

Special Commission on Combating Antisemitism



Final Report

Commission Membership

- **Representative Simon Cataldo, *Co-Chair***, Designee of the Speaker of the House
- **Senator John Velis, *Co-Chair***, Designee of Senate President
- **Representative Steven S. Howitt**, Appointed by House Minority Leader
- **Robert Leikind**, Appointed by Speaker of the House
- **Peggy Shukur**, Appointed by Speaker of the House
- **Jeremy Burton**, Appointed by Senate President
- **Jody Kipnis**, Appointed by Senate President
- **Rita Blanter**, Appointed by Senate Minority Leader
- **David Friedman**, Appointed by Governor
- **Dara Kaufman**, Appointed by Governor
- **Jamie Hoag**, Appointed by Attorney General
- **Constantia (Dena) Papanikolaou**, Appointed by Commissioner of Higher Education
- **Erin Hashimoto Martell**, Appointed by Commissioner of the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
- **Michael Memmolo**, Appointed by Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination
- **Chief Thomas Fowler**, Appointed by Massachusetts Chiefs of Police Association
- **District Attorney Paul Tucker**, Appointed by Massachusetts District Attorneys Association
- **Mayor Ruthanne Fuller**, Appointed by Massachusetts Municipal Association
- **Jill Hai**, Appointed by Massachusetts Municipal Association
- **Aaron Polansky**, Appointed by Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents

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I. Introduction

Section 201 of Chapter 140 of the Acts of 2024, An Act Making Appropriations for the Fiscal Year 2025, established the Special Commission on Combating Antisemitism in the Commonwealth (“the Commission”) to investigate and make recommendations to the General Court to combat the rise in antisemitic incidents and hate crime in the Commonwealth.

II. Statutory Charge

Section 201 of Chapter 140 of the Acts of 2024

(a) There shall be a special commission on combatting antisemitism in the commonwealth. The commission shall: (i) report on trends and data related to incidents of antisemitism in the commonwealth; (ii) make recommendations for the implementation of the United States national strategy to counter antisemitism; (iii) identify and evaluate existing efforts to combat antisemitism in the commonwealth; (iv) identify best practices from efforts to combat antisemitism in other states and jurisdictions; (v) evaluate the commonwealth’s hate crime statutes and whether any amendments would better protect residents from antisemitism and other similar forms of hatred; and (vi) recommend strategies, programs and legislation to combat antisemitism in the commonwealth. The commission shall submit a report of its study and recommendations to the clerks of the house of representatives and the senate and the senate and house committees on ways and means not later than November 30, 2024.¹

(b) The commission shall consist of: 3 persons appointed by the senate president, 1 of whom shall have expertise in combatting antisemitism and 1 of whom shall represent a Jewish community organization in the commonwealth; 3 persons appointed by the speaker of the house of representatives, 1 of whom shall have expertise in combatting antisemitism and 1 of whom shall represent a Jewish community organization in the commonwealth; 1 member who shall be appointed by the minority leader of the house of representatives; 1 member who shall be appointed by the minority leader of the senate; 2 persons appointed by the governor, 1 of whom shall have expertise in legal issues related to civil rights and civil liberties; 2 persons appointed by the Massachusetts Municipal Association, Inc.; the attorney general or a designee; the chair of the Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination or a designee; the commissioner of higher education or a designee; the commissioner of elementary and secondary education or a designee; 1 person appointed by the Massachusetts District Attorneys Association; 1 person appointed by the Massachusetts Chiefs of Police Association Incorporated; and 1 member

¹ On December 4, 2024, the Governor signed into law an amendment to Section 129 of Chapter 248 of the Acts of 2024, An Act making appropriations for the fiscal year 2024, which, in part, extended the Special Commission’s reporting deadline to Nov. 30, 2025.

appointed by the Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents, Inc. The senate president and the speaker of the house of representatives shall each designate a co-chair from their respective appointees.

III. Commission Process

The following table summarizes the Commission’s work throughout its ten hearings. Appendices to this report provide testimonies offered at each Commission meeting and hearing:

Hearing	Purpose	Agenda	Hearing Materials ²
October 29, 2024	To introduce commission members to their legislative charge and discuss areas of emphasis.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opening Statements of the Chairs - Rep. Cataldo and Sen. Velis • Self-Introductions of the Members • Overview of the Statutory Charge • Overview of Meeting Agenda • Overview of WH National Strategy to Counter Antisemitism • Discussion of Topic Areas for Emphasis in Furtherance of the Commission’s Work as Prescribed in Section 201 of Chapter 140 of the Acts of 2024 • Anti-Defamation League Presentation on Available Data on Antisemitism • Introduction to Combined Jewish Philanthropies’ Center for Combating Antisemitism • Logistical Commission Matters • Meeting is Adjourned 	<p>White House National Strategy to Counter Antisemitism</p> <p>2023 ADL Massachusetts Data</p>
November	To examine	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Roll Call 	Acton-Boxborough

² All Commission materials may be found on the General Court’s website at <https://malegislature.gov/Commissions/Detail/646/Hearings>.

19, 2024	antisemitism in K-12 educational settings and institutional responses.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Opening Statements of the Chairs on Current Events and Future Opportunities for Student Testimony – Sen. Velis and Rep. Cataldo ● Overview of Meeting Agenda ● Testimony from Massachusetts Student on Experience with Antisemitism ● Acton-Boxborough Regional School District Superintendent Peter Light Presentation on District Response to Hate and Bias Incidents ● Lubavitcher Yeshiva Academy (Longmeadow) Rabbi Noach Kosofsky Presentation on Antisemitism in Schools and Community Responses to Incidents ● Lappin Foundation Presentation on Best Practices in Responding to Antisemitism in Schools ● Approve October 29th Meeting Minutes ● Meeting is Adjourned 	<p>Protocols for Responding to Incidents Involving Hate or Bias</p> <p>Superintendent Peter Light’s Letter to Families Following October 7th</p>
January 23, 2025	To further discuss antisemitism in schools and to consider the impacts of antisemitism on students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Roll Call ● Approve November 19th Meeting Minutes ● Opening Statements of the Chairs and Announcements on Future Meeting Agenda Including Topic Areas and Opportunities for Public Comment – Sen. Velis and Rep. Cataldo ● Overview of Meeting Agenda 	<p>ADL-CAR Parent Survey of Antisemitism in Schools Results: Antisemitism in Schools and Support for Holocaust Education ADL</p> <p>Facing History and Ourselves Presentation on</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Presentation on Parent Survey of Antisemitism in Schools by Anti-Defamation League Center for Antisemitism Research (ADL-CAR) – Matt Williams, VP, ADL-CAR ● Office of the Massachusetts Attorney General Presentation on First Amendment Considerations – Jonathan Burke, Asst. Attorney General, Civil Rights Division ● Facing History and Ourselves Presentation on School Programming – Elizabeth Carroll, New England Program Director ● Presentation on Psychological Impact and Effects of Antisemitism on Students – Dr. Miri Bar-Halpern, PsyD ● Meeting is Adjourned 	<p>School Programming – Elizabeth Carroll, New England Program Director</p> <p>Facing History Explainer: Antisemitism and Its Impacts</p> <p>Executive Summary of Evaluation Results for Brave Classrooms Online Course</p> <p>Letter from Newton Public Schools leaders with testimony about Facing History's partnership</p> <p>Presentation on Psychological Impact and Effects of Antisemitism on Students – Dr. Miri Bar-Halpern, PsyD</p>
February 10, 2025	To discuss countering antisemitism in K-12 education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Roll Call ● Approve Prior Meeting Minutes: January 23, 2025 ● Opening Statements of the Chairs and Announcements – Sen. Velis and Rep. Cataldo ● Overview of Meeting Agenda ● Discussion on Countering Antisemitism in K-12 Education: Massachusetts Teachers Association (MTA) – Max Page, MTA President ● Discussion on Viewpoint 	

		<p>Diversity, Training, and Curriculum Relating to Countering Antisemitism in K-12 Education: Together for an Inclusive Massachusetts –</p> <p>Elsa Auerbach, UMass Boston Professor Emerita, Jewish Voice for Peace Boston;</p> <p>Emilia Diamant, LCSW, educator, Board Member, Boston Workers Circle;</p> <p>Merrie Najimy, elementary STEM lab teacher;</p> <p>Sana Fadel, Sawa: Newton-Area Alliance for Peace and Justice, public school parent</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion on K-12 Curriculum and Teacher Licensing: Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE) – Katherine Craven, BESE Chair • Adjourn 	
March 11, 2025	To focus on antisemitism in Western Massachusetts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Roll Call • Approve Prior Meeting Minutes: February 10, 2025 • Opening Statements of the Chairs and Announcements – Sen. Velis and Rep. Cataldo • Overview of Meeting Agenda • Discussion on concerns in Berkshire County and small rural Jewish communities - Rabbi Jordie Gordon, Hevreh of Southern Berkshire • Discussion on trends in Western Massachusetts and community responses to 	<p>Genocide Education Session Law</p> <p>Genocide Education General Law</p> <p>DESE History and Social Science Framework (2018)</p> <p>FY2025 Budget Section 106</p> <p>DESE Resources Relative to Antisemitism and Societal Bias</p>

		<p>antisemitic incidents - Molly Parr, 1st Vice President of the Jewish Federation of Western Massachusetts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion on trends in Western Massachusetts and responses from Jewish communities – Rabbi Amy Wallk, Temple Beth El • Discussion on genocide and Holocaust education curricula and resources provided to schools on antisemitism - Dr. Russell Johnston, Acting Commissioner of the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) • Discussion on community education efforts on antisemitism and Holocaust – Henia (Henny) Lewin, past Board Member of the Jewish Federation of Western Massachusetts and former Professor at University of Vermont • Discussion on viewpoint diversity, and balancing different perspectives in responding to antisemitism – Rabbi Ariella Rosen, Congregation B’nai Israel • Discussion on experiences in school settings and research on Jewish issues and antisemitism – Dr. Nicole Collins, Faculty at John F. Kennedy Middle School (Springfield), Asnuntuck Community College, American International College • Meeting is Adjourned 	
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April 7, 2025	To discuss antisemitic violence and gather testimony from public on the work of the Commission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Roll Call ● Welcome Remarks from Mayor Ruthanne Fuller ● Approve Prior Meeting Minutes: March 11, 2025 ● Opening Statements of the Chairs, Announcements, and Reminder of Special Commission's Commitment to Principles of Free Speech and Civil Liberties – Sen. Velis and Rep. Cataldo ● Overview of Meeting Agenda ● Presentation – Eric Olshan, Former U.S. Attorney, Western District of Pennsylvania, lead prosecutor in <i>U.S. v. Robert Bowers</i> (Tree of Life Synagogue Case) ● Discussion on the Orthodox Perspective on Antisemitism – Ariella Hellman, Director of Government Affairs Agudath Israel of America, New England Office ● Public Comment ● Meeting is Adjourned 	
May 5, 2025	To discuss law enforcement responses to antisemitic incidents and hate crimes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Roll Call ● Approve Prior Meeting Minutes: April 7, 2025 ● Opening Statements of the Chairs and Announcements – Sen. Velis and Rep. Cataldo ● Overview of Meeting Agenda ● Discussion on Trends and Tracking of Extremist 	

		<p>Activity – Ben Popp, ADL Center on Extremism</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion on Existing Hate Crime Statutes – David O’Sullivan, Asst. District Attorney, Essex District Attorney’s Office • Discussion on Federal, State, and Local Partnership in Combating Antisemitism and Incidents of Hate – Detective Lieutenant Ryan Czepiel, Mass. State Police Anti-Terrorism Unit/Hate Crimes Awareness and Response Team (HART) Unit • Discussion on Mass. Exec. Office of Public Safety and Security (EOPSS) Nonprofit Security Grants – Jeremy Yamin, VP, Security and Operations, Combined Jewish Philanthropies and Lily Rabinoff-Goldman, President/CEO, JCC Greater Boston • Meeting is Adjourned 	
June 9, 2025	To discuss the weaponization of antisemitism and the prevalence of antisemitism online	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Roll Call • Approve Prior Meeting Minutes: May 5, 2025 • Opening Statements of the Chairs and Announcements – Sen. Velis and Rep. Cataldo • Overview of Meeting Agenda • Discussion on weaponization of antisemitism – Amb. Alan D. Solomont (ret.), Nexus Project Board Member 	Hate Speech vs. Hate Crimes: Key Points for Law Enforcement

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Discussion on the Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS) movement and connection to antisemitism – Professor David Webber, Boston University School of Law ● Presentation by Foundation to Combat Antisemitism on insights around the digital landscape of antisemitism – Adam Katz, President, Foundation to Combat Antisemitism ● Observations on response to Jewish advocacy on municipal level and local school district, and comparison to other Massachusetts communities – Owen Zaret, Former City Councilor and Jewish Community Organizer ● Meeting is Adjourned 	
July 9, 2025	To discuss preliminary K-12 education findings and recommendations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Roll Call ● Approve Prior Meeting Minutes: June 9, 2025 ● Opening Statements of the Chairs and Announcements – Sen. Velis and Rep. Cataldo ● Discussion on Draft Preliminary K-12 Education Findings and Recommendations ● Meeting is Adjourned 	Draft Preliminary K-12 Education Findings and Recommendations
August 7, 2025	To explore antisemitism in higher education and on college campuses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Roll Call ● Approve Prior Meeting Minutes: July 9, 2025 ● Discussion on Resources Provided to Schools on Antisemitism and Societal 	SCCA K-12 Preliminary K-12 Findings and Recommendations_08.07.25

		<p>Bias – Commissioner Pedro Martinez, Dept. of Elementary and Secondary Education</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion on Jewish Student Experience on College Campuses - Professor Eitan Hersh, Professor of Political Science, Tufts University • Discussion on the State of Jewish Life on Campus from the Perspective of Hillel - Rabbi Aaron Fine, Executive Director, UMass Hillel • Discussion on Student Perspective of Jewish Life on Campus - Skye Landau, UMass Amherst • Discussion of Antisemitism on College Campuses: Using Data to Inform Policy – Dr. Leonard Saxe, Professor and Director of the Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies, Brandeis University • Discussion on Identifying Root Challenges and Best Practices for Addressing Antisemitism in Higher Education - Dr. Rachel Fish, Special Advisor to the Brandeis University President's Initiative on Antisemitism • Discussion & Vote on Endorsing Draft Preliminary K-12 Education Findings and Recommendations • Meeting is Adjourned 	
September	To continue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Roll Call 	

8, 2025	exploration of antisemitism in higher education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approve Prior Meeting Minutes: August 7, 2025 • Opening Statements of the Chairs and Announcements – Sen. Velis and Rep. Cataldo • Overview of Meeting Agenda • Discussion on the Impact of Antisemitism on STEM and Research in Higher Education - Dr. Mark Poznansky, Harvard Medical School • Discussion on Antisemitism at Harvard: Perspective of a Jewish Mom - Lindsay Gabow, Harvard Law School • Discussion on the Role of State Government in Responding to Antisemitism in Higher Education - Douglas Hauer, Former Professor at Boston University School of Law • Discussion of Hillel Experience on Public and Private Campuses - Miriam Berkowitz Blue, Executive Director - Hillel Council of New England • Meeting is Adjourned 	
September 25, 2025	To hear public comment and feedback	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Roll Call • Approve prior meeting minutes: September 8, 2025 • Opening Statements of the Chairs and Announcements – Sen. Velis and Rep. Cataldo • Overview of Meeting Agenda • Public Comment • Meeting is adjourned 	

<p>October 16, 2025</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Roll Call ● Approve prior meeting minutes: September 25, 2025 ● Opening Statements of the Chairs and Announcements – Sen. Velis and Rep. Cataldo ● Overview of Meeting Agenda ● Discussion on Combating Antisemitism while Protecting Civil Liberties – The Honorable David A. Lowy, current General Counsel, University of Massachusetts, former Associate Justice, Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court. ● Discussion: How Law Enforcement Uses Restorative Justice to Address Antisemitism – Middlesex District Attorney Marian Ryan. ● Discussion on Charging, Prosecuting and Sentencing Hate Crimes in Massachusetts –Christina Miller, Associate Clinical Professor of Law and Associate Director of Clinical Programs, Suffolk University Law School; Former Chief of District Courts and Community Prosecutions, Suffolk County District Attorney’s Office. ● Perspectives of Local 	
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		<p>Rabbis – Panel of Local Rabbis:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Rabbi Darby Leigh, <i>Kerem Shalom Synagogue, Concord</i> ● Rabbi Karen Thomashow, <i>Temple Isaiah, Lexington</i> ● Rabbi Braham David, <i>Congregation Beth Elohim, Acton</i> ● Discussion on Community Efforts to Combat Antisemitism – Panel of Community Organization Leaders; Jodi Sperber, <i>Concord-Carlisle Against Antisemitism</i>; Steven Van Evera, <i>Lexington United Against Antisemitism</i> ● The Impact of Antisemitism in Healthcare: The Need for Clinical Neutrality – Panel of Medical Professionals; Jacqueline A. Hart, MD, Internist; Consultant, Vaccine & Immunotherapy Center at MGH; Jewish-ERG leader, MGB; Janette Lawrence, MS, LGC; Senior Genetic Counselor, MGH; Elyse Park, PhD, MPH, FAPOS; Professor of Psychiatry and Medicine, MGH and Harvard Medical School; Director, MGH Health Promotion and Resiliency Intervention Research Center in the Mongan 	
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		<p>Institute, Department of Psychiatry; Leader and co-founder MGB Jewish-ERG; Rodrigo Monterrey, MPA -- Senior Director of Health Equity, Belonging and Engagement, Tufts Medicine; Leila Caplan, BU Medical Student</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concord-Carlisle Student Experiences and the Value of Jewish Student Organizations –Panel of Student Members of Concord-Carlisle HS Jewish Student Union • Discussion on Holocaust Museum Boston: Teaching the Lessons of the Holocaust to Confront Antisemitism Today – Dr. Nicole Freeman, Education Director, Holocaust Museum Boston • Adjourn 	
November 5, 2025		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	

IV. PREFATORY STATEMENT OF THE SPECIAL COMMISSION: COMBATING ANTISEMITISM AND HATE “THE MASSACHUSETTS WAY”

The Special Commission’s task emerges at a time when Jews in Massachusetts and around the country are experiencing a dramatic rise in being targeted and discriminated against for being Jewish that is widely understood to mark the end of the golden age for Western Jewry in the post-World War II era. Western countries are seeing, writ large, increasing cultural acceptance and normalization of Jew hate that is both domestic and imported, as well as a rise in violence and discrimination towards Jews.

