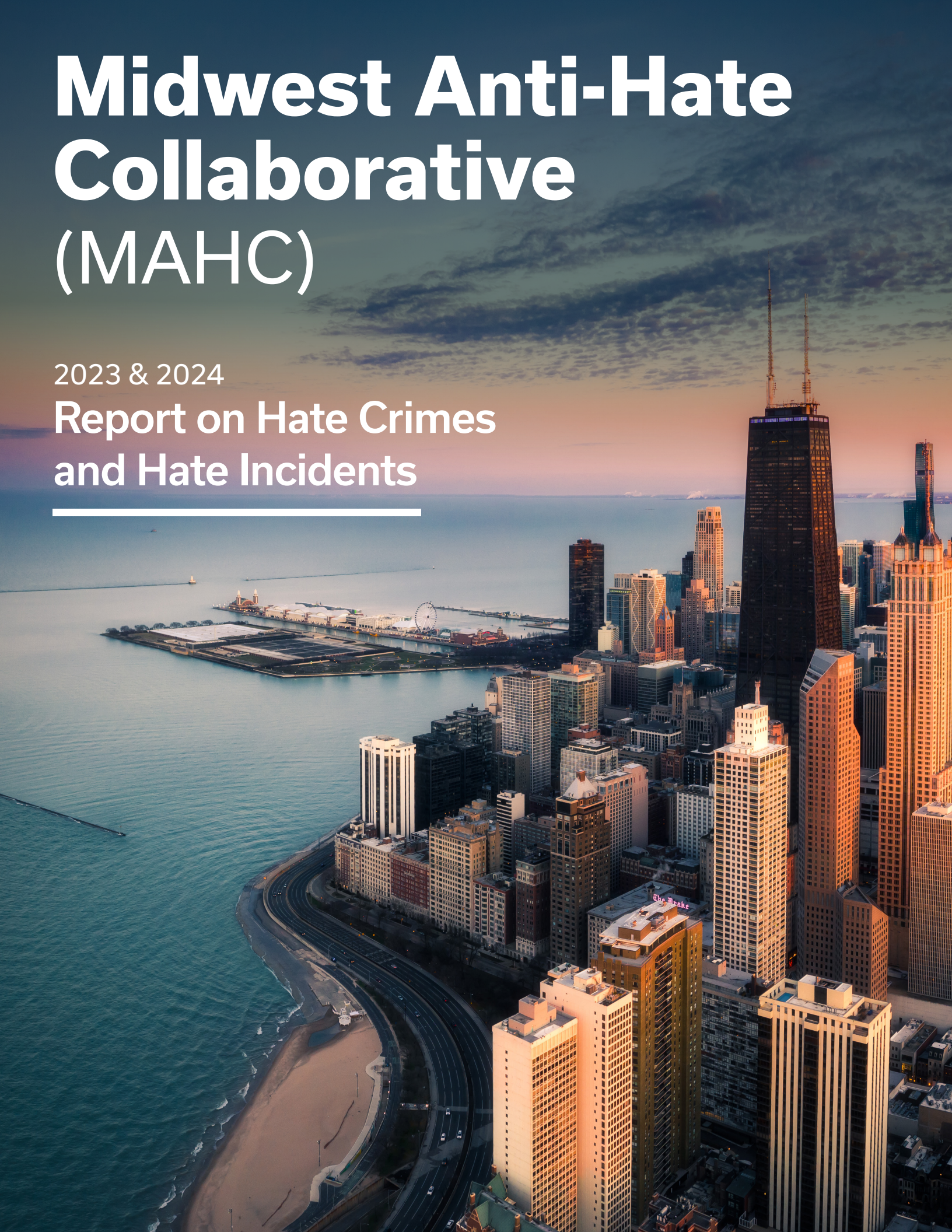


Midwest Anti-Hate Collaborative (MAHHC)

2023 & 2024

Report on Hate Crimes
and Hate Incidents



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Summary

Reported hate crimes in the City of Chicago increased fourfold over the last three years.¹ The October 7 Hamas terrorist attack on Israel fueled additional hate crimes in Chicago at the close of 2023 and throughout 2024.

The Midwest Anti-Hate Collaborative (MAHC) seeks to create infrastructure to fight hate at the local and regional levels. Our work includes research, legislation and collaboration with like-minded partners.

