Kentucky Jewish Council

Antisemitism Report 2022

What is Antisemitism?

Antisemitism is a form of discrimination or prejudice against Jews. It can manifest itself in various ways, including hostility, prejudice, and violence toward Jews, as well as the promotion of negative stereotypes about Jews. Antisemitism has a long history, dating back to ancient times, and it continues to be a problem in many parts of the world today. It is often based on the belief that Jews are a distinct and inferior race, or that they have certain negative characteristics or traits that make them different from other people. However, these beliefs are not based on fact and are instead rooted in prejudice and discrimination. Antisemitism is a form of racism.

The word "antisemitism" was coined in the late 19th century, and it is a combination of the words "anti," meaning against, and "Semitism," which refers to the Semitic peoples, or groups of ancient peoples who spoke Semitic languages, including Hebrew. The term was used to describe prejudice and discrimination against Jews. It was first used in this sense in an 1879 essay by the German journalist Wilhelm Marr, who used it to describe his belief that Jews were a distinct and inferior race that posed a threat to the purity of the Aryan race. The term quickly gained popularity and was widely used to describe anti-Jewish sentiment in Europe and beyond. Contrary to a popular misconception, it does not refer to semitic peoples as a whole.

In 2021, Kentucky adopted the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance's Definition of antisemitism, which includes:

1. Calling for, aiding, or justifying the killing or harming of Jews in the name of a radical ideology or an extremist view of religion.

2. Making mendacious, dehumanizing, demonizing, or stereotypical allegations about Jews as such or the power of Jews as collective — such as, especially but not exclusively, the myth about a world Jewish conspiracy or of Jews controlling the media, economy, government or other societal institutions.

3. Accusing Jews as a people of being responsible for real or imagined wrongdoing committed by a single Jewish person or group, or even for acts committed by non-Jews.

4. Denying the fact, scope, mechanisms (e.g. gas chambers) or intentionality of the genocide of the Jewish people at the hands of National Socialist Germany and its supporters and accomplices during World War II (the Holocaust).

5. Accusing the Jews as a people, or Israel as a state, of inventing or exaggerating the Holocaust.

6. Accusing Jewish citizens of being more loyal to Israel, or to the alleged priorities of Jews worldwide, than to the interests of their own nations.

7. Denying the Jewish people their right to self-determination, e.g., by claiming that the existence of a State of Israel is a racist endeavor.

8. Applying double standards by requiring of it a behavior not expected or demanded of any other democratic nation.

9. Using the symbols and images associated with classic antisemitism (e.g., claims of Jews killing Jesus or blood libel) to characterize Israel or Israelis.

10. Drawing comparisons of contemporary Israeli policy to that of the Nazis.

11. Holding Jews collectively responsible for actions of the state of Israel.

12. Holocaust denial or minimizing the scale and impact of the Holocaust, a genocide in which six million Jews were killed by the Nazi regime during World War II.

The Full IHRA Definition, which has been adopted by the United States, and 36 other nations, can be found here:

https://www.holocaustremembrance.com/resources/working-definitions-charters/working-definition-antisemitism/adoption-endorsement

It is important to note that not all forms of antisemitism are overt or explicitly expressed. Some forms of antisemitism may be more subtle or disguised, and may not be immediately apparent to others.

ANTISEMITISM IN 2022

This year has been a horrifying year for antisemitism around the world including;

Near daily attacks on traditional Orthodox Jews in New York City,

An attempted terror attack at a Temple in Texas,

Multiple bomb threats against Jewish Centers,

Amnesty International calling for an end to Israel,

Widespread antisemitism on campuses across the country,

Massive violent antisemitic attacks across Israel,

Unhinged attacks on the Jewish communities from rapper Kanye West and other celebrities.

ANTISEMITISM IN KENTUCKY - 2022

January 2022:

Antisemitic Flier with List of Jews Sent to UK Student Group: (1/15/22)

The University of Kentucky Black Student Union receives offensive fliers with antisemitic tropes and a list of prominent Jewish figures.

PCU Church: (1/17/22)

The Presbyterian Church USA, a religious body with a long history of Jew-Hatred, accused the State of Israel of practicing slavery, and accused the Jewish community of power over the US government.

Kentucky Congressman Antisemitic Tweet: (1/30/22)

A Kentucky Congressman tweeted a quote he attributed to Voltaire "To learn who rules over you, simply find out who you are not allowed to criticize". The quote is in fact from a prominent Neo-Nazi and convicted pedophile. The tweet was later deleted.

February 2022:

Attempted Assassination of Jewish Mayoral Candidate: (02/14/22)

Hate-driven political assassin Quintez Brown attempts to murder mayoral candidate Craig Greenberg. In days preceding the attack, Brown repeatedly posted antisemitic tropes, and met with a BHI hate cult leader.

Threats Against Synagogues in Lexington: (02/15/22)

A Jewish house of worship in Lexington was threatened by phone, amid similar threats to various Jewish congregations across the country this year.

Jewish Slur used in Legislature Meeting: (02/23/22)

While discussing a state contract, a legislator light-heartedly used the term "Jew-Them-Down", which was repeated by a State Senator. Both later met with Jewish leaders.

Nation of Islam Send Antisemitic Message to Legislators: (02/25/22)

The Nation of Islam sent a hateful antisemitic email to State Legislators, asking them to act against the Jewish community.

March 2022:

Representative Submits Amendment to Treat Jewish Community Differently: (03/02/22)

A Legislature submitted an amendment that would treat the Jewish community differently under the law. The amendment was immediately voted down.