Meanwhile, many people in Massachusetts, including many Jews, object to measures that the current federal government is taking in response to antisemitism, including actions that target some of Massachusetts' most prized institutions, and believe that antisemitism is being used for political purposes. The courts have struck down various actions by the administration as violating the civil rights of other vulnerable groups and individuals, most notably immigrants. Jews widely recognize, and have re-learned many times throughout history, that "narrow nationalisms never end well for Jews," and as such threats to democracy are intrinsically threatening to the Jewish people. Conversely, Jews generally flourish in robust democracies that protect the freedoms of all minorities.

All the while, Massachusetts Jews who come forward to report anti-Jewish hate continue to be told, with little hesitation and often with the backing of academics or diversity professionals, that the bias and violence they experience for being Jewish is a secondary or tertiary form of hate, that other groups have it worse, and that their pleas for help and recognition are fuel for an authoritarian regime. Massachusetts Jews have found themselves abandoned by people and groups who they thought were their allies in movements for the social justice and liberation, only to find out that basic principles of these movements did not apply to Jews in their time of need.

Adding to the complexity of the challenge, the diversity of opinions and political ideologies among Massachusetts Jews that is a hallmark and strength of Jewish society has caused ideological fractures among some Jews with divergent opinions about how to—or why not to—address antisemitism proactively. Perhaps chief among those differences is starkly contrasting relationships to, and opinions about, the modern State of Israel. For many—indeed, likely most—American and Massachusetts Jews, Israel has religious, personal, and spiritual meaning grounded in religious texts, personal ties, and tradition, and as such Israel is inextricable from Jewish religious and ethnic identity as well as shared ancestry. Calls for the elimination of the only Jewish state, where half of the Jews in the world live, is obvious antisemitism to most Jews. Within this majority of Jews who view Israel and Zionism as part of their religious calling, there is a wide range of opinions as to the actions of the current Israeli government. Many Jews whose religious identity connects with Israel have been harshly critical of Israel's actions, particularly during its war with Hamas.

Other Jews, who deserve no more or less protections for being Jewish and whose free speech rights are equal to all other Jews in the eyes of this Special Commission, have hostile views towards the modern State of Israel, and even go so far as to advocate for its elimination as the world's only Jewish state. Some Jews believe that their Judaism requires them to oppose not only the actions of Israel's government but also Zionism itself. In sum, some Jews believe the link between Judaism and Israel to be plainly obvious and baked into the foundation of this Special Commission's work, while other Jews object to using the word "Israel" in this very Report.

In this context, the Special Commission's has endeavored to chart "the Massachusetts Way" for combating antisemitism in the Commonwealth, anchored in its statutory charge. What follows is a set of findings and recommendations that, together, form a playbook of best practices for the use and benefit of state and local government actors, community leaders, and all residents of the Commonwealth who seek to stamp out this oldest and shape-shifting form of hate. The recommendations seek to protect all Jews from Jew-hatred, irrespective of their political ideology, their connection to Israel, or their views on geopolitical conflicts. Like all Special Commission recommendations, this playbook is not binding, but can powerfully serve as an example set that both public officials and communities can use to advocate for adherence to these principles.

To the extent that many of the recommendations are directed to state actors, it is noted that each of these actors has one or more appointees on this Special Commission itself. For recommendations that are directed towards non-state actors, including school districts, private higher education institutions and employers, municipalities, and others, adherence will depend upon their commitment to make our Commonwealth a truly inclusive place for all people – including Jews – as well as the continued engagement of Jewish residents and organizations, and their allies. The legislators on this Special Commission will monitor the implementation of these recommendations and will consider filing legislation as appropriate to advance this Report's recommendations.

With this background, the Special Commission's findings and recommendations are rooted in the following principles:

1. Discrimination, harassment, bias, and hate against Jews and Israeli-Americans should be taken seriously – and just as seriously as we take discrimination, harassment, bias and hate against other vulnerable minorities or nationalities. We should listen to and respect people who say that they have been harmed by antisemitism; we should not gaslight them or tell them that their experience is invalid. Antisemitism is not part of an inferior class of hate, and efforts to make it so are not only ahistorical, but harmful to Jews and the collective project of promoting inclusion and equality under the law for all people.
2. Antisemitism and Jew hatred should be recognized as a unique form of hate that has exploded in recent years, and which demands specific and focused action. At the same time, antisemitism should also be addressed as part of broader efforts to combat all hate. Both things are true at the same time, and this Special Commission believes that the people of Massachusetts have more than sufficient capacity to hold both truths simultaneously.

3. Antisemitism is a serious problem across the political spectrum in Massachusetts and the United States today. It is real, escalating, and damaging, whether it takes the form of neo-Nazi, white supremacist hate or pro-Hamas, radical hate. Massachusetts should condemn and combat all forms of antisemitism, not cherry-pick or ignore certain forms based on political convenience. The Special Commission notes with approval the words of Deborah Lipstadt, former White House Special Envoy to Monitor and Combat Antisemitism:

Those who place themselves at the right end of the political spectrum see antisemitism on the left. And they see it clearly and accurately. Those on the left end of the spectrum see the threat of antisemitism on the right. And they see it clearly and accurately. What each of them fail to see is the antisemitism right next to them, that which is expressed by people with whom they share many other ideas, beliefs, and political stances. If you can only see it on the opposite side of the political treason, then I have to question whether your battle is with antisemitism or with your political opponents.³

4. Measures to combat antisemitism and Jew hatred must respect and protect the rights guaranteed by the First Amendment. Nothing in the Special Commission's recommendations should be interpreted or used to censor anyone, discipline or punish protected speech, or prevent anyone from engaging in constitutionally protected speech, including, but not limited to, advocacy for Palestinians, Israelis, or anyone else.
5. The First Amendment does not give license to harass, bully, discriminate, or commit hate crimes. Likewise, it does not permit expression that violates reasonable viewpoint-neutral time, place and manner rules or disrupts a school environment. People have robust First Amendment rights to engage in political advocacy in all sorts of ways, including in public protests, through traditional and social media, and otherwise. However, there are well established limits to the First Amendment. The First Amendment allows government entities to set reasonable content-neutral time, place and manner limits on expression. And the First Amendment does not allow someone to disrupt the school environment, particularly in elementary and secondary schools.

³ See Deborah Lipstadt, Birkbeck Institute for the Study of Antisemitism, *From Right to Left and in Between: Jew-Hatred Across the Political Divide* (Feb. 21, 2024), available at <https://bisa.bbk.ac.uk/event/from-right-to-left-and-in-between-jew-hatred-across-the-political-divide/>.

6. Some speech is “lawful but awful.” The First Amendment does not protect hateful, offensive speech from being criticized and labeled as such, including by government or school officials. Part of combating antisemitism is recognizing such offensive speech, and responding by speaking out against it without imposing censorship or punishment.
7. In the current local and global context since the horrific October 7th Hamas terrorist attacks, expression that is reasonably understood as supporting, celebrating or promoting violence against Jews should be labeled and condemned as hateful and antisemitic. There are all kinds of ways to support peace in the Middle East and advocate for the rights of Palestinians, as well as Israelis and others. However, especially after October 7, it is offensive and hurtful to a significant portion of the Jewish and Israeli-American community when people use phrases that have an association with terrorism, violence and explicit calls for the elimination of Jews (i.e., “Globalize the Intifada,” “There is only one solution, Intifada revolution,” “Death to the IDF,” etc.), when people deny Hamas terrorist activity, or when people label Hamas terrorism to be “justified resistance.” Like with other vulnerable minorities, the way that many or most Jews interpret these calls is intrinsically relevant in a conversation about antisemitism.
8. Massachusetts should combat antisemitism in a way that distinguishes between good faith criticism of Israel, on the one hand, and advocacy that condones or supports the violent elimination of Jews and the state of Israel. Some people (including Jewish and non-Jewish people) have fundamental concerns or objections regarding Israel, but they do not endorse or promote violence. Our approach to combating antisemitism should create space for good faith dialogue on complex topics, in the spirit of true inclusion.
9. **The Special Commission believes that antisemitism is a hatred of Jews for being Jewish.** In recent decades, advocates, academics, and governments have crafted definitions, examples, and frameworks that serve as valuable tools to raise awareness and increase understanding of antisemitism. While these definitions/examples/frameworks are helpful educational tools, the Special Commission overall believes they lack the specificity and narrow tailoring that is appropriate for use in law or any regulatory enforcement regime. The definitions have also become a lightning rod and litmus test used by some to raise fears, engender animosity, and create division. Surely, like any definition, definitions and examples of antisemitism can all be misused in bad faith or misunderstood in ways that mislabels something as antisemitism which is not. That last point is not a reason to cancel or abolish their use for good faith educators, and the Special Commission

notes the hypocritical nature of advocating for free speech while also seeking to erase prominent definitional tools.

With the foregoing in mind, and in view of its statutory charge, the Special Commission joins the last 4 U.S. Presidential Administrations, the Biden-Harris White House National Strategy, 35 other states plus the District of Columbia, and 31 member states of the United Nations, in acknowledging the non-legally binding International Holocaust Remembrance Association (IHRA) definition of antisemitism as “the most prominent” of these educational tools. This position is consistent with the Commonwealth’s 2021 proclamation endorsing the IHRA definition of antisemitism as a non-legally binding definition that can be used to determine contemporary manifestations of antisemitism.⁴ Educators and other actors charged with implementing these recommendations should be informed of and by IHRA’s definition and its examples. Those consulting IHRA should pay special attention to its provision that “criticism of Israel similar to that leveled against any other country cannot be regarded as antisemitism,” and should understand that its examples should not be taken as *per se* antisemitism. IHRA—like all definitions—should not be employed to limit First Amendment rights. Additionally, the Special Commission, like the authors of the National Strategy, “welcomes and appreciates the Nexus Document and notes other such efforts.”⁵ Some other definitional efforts are backed by organized coalitions, such as the Jerusalem Definition⁶ and the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum,⁷ while others are grassroots and bespoke, such as the straightforward definition authored by Concord-Carlisle Against Antisemitism.⁸

V. DATA AND REPORTS BEHIND THE FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Commission is committed to a data-driven approach in its efforts to combat antisemitism. To this end, the Commission has conducted an extensive review of multiple data sources that

⁴ See Governor Charlie Baker, Proclamation endorsing the working definition of antisemitism developed by the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA), (Feb. 18, 2021), available at

[google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=&ved=2ahUKEwjHpLGRzsyQAxUzGFkFHQVVMRQQFnoECBgQAQ&url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.mass.gov%2Fdoc%2Fantisemitism-proclamation%2Fdownload&usg=AOvVaw3tnE3WeYsyjvkANbPNZTi&opi=89978449](https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=&ved=2ahUKEwjHpLGRzsyQAxUzGFkFHQVVMRQQFnoECBgQAQ&url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.mass.gov%2Fdoc%2Fantisemitism-proclamation%2Fdownload&usg=AOvVaw3tnE3WeYsyjvkANbPNZTi&opi=89978449).

⁵ See The U.S. National Strategy to Counter Antisemitism, 13 (May, 2023), available at, <https://bidenwhitehouse.archives.gov/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/U.S.-National-Strategy-to-Counter-Antisemitism.pdf>; see The Nexus Project, *The Nexus Document*, available at, <https://nexusproject.us/nexus-resources/the-nexus-document/>.

⁶ See The Jerusalem Declaration on Antisemitism, available at, <https://jerusalemdeclaration.org>.

⁷ See United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, *What is Antisemitism?*, available at <https://www.ushmm.org/antisemitism/what-is-antisemitism>

⁸ See Concord Against Antisemitism, *Frequently Asked Questions*, available at,

both individually and collectively indicate a clear and troubling rise in antisemitic incidents, crimes, and attitudes. The data reviewed by the Commission aligns closely with the anecdotal evidence and personal testimony shared by numerous speakers who appeared before it.

Key sources informing the Commission’s analysis include the FBI Hate Crime Statistics Report, the Massachusetts Executive Office of Public Safety and Security (EOPSS) Hate Crimes Report, and the Anti-Defamation League’s (ADL) Audit of Antisemitic Incidents 2024—all of which document a sharp increase in antisemitic crimes and incidents following October 7, 2023.⁹ Further, research from organizations such as the Foundation to Combat Antisemitism (FCAS), the American Jewish Committee (AJC), the Jewish Federations of North America, and others highlight a rise in antisemitic attitudes and a surge in antisemitic content and engagement across online platforms.¹⁰ In addition to the above named sources, the Commission based its findings

⁹ See FBI Crime Data Explorer, available at, <https://www.concordagainstantisemitism.org/faq.https://cde.ucr.cjis.gov/LATEST/webapp/#/pages/explorer/crime/hate-crime> (showing a significant spike in reported antisemitic hate crime incidents immediately following October 7, 2023, and sustained, elevated levels of such incidents throughout 2024 compared with pre–October 7, 2023, levels); see Massachusetts Executive Office of Public Safety, *Hate Crime 2024 Massachusetts*, available at https://ma.beyond2020.com/ma_tops/report/hate-crime_1/massachusetts/2024 (showing that 2024 marked the first year on record in which Massachusetts reported more hate-crime incidents targeting Jews than targeting Black people). The data collected by EOPS shows that 84.4% of religious bias hate crimes were anti-Jewish, an increase of nearly 10% when compared to 2023 data. See also Anti-Defamation League, *Audit of Antisemitic Incidents 2024*, available at, https://www.adl.org/resources/report/audit-antisemitic-incidents-2024?gclid=aw.ds&gad_source=1&gad_campaignid=10844164222&gbraid=0AAAAADtja53cELSoS Mw-WpUfzYRbseRxi&gclid=CjwKCAjwuePGBhBZEiwAIGCVS48SyY1RBuAEKej9nlzV0sbPzrYO258aNc6Qp6hl7tsLXQk4N5X-WhoCYP0QA vD_BwE, (listing 9,354 antisemitic incidents nationwide—the highest number in the ADL’s 46 years of tracking—marking a 5% rise from 2023, 344% over five years and 893% over ten years.)

