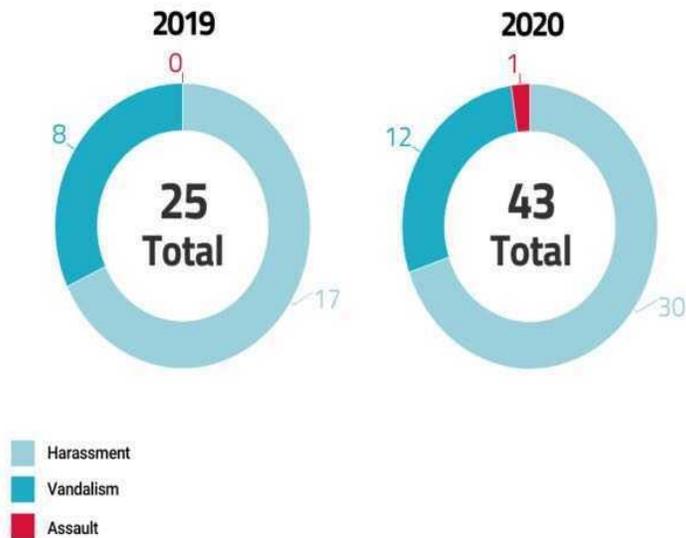


2020 HIGHEST YEAR ON RECORD FOR ANTISEMITIC INCIDENTS IN OHIO

In 2020, Ohio experienced the highest number of antisemitic incidents recorded in the State since ADL tracking began in 1979, according to [new data](#) from ADL (the Anti-Defamation League).

Antisemitic Incidents in Ohio are ▲ 72% from 2019 to 2020



ADL

ADL recorded 43 antisemitic incidents in Ohio in its 2020 *Audit of Antisemitic Incidents*. This is up from 25 incidents recorded in 2019—a 72 percent increase. Antisemitic incidents in Ohio in 2020 were 52 percent higher than the State’s annual average of 28 incidents a year.

Incident Breakdown

The ADL Audit includes both criminal and non-criminal acts of harassment and intimidation, including distribution of hate propaganda, threats and slurs. The Audit classifies incidents into three categories: harassment, vandalism and assault. Of the total incidents reported in Ohio in 2020:

- **Harassment:** There were 30 harassment incidents, a 76 percent increase over the previous year. ADL defines harassment as cases in which one or more Jews reported feeling targeted or threatened by antisemitic language or acts.
- **Vandalism:** There were 12 vandalism incidents, a 50 percent increase over the previous year. ADL defines vandalism as cases in which property was damaged in a manner that harmed or intimidated Jews. [Swastikas](#), which are generally interpreted as symbols of antisemitic hatred, were present in 83 percent of these incidents.

- **Assault:** There was 1 assault incident, an increase from 0 in 2019. ADL defines assaults as cases in which individuals were physically targeted with violence accompanied by evidence of antisemitic animus.

Impact of the Coronavirus Pandemic

As it did with so many aspects of Americans' lives in 2020, the coronavirus pandemic significantly impacted antisemitic attitudes and manifestations last year. ADL's [Center on Extremism](#) tracked the proliferation of [antisemitic conspiracy theories](#) around the origins of the virus, government restrictions, [vaccines](#) and other aspects of the pandemic.

Although many in-person locations were closed in Ohio in 2020, the State saw an increase in antisemitic incidents at business establishments, and public areas, both of 100% respectively.

Educational institutions experienced an opposite trend, potentially because of closures due to the pandemic.

Jewish institutions were targeted at a significantly higher rate in 2020 across Ohio. ADL recorded 8 antisemitic incidents at Jewish institutions, including synagogues, Jewish community centers, retirement homes and schools. This was an 167% increase from 3 in 2019.

Antisemitic incidents online also dramatically increased in 2020 as people spent more time in virtual spaces. ADL tracked a near-quadrupling of antisemitic incidents online, from 2 to 7. The pandemic inspired the development of new tactic in antisemitic harassment known as [Zoombombing](#), in which malicious actors intentionally disrupt virtual meetings with graphic or hateful messages. Ohio experienced 9 antisemitic Zoombombing incidents in 2020, 7 of which specifically targeted Jewish institutions.

For the purposes of the Audit, ADL counts instances in which individuals report having been the direct targets of online antisemitic harassment, including on social media. It does not include antisemitic rhetoric without a specific target, which ADL's [Center on Technology and Society](#) works to track and expose alongside other forms of online hate.

Extremists and Antisemitism

Extremists continued to act on their hateful ideologies in 2020. Known extremist groups or individuals inspired by extremist ideology were responsible for 4 antisemitic incidents in Ohio. Across the country, however, antisemitic acts attributed to known extremist groups or ideology represented 16% of the total number of incidents.

2 of the 4 extremist incidents in Ohio were white supremacist propaganda distributions featuring antisemitic content or targeting Jewish individuals or institutions. These incidents were part of a [record-breaking amount of white supremacist propaganda](#) that ADL tracked in the region last year.

