

2020 AUDIT OF ANTISEMITIC INCIDENTS



Dear Friends,

While the pandemic put so much of our lives on hold in 2020, antisemitism and hate not only continued, but it shockingly reached historic highs once again, especially in New York and New Jersey. We hoped for a different narrative, but that was not the case. Harassment, assault, vandalism, and anti-Israel-related antisemitism continued. Moreover, 2020 introduced us to Zoombombing, it fueled election-related hate, and it saw insidious germ-spreading accusations against the Jewish community.

While thankfully, this year, our country saw no deadly attacks perpetrated against the Jewish community, violence against Jewish people still took place, despite the lockdown. That was the case both nationally and locally and sewed fear in the hearts of many members of the Jewish community. **No one should have to be in fear for their safety because they are Jewish.**

ADL has been tracking antisemitic incidents since 1979, and this past year was the third highest on record. **The total number of incidents was 2,024**, just 83 incidents behind 2019, the highest year ever recorded. More than half of those incidents involved harassment, and the rest consisted mostly of vandalism and assaults. [ADL's Heat Map](#) shows the details.

Looking at the 50 states, **New York had more incidents than any other state with 336 incidents**, followed by **New Jersey which occupies the number 2 spot with 295 incidents**. These 631 incidents were tracked and

responded to by ADL New York/New Jersey's Regional Operations team, representing an enormous commitment to fighting antisemitism in the trenches. I am so grateful to them for their incredibly hard work, day in and day out.

Given the trend, one can only imagine what 2020 would have been like had the pandemic not occurred. Now, **as we begin to open up again, we must be ever vigilant, and ADL is**. We remain committed to fighting back against antisemitism and hatred of all forms. But that fight is not just a reactive one. It is also proactive, and it takes place every day in the form of ADL's work with leaders, schools, and communities. This is all made possible by ADL's generous donors and supporters who enable ADL to fight hate for good in New York, New Jersey, and beyond.

Sincerely,



Scott Richman
ADL NY/NJ Regional Director

[READ THE AUDIT](#)

ATTACKS ON THE JEWISH COMMUNITY BY THE NUMBERS



In 2020, ADL tracked 2,024 antisemitic incidents across the U.S., a 4 percent decline from 2019. ADL's Audit classifies incidents into three categories: assault, harassment, and vandalism. Of the total incidents reported in 2020:

Harassment: There were 1,242 harassment incidents, an increase of 10 percent from 2019.

Vandalism: There were 751 vandalism incidents, cases where property was damaged in a manner that harmed or intimidated Jews. Swastikas were present in 517 of these incidents. Acts of antisemitic vandalism decreased 18 percent from 2019.

Assault: There were 31 assault incidents involving a total of 41 victims where people were physically targeted with violence accompanied by evidence of antisemitic hatred. Assaults dropped 49 percent from 2019, perhaps due in part to COVID lockdowns and other pandemic-related behavioral changes. For the first time since 2017, there were no antisemitic fatalities reported.

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SPOTLIGHT: Antisemitic Incidents in New York & New Jersey



Major New Jersey Findings:

In 2020, ADL documented a **total of 295 antisemitic incidents** across New Jersey, a 14 percent decrease relative to 345 incidents recorded in 2019. In total, ADL recorded the following antisemitic incidents in New Jersey in 2020:

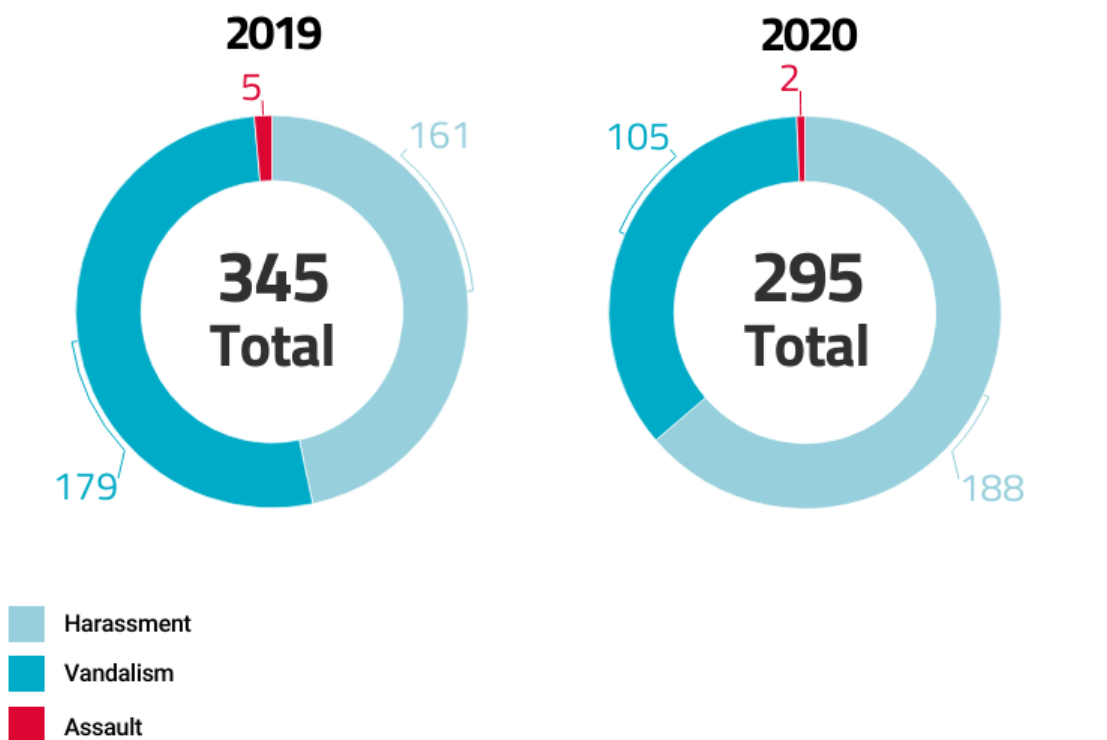
- **Harassment:** There were 188 documented incidents of harassment in 2020, an increase of 17 percent relative to 2019. Swastikas were used in 27 of these incidents.
- **Vandalism:** There were 105 documented incidents of vandalism in 2020, a 41 percent decrease relative to 2019. Swastikas were used in connection with 83 of these incidents.
- **Assault:** There were 2 documented antisemitic assaults, down from 5 in 2019.

During the first quarter of 2020, just prior to and at the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, ADL recorded 96 antisemitic incidents – an 85 percent increase relative to the 52 reported incidents documented during the first quarter of 2019. Despite social distancing due to COVID-19, ADL recorded 2

antisemitic assaults in 2020. Notably, one of the assaults was documented to have taken place in a K-12 public school and involved a student who was reportedly targeted by a classmate for being Jewish.

To learn more about antisemitic incidents in New Jersey in 2020, [please click here](#).

Antisemitic Incidents in **New Jersey** are ▼ 14% from 2019 to 2020



Major New York Findings:

In 2020, ADL tracked **336 antisemitic incidents in New York**, a **22 percent** decrease from 430 incidents in 2019. Of the total incidents reported in 2020:

- **Harassment:** There were 153 harassment incidents, down 3 percent from 157 incidents in 2019.
- **Vandalism:** There were 171 vandalism incidents, down 28 percent from 238 incidents in 2019. Swastikas were utilized in 138 of these instances.