¹⁰ See Foundation to Combat Antisemitism, *BSA Study: Jewish Hate Has Escalated In The US—But Could Be Slowing*, available at, <https://www.bluesquarealliance.org/research/survey-finds-jewish-hate-rising/>, (indicating that more than 26 million Americans are now leaning toward antisemitic hate as compared to 18 months ago). The December 2024 survey showed a modest slowing of negative trends, yet the prevalence of antisemitic beliefs remains elevated when compared with data from 2023. See also American Jewish Committee, *The State of Antisemitism in America 2024: Comparing American Jews and the General Public*, available at, <https://www.ajc.org/AntisemitismReport2024/Comparison>, (relaying that 91% of American Jews and 59% of the General Public think that antisemitism has increased over the past 5 years and that 93% of American Jews and 72% of the General Public see antisemitism as a problem in the U.S.). See also Jewish Federations of North America and Anti-Defamation League Center for Antisemitism Research, *Portrait of Antisemitic Experience in the U.S., 2024-2025*, available at, <https://www.adl.org/resources/report/portrait-antisemitic-experiences-us-2024-2025>, (finding

and recommendations on reports and surveys conducted by academics and researchers, all of which corroborated the escalation of antisemitism.¹¹

While the Special Commission is the first legislative body of its kind dedicated specifically to combating antisemitism, it is not the first to recognize or respond to its alarming rise. To that end, the Commission gives significant weight to reports documenting antisemitism, such as the Harvard Presidential Task Force on Combating Antisemitism and Anti-Israel Bias,¹² and builds upon the findings and recommendations of the June 2023 White House National Strategy to Counter Antisemitism.¹³

No single data set or report forms the foundation for the following findings or recommendations. Rather, a broad range of reports and studies from a broad range of authors and organizations were reviewed—alongside over 50 hours of public testimony and hundreds of pages of written submissions, sent through and to the Commission’s publicly available feedback form and email address—to provide a comprehensive and accurate picture of the state of antisemitism in the Commonwealth. Taken together, the aggregated data points unmistakably in one direction: antisemitism has risen significantly since October 7, 2023, and remains an urgent challenge that demands coordinated action.

VI. FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE MASSACHUSETTS SPECIAL COMMISSION ON COMBATING ANTISEMITISM

MSCCA K-12 EDUCATION FINDINGS

that over half of Jewish American have experience a form of antisemitism in the past 12 months).

¹¹ See Graham Wright, Shahar Hecht, Sasha Volodarsky & Leonard Saxe, *Antisemitism on Campus: Understanding Hostility to Jews and Israel* (Aug. 2024), Cohen Ctr. for Modern Jewish Studies, Brandeis Univ., <https://www.brandeis.edu/cmjs/antisemitism/antisemitism-on-campus.html>; see Eitan Hersh & Dahlia Lyss, *A Year of Campus Conflict and Growth: An Over-Time Study of the Impact of the Israel-Hamas War on U.S. College Students* (Sept. 3, 2024), Jim Joseph Found., <https://jimjosephfoundation.org/learning-resources/a-year-of-campus-conflict-and-growth-an-over-time-study-of-the-impact-of-the-israel-hamas-war-on-u-s-college-students>.

¹² See Harvard University Presidential Task Force on Combating Antisemitism and Anti-Israeli Bias, *Final Report*, 138 (Apr. 29, 2025) (noting substantial majority of students the Task Force met with expressed some level of discomfort with their place in the Harvard community.) The Final Report of the Task Force indicates that the qualitative assessment is corroborated with the quantitative survey data. *Id.*

¹³ See The U.S. National Strategy to Counter Antisemitism, 2 (May, 2023), *available at*, <https://bidenwhitehouse.archives.gov/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/U.S.-National-Strategy-to-Counter-Antisemitism.pdf> (noting that “antisemitism is rising, both at home and abroad.”).

1. Antisemitism in Massachusetts K-12 public schools is a pervasive and escalating problem, with a large number of reported incidents of hate, bullying, harassment and discrimination experienced by families and teachers. There has been a stark escalation of incidents in recent years, especially after the Hamas terrorist attack on Israel on October 7, 2023. Many Jewish students in Massachusetts schools are scared to publicly display their Judaism or let others know they are Jewish for fear of disparate treatment or bullying.¹⁴
2. Antisemitism is a distinct type of hate that takes various forms and manifests in a variety of ways in Massachusetts K-12 schools.¹⁵ These include, but are not limited to: swastika graffiti; Holocaust jokes, distortion, or denial; harassment or discrimination based on Jewish identity, perceived relationship to Israel, or actual Israeli citizenship; and harassment directed towards Jewish individuals while using the term “Zionist” as a replacement slur.¹⁶
3. Antisemitic incidents and the more pervasive climate of antisemitism are causing serious harm to the mental health of Jewish and/or Israeli students and families.¹⁷
4. Antisemitic incidents and hate crimes in the Massachusetts K-12 school environment are likely to be significantly underreported. Many school districts and schools do not provide teachers and staff with clear instructions as to when and how they should report potential hate or bias incidents of all types, including antisemitic incidents. The Commonwealth lacks a centralized mechanism for compiling and tracking such incidents. Many victims

¹⁴ See ADL, *Audit of Antisemitic Incidents in 2024* (Apr. 22, 2025), available at <https://www.adl.org/resources/report/audit-antisemitic-incidents-2024>; see also *First Hearing of the Special Comm’n on Combating Antisemitism* (Oct. 29, 2024) (statement of Melissa Garlick, Associate Vice President, CJP’s Center for Combating Antisemitism at 1:42:35); *Fourth Hearing of the Special Comm’n on Combating Antisemitism* (Feb. 10, 2025) (statement of Katherine Craven, Chair of Mass. Board of Elementary and Secondary Education at 2:58:08); *Fifth Hearing of the Special Comm’n on Combating Antisemitism* (Mar. 11, 2025) (statement of Molly Parr, First VP Jewish Federation of Western Massachusetts at 2:56:20).

¹⁵ See *Fifth Hearing of the Special Comm’n on Combating Antisemitism* (Mar. 11, 2025) (statement of Rabbi Amy Wallk at 0:59:05); *Fifth Hearing of the Special Comm’n on Combating Antisemitism* (Mar. 11, 2025) (statement of Rabbi Ariella Rosen at 3:45:10).

¹⁶ See Facing History and Ourselves, *Explainer: Antisemitism and Its Impacts*, available at https://www.facinghistory.org/sites/default/files/202402/Explainer_Antisemitism_and_Its_Impacts_1.pdf.

¹⁷ See *Second Hearing of the Special Comm’n on Combating Antisemitism* (Nov. 19, 2024) (statement of Jessica Goldberg, School Counselor at 2:39:34); *Third Hearing of the Special Comm’n on Combating Antisemitism* (Jan. 23, 2025) (statement of Dr. Miri Bar-Halpern at 2:33:40); *Fourth Hearing of the Special Comm’n on Combating Antisemitism* (Feb. 10, 2025) (statement of Katherine Craven at 2:59:00).

of antisemitic incidents do not report cases due to fear of retaliation and harassment or the sense that reporting an incident will not lead to any response by the school.¹⁸

5. Since October 7th, 2023, antisemitic speech and harassment in Massachusetts K-12 settings has had a particularly serious impact on Israeli-American students, families and teachers, as well as many Jewish students, families and teachers who have not lived in Israel but who have a personal or religious connection to the State of Israel.¹⁹
6. Programs for students, staff, and educators on combating hate and bias often neglect to include antisemitism as a form of bias and, as a consequence, fail to address it as a legitimate issue.²⁰ This is true even in school districts that have a demonstrated pattern of antisemitic incidents.
7. There is a lack of understanding among some K-12 educators and administrators in Massachusetts as to what forms of speech and expression constitute antisemitism and should therefore be subject to or prohibited under school codes of conduct, anti-harassment, anti-discrimination, and anti-bullying policies.²¹
8. There is a hesitancy in many schools across the Commonwealth to address antisemitism, both proactively through education and reactively when it occurs, that stems from a variety of factors. These include a lack of understanding around what types of speech are harmful to Jewish students and staff including the impact of such speech, a perception that proactive education is only necessary in communities with prominent Jewish populations, and a lack of familiarity with the programs and resources available to support efforts to combating antisemitism.²²
9. There is inconsistency in responses from districts when antisemitic incidents or concerns of antisemitism are raised and no wide availability of best practices for Massachusetts

¹⁸ See *First Hearing of the Special Comm'n on Combating Antisemitism* (Oct. 29, 2024) (statement of Peggy Shukur, Vice President of the East Division of ADL at 1:15:22). It is noted that student privacy concerns or reputational harm to a school district may hinder reporting of antisemitic and other types of bias-related incidents.

¹⁹ See *Third Hearing of the Special Comm'n on Combating Antisemitism* (Jan. 23, 2025) (statement of Dr. Miri Bar-Halpern at 2:48:32); *Second Hearing of the Special Comm'n on Combating Antisemitism* (Nov. 19, 2024) (statement of Debbie Coltin, Executive Director of Lappin Foundation at 2:48:17); *Fifth Hearing of the Special Comm'n on Combating Antisemitism* (Mar. 11, 2025) (statement of Rabbi Amy Wallk at 0:49:27).

²⁰ See *Third Hearing of the Special Comm'n on Combating Antisemitism* (Jan. 23, 2025) (statement of Dr. Miri Bar-Halpern at 2:52:57).

²¹ See *Second Hearing of the Special Comm'n on Combating Antisemitism* (Nov. 19, 2024) (statement of Acton-Boxborough Regional School District Superintendent Peter Light at 0:26:14).

²² See ADL, *Antisemitism in Schools and Support for Holocaust Education* (Dec. 23, 2024), available at <https://www.adl.org/resources/report/antisemitism-schools-and-support-holocaust-education>.

schools. As a result, some districts respond ineffectively, and others fail to respond at all.²³

10. Massachusetts public school students have reported being exposed to content and curriculum that contains inaccurate, decontextualized, and harmful material around Israel and the Jewish people. Massachusetts public school educators have reported that similar problematic content or resources have been endorsed or promoted through the Massachusetts Teachers Association and professional development opportunities.²⁴
11. The Commonwealth, through the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE), has limited visibility into the curricular materials and programs utilized by individual districts to teach about antisemitism, Jewish history, and Jewish identity. As a result, neither DESE nor this Commission knows what curriculum materials each local district and school uses to address antisemitism and the history of the Jewish people.²⁵
12. In 2018, DESE published a revised content standard relating to Israel, Palestine, and conflict in the Middle East.²⁶ DESE recently publicized, and is currently accepting public feedback on, its Antisemitism and Societal Bias Prevention Curriculum and Professional Development Rubric, to establish basic standards relating to classroom education on the topic of antisemitism itself.²⁷ However, there are significant limitations on DESE's authority to require a school district to use or cease using particular curricula and

²³ See *Second Hearing of the Special Comm'n on Combating Antisemitism* (Nov. 19, 2024) (statement of Superintendent Peter Light at 0:28:09); *Second Hearing of the Special Comm'n on Combating Antisemitism* (Nov. 19, 2024) (statement of Maddie Katzen, UMass Lowell student at 0:49:50); *Second Hearing of the Special Comm'n on Combating Antisemitism* (Nov. 19, 2024) (statement of Rabbi Noach Kosofsky at 1:57:56).

²⁴ See Massachusetts Teachers Association, *MTA resources on Israel and Occupied Palestine*, available at <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1gLzllkhtAD1ki-UHbrfBcHM2IgzVDxn7/view?usp=sharing>; see also *Fourth Hearing of the Special Comm'n on Combating Antisemitism* (Feb. 10, 2025) (statement of Katherine Craven, BESE chair at 3:02:47, 3:03:47); Sobey, Rick, "Stunned Massachusetts Educators, ADL Call for MassCUE Apology after 'Hateful' Anti-Israel and Holocaust Rhetoric at Conference," *Boston Herald* (Dec. 20, 2024), available at <https://www.bostonherald.com/2024/12/20/stunned-massachusetts-educators-adl-call-for-masscue-apology-after-hateful-anti-israel-and-holocaust-rhetoric-at-conference/>.

²⁵ See *Fourth Hearing of the Special Comm'n on Combating Antisemitism* (Feb. 10, 2025) (statement of Katherine Craven, BESE chair at 3:00:42, 3:01:23).

²⁶ See Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, *History and Social Science Curriculum Framework: Grades PreKindergarten to 12, Content Standards 6.T3e, 6.T3g, and WHI.T5* (2018), available at <https://www.doe.mass.edu/frameworks/hss/2018-12.pdf>.

²⁷ See Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, *Antisemitism and Societal Bias Prevention Curriculum and Professional Development Rubric* (Oct. 17, 2025), available at https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=&ved=2ahUKEwja6Yat osWQAxXxk4keHT0JOciQFnoECBkQAw&url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.doe.mass.edu%2Fsf%2Fsafety%2Fdraft-rubric.pdf&usg=AOvVaw0_r4dueQpFikw-24gm_Zwv&opi=89978449.

classroom materials.²⁸ There are also limits on DESE's ability to address or investigate reports of antisemitism that are reported to it.

13. In 2023-2024, DESE conducted a genocide education survey in part to monitor compliance with the Commonwealth's Genocide Education Mandate. The survey demonstrated a need for greater visibility into the implementation of the mandate across the Commonwealth, and suggested poor adherence to the law by school districts. DESE sent the survey to 187 of the Commonwealth's 389 districts. 58% of districts responded to the survey. Of the districts that responded, 76% provide genocide education through required courses, not only electives. Of those districts providing required genocide education courses, 89% teach about the Holocaust as part of that curriculum and 11% do not teach about the Holocaust.²⁹
14. Students are increasingly exposed to neo-Nazi, pro-Hamas, and other extreme right- and left-wing ideologies through social media and other online platforms, often without critical context. This exposure fosters the spread of hateful conspiracy theories and antisemitic beliefs, and may be causally linked to a rise in Nazi-related and/or terrorist sympathizing graffiti, gestures, and speech by students in K-12 settings.³⁰

MSCCA K-12 EDUCATION RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE) should establish an Advisory Council on Holocaust and Genocide Education within the next six months to ensure timely support for schools in the implementation of the Genocide Education Mandate and to track its implementation.³¹ As part of its charge, the Advisory Council should:

²⁸ See *Fifth Hearing of the Special Comm'n on Combating Antisemitism* (Mar. 11, 2025) (statement of Dr. Russell Johnston, Acting Commissioner of DESE at 2:06:40).

²⁹ See Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, *Genocide Education in Massachusetts Middle & High Schools: A Statewide Landscape Analysis & 2023-2024 School Year Grant Outcomes Report* (2024), available at <https://www.doe.mass.edu/research/reports/2024/10-genocide-education.pdf>.

³⁰ See *Sixth Hearing of the Special Comm'n on Combating Antisemitism* (April 7, 2025) (statement of Eric Olshan, Former U.S. Attorney for the Western District of Pennsylvania at 0:46:30); see also *Seventh Hearing of the Special Comm'n on Combating Antisemitism* (May 5, 2025) (statement of Ben Popp, ADL Center on Extremism at 0:17:22); see also *Eighth Hearing of the Special Comm'n on Combating Antisemitism* (June 9, 2025) (statement of Adam Katz, President, Foundation to Combat Antisemitism at 2:09:35).

³¹ For a full list of BESE Advisory Councils, see <https://www.doe.mass.edu/bese/councils/>; see also *Fourth Hearing of the Special Comm'n on Combating Antisemitism* (Feb. 10, 2025) (statement of Katherine Craven, BESE chair at 3:14:44, 3:17:13); *Sixth Hearing of the Special Comm'n on Combating Antisemitism* (April 7, 2025) (statement of Eric Olshan, Former U.S. Attorney for the Western District of Pennsylvania at 1:13:45).

- a. assess the demand for and adequacy of Genocide Education Trust funding to ensure effective implementation of the mandate, including teacher training, instructional materials, and community engagement efforts.
 - b. ensure that age-appropriate curriculum and resources are developed and made available for all grade levels, including younger students in elementary school, to build foundational understanding.
2. In accordance with existing legislative requirements, DESE should develop model curricula and best practices/resources around teaching antisemitism and Jewish identity in schools, including through enhancements to its Frameworks. Initial model resources should be published within one year, with annual updates thereafter. This may include Jewish history, positive Jewish contributions to America, Jewish diversity, and manifestations of contemporary antisemitism.³²
3. DESE should provide resources that are appropriate for classroom instruction at various grade levels to teach about Ancient Israel, Palestine, the modern State of Israel, and related conflicts in the Middle East that align and relate to the Content Standards for History and Social Science, specifically, Standards 6.T3e, 6.T3g, and WHII.T5. Schools should address antisemitism, extremism and antisemitic myths/tropes³³ as part of a broader focus on digital literacy, civics, and the critical evaluation of misinformation and disinformation.³⁴
4. Public school districts should institute mandatory anti-bias education for school committees and all K-12 faculty and administrators that includes antisemitism. The

³² See U.S. National Strategy to Counter Antisemitism at 17, *available at* <https://bidenwhitehouse.archives.gov/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/U.S.-National-Strategy-to-Counter-Antisemitism.pdf>; *see also Fifth Hearing of the Special Comm’n on Combating Antisemitism* (Mar. 11, 2025) (statement of Rabbi Jodie Gordon at 0:22:16); *Fifth Hearing of the Special Comm’n on Combating Antisemitism* (Mar. 11, 2025) (statement of Dr. Nicole Collins at 3:57:50).