Select Ohio Incidents

Below is a small sampling of antisemitic incidents in Ohio recorded by ADL in 2020. The full list of incidents can be accessed on ADL's interactive H.E.A.T. (Hate, Extremism, Antisemitism, Terrorism) Map, found at www.adl.org/heat-map.

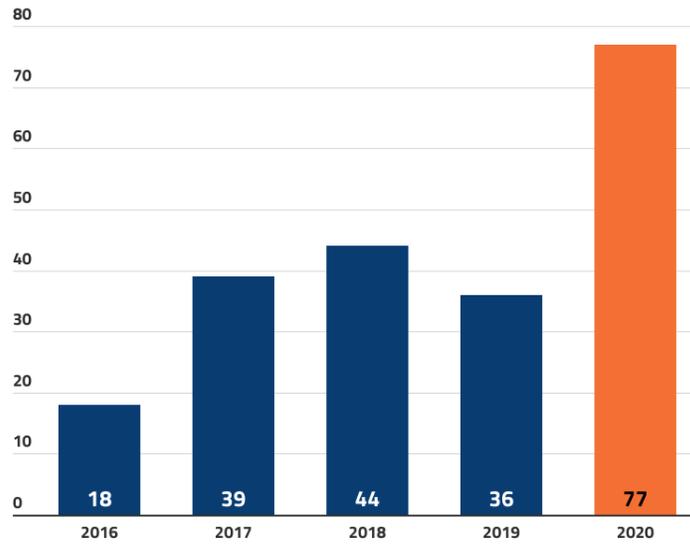
- **December**, Rocky River, OH - A virtual conference held via Zoom was disrupted by unknown participants who posted images of swastikas and asked if the attendees liked Nazis.
- **November**, Columbus, OH - A Jewish couple was verbally harassed amidst celebrating President-elect Joe Biden's win by their neighbor who allegedly yelled at them: "You fucking liberal Jews, you and your fucking dog - I'm going to poison your goddamn dog" and "No wonder Hitler burned all your people, I'm going to burn you and all your Jewish friends." Later, the neighbor threw objects at the house, shattering their window and door.
- **November**, Cleveland, OH - Vandalism that included a drawing of a swastika and the word "Jewish" was found at Lansing Avenue Jewish Cemetery.
- **October**, Akron, OH - A Jewish funeral held on Zoom was disrupted by unknown participants who made antisemitic comments.
- **September**, Cleveland, OH - A Jewish virtual prayer service held on Zoom for mourners was disrupted by unknown participants who shared pornographic images and stated "he deserved to die."
- **September**, Oxford, OH - According to Miami University, a Zoom meeting hosted by a business fraternity was disrupted by unknown participants who used "racial slurs and anti-Semitic images."
- **August**, Cleveland, OH - A Jewish educational organization's online class was disrupted by unknown participants who wrote "Adolph Hitler" on the screen and "FUCK JEWS FREE PALESTINE." The intruders also shouted "Sieg Heil" and "Kill the Jews."
- **August**, Newton Falls, OH - A swastika and the white supremacist numeric symbol 1488 were found drawn in chalk on an outdoor basketball court.
- **August**, Orange, OH - A man was issued a fourth-degree misdemeanor citation after multiple people, including two off-duty police officers, witnessed him carving a swastika on the sidewalk.
- **July**, Columbus, OH - A swastika and the words "I love Nazi" were found etched into a parked car near The Ohio State University.

Regional Incidents

ADL's Cleveland Regional Office saw a 114 percent increase in antisemitic activity throughout its entire area of service, which includes all of Ohio, West Virginia, Kentucky, and Western Pennsylvania—this is one of the highest percent increases of any ADL region across the country. In 2020, ADL recorded 77 incidents in this region, the highest level of the last decade, including 43 incidents in Ohio, 19 incidents in Kentucky, 4 incidents in West Virginia, and 11 incidents in Western Pennsylvania.

Antisemitic Incidents in Cleveland Region (OH, KY, WV, W.PA)

114% increase from 2019 to 2020



ADL

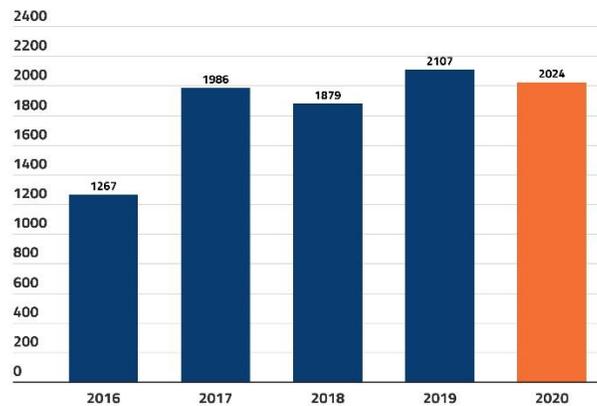
Of the 43 antisemitic incidents across Ohio, roughly forty percent (17 incidents) occurred in the greater Cleveland area, and 63 percent (27 incidents) occurred in all of Northeast Ohio. Twenty-three percent (10 Incidents) occurred in Central Ohio. Roughly 12 percent (5 incidents) occurred in West and Southwest Ohio, and one incident occurred in Northwest Ohio.