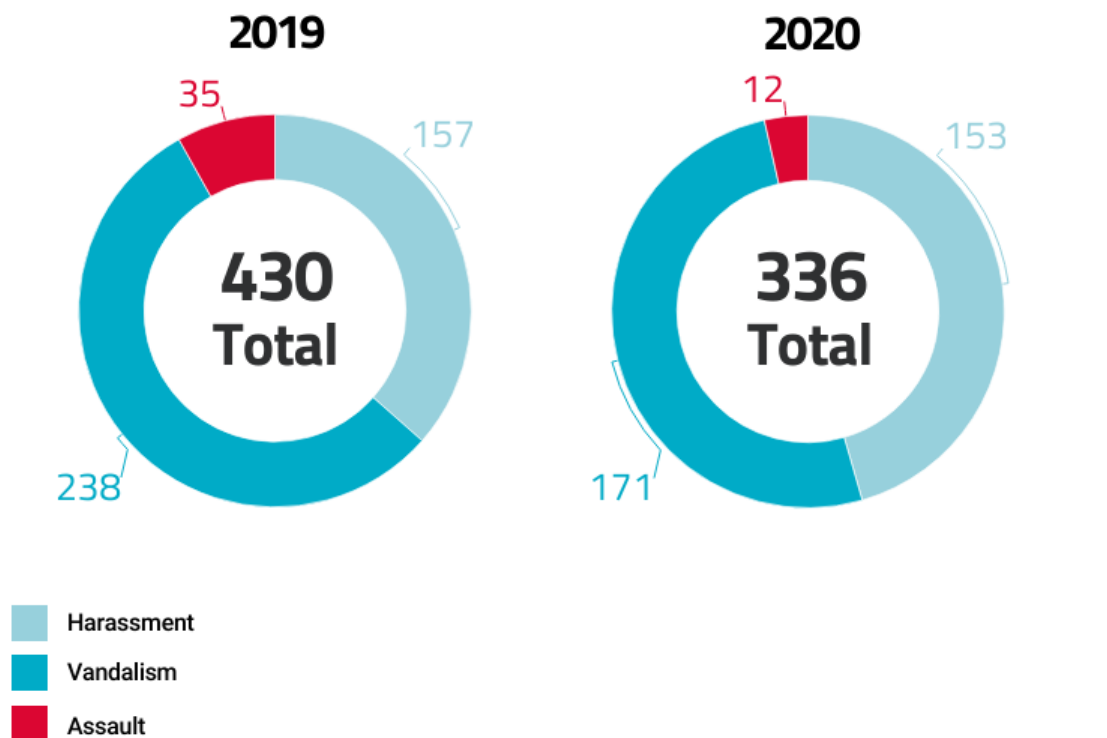
- **Assault:** There were 12 documented antisemitic assaults, down 66 percent from 25 incidents in 2019. Eleven of these assaults took place in Brooklyn, while one was documented in Manhattan.

Notably, antisemitic incidents against **Jewish institutions increased 76 percent in 2020**, with a total of 44 documented incidents, up from 25 in 2019. Temples or Jewish Community Centers in 10 different counties were targets of either antisemitic harassment or vandalism, with 14 incidents occurring over Zoom, and 9 incidents involving a swastika.

Sixty-nine percent of antisemitic incidents in New York were documented within the five boroughs. Acts of antisemitism touched 23 of 62 counties in New York State.

To learn more about antisemitic incidents in New York State in 2020, [please click here](#).

Antisemitic Incidents in **New York State** are ▼ **22% from 2019 to 2020**



SPOTLIGHT: Antisemitism Connected to Israel



Incidents connected to Israel or Zionism climbed in 2020, with efforts from many groups trying to demonize Jewish support for the Jewish state. These antisemitic acts came from across the spectrum. The people and organizations committing these acts range from white supremacist groups' that post propaganda spreading anti-Israel and antisemitic beliefs to campus groups that direct anti-Israel hatred against Jewish students by using antisemitic imagery and harassment for real or assumed connections to Israel.

In New Jersey:

ADL documented 20 antisemitic incidents relating to **Israel or Zionism**. These documented incidents included 17 harassment cases and 3 vandalism cases across a variety of locations. Of the 17 harassment incidents, 13 involved extremism; all 3 of the recorded vandalism incidents were extremist-related.