³³ For examples of common antisemitic myths/tropes, *see* Facing History & Ourselves, “Antisemitic Tropes” (Nov. 3, 2022), *available at* https://www.facinghistory.org/sites/default/files/202211/Handout_%20Antisemitic%20Tropes.pdf.

³⁴ For examples of resources addressing antisemitic myths/tropes in online spaces, *see* Facing History and Ourselves, *Confronting Online Antisemitism*, *available at* <https://www.facinghistory.org/resource-library/confronting-online-antisemitism>; ADL, *Antisemitism Uncovered*, *available at* <https://antisemitism.adl.org/>; *see also Third Hearing of the Special Comm’n on Combating Antisemitism* (Jan. 23, 2025) (statement of Matt Williams, VP ADL’s Center for Antisemitism Research at 0:29:05); *Eighth Hearing of the Special Comm’n on Combating Antisemitism* (June 9, 2025) (statement of ret. Ambassador Alan D. Solomont, Nexus Project Board Member at 1:41:45).

mandatory anti-bias education should include antisemitism education and training aligned with a DESE-developed framework.³⁵

5. Schools and districts should work with community organizations to create and implement programming for Jewish American Heritage Month (JAHM)³⁶ each May to promote awareness and appreciation of Jewish contributions to American society, and to treat JAHM in an equivalent fashion to other history, identity and heritage months recognized by the schools throughout the year. Districts should be prepared to implement JAHM programming by May of the upcoming school year.
6. The Commission calls upon the Association of Independent Schools New England to adopt similar recommendations for its schools in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.
7. The Commonwealth should establish a statewide Bias Reporting Program that explicitly includes antisemitism as a form of bias. This program should be piloted in select districts within the next school year and evaluated for statewide rollout within 18 months. This program should encompass efforts to collect centralized hate crimes data, including efforts by the Mass. State Police Hate Crimes Awareness and Response Team (HART).³⁷ Additionally, this program should collect data on bias incidents - which may not rise to the level of a hate crime - in all K-12 schools. Some incidents, particularly in school settings, may not constitute crimes but are nonetheless harmful and require tailored, non-punitive, and supportive responses, including but not limited to restorative justice. DESE and the Attorney General's office should instruct all districts that every incident that might potentially constitute a case of bias, bullying, harassment or discrimination against individuals or groups of a protected class should be reported to this response program. The program should include an anonymous reporting option to encourage safe and accessible reporting for students, families, and staff. The program should include annual

³⁵ For a state-based framework for mandatory anti-bias education inclusive of antisemitism, *see* Md. H.B. 1386, 2024 Reg. Sess. (Md. 2024), Chapter 128 (approved Apr. 25, 2024; eff. July 1, 2024), *available at* <https://mgaleg.maryland.gov/mgaweb/Legislation/Details/HB1386?ys=2024RS>; *see also* *Fourth Hearing of the Special Comm'n on Combating Antisemitism* (Feb. 10, 2025) (statement of Katherine Craven, BESE chair at 2:59:30).

³⁶ *See* U.S. National Strategy to Counter Antisemitism at 19, *available at* <https://bidenwhitehouse.archives.gov/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/U.S.-National-Strategy-to-Counter-Antisemitism.pdf>; for a list of resources to support teaching about and celebrating JAHM *see*, Jewish American Heritage Month, *Educator Resources*, *available at* <https://jewishamericanheritage.org/educator-resources/>.

³⁷ *See Seventh Hearing of the Special Comm'n on Combating Antisemitism* (May 5, 2025) (statement of Det. Lt. Ryan Czepiel, MA State Police HART Unit at 1:25:40).

public reporting by DESE of the number of reported incidents by category, as well as pertinent details (anonymized to protect privacy and personal identity).³⁸

8. School counseling departments should:
 - a. work to deepen their understanding of the effects of antisemitism on the mental health of Jewish young people;
 - b. apply trauma informed interventions to incidents of antisemitism; and
 - c. expand access to mental health resources for Jewish students targeted by antisemitic harassment or bullying.³⁹
9. Schools should have a clear, transparent, and publicly available protocol for how a community member can report to the school administration an incident of hate, bias, or discrimination in consultation with the “Guidance on School’s Legal Obligations to Prevent and Address Hate and Bias Incidents” by DESE and the Attorney General’s Office.”⁴⁰ As part of this protocol, schools should establish clear and public whistleblower protections for anyone who reports such an incident, including safeguards against retaliation.⁴¹

³⁸ For Massachusetts DESE example *see*, DESE Student Discipline Data Report, *available at* <https://profiles.doe.mass.edu/statereport/ssdr.aspx>; *see also* *First Hearing of the Special Comm’n on Combating Antisemitism* (Oct. 29, 2024) (statement of Peggy Shukur, Vice President of the East Division of ADL at 1:15:22); *Sixth Hearing of the Special Comm’n on Combating Antisemitism* (April 7, 2025) (statement of Ariella Hellman, Director of Government Affairs at Agudath Israel of America at 1:41:10); *Seventh Hearing of the Special Comm’n on Combating antisemitism* (May 5, 2025) (statement of ADA David O’Sullivan at 1:17:05). The Special Commission intends to explore, in future meetings, the possibility of expanding the Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination’s (MCAD) charge to include incidents that occur in the K-12 school setting.

³⁹ *See, e.g.,* Miri Bar-Halpern and Jaclyn Wolfman, *Traumatic Invalidation in the Jewish Community after October 7*, *Journal of Human Behavior in the Social Environment*; Association of Jewish Psychologists Webinar, *Exploring the Psychological Toll of Antisemitism on Mental Health* (Feb. 27, 2024), *available at* https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7clRtE_eBmk; Association of Jewish Psychologists, *Resources Menu and Downloadable Content*, *available at* <https://associationofjewishpsychologists.com/resources/#links>; *see also* *Sixth Hearing of the Special Comm’n on Combating Antisemitism* (April 7, 2025) (statement of Ariella Hellman, Director of Government Affairs at Agudath Israel of America at 1:28:45).

⁴⁰ *See* Office of the Attorney General, *Guidance on Schools’ Legal Obligations to Prevent and Address Hate and Bias Incidents*, *available at* <https://www.mass.gov/doc/guidance-on-schools-obligations-to-prevent-and-address-hate-incidents-september-2024/download>.

⁴¹ *See* Revere Public Schools, *Bias Incident Reporting Procedure*, *available at*, https://www.reverek12.org/apps/pages/index.jsp?uREC_ID=2833610&type=d&pREC_ID=2320528&total1y=true (clarifying that “ANY retaliation against a person who reports an incident – whether they are a person harmed/targeted, a witness, or a reporter of information – will not be tolerated and will be subjected to strict enforcement.”)

10. Schools should have a clear, transparent, and publicly available protocol for how reports of hate, bias, or discrimination are handled by the district. The protocol should include procedures for how and when such incidents are reported to law enforcement, the community, and the potential victims.⁴²
11. Before the start of each school year, DESE and the Attorney General's Office should circulate their "Guidance on School's Legal Obligations to Prevent and Address Hate and Bias Incidents"⁴³ to all school districts. This guidance should explain the obligations of schools to prevent bias-related incidents and harassment by students and staff and how to respond effectively when it occurs as required by the Massachusetts Anti-Bullying Law (G.L. c 71 sec. 37O) and the Student Anti-Discrimination Act (G.L. c 76 sec. 5). The guidance should also make clear that the protections against harassment provided by the Student Anti-Discrimination Act are closely analogous to those provided by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, though the Student Anti-Discrimination Act provides greater protections based on religion. DESE and the Attorney General's Office should update this guidance annually.
12. DESE should issue guidance for Massachusetts public and private schools on creating safe and supportive school environments with respect to shared national origin, shared ancestry or ethnic characteristics similar to its existing guidance on Gender Identity and LGBTQ+ students.⁴⁴ The guidance should include materials specific to creating safe and supportive environments for Jewish students.

⁴² See Concord Public Schools and Concord Carlisle Regional School District, *Bias Incident Response Protocol and Reporting Form*, available at, <https://www.concordps.org/deib>; see Public Schools of Brookline, *Bullying Prevention and Incident Reporting*, available at, <https://www.brookline.k12.ma.us/bullying>; see Hopkinton Public Schools, *Bullying Intervention and Prevention Plan*, available at, <https://www.hopkinton.k12.ma.us/district-departments/technology-services/technology-policies/bullying-intervention-and-prevention-plan>. See also, ADL, *Responding to Bias Incidents in Middle and High Schools: Resources and Best Practices for School Administrators & Educators*, available at, https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=&ved=2ahUKEwiw-c36_8SQAxXM0PACHWWCIQwQFnoECBkQAQ&url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.adl.org%2Fsites%2Fdefault%2Ffiles%2Fdocuments%2F2024-10%2Fresponding-to-bias-incidents-guide.pdf&usq=AOvVaw1r-gkoD5YIQEX0PzaaA7K2&opi=89978449.

⁴³ See Office of the Attorney General, *Guidance on Schools' Legal Obligations to Prevent and Address Hate and Bias Incidents*, available at <https://www.mass.gov/doc/guidance-on-schools-obligations-to-prevent-and-address-hate-incidents-september-2024/download>.

⁴⁴ Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, *Principles for Ensuring Safe and Supportive Learning Environments for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, and Questioning (LGBTQ) Students* (March 24, 2015), available at <https://www.doe.mass.edu/sfs/lgbtq/Principles-SafeEnvironment.html>.

13. School officials should adopt these best practices when communicating about antisemitic incidents and awareness, including:
- a. School officials should make strong, clear statements that antisemitism is unacceptable and will not be tolerated, both at the start of each school year and regularly on other appropriate occasions, such as on International Holocaust Remembrance Day, January 27 of each year.⁴⁵
 - b. When an antisemitic incident occurs, school officials, particularly superintendents and principals, should speak out clearly, forcefully, and with specificity as to the type of hate, rather than using vague language around all forms of hate.⁴⁶ Communication to the school community should be timely following an incident.⁴⁷
 - c. School administrators should communicate clearly and consistently to the entire school community (inclusive of the community in which the school is located), including all students and families, about school values and rules, including policies governing bullying, harassment, discrimination, protests, walkouts, poster, vandalism/graffiti, and social media. School administrators should make it clear that antisemitism falls under the umbrella of such values, rules and policies.
14. DESE should coordinate with the Attorney General's office to provide schools with clear guidance around First Amendment law, including students' right to free expression as provided in G.L. c 71 sec 82.⁴⁸
15. At the start of each school year, DESE should remind districts of their obligation to teach curriculum that adheres to the frameworks and guidance issued by DESE.⁴⁹

⁴⁵ See *Third Hearing of the Special Comm'n on Combating Antisemitism* (Jan. 23, 2025) (statement of Jonathan Burke, Asst. Attorney General, Civil Rights Division at 0:40:50).

⁴⁶ See *Second Hearing of the Special Comm'n on Combating Antisemitism* (Nov. 19, 2024) (statement of Superintendent Peter Light at 0:20:34).

⁴⁷ For examples of effective communications from school officials following antisemitic incidents, see Letter to Acton-Boxborough Families from Superintendent Peter Light, (Oct. 12, 2023), available at, https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Ks1wbRPkzbpw3Pk9fqikm2HGwJX2JX_m/view; see Letter to Concord-Carlise Regional High School Families from Superintendent Laurie Hunter, (Aug. 27, 2025), available at, https://drive.google.com/file/d/1tSVhbpqoDbV-WtLO1P8zMRkb9uLB_AIw/view; see Letter to St. John's Prep Community from the Office of the Head of School, available at, <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1uWfPzIVE-XhUUqFOBoChTBxi-SQyVAP/view>.

⁴⁸ See *Third Hearing of the Special Comm'n on Combating Antisemitism* (Jan. 23, 2025) (statement of Jonathan Burke, Asst. Attorney General, Civil Rights Division at 1:23:50).

⁴⁹ See *Third Hearing of the Special Comm'n on Combating Antisemitism* (Jan. 23, 2025)

16. DESE should develop a mechanism for reporting problematic curriculum in use in class including materials that promote bias, bigotry or discrimination against any person or group of persons on the basis of protected characteristics.⁵⁰ This reporting mechanism should clearly explain how concerns are evaluated, decisions made, and actions taken, as well as define its scope, limitations, and review timelines. This mechanism should be developed and made publicly available within one year.
17. Schools and districts should expand efforts to ensure kosher and halal foods are available to meet students' religious dietary needs.⁵¹
18. The Special Commission notes the existence of 603 CMR 26.05,⁵² requiring public schools to promote through their curricula respect for the human and civil rights of all individuals, ensure instructional materials have intellectual merit and are not biased or demeaning, and ensure equal physical education opportunities, and encourages its robust implementation by DESE.
19. Schools should have clear policies that assist students observing religious holidays not observed with a day off on the school calendar with making up missed classes or assignments.⁵³
20. Schools should promote and invest in after-school programs and clubs that encourage cross-identity or cross-communal bonding through shared experiences, for example,

(statement of Jonathan Burke, Asst. Attorney General, Civil Rights Division at 0:49:20).

⁵⁰ See *Fifth Hearing of the Special Comm'n on Combating Antisemitism* (Mar. 11, 2025)

(statement of Dr. Russell Johnston, Acting Commissioner of DESE at 2:38:18).

⁵¹ See, e.g., Boston Public Schools, *Halal and Kosher Meals*, available at <https://www.bostonpublicschools.org/bps-departments/food-and-nutrition-services/halal-and-koshermeals#:~:text=BPS%20offers%20halal%20and%20circle,available%20at%20your%20child%27s%20school>; Sharon Public Schools, *Food and Nutrition Services*, available at <https://sharon.healtheliving.net/>. For a statewide example, see, Illinois, Senate Bill 457 (103rd Gen. Ass'y, Public Act 103-1076, eff. March 21 2025), amending 105 ILCS 5/1B-22, 110 ILCS 330/8j, 410 ILCS 637/25, 410 ILCS 645/1.5 et seq., and 730 ILCS 5/3-7-9 to require halal and kosher meal options at public schools, state-operated hospitals, and Department of Corrections facilities, available at <https://www.ilga.gov/Legislation/BillStatus?DocNum=0457&GAID=17&GA=103&DocTypeID=SB&LegID=144205&SessionID=112>; see also *Sixth Hearing of the Special Comm'n on Combating Antisemitism* (Apr. 7, 2025) (statement of Ariella Hellman, Director of Government Affairs Agudath Israel of America, New England Office at 1:29:10).

⁵² See Access To Equal Educational Opportunity, 603 CMR 26.00 § 26.05 (2012) available at <https://www.doe.mass.edu/lawsregs/603cmr26.html?section=05>.

⁵³ In accordance with *Massachusetts General Laws*, c. 151C, sec. 2B

Jewish Student Unions and similar student organizations. Schools may authorize and support the creation of such student unions without violating the Establishment Clause of the Constitution.⁵⁴

21. Schools should leverage best practices for the US National Youth Sports Strategy to spotlight how activities like sports, fitness, dance, cooking, volunteering and more can build community solidarity to counter antisemitism and other forms of hate and ensure that such activities are not hostile environments for Jewish students.⁵⁵
22. Schools and districts should implement active bystander training to equip students and staff with the skills to safely intervene in incidents of bias, harassment, or discrimination.

MSCCA HIGHER EDUCATION FINDINGS

1. Massachusetts institutions of higher learning are essential to the economic and intellectual vitality of the Commonwealth.⁵⁶
2. Antisemitism on Massachusetts college and university campuses has negatively impacted the educational experience of many Jewish students, faculty, and staff. Antisemitism also poses a threat to the ability of Massachusetts higher education institutions to remain competitive recruiting and retaining Jewish students, faculty, and leaders.⁵⁷

⁵⁴ See, e.g., Emerson College, *Youth Lead* (Sharon, Mass.), available at <https://emerson.edu/social-justice-collaborative/elma-lewis-center/programs-projects/youth-lead>; Mosaic Interfaith Youth Action, <https://mosaicaction.org/our-programs/>; see also *Fifth Hearing of the Special Comm'n on Combating Antisemitism* (Mar. 11, 2025) (statement of Rabbi Jodie Gordon at 0:29:35). See *Thirteenth Hearing of the Special Comm'n on Combating Antisemitism* (Oct. 16, 2025) (statement of Student Members of Concord-Carlisle High School Jewish Student Union at 3:40:13).

⁵⁵ See Center for the Study of Sports in Society and Northeastern University, *Exploring Diverse Opportunities for Engagement and Empowerment*, available at <https://sportinsociety.sites.northeastern.edu/programs/>.

⁵⁶ See *Tenth Hearing of the Special Comm'n on Combating Antisemitism* (August 7, 2025) (statement of Dr. Leonard Saxe, 2:14:40); New England Board of Higher Education, *Impact of Higher Education in Massachusetts*, retrieved on at <https://nebhe.org/info/pdf/policy/nec/2025-Massachusetts-Economic-Impact-of-Higher-Education.pdf> (March 2025).

