a free speech rock with an Israeli flag. (October 2023, Detroit, MI)
- Jewish student at the University of Georgia was assaulted by an individual who said, “You Israeli, I am going to murder you and all your family.” (October 2023, Athens, GA)

## Cemetery Desecration

Jewish graves and/or cemeteries were desecrated thirteen times in 2023, up from four in 2022. The desecration of Jewish headstones is a long-standing act of antisemitism used by those looking to terrorize and offend Jews.



- “KKK” was spray-painted at a Jewish cemetery. (January 2023, Indianapolis, IN)
- Headstones were toppled and bushes uprooted at a Jewish cemetery. (February 2023, Jackson, MI.)
- The head of a pig was placed in a Jewish cemetery. (March 2023, East Haven, CT)
- Gravestones were destroyed at a historic [Jewish cemetery](#). (May 2023, Hartford, CT)
- American flags next to headstones at a Jewish cemetery were lit on fire. (May 2023, Dallas, TX)
- Headstones at a Jewish cemetery were vandalized with red paint. (September 2023, Philadelphia, PA)
- [Swastika graffiti](#) was found spray-painted on the entrance to a Jewish cemetery. (September 2023, Rosedale, MD)
- Headstones at a [Jewish cemetery](#) were vandalized. (October 2023, Watertown, NY)
- Antisemitic graffiti was located at a cemetery. The graffiti included swastikas, “white power,” “KKK,” “kill all jews” and “all kikes must die.” (November 2023, Champaign, IL)
- Dead animals and coins were repeatedly left at a Jewish cemetery. (November 2023, Detroit, MI)
- A Jewish cemetery war veteran memorial was vandalized with swastikas. (November 2023, Dallas, TX)
- A [Jewish cemetery](#) was vandalized with swastikas. (November 2023, Brooklyn, OH)
- A Palestinian flag and “From the river to the sea, Palestine will be free” were spray-painted on a Jewish cemetery. (December 2023, Queens, NY)



## Methodology

The ADL Audit of Antisemitic Incidents is comprised of both criminal and non-criminal incidents of harassment, vandalism and assault against individuals and groups as reported to ADL by victims, law enforcement, the media and partner organizations. It is not a public opinion poll or an effort to catalog every expression of antisemitism.

Incidents are defined as vandalism of property, or as harassment or assault on individuals or groups, where either 1) circumstances indicate anti-Jewish animus on the part of the perpetrator, or 2) a reasonable person or group of people could plausibly conclude that they have been victimized due to their Jewish identity. Vandalism of Jewish cultural, educational, or religious institutions, as well as cemeteries, is generally included. Cases of robbery or theft are generally not included unless evidence of specific antisemitic animus is present.

**Online Content:** The Audit includes cases where individuals or groups were harassed online via antisemitic content in direct messages, on listservs or in social media settings where they would have the reasonable expectation of not being subjected to antisemitism. The Audit does not attempt to assess the total amount of antisemitism online.

**Credibility and tabulation:** ADL carefully examines the credibility of all reported incidents, including obtaining independent verification when possible. Each antisemitic action is counted only once, regardless of how many times it has been reported to ADL. ADL counts certain “sprees” of incidents only once. For example, if antisemitic fliers from an extremist group are distributed to several homes in one city over the course of a weekend, this is considered one incident for the purpose of the Audit. Similarly, if multiple expressions of antisemitism took place at a single public event, those expressions are only counted as one incident.

**Israel and Zionism:** Following the October 7 attack by Hamas, ADL updated its methodology regarding anti-Zionism. (Our original methodology can be found in Audit reports from previous years.)

- ADL is careful to not conflate general criticism of Israel or anti-Israel activism with antisemitism. Legitimate political protest, support for Palestinian rights or expressions of opposition to Israeli policies is not included in the Audit. ADL’s approach to Israel-related expressions comports with the [IHRA definition of antisemitism](#).
- Since October 7, 2023, ADL began to include in the Audit certain expressions of opposition to Zionism, as well as support for resistance against Israel or Zionists that could be perceived as supporting terrorism or attacks on Jews, Israelis or Zionists.
- When they occur during public activism (such as at protests), in confrontations between individuals or in the form of vandalism (such as graffiti), these expressions constitute an implicit attack on the great majority of American Jews who view a relationship with Israel to be an important part of their religious, cultural and/or social identities. Such rhetoric can be traumatizing to many American Jews and has led to their exclusion from some spaces simply because of that element of how they define and express their Jewishness.
- Physical scuffles or verbal insults between pro- and anti-Israel protestors are generally not included in the Audit unless the context suggests an antisemitic or anti-Zionist motivation for the assaults.
- The Audit includes all cases of picketing of Jewish religious or cultural institutions for their perceived or real support for Israel. It does not include protests outside pro-Israel political activist groups or Israeli embassies/consulates unless those protests incorporate anti-Zionism, support for terrorism, or classic antisemitic tropes.
- Burning or desecrating Israeli flags is not included in the Audit.

