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LA County Sees Highest Number of Recorded Hate Crimes in Two Decades

The 2021 Hate Crime Report released by the Los Angeles County Commission on Human Relations shows a 23% increase in hate crimes from previous year and the most recorded since 2002. The majority of religion-motivated hate crimes (74%) targeted the Jewish community.

Los Angeles, CA. December 7, 2022 ... The [2021 Hate Crime Report](#) released by the Los Angeles County Commission on Human Relations today shows that the total number of reported hate crimes increased an astounding 23 percent from the previous year jumping from 641 to 786 reported crimes. This sharp rise affirms what ADL reported in its 2021 [Audit of Antisemitic Incidents](#) – hate crimes in our city, state and nation have become more prolific than ever before.

While Jews make up only 2% of the U.S. population, they continue to be the most-targeted group of religious-based hate crimes. According to the report, religious crimes increased by a startling 29% and the rate of violence was the highest in at least 20 years. The majority of these attacks (74%) targeted Jews. Anti-Jewish crimes make up 10% of the total recorded hate crimes in 2021 and Jews were the fourth most targeted group across all categories.

“We are witnessing a widescale normalization of antisemitism in our county and our nation,” ADL Los Angeles Regional Director Jeffrey I. Abrams says. “While this report covers 2021, we have recently seen a terrifying increase in hateful vitriol from celebrities and elected leaders – most recently with Ye’s repeated tirades against the Jewish people. We know that words matter. And words can and do incite real-life violence.”

In fact, words have inspired a shocking uptick in violence. Across all hate crimes, the rate of violence grew from 68% to 74% – the highest percentage recorded in the last 20 years.

Unfortunately, no group was safe from the rise in hate crimes. In 2021, there was a 17% jump in racial hate crimes with 77 hate crimes targeting the AAPI community – the highest figure recorded in 20 years. In one-quarter of these attacks, victims were blamed for the COVID-19 pandemic. African Americans comprise only 9% of the county’s population but were disproportionately targeted by hate crimes (46% of the total racial hate crime victims). Sexual orientation hate crimes increased by 15%.

According to the report, which reflects the volume and types of incidents reported directly to ADL in 2021, many examples of crimes against the Jewish community included swastikas or antisemitic tropes that evoke a particularly emotional response in the Jewish community.

“Unfortunately, we saw a severe spike in antisemitic hate incidents and hate crimes during the height of the deadly conflict between Israel and Hamas, a U.S.-designated foreign terrorist organization, along the Gaza Strip in May 2021,” Mr. Abrams says. “Many will recall the caravan that pulled up to a sushi restaurant in the heart of Los Angeles with armed men demanding to know which of the diners was a Jew.

ADL worked closely with law enforcement to ensure that this assault and other antisemitic assaults were appropriately enhanced as hate crimes.”

Earlier this year, ADL released an [audit of antisemitic incidents for 2021](#) that further affirms the significant increases in antisemitic incidents across California and the U.S.

In addition to responding to hate crimes and providing victim assistance after a crime has occurred, ADL works daily to prevent the spread of hate that can lead to such crimes. ADL’s anti-bias education programs from primary school through college help students: recognize bias and the harm it inflicts on individuals and society; explore the value of diversity; improve intergroup relations; and combat racism, antisemitism and all forms of prejudice and bigotry.

“The best way to combat hate is to stand together as one community against racism and bigotry of all kinds,” Mr. Abrams says. “We are grateful to continue to have LA County and our partners at LA vs. Hate as key partners in our work to reduce hate crimes and increase public awareness of the impact these kinds of crimes have on our communities. The LA County Hate Crime Report is a consistent reminder that the important work of ADL is needed now more than ever.”

ADL is a leading anti-hate organization. Founded in 1913 in response to an escalating climate of antisemitism and bigotry, its timeless mission is to protect the Jewish people and to secure justice and fair treatment for all. Today, ADL continues to fight all forms of hate with the same vigor and passion. ADL is the first call when acts of antisemitism occur. A global leader in exposing extremism, delivering anti-bias education and fighting hate online, ADL’s ultimate goal is a world in which no group or individual suffers from bias, discrimination or hate. More at www.adl.org

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