⁵⁷ See *Eleventh Hearing of the Special Comm'n on Combating Antisemitism* (May 5, 2025) (statement of Dr. Mark Poznansky at 0:49:14); *Eleventh Hearing of the Special Comm'n on Combating Antisemitism* (May 5, 2025) (statement of Dr. Rachel Fish at 3:21:15); *Tenth Hearing of the Special Comm'n on Combating Antisemitism* (Aug. 8, 2025) (statement of Leonard Saxe at 2:14:43); see also Harvard University Presidential Task Force on Combating Antisemitism and Anti-Israeli Bias, *Final Report*, 148 (Apr. 29, 2025).

3. Antisemitism is a serious concern within institutions of higher education across the Commonwealth. Jewish students, faculty, and staff report:
 - a. Feeling that their campuses are increasingly hostile environments, where expressing a Jewish identity or connection to Israel can lead to social isolation or backlash.
 - b. Feeling unwelcome or unsafe, with some choosing to conceal their Jewish identity in order to avoid judgment or exclusion.
 - c. Participation in Jewish campus life is often met with negative perceptions. Actual or perceived support for the existence of Israel as a Jewish state can carry significant social costs. In some cases, peers have actively sought to marginalize or ostracize Jewish students for holding such views.
 - d. Concern about antisemitism from both the political left and right, contributing to a climate in which Jewish members of campus communities feel used, vulnerable, and unsupported.
 - e. Being subject to violent physical assaults, antisemitic graffiti, and vandalism including the destruction of mezuzot.
 - f. Harassment and bullying based on their Jewish identity, perceived or actual connection to Israel, or Israeli citizenship.
 - g. Exposure to Holocaust denial and jokes, and disturbing verbal abuse, including statements suggesting they should have been sent to “the gas chambers.”
 - h. Being targets of harassment using the term “Zionist” as a replacement slur.
 - i. Demands to state their views on the Israel-Palestine conflict and to publicly denounce the State of Israel.⁵⁸
4. It is antisemitic to call upon Jews to explain the actions of the Israeli government or demand that Jews share their thoughts on the conflict simply because they are Jewish. So too is it antisemitic to hold Jews collectively responsible for the conduct of the Israeli government, target or harass Jewish individuals or institutions in response to Israeli policies or assume that all Jews support or are affiliated with Israeli government actions. The Jewish community, like all religious/ethnic groups, is made up of individuals, with diverse political, religious and social views, including with regards to the State of Israel.⁵⁹ Treating all members of a diverse group as monolithic is a core aspect of prejudice and reinforces harmful stereotypes.
5. In the months and years following the October 7, 2023, Hamas attack on Israeli citizens, many institutions of higher education in the Commonwealth have taken proactive and exemplary steps to address concerns surrounding antisemitism, including those cited in the Recommendations below. While challenges remain, these efforts reflect a growing

⁵⁸ See *Tenth Hearing of the Special Comm’n on Combating Antisemitism* (Aug. 8, 2025) (statement of Skye Landau at 57:25).

⁵⁹ See *Tenth Hearing of the Special Comm’n on Combating Antisemitism* (Aug. 8, 2025) (statement of Rabbi Aaron Fine at 45:41); Harvard University Presidential Task Force on Combating Antisemitism and Anti-Israeli Bias, *Final Report*, 132-33 (Apr. 29, 2025).

recognition of the seriousness of antisemitism on campus and the need for sustained institutional responses.⁶⁰

6. Many institutions in the Commonwealth maintain robust Jewish Studies departments or offer a wide range of courses that address Jewish history, culture, and antisemitism.⁶¹
7. Antisemitism on campus causes serious mental health impacts for Jewish and Israeli students, faculty, and staff by fueling anxiety and isolation. Jewish students, faculty, and staff have reported increased levels of stress and depressive symptoms linked to being the target of or witnessing antisemitism.⁶²
8. Programs and training for students, faculty, staff, and administrators on combating hate and bias at times do not include antisemitism as a form of bias and, as a consequence, fail to address it as a legitimate issue.⁶³ Many institutions of higher education, including

⁶⁰ See Graham Wright, Shahar Hecht & Leonard Saxe, *Ideology in the Classroom: How Faculty at U.S. Universities Navigate Politics and Pedagogy Amid Federal Pressure Over Viewpoint Diversity and Antisemitism*, Steinhardt Soc. Rsch. Inst., Brandeis Univ. (July 2025), <https://www.brandeis.edu/cmjs/antisemitism/ideology-classroom.html>; Graham Wright, Shahar Hecht, Sasha Volodarsky & Leonard Saxe, *Antisemitism on Campus: Understanding Hostility to Jews and Israel* (Aug. 2024), Cohen Ctr. for Modern Jewish Studies, Brandeis Univ., <https://www.brandeis.edu/cmjs/antisemitism/antisemitism-on-campus.html>; Eitan Hersh & Dahlia Lyss, *A Year of Campus Conflict and Growth: An Over-Time Study of the Impact of the Israel-Hamas War on U.S. College Students* (Sept. 3, 2024), Jim Joseph Found., <https://jimjosephfoundation.org/learning-resources/a-year-of-campus-conflict-and-growth-an-over-time-study-of-the-impact-of-the-israel-hamas-war-on-u-s-college-students>; *Tenth Hearing of the Special Comm’n on Combating Antisemitism* (Aug. 7, 2025) (statement of Eitan Hersh at 19:56); *Tenth Hearing of the Special Comm’n on Combating Antisemitism* (Aug. 7, 2025) (statement of Rabbi Aaron Fine at 49:55); *Eleventh Hearing of the Special Comm’n on Combating Antisemitism* (Sept. 8, 2025) (statement of Miriam Berkowitz Blue at 2:11:45); see *Eleventh Hearing of the Special Comm’n on Combating Antisemitism* (Sept. 8, 2025) (statement of Lindsey Gabow at 29:20); ADL, *Antisemitism on Campus*, available at <https://www.adl.org/antisemitism-campus>.

⁶¹ See Harvard University, Center for Jewish Studies, *Courses in Jewish Studies*, available at <https://cjs.fas.harvard.edu/academics/courses/>; Boston University, Elie Wiesel Center for Jewish Studies, *Elie Wiesel Center for Jewish Studies*, available at <https://www.bu.edu/jewishstudies/>.

⁶² See Talia Morstead & Anita DeLongis, *Antisemitism on Campus in the Wake of October 7: Examining Stress, Coping and Depressive Symptoms Among Jewish Students*, available at <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/smi.3529>; see also Sharon Shapiro, Psychology Today, *Back to School—and Confronting Campus Antisemitism*, (Sept. 5, 2025), available at <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/facilitating-change/202509/back-to-school-and-confronting-campus-antisemitism>.

⁶³ See American Jewish Committee, *Educational Institutions Action Items*, available at <https://www.ajc.org/call-to-action/educational-institutions>; ADL, *Nearly Three-Quarters of Jewish Students Experienced or Witnessed Antisemitism on Campus, New Survey Finds* (Nov. 29, 2023), available at <https://www.adl.org/resources/press-release/nearly-three-quarters-jewish->

Brandeis University, Harvard University, and Simmons College, have taken positive steps to incorporate antisemitism training as part of their broader programming on anti-bias training.⁶⁴

9. Jewish students have raised serious concerns about the lack of clarity in processes for reporting complaints and incidents of bias, as well as inconsistent application of disciplinary measures. Additionally, Jewish students report that antisemitic incidents are not addressed with the same urgency or seriousness as incidents targeting other vulnerable student populations. The concern about potential differences in treatment coupled with perceived indifference from university administrations contributes to a sense among Jewish students that their concerns are marginalized or dismissed.⁶⁵
10. While most Massachusetts colleges and universities have policies governing campus demonstrations, these rules are sometimes enforced inconsistently, leading to confusion, safety concerns, and administrative inaction. Protests have, in some cases, disrupted classes, campus operations and classroom instruction, and included speech or conduct perceived by students and faculty as harassing or intimidating. Although many schools have adopted content-neutral time, place, and manner restrictions, their effectiveness is undermined where enforcement is uneven.⁶⁶
11. Colleges and universities are required to comply with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 which prohibits discrimination based on protected classes, including on the basis of race, color, and national origin. Stakeholders suggest the value of having designated staff

students-experienced-or-witnessed-antisemitism (56% of students surveyed by ADL said they had previously completed DEI training, but only 18% of those who had DEI training said that they had completed any training modules specific to anti-Jewish prejudice).

⁶⁴ See Brandeis University, *Frieze Family Foundation Summer Institute on Antisemitism in Higher Education*, available at <https://www.brandeis.edu/antisemitism/programs/summer-institute-higher-ed/index.html>; Harvard University, *Training for the Harvard community*, available at <https://www.harvard.edu/task-force-on-antisemitism/revising-and-implementing-policies-procedures-and-training/>; Simmons University, *Simmons Hosts Project Shema's Webinar on Contemporary Antisemitism* (Sept. 27, 2024), available at [https://www.simmons.edu/news/simmons-hosts-project-shemas-webinar-contemporary-antisemitism#:~:text=On%20September%2020%2C%20ODEI%20hosted,%2DFounder%20of%20Project%20Shema\).](https://www.simmons.edu/news/simmons-hosts-project-shemas-webinar-contemporary-antisemitism#:~:text=On%20September%2020%2C%20ODEI%20hosted,%2DFounder%20of%20Project%20Shema).)

⁶⁵ See *Tenth Hearing of the Special Comm'n on Combating Antisemitism* (Aug. 8, 2025) (statement of Skye Landau at 53:10); Harvard University Presidential Task Force on Combating Antisemitism and Anti-Israeli Bias, *Final Report*, 127-28 (Apr. 29, 2025).

⁶⁶ See *Tenth Hearing of the Special Comm'n on Combating Antisemitism* (Aug. 8, 2025) (statement of Rabbi Aaron Fine at 47:39); see *Tenth Hearing of the Special Comm'n on Combating Antisemitism* (Aug. 8, 2025) (statement of Skye Landau at 59:29); See *Tenth Hearing of the Special Comm'n on Combating Antisemitism* (Aug. 8, 2025) (statement of Dr. Rachel Fish at 3:08:10).

at each institution responsible for overseeing Title VI compliance.⁶⁷ Recently, some institutions of higher education in the Commonwealth — including Harvard University — have taken steps to address this need by hiring full-time Title VI coordinators or staff with dedicated Title VI compliance responsibilities.⁶⁸

12. Recent cuts to United States Department of Education (USED) staffing make it difficult or impossible for federal officials to promptly and reliably address complaints filed under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. In 2024, 7 of 11 regional USED Office of Civil Rights (OCR) offices have completely closed, including the Boston office, and additional OCR staff have been laid off since. Meanwhile, OCR received a record 22,687 complaints in 2024.⁶⁹ The federal government's reduction in capacity to address civil rights abuses places added pressure on state and private actors to police antisemitism and other forms of hate.
13. College and university students have reported being exposed to educational content and teaching practices which have made Jewish/Israeli students feel unwelcome or unsafe including holding class at a protest encampment or giving extra credit to participate in a pro-Palestine protest.⁷⁰
14. Academic freedom and open discourse are essential in higher education. These fundamental characteristics of a robust higher education system must be balanced with a commitment to accuracy, context, and inclusion. When educational content or classroom dynamics promote one-sided narratives, erase Jewish history and identity, or create a

⁶⁷ See N.Y. Educ. Law § 6436-a (McKinney 2025), *available at* <https://www.nysenate.gov/legislation/laws/EDN/6436-A>; Johanna Alonso, Inside Higher Ed, *Now Hiring: Title VI Coordinators* (July 14, 2025), *available at* <https://www.insidehighered.com/news/students/diversity/2025/07/14/colleges-hire-title-vi-coordinators-amid-federal-scrutiny>; *Tenth Hearing of the Special Comm'n on Combating Antisemitism* (Aug. 8, 2025) (statement of Dr. Leonard Saxe at 2:29:27); *Eleventh Hearing of the Special Comm'n on Combating Antisemitism* (Sept. 8, 2025) (statement of Miriam Berkowitz Blue at 2:15:30); Harvard University Presidential Task Force on Combating Antisemitism and Anti-Israeli Bias, *Final Report*, 137 (Apr. 29, 2025).

⁶⁸ See Harvard University, Office of Community Support, Non-Discrimination, Rights and Responsibilities, *Our Staff*, *available at* <https://csndr.harvard.edu/staff>.

⁶⁹ See Center for American Progress, *Department of Education Staff Cuts Will Harm America's Children and Schools*, (Mar. 14, 2025) *available at* <https://www.americanprogress.org/article/department-of-education-staff-cuts-will-harm-americas-children-and-schools/>.

⁷⁰ *Tenth Hearing of the Special Comm'n on Combating Antisemitism* (Aug. 8, 2025) (statement of Rabbi Aaron Fine at 49:32); *Tenth Hearing of the Special Comm'n on Combating Antisemitism* (Aug. 8, 2025) (statement of Dr. Rachel Fish at 3:26:34); Harvard University Presidential Task Force on Combating Antisemitism and Anti-Israeli Bias, *Final Report*, 125-127 (Apr. 29, 2025).

hostile environment for Jews, it undermines both academic integrity and student safety.⁷¹ Confusion and disagreement regarding the nature and definition of antisemitism has resulted in efforts by some to oppose or cancel academic dialogue on campuses regarding complex issues relating to antisemitism itself and Middle Eastern politics. Some programs sponsored on campuses have featured content that is fairly characterized as biased, offensive and in some cases antisemitic. However, some programs have addressed these topics seeking open dialogue and good faith efforts to foster understanding, but have unfairly been labeled as antisemitic.

15. Academic boycotts that discriminate based on protected classes, including race, religion, or national origin, are inconsistent with federal and state anti-discrimination laws.⁷² Additionally, academic boycotts targeting individuals or institutions on the basis of race, religion, or national origin violate foundational principles of academic freedom, freedom of expression, and the free exchange of ideas.⁷³ Recently, the University of Massachusetts-Amherst responded swiftly to an event that excluded anyone associated with “Israeli institutions,” reaffirming its commitment to nondiscrimination and the protection of academic freedom.⁷⁴
16. Jewish students and faculty have experienced a lack of awareness and sensitivity to the Jewish calendar and religious holidays, both from university administrators and student organizations. This lack of recognition can result in scheduling conflicts for important academic activities, exams, and campus events, with limited or unclear accommodations for religious observance.⁷⁵
17. Many institutions in the Commonwealth are now offering guidance on addressing and responding to online harassment,⁷⁶ in recognition of the fact that antisemitism

⁷¹ Harvard University Presidential Task Force on Combating Antisemitism and Anti-Israeli Bias, *Final Report*, 125-27 (Apr. 29, 2025); *see Tenth Hearing of the Special Comm’n on Combating Antisemitism* (May 5, 2025) (statement of Dr. Rachel Fish at 3:18:10).

⁷² 42 U.S.C. § 2000d (2018); Mass. Gen. Laws ch. 151C § 2(d) (2023).

⁷³ *See Tenth Hearing of the Special Comm’n on Combating Antisemitism* (Aug. 8, 2025) (statement of Dr. Rachel Fish at 3:10:34); *Eleventh Hearing of the Special Comm’n on Combating Antisemitism* (Sept. 8, 2025) (statement of Professor Jeremy Menchik at 2:01:39).

⁷⁴ *See Brandeis Center, Following Brandeis Center Demand Letter, UMass Amherst To Prevent Conference From Boycotting Israelis*, available at <https://brandeiscenter.com/following-brandeis-center-demand-letter-umass-amherst-to-prevent-conference-from-boycotting-israelis/>;

⁷⁵ *See Tenth Hearing of the Special Comm’n on Combating Antisemitism* (Aug. 8, 2025) (statement of Skye Landau at 53:54); *see also* Harvard University Presidential Task Force on Combating Antisemitism and Anti-Israeli Bias, *Final Report*, 129 (Apr. 29, 2025).