Our first report on hate in Chicago seeks to review practices for documenting and reporting hate, evaluate high-profile incidents and find new ways to ensure our City serves as a bulwark in the fight against hate. Our role is more critical than ever in light of the 2024 US Presidential Election results and the awarding of Cabinet and ranking federal advisory and policy positions to individuals who have promised to target immigrants and other vulnerable populations. Immigrant communities are in crisis as federal agencies seek to enact mass deportation policies. Hate groups are emboldened by policy changes in Washington DC.

1. <https://home.chicagopolice.org/statistics-data/data-dashboards/hate-crime-dashboard/>

While hate in Chicago is near an all-time high, a bright spot is the City Council's response to these trends. Innovative, timely legislation in the areas of tracking and reporting hate crimes and hate incidents is taking root, providing a critical foundation upon which Chicago can grow its efforts to fight hate.

However, we must do more to protect our communities.

In October, a 39-year-old Orthodox Jewish man who was on his way to his local synagogue was shot in the West Ridge neighborhood. The 22-year-old gunman—who engaged in a shootout with first responders—was charged with six counts of attempted murder and felony terrorism and hate crime charges.

Last year, Muslim-owned businesses were targeted and damaged by vandals on numerous occasions. The Muslim Community Center in the Albany Park neighborhood was reportedly hit by gunfire as was a Muslim-owned martial arts gym. An Uptown restaurant that has displayed a Palestinian flag has twice had its windows smashed.

Between October 2023 and April 2024, Chicagoans across numerous neighborhoods were targeted by a campaign of anti-Jewish extremism. While hundreds of people were affected and local elected officials in Chicago responded to these events, the Office of Chicago Mayor Brandon Johnson did little publicly—such as the quick-turnaround neighborhood press conference that predecessors organized—to demonstrate his commitment to these communities.

In late-October, Mayor Johnson appointed Rev. Mitchell Ikenna Johnson as Chicago Public School Board President. On Oct. 29, news reports revealed Ikenna Johnson had made antisemitic, misogynistic and Sept. 11 conspiracy posts to social media accounts.² While he defended his appointee at first, Johnson asked for Ikenna Johnson's resignation on Oct. 31, after more than 40 members of the City Council and additional elected officials called for his removal. Other top Johnson Administration appointees have made questionable statements about Jewish people³ and the Israel-Hamas conflict.⁴ Improved vetting processes are needed to ensure appointees can effectively represent the interest of all Chicagoans.

2. <https://jewishinsider.com/2024/10/new-chicago-education-board-president-has-history-of-antisemitic-pro-hamas-facebook-posts/>

3. <https://www.chicagotribune.com/2024/11/26/mayor-brandon-johnson-press-director-accusations/>

4. <https://chicago.suntimes.com/city-hall/2024/09/12/mayor-brandon-johnson-kennedy-bartley-hamas-gaza-resolution-israel-silverstein-antisemitism>

5. <https://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/justice-department-awards-nearly-30m-combat-rise-hate-and-bias-crimes>

While Chicago now has some of the most innovative anti-hate laws in the nation, it has failed to promote them. Starting in 2024, residents for the first time ever can use the City's 311 and the CHI311 mobile phone app to report non-criminal hate incidents and hateful graffiti. However, reporting numbers so far are low. In the past several years, the State of California has put \$90 million toward support for a similar reporting initiative, but Chicago is failing to leverage basic public relations resources to promote the services it provides. This year's City budget cut a \$4,000 public awareness campaign on trains and buses. The Office of the Mayor and the agencies under the Mayor can and must do more.

"Hate crimes and incidents instill fear across entire communities and undermine the principles upon which our democracy stands. All people in this country should be able to live without fear of being attacked or harassed because of what they look like or where they are from – whether actual or perceived."

—*Raising Awareness of Hate Crimes & Hate Incidents During the COVID-19 Pandemic*, US Department of Justice.

Unlike other states and municipalities, Chicago has failed to obtain significant grant funding to target hate. In September, the US Department of Justice awarded nearly \$30 million in grants to law enforcement agencies, states, community-based organizations, national civil rights organizations, and other stakeholders to fight the rise in hate and bias crimes and incidents. While Chicago should be competing for federal funding, the City has received just \$400,000 over the last several years, significantly less than both Cook County and the State of Illinois.⁶

As we explore these topics, our hope is the information in this report will be shared and, in the right hands, inspire new policy ideas and further collaboration among elected officials, law enforcement, community and advocacy organizations, and people who call Chicago home. Thank you for joining us as we explore a path toward ending hate in the City of Chicago and across the State of Illinois.