Of the 20 incidents related to Israel or Zionism, 16 were cases of **extremist propaganda distribution**. The remaining four all took place online and involved an individual experiencing targeted antisemitic harassment tied to anti-Israel messaging.

In New York:

ADL documented 16 documented antisemitic incidents involved **references to Israel or Zionism**, down 16 percent from 19 documented incidents in 2019. These included comments telling Jewish individuals to “go back to Auschwitz or Israel,” wishing “death to Israel,” and stating that Israel and Jewish people “control the U.S.”

SPOTLIGHT: In Schools, A Pandemic-Driven Drop in Incidents



The disruption of in-school education in K-12 schools and on college campuses across the country during the pandemic resulted in a steep drop in school-based incidents after March 2020 as vast numbers of schools shifted to fully remote learning. A rise in Zoombombings of school-related online gatherings only partially offset this decline.

New Jersey Schools:

K-12 schools saw a 60 percent **decrease in documented antisemitic incidents**, down to 39 from 97 incidents in 2019. The decrease is likely due, in part, to the closing of schools for in-person instruction and activities for most of the year due to the COVID-19 pandemic. **21 of these were incidents of vandalism and 17 were harassment.**

Despite the absence of in-person instruction for most of the year, **there was one recorded K-12 assault**, where a student was reportedly targeted by a classmate and assaulted for being Jewish while being told, “This is what we do to Jews in my culture”.

New York Schools:

The number of antisemitic incidents in K-12 schools—19—decreased 56 percent relative to 2019. The majority of these incidents were acts of vandalism, followed by several incidents of harassment and assault—15 and 4, respectively.

ADL IMPACT: Protection from New Forms of Online Hate



In New Jersey, there were 18 reported antisemitic “Zoombombing” incidents, comprising nearly 7% of all reported antisemitic incidents in the state last year.

Most of these incidents targeted Jewish schools or institutions, and six involved the display of a swastika.

In New York, antisemitic incidents continued to occur online in New York,

increasing 57%, up from 14 documented incidents in 2019 to 22 incidents in 2020. These online incidents included the use of swastikas, disparaging commentary about Israel directed towards Jews, blaming the Jewish community for COVID-19, and calling Jewish people dirty who “deserve to be inside a gas chamber.” There were also 21 reported antisemitic “Zoombombing” incidents, with 14 targeting Jewish institutions and four targeting K-12 schools and colleges.

If you witness or experience Zoombombing or another act of antisemitism or hate, please [report it to ADL online](#) or by connecting with your [local ADL office](#). You can also use our [guidelines to minimize the risk of Zoombombings](#) for your organizations.

ADL IMPACT: Ways to Take Action Against Antisemitism and Hate



You can take action against antisemitism with ADL.

At a time that can feel isolating, we can still join together to fight hate for good and make a difference in our communities.

1. Report an incident

We can't do this alone. Because of thousands of people like you who have reported incidents, we have been able to help communities across the country by reporting on trends, educating lawmakers and law enforcement and advocating for stronger protections from incidents and crimes.

If you have experienced or witnessed an incident of antisemitism, extremism, bias, bigotry or hate, please report it using our [incident form](#). When you hear of an incident happening to a loved one, friend or community member, remind them to report the incident to ADL.

2. Join us for Never Is Now: The Summit on Antisemitism and Hate | November 7-9, 2021

This November, thousands of experts, members of the ADL community, business leaders and students will come together virtually for Never Is Now,

the world's largest annual summit on antisemitism and hate. Never Is Now is the best way to learn about and discuss contemporary drivers of antisemitism and hate and find out how you can take action in combating bias of all kinds. [Watch sessions from 2020](#) and [sign up for updates](#) to ensure you are among the first to hear event details as they become available.

3. Learn more about fighting antisemitism

ADL has a variety of [resources](#) to help you learn more about the root causes of antisemitism and hate and to share that information with others.

MORE WAYS TO TAKE ACTION

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