⁷⁶ *See* Boston University, *Guide to Managing Online Harassment*, available at <https://www.bu.edu/research/forms-policies/guide-to-managing-online-harassment-for-the-boston-university-research-community/>; Harvard, Office of the President, *Guidance on*

experienced by Jewish students on college and university campuses occurs both in physical and digital spaces.⁷⁷ Social media platforms have become a significant vehicle for the spread of antisemitism and are frequently used to target, harass, and intimidate Jewish students. Some colleges and universities lack clear, enforceable policies that address discriminatory or harassing behavior occurring on social media, whether the conduct originates on- or off-campus.⁷⁸

18. The federal government's threats and actions to withhold or cut billions of dollars of funding for research at Massachusetts higher education institutions, much of which is scientific research, including but not limited to cancer research, climate science, and other critical areas of academic inquiry, purportedly to address antisemitism on college campuses, are ineffective methods of addressing antisemitism. These punitive measures are highly divisive and threaten to undermine the earnest efforts that many Massachusetts college and university leaders are making to deal with the issue of antisemitism in good faith. Furthermore, cutting research funding risks stifling innovation, scientific discovery, and intellectual freedom. Such funding cuts, made in the name of tackling antisemitism, carry direct negative consequences for students — including Jewish students — by limiting research opportunities, reducing access to academic resources, and weakening the overall educational environment that supports their growth and success.⁷⁹

MSCCA HIGHER EDUCATION RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Colleges and universities should have a clear, transparent, and publicly available protocol for how a community member can report any incident of hate, bias, harassment, or discrimination to the school administration. The protocol should include supportive

Addressing Online Harassment, (Sept. 5, 2024), available at <https://www.harvard.edu/president/news/2024/guidance-on-addressing-online-harassment/>; University of Massachusetts Amherst, Equal Opportunity & Access Office, *Managing Online and Social Media Harassment*, available at <https://www.umass.edu/equalopportunity/managing-online-and-social-media-harassment>.

⁷⁷ See *Tenth Hearing of the Special Comm'n on Combating Antisemitism* (Aug. 7, 2025) (statement of Rabbi Aaron Fine at 44:45 to 49:00); *Tenth Hearing of the Special Comm'n on Combating Antisemitism* (Aug. 7, 2025) (statement of Skye Landau at 44:45 to 49:00); *Eleventh Hearing of the Special Comm'n on Combating Antisemitism* (Sept. 8, 2025) (statement of Miriam Berkowitz Blue at 2:11:30).

⁷⁸ See *Tenth Hearing of the Special Comm'n on Combating Antisemitism* (Aug. 8, 2025) (statement of Skye Landau at 53:54); *Eleventh Hearing of the Special Comm'n on Combating Antisemitism* (May 5, 2025) (statement of Miriam Berkowitz Blue at 2:17:30).

⁷⁹ See *Eighth Hearing of the Special Comm'n on Combating Antisemitism* (June 9, 2025) (statement of Alan D. Solomont at 19:52); *Tenth Hearing of the Special Comm'n on Combating Antisemitism* (Aug. 8, 2025) (statement of Leonard Saxe at 2:20:30); Graham Wright, Shahar Hecht & Leonard Saxe, *Ideology in the Classroom: How Faculty at U.S. Universities Navigate Politics and Pedagogy Amid Federal Pressure Over Viewpoint Diversity and Antisemitism*, Steinhardt Soc. Rsch. Inst., Brandeis Univ. (July 2025), 31, available at <https://www.brandeis.edu/cmjs/antisemitism/ideology-classroom.html>.

measures for affected parties. In addition, the protocol should identify how to file a report, how to file a formal complaint, how to access campus resources, and how the institution will respond. Several Massachusetts institutions of higher education, including Tufts University, University of Massachusetts Amherst, and Wheaton College, have set strong examples by establishing clear, accessible and user-friendly mechanisms for reporting bias-related or hate-based incidents.⁸⁰ The offices that oversee and collaborate to address these complaints should work to protect all students, faculty and others from harassment, including intervening to prevent or stop harassment; and vigilantly and promptly respond to and investigate reports and incidents of harassment and other bias-motivated violations of law, school rules, and school codes of conduct.

2. College and university administrations should coordinate closely with local and state law enforcement agencies to assess risks, share intelligence, cooperate in relevant criminal investigations, and develop responsive security strategies to protect vulnerable populations of students, including but not limited to Jewish students. As it concerns Jewish students in particular, institutions should engage directly with Jewish student groups, campus Hillel organizations, and local Jewish community organizations to identify specific safety concerns, including threats of antisemitic harassment, violence and vandalism/destruction.⁸¹ Hillel leaders have praised higher education administrators for their responsiveness and proactive efforts in addressing antisemitism and ensuring the safety and well-being of Jewish students, recognizing these partnerships as essential to maintaining inclusive and secure campus environments.⁸²
3. Colleges and universities should review, clarify, and widely disseminate their policies and codes of conduct to explicitly prohibit discrimination and harassment based on all protected identities, including but not limited to religion, race, national origin, or ethnicity. These policies must clearly state that they apply to all members of the campus community, including students, faculty, staff, and administrators. Additionally, all students, faculty, and staff should be required to acknowledge and affirm their understanding of these anti-discrimination policies as a condition of enrollment or

⁸⁰ See Tufts University, *Incident Reporting Process*, available at <https://www.tufts.edu/israel-hamas-war/incident-reporting-process>; University of Massachusetts Amherst, Office of Equity and Inclusion, *Incident Report Form*, available at, <https://www.umass.edu/diversity/incident-report-form>; Wheaton College, *Bias Incident Policy & Reporting*, available at <https://wheatoncollege.edu/about-wheaton-college/honor-code/bias-incident-policy-reporting/>.

⁸¹ For an example of an initiative to increase security on college campuses for Jewish students, see Hillel International, *Operation SecureOurCampuses*, (Aug. 23, 2024) available at, <https://www.hillel.org/operation-secureourcampuses-release/>.

⁸² See *Tenth Hearing of the Special Comm'n on Combating Antisemitism* (Aug. 7, 2025) (statement of Rabbi Aaron Fine at 49:55); *Eleventh Hearing of the Special Comm'n on Combating Antisemitism* (Sept. 8, 2025) (statement of Miriam Berkowitz Blue at 2:11:45).

employment. In the years following the October 7, 2023, Hamas attack on Israeli citizens, institutions of higher education such as the University of Massachusetts, Harvard University, Brandeis University, and others have done an exemplary job of clarifying and communicating these policies.⁸³

4. Colleges and universities should ensure that their police and security departments have appropriate training on antisemitism, hate and bias, and trauma-informed investigations.
5. College and university health services and counseling programs should:
 - a. work to deepen their understanding of the effects of antisemitism on the mental health of Jewish and Israeli-American young adults;
 - b. apply trauma-informed interventions to incidents of antisemitism; and
 - c. expand access to culturally competent mental health resources for Jewish and Israeli-American students targeted by antisemitic harassment or bullying.⁸⁴
6. Colleges and universities should institute mandatory anti-bias education for all faculty, administrators, students, and trustees that specifically includes antisemitism education and training. In addition to such core training, colleges and universities should provide in-depth trainings and resources for administrators and for select faculty who are more likely to engage with students on issues relating to antisemitism. Colleges and universities should also implement active bystander training to equip students and staff with the skills to safely intervene in incidents of bias, harassment, or discrimination. Many institutions of higher learning, including Brandeis University, Harvard University

⁸³ University of Massachusetts, Office of the President, *University Policies, Guidelines, State & Federal Laws*, <https://www.umassp.edu/hr/employee-handbook/2-university-policies-guidelines-state-federal-laws>; Harvard University, *Non-Discrimination, Anti-Bullying, and Other Professional Conduct Policies*, available at <https://www.fas.harvard.edu/non-discrimination-anti-bullying-and-other-professional-conduct-policies>; Brandeis University, Department of Student Rights and Community Standards, *Rights and Responsibilities, Section 3. Harassment, Discrimination, Sexual Violence*, available at <https://www.brandeis.edu/student-rights-community-standards/rights-responsibilities/current/section-3.html>.

⁸⁴ See, e.g., Miri Bar-Halpern and Jaclyn Wolfman, *Traumatic Invalidation in the Jewish Community after October 7*, *Journal of Human Behavior in the Social Environment*; Association of Jewish Psychologists Webinar, *Exploring the Psychological Toll of Antisemitism on Mental Health* (Feb. 27, 2024), available at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7cIRtE_eBmk; Association of Jewish Psychologists, *Resources Menu and Downloadable Content*, available at <https://associationofjewishpsychologists.com/resources/#links>; see also *Sixth Hearing of the Special Comm'n on Combating Antisemitism* (Apr. 7, 2025) (statement of Ariella Hellman, Director of Government Affairs at Agudath Israel of America at 1:28:45).

and Simmons College, have begun to incorporate antisemitism training as part of their broader programming on anti-bias training.⁸⁵

7. The Massachusetts Department of Higher Education (“DHE”) should:
 - a. Encourage all public and private colleges and universities to conduct campus climate surveys on student belonging that also include questions related to hate and bias incidents experienced by students. These surveys should collect and analyze responses across demographic groups representing all protected classes. Institutions should publish the findings of their surveys on their websites in a manner that maintains confidentiality. The DHE should develop a statewide reporting program, which identifies and links to the websites of those institutions that are conducting such climate surveys. Examples of institutions currently conducting such surveys include: University of Massachusetts, Amherst; Bridgewater State University, Tufts University, and MIT.
 - b. Issue specific guidance, in conjunction with the Attorney General’s Office, for Massachusetts public colleges and universities on creating safe and supportive campus environments with respect to protected categories under state and federal law, including materials specific to creating safe and supportive environments for Jewish students. Such guidance should make clear that federal and state antidiscrimination law and school non-discrimination and harassment policies cover Jewish and Israeli identity.
 - c. Coordinate with the Attorney General’s Office to provide public colleges and universities with clear guidance around the First Amendment including the legality and necessity of content-neutral time, place and manner restrictions.
 - d. Provide guidance for all public colleges and universities regarding protocols and best practices, including clear protection for those who report incidents of hate and bias and safeguards against retaliation.⁸⁶

⁸⁵ For examples of anti-bias training specifically on antisemitism, *see* Brandeis University, *Frieze Family Foundation Summer Institute on Antisemitism in Higher Education*, available at, <https://www.brandeis.edu/antisemitism/programs/summer-institute-higher-ed/index.html>; Harvard University, *Training for the Harvard community*, available at, <https://www.harvard.edu/task-force-on-antisemitism/revising-and-implementing-policies-procedures-and-training/>; and Simmons University, *Simmons Hosts Project Shema’s Webinar on Contemporary Antisemitism* (Sept. 27, 2024), available at [https://www.simmons.edu/news/simmons-hosts-project-shemas-webinar-contemporary-antisemitism#:~:text=On%20September%2020%2C%20ODEI%20hosted,%2DFounder%20of%20Project%20Shema\).](https://www.simmons.edu/news/simmons-hosts-project-shemas-webinar-contemporary-antisemitism#:~:text=On%20September%2020%2C%20ODEI%20hosted,%2DFounder%20of%20Project%20Shema).)

⁸⁶ *See* Massachusetts Department of Higher Education, *Resources for Addressing Hate and Protecting Free Speech on Higher Education Campuses*, available at <https://www.mass.edu/strategic/addressinghatecrimesresources.asp>.

8. Colleges and universities should adopt and distribute clear rules governing campus demonstrations and protests. These rules should include clear instruction on content-neutral time, place and manner restrictions on speech and expression, requirements for registering or obtaining permits to conduct organized events. In recent years, institutions such as MIT, Harvard Business School, and Boston University have set strong examples by making their policies clear, easily accessible and publicly available.⁸⁷
9. Colleges and universities in the Commonwealth should appoint a Title VI Coordinator responsible for overseeing the institution's compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and providing university-wide training on Title VI and other federal civil rights protections.⁸⁸
10. Consistent with M.G.L. c. 151C § 2B, colleges and universities should have clear policies that assist students observing religious holidays on school days with making up missed classes or assignments. Institutions should also ensure reasonable accommodation for religious dietary and residential needs. Additionally, colleges and universities should encourage registered student organizations to consider the religious observance needs of their members when planning events or activities, and to make reasonable accommodations to the best of their ability.⁸⁹

⁸⁷ For good models of such campus policies, Harvard Business School, *Demonstration Policy* (available at <https://www.hbs.edu/about/campus-and-culture/policies/demonstration-policy>); MIT, *Rules for Campus Protests and Demonstrations*, available at <https://resources.mit.edu/protest-demonstration-rules/>; Boston University, *Boston University Events and Demonstrations Policy* (Dec. 10, 2024), available at, <https://www.bu.edu/policies/boston-university-events-and-demonstrations-policy/#Time,%20Place>.

⁸⁸ See N.Y. Educ. Law § 6436-a (McKinney 2025), available at <https://www.nysenate.gov/legislation/laws/EDN/6436-A>; Columbia Spectator, *Barnard to Hire Title VI Coordinator, Prohibit Negotiations with Protest Groups, Offer Free Classes at JTS as Part of Antisemitism Lawsuit Settlement* (July 7, 2025), available at <https://www.columbiaspectator.com/news/2025/07/07/barnard-to-hire-title-vi-coordinator-prohibit-negotiations-with-protest-groups-offer-free-classes-at-jts-as-part-of-antisemitism-lawsuit-settlement/>; NYU Adopts JCRC-NY's Call for Creation of Title VI Coordinator to Combat Hate, Including Antisemitism (July 11, 2024), available at <https://www.jcrcny.org/news-post/nyu-adopts-jcrc-nys-call-for-creation-of-title-vi-coordinator-to-combat-hate-including-antisemitism/>; see Tufts Now, *Tufts Launched University-Wide Training Series on Civil Rights Protections* (Sept. 10, 2025) available at <https://now.tufts.edu/2025/09/10/tufts-launches-university-wide-training-series-civil-rights-protections>.

⁸⁹ See Boston University, *Religious Holidays & University Policy*, available at <https://www.bu.edu/chapel/students/religious-holidays-policies/>; University of Massachusetts Amherst, *Policies on Religious observance or Practice*, available at <https://www.umass.edu/student-life/religious-spiritual-life/policies-observance-practice>.

11. Subject to each institution's internal governance processes and consistent with each institution's mission, colleges and universities should consider offering a curriculum that addresses antisemitism, extremism and antisemitic myths/tropes⁹⁰ as part of a broader focus on digital literacy, pluralism and civic dialogue, civics, and the critical evaluation of misinformation and disinformation.⁹¹
12. Colleges and universities should develop, broadly disseminate, and enforce clear policies to address discriminatory or harassing behavior targeting students, faculty, or staff on social media, including antisemitic content. These policies should make clear:
- that online harassment, doxxing, cyberbullying, or intimidation violates codes of conduct and policies against harassment and bullying;
 - that online harassment, doxxing, cyberbullying, or intimidation based on an individual's actual or perceived race, ethnicity, religion, national origin, gender or sexual orientation violate codes of conduct and policies on discrimination;
 - that students, faculty, staff, or administrators found responsible for online harassment, doxxing, cyberbullying, or intimidation will be subject to the institution's disciplinary process and, if the behavior is criminal, referred to law enforcement;
 - how members of the campus community can report and document instance of online harassment, doxxing, cyberbullying, or intimidation;
 - how members of the campus community can take steps to protect themselves from online harassment.⁹²

⁹⁰ For examples of common antisemitic myths/tropes, see Facing History & Ourselves, "Antisemitic Tropes" (Nov. 3, 2022), available at https://www.facinghistory.org/sites/default/files/202211/Handout_%20Antisemitic%20Tropes.pdf; American Jewish Committee, *Translate Hate Glossary*, available at <https://www.ajc.org/translatehateglossary>.

⁹¹ For examples of resources addressing antisemitic myths/tropes in online spaces, see Facing History and Ourselves, *Confronting Online Antisemitism*, available at <https://www.facinghistory.org/resource-library/confronting-online-antisemitism>; ADL, *Antisemitism Uncovered*, available at <https://antisemitism.adl.org/>; see also *Third Hearing of the Special Comm'n on Combating Antisemitism* (Jan. 23, 2025) (statement of Matt Williams, VP ADL's Center for Antisemitism Research at 0:29:05); *Eighth Hearing of the Special Comm'n on Combating Antisemitism* (June 9, 2025) (statement of ret. Ambassador Alan D. Solomont, Nexus Project Board Member at 1:41:45);

⁹² Boston University, *Guide to Managing Online Harassment*, available at <https://www.bu.edu/research/forms-policies/guide-to-managing-online-harassment-for-the-boston-university-research-community/>; Harvard, Office of the President, *Guidance on Addressing Online Harassment*, (Sep. 5, 2024), available at <https://www.harvard.edu/president/news/2024/guidance-on-addressing-online-harassment/>; University of Massachusetts Amherst, Equal Opportunity & Access Office, *Managing Online*

13. Academic institutions and affiliated organizations should refrain from participating in discriminatory academic boycotts that target individuals or institutions based on race, religion, or national origin. Such boycotts are inconsistent with federal and state antidiscrimination laws and undermine the core principles of academic freedom, freedom of expression, and the free exchange of ideas. Institutions should adopt policies that uphold these principles and promote inclusive, non-discriminatory academic engagement. When events or organizations call for discriminatory academic boycotts, institutions should respond promptly and unequivocally by reaffirming that such actions are inconsistent with state and federal antidiscrimination legislation and run counter to the values of academic freedom and institutional integrity. University of Massachusetts Amherst recently demonstrated such leadership by swiftly disallowing a group's discriminatory policy, reaffirming its commitment to inclusion and the protection of academic values.⁹³
14. Colleges and universities should create and maintain safe, inclusive venues and forums that encourage open dialogue and discussion on diverse and often sensitive topics, including but not limited to issues related to antisemitism, religious identity, and international conflicts. This can be achieved through the addition of relevant academic courses, increased programming such as campus events and facilitated discussions, and the invitation of a diverse range of visiting speakers who can offer multiple perspectives in a respectful and educational environment.⁹⁴

MSCCA Public Safety and Law Enforcement Findings

1. Antisemitic hate crimes in Massachusetts are rising – by over 20% in 2024 alone – at the same time as overall violent crime is decreasing in the Commonwealth. Jews were the most targeted victims of hate crimes in 2024, which also marked the first year on record in which Massachusetts reported more hate-crime incidents targeting Jews than targeting

and Social Media Harassment, available at <https://www.umass.edu/equalopportunity/managing-online-and-social-media-harassment>.