National Incidents

In 2020, regional antisemitic incidents mirrored national trends. Nationwide, antisemitic incidents remained at historically high levels last year, with a total of 2,024 reported incidents. While national antisemitic incidents declined by 4 percent after hitting an all-time high in 2019, 2020 was the third-highest year for incidents against American Jews on record. There were incidents reported in every state except Hawaii, North Dakota, and Wyoming. The audit found there were, on average, nearly six antisemitic incidents in the U.S. for every day last year.

The full national report can be found at <https://www.adl.org/audit2020>.

Antisemitic Incidents: U.S. Over the Last Five Years | 2016-2020



How ADL is Responding

ADL pursues a comprehensive approach to addressing antisemitic incidents and behavior. ADL is the largest [anti-bias educator](#) in the United States, annually teaching hundreds of thousands of youth and adults to challenge antisemitism and other forms of bias in themselves and others. ADL is leading partner to [law enforcement](#) in the nation, helping over 10,000 law enforcement officers each year better prevent and respond to hate crimes and [extremism](#). ADL is a tireless champion of [civil rights](#) for all, advocating at the federal, state and local levels for better prevention and response to antisemitism and all forms of hate.

In the Cleveland region, ADL works diligently to combat antisemitism and other forms of bias through investigation, advocacy, and education. The coronavirus pandemic did not slow down ADL's work to fight antisemitism and all forms of hate across Ohio, West Virginia, Kentucky, and West Virginia in 2020:

- ADL impacted over 40,000 students in the region through its [No Place for Hate](#)[®] and [A WORLD OF DIFFERENCE™ Institute](#) bias and bullying prevention programs, in addition to training hundreds of additional students and educators through our [antisemitism](#) and [Holocaust education](#) programs.
- ADL Cleveland launched our pro bono legal assistance project, through which we connect victims of antisemitism with top civil litigators who represent the victims pro bono.
- ADL Cleveland launched the Signature Synagogue Program, through which we partner with synagogues to fight antisemitism and all forms of hate.
- ADL Cleveland works with law enforcement to provide reports and concrete analysis on local/national extremist groups and their activity in the region.

- ADL Cleveland, along with ADL's Center on Extremism, briefed large-city mayors in Ohio, Governor DeWine, Governor DeWine's Chief of Staff, and Ohio's Public Safety Director on emerging threats in the lead up to and after the November 2020 election.
- ADL Cleveland supported victims of antisemitism and other forms of bias, built diverse coalitions, and worked with dozens of schools, campuses, workplaces, and other institutions while responding to nearly 300 requests for assistance.

ADL Policy Recommendations

In response to the historic rise in antisemitic incidents over the past few years, ADL has made the following policy recommendations:

- Public officials and civic leaders must use their bully pulpits to speak out against antisemitism and all forms of hate and extremism.
- The Ohio Legislature should hold hearings on the high levels of hate crimes, the rise of extremist groups and proliferation of their propaganda, and support legislation that improves responses to hate crimes and domestic terror.
- Policymakers should support efforts to provide law enforcement officials with the tools and training they need to prevent and effectively respond to hate crimes. Federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies should also improve their procedures for responding to and reporting hate crimes.
- School districts should promote bias and bullying prevention and Holocaust education programs in elementary and secondary schools. Elected officials in Ohio should help incentivize and equip schools to adopt effective anti-bias policies and programs.
- University leadership should respond firmly and forcefully to antisemitic acts on campus, including incidents that target Jewish students because of their actual or perceived support of the state of Israel.
- In response to the rising threat of domestic extremism in the wake of the Jan. 6 insurrection at our nation's Capitol, ADL recently announced the [PROTECT](#) and [REPAIR](#) plans outlining a whole-of-society approach to address this pernicious threat in person and online.

ADL's Audit of Antisemitic Incidents

Compiled using information provided by victims, law enforcement, and community leaders, and evaluated by ADL's professional staff, the ADL Audit provides a regular snapshot of one specific aspect of a nationwide problem while identifying possible trends or changes in the types of activity reported. This information assists ADL in developing and enhancing its programs to counter and prevent the spread of antisemitism and other forms of bigotry.

The Audit offers one method to examine how American Jews encounter antisemitism, but a full understanding of antisemitism in the U.S. requires other forms of analysis as well, including but not limited to public opinion polling, assessments of online antisemitism and examinations of

extremist activity, all of which ADL offers in other reports, such as [ADL Global 100](#), [Online Hate and Harassment: The American Experience 2020](#), [Murder and Extremism in the United States in 2020](#), the [2021 Survey on Jews Americans' Experiences with Antisemitism](#) and the [ADL Survey of American Attitudes Toward Jews](#). For a broader examination of antisemitism, see ADL's resource, [Antisemitism Uncovered](#).

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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 to 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.