**Swastikas:** The appearance of swastikas, which are generally interpreted by Jews to be symbols of antisemitic hatred, are included in the Audit. However, swastikas are not included in circumstances when they appear to be targeting a different minority group. Swastikas used as a means of political protest on non-Israel-related issues are also not included. For example, in 2021, some Americans used swastikas, as well as references to Hitler and Nazi-era politics, in protests against COVID-19 public health measures and mask mandates; those incidents are not generally included in the Audit unless there is other evidence of antisemitic animus.

**The Audit excludes the following types of incidents:**

- Antisemitic activities or statements which take place in private venues (e.g., at a private meeting) or in a manner that requires potential victims to “opt-in” in order to access them (e.g., by going to websites where unmoderated discussion occurs, looking at specific individuals’ social media pages, etc.)
- Instances of discrimination (e.g., a Jewish employee not receiving an accommodation for Rosh Hashanah), unless the discrimination is accompanied by verbal harassment as described above.
- General expressions of white supremacy or other hateful ideologies, unless those expressions include overt antisemitic elements.

**Data Sources:**

- The majority of the incidents included in the Audit are reported to ADL directly by Jewish victims via our online form, email or phone message.
- ADL Center on Extremism researchers also monitor media reports and other online spaces for credible reports of antisemitic incidents and extremist activity.
- In 2021, the Audit began incorporating reports of antisemitic incidents from other Jewish organizations with whom ADL has established partnerships. In 2023 those organizations included BBYO, Community Security Initiative (CSI), Community Security Service (CSS), Chabad, Hillel International, Israel on Campus Coalition (ICC), Jewish Federations of North America, Secure Community Network (SCN), Union of Reform Judaism, the United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism and the Israeli American Council (IAC). We thank these organizations for their ongoing efforts to help encourage reporting of antisemitic incidents. All incidents are assessed by ADL for credibility and are deduplicated before being included in the Audit. Incident totals reported in the ADL Audit may differ from totals announced by partner agencies due to methodological differences pertaining to how incidents are defined and tabulated.
- ADL appreciates the assistance of our many law enforcement partners who share information about antisemitic incidents and criminal activity with us. Many of those incidents are included in the Audit as well.

## Policy Recommendations

The 2023 Audit of Antisemitic Incidents documents historic levels of antisemitism in the United States which require a concerted whole-of-government, whole-of-society response. ADL urges leaders to:

Federal:

- **Cosponsor and pass the Countering Antisemitism Act.** Support the Countering Antisemitism Act (CAA)—the most comprehensive antisemitism initiative ever to be introduced in Congress—to implement the U.S. National Strategy to Counter Antisemitism and ensure its policies and infrastructure are made permanent. The CAA will create lasting executive structures to prioritize and fight antisemitism, including a National Coordinator to Counter Antisemitism and a dedicated Task Force that meets regularly to coordinate efforts to fight antisemitism across federal agencies. It will also promote Holocaust education, address the scourge of antisemitism on college and university campuses across the country, support the life-saving Nonprofit Security Grant Program, celebrate Jewish life by declaring May Jewish American Heritage Month, and more. As we face historic levels of antisemitism, the Countering Antisemitism Act offers a smart, innovative whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach to combating this hatred and protecting Jews around the country. To learn more, [click here](#) for a bill summary of the Countering Antisemitism Act.

State:

- **Create State Strategies to Counter Antisemitism.** All states should create and adopt State Strategies to Counter Antisemitism, just as there is a U.S. National Strategy to Counter Antisemitism. In response to the unprecedented surge in antisemitism in the U.S. and around the world, state leaders must publicly commit to combat antisemitism. Each state should launch a comprehensive and state-specific antisemitism strategy to increase awareness and understanding of antisemitism, improve safety and security for Jewish communities, reverse the normalization of antisemitism, and build cross-community solidarity and support collective action to counter hate. The increased danger to the Jewish American community underscores the pressing requirement for targeted state-specific plans to safeguard Jewish communities and address the spread of hate.