⁹³ See Brandeis Center, *Following Brandeis Center Demand Letter, UMass Amherst To Prevent Conference From Boycotting Israelis*, available at <https://brandeiscenter.com/following-brandeis-center-demand-letter-umass-amherst-to-prevent-conference-from-boycotting-israelis/>.

⁹⁴ For current and past initiatives encouraging more open discussion and dialogue on college campuses, see Tufts University, *Tufts Talks Openly*, available at, <https://provost.tufts.edu/tufts-talks-openly/>; Northeastern University, *Dialogue & Action in an Age of Divides: A Series Organized by Nine Massachusetts Universities*, available at <https://dialogueandaction.northeastern.edu/>; and Tufts Hillel, *Critical Conversations: An Israel Education Series*, available at <https://tuftshillel.org/series/critical-conversations-an-israel-education-series/>.

Black people. Further, 84.4% of religious bias hate crimes in the Commonwealth were committed against Jews.⁹⁵

2. The Commission commends the creation and work of the Massachusetts State Police Hate Crimes Awareness and Response Team (HART), established under the Healey-Driscoll Administration to confront and deter hate crimes, support victims, and strengthen community resiliency across the Commonwealth. The HART unit has developed resources and communication channels to educate both law enforcement and impacted communities on how to recognize and respond to hate crimes and incidents of hate. Additionally, the HART unit's recently created Hate Crime Reporting Portal, launched in October, will serve as a valuable tool to enhance data collection and improve the Commonwealth's overall response to hate-based activity.⁹⁶
3. Antisemitic hate crimes take various forms and manifest in a variety of ways including vandalism/destruction of property, intimidation, assaults, larceny, burglary and extortion.⁹⁷

⁹⁵ See The Boston Globe, *Violent Crime Went Down Last Year in Mass., but Anti-Jewish Hate Crimes Spiked, Officials Say* (July 1, 2025), available at <https://www.bostonglobe.com/2025/07/01/metro/violent-crime-down-mass-hate-crime-anti-jewish-incidents-up/>; See FBI Crime Data Explorer, available at <https://cde.ucr.cjis.gov/LATEST/webapp/#/pages/explorer/crime/hate-crime>; United State Department of Justice Federal Bureau of Investigation, *UCR Summary of Reported Crimes in the Nation, 2024* (August 5, 2025), available at <https://www.fbi.gov/news/press-releases/fbi-releases-2024-reported-crimes-in-the-nation-statistics>; see Massachusetts Executive Office of Public Safety, *Hate Crime 2024 Massachusetts*, available at https://ma.beyond2020.com/ma_tops/report/hate-crime_1/massachusetts/2024; Massachusetts Executive Office of Public Safety and Security, *Massachusetts Crime Rates Continue Downward Trend Ahead of Summer Season; Preliminary 2024 Data Shows Fewer Violent and Property Crimes Statewide* (June 6, 2024), available at <https://www.mass.gov/news/massachusetts-crime-rates-continue-downward-trend-ahead-of-summer-season-preliminary-2024-data-shows-fewer-violent-and-property-crimes-statewide>. While it is not possible to disaggregate changes in reporting behavior from the reported statistics themselves, the Special Commission does not believe that the increase in reported incidents is due to a change in reporting behavior rather than an actual increase in incident occurrence.

⁹⁶ See Governor Maura Healey and Lt. Governor Kim Driscoll, *Healey-Driscoll Administration Launches New Statewide Initiatives to Combat and Prevent Hate Crimes*, available at <https://www.mass.gov/news/healey-driscoll-administration-launches-new-statewide-initiatives-to-combat-and-prevent-hate-crimes>; see *Seventh Hearing of the Special Comm'n on Combating Antisemitism* (May 5, 2025) (statement of Detective Lieutenant Ryan Czepiel at 1:24:23).

⁹⁷ Massachusetts Executive Office of Public Safety and Security, *2023 Massachusetts Hate Crime Report* (2023), available at <https://www.mass.gov/doc/2023-massachusetts-hate-crime-report-0/download>; Massachusetts Executive Office of Public Safety and Security, *Massachusetts Crime Rates Continue Downward Trend Ahead of Summer Season; Preliminary*

4. Hate crimes negatively impact not only the victim and the specific community being targeted but harm the broader community and the Commonwealth as a whole.⁹⁸
5. Antisemitic hate crimes and incidents in Massachusetts are likely to be underreported. Accurate reporting of hate crimes is essential to ensure proper allocation of resources for the investigation and prosecution of hate crimes as well as for providing support for victims and impacted communities.⁹⁹
6. Under M.G.L. c. 22C § 33, law enforcement agencies in the Commonwealth are not required to report hate crimes to a central data repository, which limits the state's ability to accurately track, analyze, and respond to incidents of bias-motivated violence.¹⁰⁰
7. Victims of hate crimes may not report hate crimes because they may not know the conduct they suffered is legally recognized in Massachusetts as a hate crime. Additionally, individuals and communities which are frequently the target of hate-based incidents or hate crimes may normalize the conduct or see the conduct as not serious enough to report.¹⁰¹

2024 Data Shows Fewer Violent and Property Crimes Statewide (June 6, 2024), available at <https://www.mass.gov/news/massachusetts-crime-rates-continue-downward-trend-ahead-of-summer-season-preliminary-2024-data-shows-fewer-violent-and-property-crimes-statewide>

⁹⁸ See U.S. Nat'l Strategy to Counter Antisemitism, 2, (Oct. 2023), available at <https://bidenwhitehouse.archives.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2023/06/02/the-u-s-national-strategy-to-counter-antisemitism-key-actions-by-pillar-2/>; James Morsch, *The Problem of Motive in Hate Crimes: The Argument against Presumptions of Racial Motivation*, 82 J. Crim. L. & Criminology 659, 662 (1991), available at

<https://scholarlycommons.law.northwestern.edu/jclc/vol82/iss3/6/>. CITE Christina Miller.

⁹⁹ See *Seventh Hearing of the Special Comm'n on Combating Antisemitism* (May 5, 2025) (statement of Senator John Velis at 1:53:50); see Tien Nguyen, *Why are hate crime so hard to convict in court?*, The Center for Public Integrity (May 9, 2024), available at <https://publicintegrity.org/inequality-poverty-opportunity/addressing-anti-asian-hate/why-are-hate-crimes-so-hard-to-convict-in-court/>; see Madison F. Bader & Christina Miller, *Addressing Hate Crimes: Massachusetts Can Do Better*, 66 B. Bar J., available at <https://bostonbar.org/journal/addressing-hate-crimes-massachusetts-can-do-better/>.

¹⁰⁰ See *Seventh Hearing of the Special Comm'n on Combating Antisemitism* (May 5, 2025) (statement of Assistant District Attorney David O'Sullivan at 0:49:14); See *Seventh Hearing of the Special Comm'n on Combating Antisemitism* (May 5, 2025) (statement of Detective Lieutenant Ryan Czepiel at 1:48:40). See also M.G.L. c. 22C § 33.

¹⁰¹ See *Seventh Hearing of the Special Comm'n on Combating Antisemitism* (May 5, 2025) (statement of Detective Lieutenant Ryan Czepiel at 1:28:08); see FBI Boston, *FBI Boston Launches Public Awareness Campaign to Encourage the Public to Report Hate Crimes* (Oct. 12, 2021), available at <https://www.fbi.gov/contact-us/field-offices/boston/news/press-releases/fbi-boston-launches-public-awareness-campaign-to-encourage-the-public-to-report-hate-crimes>.

8. Distrust between law enforcement and communities contributes to the underreporting of hate crimes and incidents. Building and maintaining trust between law enforcement and communities which are frequently the targets of hate crimes is crucial in combating hate crimes.¹⁰²
9. When civilians fail to identify an incident as motivated by hate, officers may discover a hateful motive by asking tailored questions. Without specialized training for law enforcement personnel on recognizing the legal elements of hate crimes, law enforcement may not properly recognize or categorize an incident as a hate crime.¹⁰³
10. The rise of online harassment and coordinated digital intimidation has created significant new threats to personal and public safety and privacy. Antisemitic hate crimes often originate online, where many extremist ideologies take root and spread. Digital platforms are frequently used to disseminate antisemitic conspiracy theories, and to support and encourage violence against Jewish communities. Doxxing, the deliberation publication or dissemination of an individual's personal or identifying information, such as home addresses, phone numbers, employment details or family information, without consent and with intent to harass, threaten or incite others to cause harm, has become a dangerous tool for silencing voices, spreading fear and enabling offline violence.¹⁰⁴
11. M.G.L. c. 265 § 39 requires the secretary of Executive Office of Public Safety to design a diversity awareness program in consultation with the Massachusetts Commission Against

¹⁰² See American Jewish Committee, *Law Enforcement Action Items*, available at <https://www.ajc.org/call-to-action/law-enforcement>. AJC's State of Antisemitism in America 2024 Report found that 65% of American Jews believed that law enforcement was effective in responding to their security needs, down from 81% in 2019. See also *Seventh Hearing of the Special Comm'n on Combating Antisemitism* (May 5, 2025) (statement of Detective Lieutenant Ryan Czepiel at 1:28:08)

¹⁰³ See Madison F. Bader & Christina Miller, *Addressing Hate Crimes: Massachusetts Can Do Better*, 66 B. Bar J., available at <https://bostonbar.org/journal/addressing-hate-crimes-massachusetts-can-do-better/>; see also *Seventh Hearing of the Special Comm'n on Combating Antisemitism* (May 5, 2025) (statement of Detective Lieutenant Ryan Czepiel at 1:39:06); *Seventh Hearing of the Special Comm'n on Combating antisemitism* (May 5, 2025) (statement of ADA David O'Sullivan at 1:14:05).

¹⁰⁴ See U.S. National Strategy to Counter Antisemitism at 37, available at <https://bidenwhitehouse.archives.gov/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/U.S.-National-Strategy-to-Counter-Antisemitism.pdf>; see *Eighth Hearing of the Special Comm'n on Combating Antisemitism* (June 9, 2025) (statement of Adam Katz, President, Foundation to Combat Antisemitism at 2:19:58); see National Association of Attorneys General, *The Escalating Threats of Doxxing and Swatting: An Analysis of Recent Developments and Legal Responses*, (Aug. 12, 2025), available at, <https://www.naag.org/attorney-general-journal/the-escalating-threats-of-doxxing-and-swatting-an-analysis-of-recent-developments-and-legal-responses/>.

Discrimination, to be approved by the Chief Justice of the Trial Court. Every individual convicted of assault or battery for purpose of intimidation under M.G.L. c. 265 § 39 is required to participate in the program, however, individuals whose cases are disposed via a continuance without a finding (CWOFF) are not required to participate. No such program has ever been established or implemented.¹⁰⁵

12. In the absence of overwhelming evidence, proving motive in hate crime cases is extremely difficult. This is especially true in “mixed-motive” cases, where a perpetrator may have acted based on a combination of motives, such as personal conflict or opportunity, in addition to bias and hate.¹⁰⁶
13. Restorative justice can be a powerful tool for addressing hate crimes. Such approaches have the potential to increase satisfaction with the prosecution outcome among victims and affected communities, while also reducing recidivism rates among hate crime offenders.¹⁰⁷ Restorative justice can also be effective in school settings, where incidents of bias or discrimination may not rise to the level of a crime but still cause harm and require meaningful resolution.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁵ See M.G.L. c. 265 § 39; see *Thirteenth Hearing of the Special Comm’n on Combating Antisemitism* (Oct. 16, 2025) (statement of Professor Christina Miller at 2:19:20); see Madison F. Bader & Christina Miller, *Addressing Hate Crimes: Massachusetts Can Do Better*, 66 B. Bar J., available at <https://bostonbar.org/journal/addressing-hate-crimes-massachusetts-can-do-better/>; see *Thirteenth Hearing of the Special Comm’n on Combating Antisemitism* (Oct. 16, 2025) (statement of District Attorney Marian Ryan at 1:09:51).

¹⁰⁶ See *Thirteenth Hearing of the Special Comm’n on Combating Antisemitism* (June 9, 2025) (statement of Professor Christina Miller at 2:18:10); see Madison F. Bader & Christina Miller, *Addressing Hate Crimes: Massachusetts Can Do Better*, 66 B. Bar J., available at <https://bostonbar.org/journal/addressing-hate-crimes-massachusetts-can-do-better/>

¹⁰⁷ See *Thirteenth Hearing of the Special Comm’n on Combating Antisemitism* (June 9, 2025) (statement of District Attorney Marian Ryan at 1:05:09). According to DA Ryan, when restorative justice is used, victims are significantly more likely to be satisfied with the prosecution outcome, and offenders are less likely to reoffend. See also *Thirteenth Hearing of the Special Comm’n on Combating Antisemitism* (June 9, 2025) (statement of Professor Christina Miller at 2:18:52); see Gerald FitzGerald, Aspen Institute, *Restorative Justice as a Response to the Harms of Hate*, (Nov. 2023), available at <https://www.aspeninstitute.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/05/Restorative-Justice-Convening-Report.pdf>; Parents for Peace, *Services*, available at <https://www.parents4peace.org/services>.

¹⁰⁸ See *Eleventh Hearing of Special Comm’n on Combating Antisemitism* (Sep. 8, 2025) (statement of Professor Hilary Lustick at 1:06:39); See *Thirteenth Hearing of Special Comm’n on Combating Antisemitism* (Oct. 16, 2025) (statement of District Attorney Marian Ryan at 1:06:08).

14. Efforts to strengthen the Commonwealth's hate crime statutes will benefit not only the Jewish community, but all communities disproportionately impacted by hate crimes.
15. Recent revisions by the Department of Homeland Security to the FY 2025 Standard Terms and Conditions for grant recipients—requiring coordination and cooperation with Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) officials and prohibiting recipients from operating Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) programs—pose a significant risk to the security of places of worship and the safety of their attendees.¹⁰⁹
16. Non-governmental and non-profit organizations such as the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) and the Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC) have made important contributions to data collection. These organizations contribute by tracking incidents and trends motivated by hate, providing training and resources to law enforcement, and conducting outreach to communities frequently targeted by hate groups. The recent decision by the FBI to cut ties with both the ADL and SPLC undermines this collaborative framework and may hamper the ability of law enforcement to effectively track, prevent, and respond to hate crimes. Weakening cooperation between government agencies and civil society organizations risks leaving communities more vulnerable to extremist threats and undermines public trust in efforts to combat hate.¹¹⁰
17. The Massachusetts Victim Bill of Rights (M.G.L. c. 258B) applies primarily to individual victims and does not require courts to accept community impact statements in hate crime

¹⁰⁹ See Massachusetts Office of the Attorney General, AG Campbell Releases Statement After Court Finds Trump Administration's Threats To Withhold FEMA Funding Unconstitutional, (Sep. 24, 2025), available at <https://www.mass.gov/news/ag-campbell-releases-statement-after-court-finds-trump-administrations-threats-to-withhold-fema-funding-unconstitutional>; see U.S. Department of Homeland Security, *FY 2025 DHS Terms and Conditions, Version 3 Dated April 18, 2025*, available at <https://www.dhs.gov/publication/dhs-standard-terms-and-conditions>; see *Seventh Hearing of the Special Comm'n on Combating Antisemitism* (May 5, 2025) (statement of Jeremy Yamin at 2:17:10); see *Thirteenth Hearing of the Special Comm'n on Combating Antisemitism* (Oct. 16, 2025) (statement of Rabbi Braham David at 1:49:39).