Representative Makes Offensive Speech about Jewish Community: (03/02/22)

A state representative made an out of place speech, referencing Jewish women, the Holocaust, and Jewish involvement in Abortion. Following the Speech, the representative met with Jewish leaders.

Libertarian Party of Kentucky Continues Antisemitic Behavior Online: (03/02/22)

The Libertarian Party of Kentucky, whose online behavior has often included offensive speech, doubled down on previous antisemitic posts, eventually blocking Jewish leaders and organizations.

Courier-Journal Prints Antisemitic Op-ed, Retracted Days Later: (03/03/22)

An op-ed in the Courier-Journal by a radical activist compared a prominent rabbi to Louis Farrakhan, the antisemitic firebrand, and Adolph Hitler. The Courier retracted the offending paragraphs days later.

Jewish Center Receives Threat: (03/23/22)

The Jewish Community Center in Louisville received a bomb threat, shutting the building for the day. Police responded, and found no sign of explosives.

April 2022:

Antisemitic Flyers Distributed: (04/20/22)

A White Supremacist group distributed antisemitic flyers attacking the Jewish community. This had occurred over a dozen times in recent months.

May 2022:

Prominent Kentucky Cartoonist Publishes Antisemitic Caricature: (05/05/22)

A Prominent Kentucky Cartoonist, with a long history of antisemitic cartoons, publishes a cartoon featuring a politician morphed into a Jewish politician by elongating his nose.

Jewish Leader Threatened at University of Kentucky Jewish Student Center: (05/07/22)

A student partying near the UK Jewish Student Center yelled, "Kill the Kikes" at the center's director.

Louisville Neighborhood Association uses Antisemitic Tropes: (05/09/22)

The Historically Black Neighborhood Association in Louisville used repeated antisemitic tropes in a series of attacks on community leaders. Tropes included devil horns, bags of money, and elongated noses.

Antisemitic Political Mailer in Kentucky 30th District race: (05/12/22)

A political mailer in the Kentucky 30th district used a praying child with the heading "Don't let THEM buy our elections", a common trope, and featuring the Jewish candidate's name in large font.

Courier Journal Prints Op-ed Accusing Jews of Crying Wolf: (05/16/22)

An op-ed written by a group of activists accused the Jewish community of "crying wolf" about antisemitism, and downplayed any issues facing the Jewish community.

Kentucky Congressman Lone Vote Against Condemning Antisemitism: (05/18/22)

A Kentucky congressman was the single vote in the House of Representatives against a resolution condemning antisemitism, despite previous personal issues.

June 2022:

Antisemtic Flyer Distributed: (06/15/22)

A white supremacist group distributed threatening fliers, calling for action against the Jewish community, and accusing them of world domination.

Kentucky House Candidate Tweets Holocaust Minimization: (06/24/22)

A candidate for the Kentucky State House wrote a Twitter post making comparisons between Nazi leaders and Kentucky elected officials and comparing Kentucky policy to Holocaust edicts.

July 2022:

PCUSA Votes on Condemning Jewish Majority State: (07/08/22)

The Presbyterian Church USA, whose assembly has a long history of antisemitism, took an official vote to single out and demonize the state of Israel. Jewish and Presbyterian leaders condemned the vote.

County Party FB Page Sends out Extreme Antisemitic Message: (07/15/22)

A County Party Facebook page published an antisemitic screed accusing a "Jewish Junta" of controlling the US government and choosing government officials.

August 2022:

Jewish Home Defaced with Graffiti in Louisville: (08/06/22)

A Jewish family had their home defaced with antisemitic graffiti in Louisville. No arrests were made.

September 2022:

Candidate Files for Senate Race with Hitler-Inspired Campaign: (09/13/22)

A write-in candidate for the US Senate race in Kentucky published a website, with repeated Nazi inspiration, including the candidates book, titled "My Struggle 2".

Black Hebrew Israelite Hate Cult Announce Rally to be hosted at Louisville Public Library: (09/15/22)

The Black Hebrew Israelite Hate Cult, who have been responsible for several violent attacks in recent years, and claim that Jews are members of a worldwide conspiracy, book the Louisville Public Library for a rally.

October 2022:

Kentucky Mayor and House Candidate's Offensive Tweets Come to Light: (10/17/22)

A Kentucky Mayor and State House Candidate's previous social media messages, comparing American politicians to Hitler, and other offensive posts.

November 2022:

Prominent Civil Leader Defends Antisemitic Messages: (11/04/22)

A prominent Louisville civil leader stridently defends basketball player Kyrie Irving's endorsement of a Holocaust-Denial film calling for violence against Jews.

"Justice for the People" PAC Endorses Quintez Brown: (11/06/22)

Justice for the People, a PAC out of Louisville announced their revised list of endorsements, including Quintez Brown, the would be assassin in the antisemitic hate crime earlier in the year.

Black Hebrew Israelite Hate Cult Hosts Event at Public Library: (11/07/22)

The Black Hebrew Israelite Hate Cult hosted an event at the Louisville Free Public Library, Preaching the Jewish community are "Fake Jews" and that an awakening is coming. BHI is recognized by the SPLC as a radical hate group.

December 2022:

UK Student Verbally Accosted on Street:

A University of Kentucky student was verbally accosted on the street while preparing items for the Jewish Student Center.

Rabbi Accosted and Threatened: (12/09/22)

The Rabbi at the University of Kentucky was accosted with cries of "Kanye is right" from a passing motorist, followed by threats of violence.