¹¹⁰ See Eric Tucker, Associated Press, *FBI cuts ties with Southern Poverty Law Center, Anti-Defamation League after conservative complaints*, (Oct. 3, 2025), available at <https://apnews.com/article/fbi-antisemitism-patel-comey-kirk-f997bd60b92a07023c00cfbf6c4ed7e6>; see Jay Deitcher, eJewishPhilanthropy, *FBI cutting ties with ADL puts Jewish community at greater risk, experts say*, (Oct. 6, 2025), available at <https://ejewishphilanthropy.com/fbi-cutting-ties-with-adl-puts-jewish-community-at-greater-risk-experts-say/>; see *Seventh Hearing of the Special Comm'n on Combating Antisemitism* (May 5, 2025) (presentation of Ben Popp from ADL Center on Extremism at 00:08:45).

cases, though courts may consider such statements at their discretion under M.G.L. c. 279, § 4B.¹¹¹

MSCCA Public Safety and Law Enforcement Recommendations

1. The Executive Office of Public Safety and Security (EOPSS) should encourage local law enforcement agencies to report all instances of hate crimes, both charged and investigated, to the newly established HART Hate Crimes Reporting Portal, and the National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS).¹¹²
2. Law enforcement should engage with community organizations and provide resources to help targeted populations better understand and recognize when a hate crime occurs and to foster trust and cooperation between marginalized or targeted communities and law enforcement agencies.¹¹³
3. District Attorney's Offices, the Office of the Attorney General and the Massachusetts Office for Victim Assistance (MOVA) should provide resources on their websites to ensure that victims of hate crimes—and the broader communities impacted—have access to trauma-informed services and support systems. These victim services should include counseling, legal assistance, and culturally competent victim advocacy. District Attorney's Offices, the Office of the Attorney General and the Massachusetts Office for Victim Assistance (MOVA) should partner with community-based organizations, including those serving religious and ethnic minorities, to deliver support to victims of hate crimes in a timely and accessible manner.¹¹⁴
4. Law enforcement agencies should collaborate with civil society organizations and non-profits to provide training and resources to non-profit and religious organizations on

¹¹¹ See *Thirteenth Hearing of the Special Comm'n on Combating Antisemitism* (June 9, 2025) (statement of Professor Christina Miller at 2:21:20); see M.G.L. c. 258B.

¹¹² See Federal Bureau of Investigation, *National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS)*, available at <https://www.fbi.gov/how-we-can-help-you/more-fbi-services-and-information/ucr/nibrs>

¹¹³ Massachusetts State Police, Hate Crimes Awareness and Response Team (HART) Hate Crime Brochures, available at, https://drive.google.com/file/d/1HHyQ11zTVVt1mOWzFqehFnzGIbzF0yN_/view; See IACP, *Action Agenda for Community Organizations and Law Enforcement to Enhance the Response to Hate Crimes*, (Apr. 1, 2019), available at <https://www.theiacp.org/resources/document/action-agenda-for-community-organizations-and-law-enforcement-to-enhance-the>.

¹¹⁴ See *Sixth Hearing of the Special Comm'n on Combating Antisemitism* (Apr. 3, 2025) (statement of Commissioner Peggy Shuku at 1:14:35); see Suffolk County District Attorney, *Victim Services: Hate Crimes*, available at <https://www.suffolkdistrictattorney.com/victim-services/hate-crimes>.

physical security, cybersecurity, and emergency preparedness and response. Additionally, law enforcement should develop and maintain toolkits and guidance materials tailored to non-profits and religious organizations, addressing common security threats and outlining best practices for risk mitigation.¹¹⁵

5. Law enforcement agencies should provide training for all law enforcement personnel, clerk magistrates, victim witness advocates and prosecutors that specifically includes instruction on antisemitism and hate crimes. Such training should include instruction on recognizing antisemitism, and interview techniques to better elicit whether a crime was motivated by bias or hate. Law enforcement should also provide resources to law enforcement personnel on recognizing and responding to hate crimes.¹¹⁶
6. Law enforcement agencies should educate and train personnel on religious holy days and observances and take proactive policing measures, including coordinating with local religious institutions, on such days to ensure the security of places of worship and the safety of congregants.¹¹⁷
7. Law enforcement agencies should support and implement youth initiatives and restorative justice programs, including the Diversity Awareness Program mandated by M.G.L. c. 265 § 39, to mitigate and combat radicalization. Such initiatives and programs should enlist

¹¹⁵ See Secure Community Network, *SCN Announces Full 2024 High Holiday Webinar & Training Series*, (July 22, 2025), available at <https://www.securecommunitynetwork.org/articles/scn-announces-full-2025-high-holiday-webinar-training-series/>; Combined Jewish Philanthropies, *CJP Communal Security Initiative*, available at <https://ma.cjp.org/communal-security-initiative>; see *Seventh Hearing of the Special Comm'n on Combating Antisemitism* (May 5, 2025) (statement of Jeremy Yamin at 2:17:10).

¹¹⁶ See *Sixth Hearing of the Special Comm'n on Combating Antisemitism* (Apr. 3, 2025) (statement of former U.S. Attorney Eric Olshan at 1:11:40); see *Thirteenth Hearing of the Special Comm'n on Combating Antisemitism* (June 9, 2025) (statement of Professor Christina Miller at 2:14:37); see International Association of Chiefs of Police, *Responding to Hate Crimes: A Police Officer's Guide to Investigation and Prevention*, available at <https://www.theiacp.org/resources/responding-to-hate-crimes-a-police-officers-guide-to-investigation-and-prevention>; Out to Protect, *Hate Crimes Investigation for Law Enforcement*, available at <https://outtoprotect.org/hate-crimes-investigations/>; Matthew Shepard Foundation, *Creating Safer Communities Hate Crime Prevention Training*, available at <https://www.matthewshepard.org/creating-safer-communities-hate-crimes-prevention-training/>.

¹¹⁷ See Secure Community Network, *SCN Announces Full 2024 High Holiday Webinar & Training Series*, (July 22, 2025), available at <https://www.securecommunitynetwork.org/articles/scn-announces-full-2025-high-holiday-webinar-training-series/>.

professional counselors and juvenile parole officers as well as civil society organizations.¹¹⁸

MSCCA Workplace/Healthcare Findings

1. A significant number of Jewish employees in Massachusetts and across the United States report feeling unsafe or uncomfortable being openly Jewish in their workplaces. Many refrain from expressing their religious or cultural identity due to fear of discrimination, social exclusion, or retaliation. Some Jewish employees do not believe their employers have adequate policies in place to protect them from antisemitic harassment or bias.¹¹⁹
2. In the wake of the October 7, 2023, terrorist attacks and the subsequent global surge in antisemitic incidents, Jewish employees have expressed a growing need for connection, safety, and institutional support in the workplace. Jewish workers increasingly seek environments where they can discuss their experiences, express and celebrate their identity without fear, and find solidarity among colleagues.¹²⁰

¹¹⁸ See *Thirteenth Hearing of the Special Comm'n on Combating Antisemitism* (June 9, 2025) (statement of District Attorney Marian Ryan at 1:05:09); see also *Thirteenth Hearing of the Special Comm'n on Combating Antisemitism* (June 9, 2025) (statement of Professor Christina Miller at 2:18:52); see Gerald FitzGerald, Aspen Institute, *Restorative Justice as a Response to the Harms of Hate*, (Nov. 2023), available at <https://www.aspeninstitute.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/05/Restorative-Justice-Convening-Report.pdf>; Parents for Peace, *Services*, available at <https://www.parents4peace.org/services>.

¹¹⁹ See Rabbi Elan Babchuck and Rebecca Leeman, Clal – The National Jewish Center for Learning and Leadership & Applied Curiosity Research, *Jewish at Work 2024: Results from a Survey of Jews in the Workplace* (Jan. 17, 2025), available at, https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=&ved=2ahUKEwj2u-KfprOQAxUIEFkFHRlhGTIQFnoECBIQAQ&url=https%3A%2F%2Frevsonfoundation.org%2Fwp-content%2Fuploads%2F2025%2F02%2FJewishatWork2024_Report_011725.pdf&usg=AOvVaw3HTeWsV0TXCLL3_7b3lysv&opi=89978449. According to the survey, 31% percent of Jewish employees feel unsafe being openly Jewish at work, 56% do not feel supported by their employer to express their Jewish identity and 37% often encounter Jewish stereotypes or misconceptions. *Id.* at 4.

¹²⁰ See Rabbi Elan Babchuck and Rebecca Leeman, Clal – The National Jewish Center for Learning and Leadership & Applied Curiosity Research, *Jewish at Work 2024: Results from a Survey of Jews in the Workplace* (Jan. 17, 2025), available at, https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=&ved=2ahUKEwj2u-KfprOQAxUIEFkFHRlhGTIQFnoECBIQAQ&url=https%3A%2F%2Frevsonfoundation.org%2Fwp-content%2Fuploads%2F2025%2F02%2FJewishatWork2024_Report_011725.pdf&usg=AOvVaw3HTeWsV0TXCLL3_7b3lysv&opi=89978449. 46% of Jewish ERG members and leaders surveyed joined their groups after October 7, 2023. *Id.* at 4. Further, from October 2023 to

3. Employee Resource Groups (ERGs) are a proven mechanism for promoting inclusion, belonging, and cross-cultural understanding in the workplace. ERGs focused on Jewish identity can provide safe and affirming spaces for Jewish employees to connect, celebrate cultural traditions, and educate others.¹²¹
4. Antisemitic incidents and attitudes within professional environments can significantly hinder an employer's ability to attract and retain Jewish talent.¹²²
5. Antisemitic incidents and attitudes, particularly in the healthcare sector, have caused some Jewish medical professionals, students and patients to feel unsafe, unwelcome and discriminated against. The presence of antisemitism in healthcare settings is likely to have a negative impact on health outcomes for Jewish patients—especially in fields such as genetics, where a patient's Jewish heritage may be medically relevant to risk assessment, diagnosis, and treatment. When patients are fearful of disclosing their ancestry due to experiences of bias or discrimination, negative health consequences will follow.¹²³
6. Jewish medical professionals, researchers, and students have been exposed to politically charged, divisive, or antisemitic rhetoric in academic and professional forums, including lectures, conferences, and education programs. Such rhetoric—often unrelated to the subject matter being presented—has included inflammatory commentary about Israel or Jewish identity, creating hostile and exclusionary environments for Jewish participants.¹²⁴

October 2024, there was a 709% growth in the number of groups participating in the Jewish ERG network. *Id.* See also

¹²¹ See *Thirteenth Hearing of the Special Comm'n on Combating Antisemitism* (June 9, 2025) (statement of Elyse Park at 3:14:01).

¹²² See *Thirteenth Hearing of the Special Comm'n on Combating Antisemitism* (June 9, 2025) (statement of Dr. Jacqueline Hart at 3:02:15); see *Eleventh Hearing of the Special Comm'n on Combating Antisemitism* (May 5, 2025) (statement of Dr. Mark Poznansky at 0:49:14); see Harvard University Presidential Task Force on Combating Antisemitism and Anti-Israeli Bias, *Final Report*, 148 (Apr. 29, 2025).

¹²³ See *Thirteenth Hearing of the Special Comm'n on Combating Antisemitism* (Oct. 16, 2025) (statement of Janette Lawrence at 3:10:12); see United States Senate Special Committee on Aging, *Never Again: Addressing the Rise of Antisemitism and Supporting Older Americans*, 53, (Apr. 30, 2025), available at <https://www.aging.senate.gov/hearings/never-again-addressing-the-rise-of-antisemitism-and-supporting-older-americans>.

¹²⁴ See *Thirteenth Hearing of the Special Comm'n on Combating Antisemitism* (Oct. 16, 2025) (statement of Leila Caplan at 3:26:29; see *Thirteenth Hearing of the Special Comm'n on Combating Antisemitism* (Oct. 16, 2025) (statement of Janette Lawrence at 3:08:30).

MSCCA Workplace and Healthcare Recommendations

1. The Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination (MCAD) should issue updated guidance clarifying that employment discrimination against Jews is prohibited as discrimination based on religion, ancestry, and in some cases, national origin, and is prohibited under state and federal law.¹²⁵
2. State agencies and private employers should incorporate education on antisemitism into broader workplace diversity, equity, inclusion, and anti-discrimination training programs. Doing so ensures that antisemitism is recognized as a serious and distinct form of hate, while also affirming its connection to broader patterns of bias. Integrating antisemitism into DEI initiatives promotes more comprehensive understanding, strengthens allyship across communities, and fosters safer, more inclusive work environments for all.¹²⁶
3. State agencies and private employers should support the creation of and formally recognize Employee Resource Groups (ERGs), including those focused on Jewish identity, to promote education, cultural awareness, belonging and allyship while providing employees with safe spaces for connection and support.¹²⁷

¹²⁵ See Fact Sheet: Biden-Harris Administration Takes Landmark Step to Counter Antisemitism, (Sep. 28, 2023), available at <https://bidenwhitehouse.archives.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2023/09/28/fact-sheet-biden-harris-administration-takes-landmark-step-to-counter-antisemitism/>. As part of the National Strategy to Counter Antisemitism, eight federal agencies clarified in writing that Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, prohibiting discrimination based on race, color, or national origin applies to discrimination against Jews. See also M.G.L. c. 151B § 4(1A); see *Thirteenth Hearing of the Special Comm’n on Combating Antisemitism* (Oct. 16, 2025) (statement of Commissioner Michael Memmolo at 3:37:35) (explaining that discrimination in the workplace based on protected class is illegal in Massachusetts). See also Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 42 U.S.C. §§ 2000e – 2000e-17 (2024) (prohibiting employment discrimination based on religion).

¹²⁶ See *Thirteenth Hearing of the Special Comm’n on Combating Antisemitism* (Oct. 16, 2025) (statement of Dr. Jacqueline Hart at 3:37:35); see *Thirteenth Hearing of the Special Comm’n on Combating Antisemitism* (Oct. 16, 2025) (statement of Rodrigo Monterrey at 3:18:41); see Project Shema, *Corporate*, available at <https://www.projectshema.org/corporate>; see Shine A Light on Antisemitism, *Safe and Inclusive Workplace*, available at <https://shinealighton.com/workplace/>.

¹²⁷ See Massachusetts Office of Diversity and Equal Opportunity, *Employee Resource Group Roadmap and Tools*, available at, <https://www.mass.gov/doc/employee-resource-groups-at-the-commonwealth/download>; see *Thirteenth Hearing of the Special Comm’n on Combating Antisemitism* (Oct. 16, 2025) (statement of Elyse Park at 3:12:58); see Combined Jewish Philanthropies, 2026 “Jewish at Work” Stipends, available at <https://ma.cjp.org/jewish-at-work-stipends>. CJP is currently offering a limited number of stipends, up to \$1,000, for the creation of Jewish Employee Resource Groups (ERGs), affinity groups, and Jewish employee peer groups within Greater Boston workplaces. *Id.*

4. Private employers should review and strengthen their policies and practices to ensure full compliance with federal and state laws governing religious accommodation in the workplace, including Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and M.G.L. c. 151B § 4(1A).¹²⁸
5. Professional and academic organizations, particularly in the healthcare and higher education sectors, should adopt standards ensuring that educational and professional programming remains focused on its intended subject matter and free from politically divisive, antisemitic, or otherwise discriminatory rhetoric.¹²⁹
6. Public and private employers should be encouraged to recognize and celebrate Jewish American Heritage Month (JAHM), observed nationally each May, as part of their diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) initiatives. Promoting awareness of JAHM aligns with broader efforts to build inclusive workplaces, educate employees about Jewish history and culture, and combat antisemitism through understanding and visibility.¹³⁰

Other Findings:

1. Encouraging and coordinating interfaith and multi-ethnic dialogue fosters greater understanding, collaboration, and allyship among diverse religious faiths and ethnic and racial groups, strengthening community cohesion and resilience against hate.

¹²⁸ See *Thirteenth Hearing of the Special Comm'n on Combating Antisemitism* (Oct. 16, 2025) (statement of Rodrigo Monterrey at 3:19:10).

¹²⁹ See American Public Health Association, *APHA Continuing Education Policies*, available at <https://www.apha.org/professional-development/continuing-education/apha-continuing-education-policies> (providing that organizers of APHA meetings or events should ensure that “content proposed is relevant for the Meeting theme and the learning needs of the target audience of professionals who attend the meeting.”)

¹³⁰ See U.S. National Strategy to Counter Antisemitism at 19, available at <https://bidenwhitehouse.archives.gov/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/U.S.-National-Strategy-to-Counter-Antisemitism.pdf>; see City of Boston, *City Council Recognizes Jewish American Heritage Month*, (May 13, 2024), available at <https://www.boston.gov/news/city-council-recognizes-jewish-american-heritage-month-0>; see Sony Music Group, *Celebrating Jewish American Heritage Month at Sony Music Group*, (May 31, 2024), available at <https://www.sonymusic.com/inside-sony-music/jewish-american-heritage-month-2024/>.