6. https://www.usaspending.gov/award/ASST_NON_15PBJA23GG05356HATE_1550/

Mission

The Midwest Anti-Hate Collaborative is committed to combating hate through education, research, policymaking and partnerships. We work to create safer communities through outreach and engagement at local, state, and national levels, empowering communities, organizations and individuals to take a stand against hate.



The State of Hate

Chicago 2023-2024

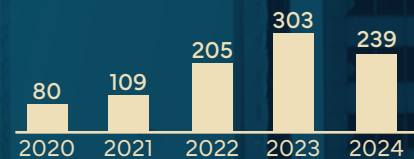
Hate crimes in Chicago increased by more than 250 percent since 2020. The over 282 hate crimes recorded in 2023 represent an all-time high. By comparison, a decade ago, just 65 hate crimes were tallied. As of December 31, 2024, more than 208 hate crimes were reported.

Among Chicagoans in 2023 and 2024, the largest portion of hate crimes targeted individuals on the basis of race, ethnicity and ancestry—around 50 percent—followed by religion. Sexual orientation ranked third among bias motivation over the last two years.

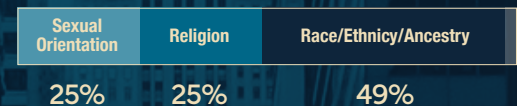
Since 2014, the highest number of hate crimes took place in the 19th (155 reports) and 24th (144 reports) Police Districts. By community area, Lake View and the Near North Side rank the highest across the City. In 2023, the Loop tallied the most reports. Black, gay and Jewish Chicagoans are the most likely groups to be targeted. Assault, battery and criminal damage are the top crimes involved with police reports.⁷

Studies show that 40 to 50 percent of hate crimes and incidents can go unreported—a major obstacle to combating hate and an indicator that the number of actual hate crimes taking place in Chicago is significantly higher than what is formally recorded. Top reasons for failing to report hate crimes and incidents include the difficulty of reporting, a lack of trust in government authorities and the belief that nothing will change when it is reported.⁸

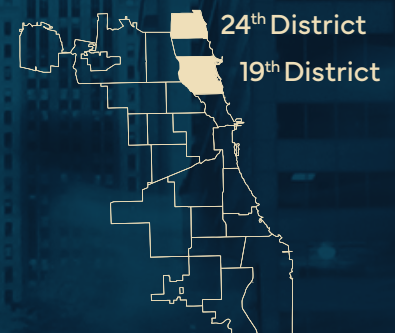
ARE HATE INCIDENTS
INCREASING OR DECREASING?



WHAT BIASES MOTIVATE
CHICAGO HATE CRIME INCIDENTS?



WHERE DO MOST HATE CRIMES OCCUR?



CHI vs HATE

In late 2023, Chicago became a national leader in providing access to citizen hate crime and hate incident reporting mechanisms. **CHI vs HATE** represented the first substantive changes to the City's municipal hate crime ordinance since the early 1990s. Thanks to CHI vs HATE, Chicago now allows for citizen reporting of hate crimes via 311 and the CHI 311 app.⁹

CHI vs HATE also provided for a formal municipal definition for a hate incident. The legal definition is as follows: "Any action that: (a) targets an individual or group based on their actual or perceived race, color, sex, gender identity, age, religion, disability, national origin, ancestry, or sexual orientation; (b) consists of clear and intentional acts of bias, prejudice, or hostility, including but not limited to offensive language, symbols, or threats, that place the targeted individual or group in reasonable apprehension of a hate crime."¹⁰

CHI vs HATE includes new tracking requirements for hate incidents.

Unique to Chicago is how both hate crimes and hate incidents can now be reported via 911 and 311, including the CHI 311 mobile application and 311 online portal making it the only place in the United States where hate incidents can be reported to an operator 24/7 and 365 days a year.

Chicago is among the first US cities to "crowdsource" the reporting of hate.

Additionally, CHI vs HATE created a new framework for citizen reporting of hateful graffiti and other types of hateful property damage. This can be reported via the 311 "Hate Incident" and "Graffiti Removal Request" constituent service request functions. In most instances, these graffiti images are being documented by City entities.

CHI vs HATE also enhanced data reporting requirements for City agencies so stakeholders have better access to information related to hate. It requires that annual reports on hate crimes and hate incidents be submitted to the Chicago City Council and the web-based Chicago Police Department (CPD) Hate Crime Dashboard must be updated at least monthly

As of December 31, CPD had recorded 29 non-criminal hate incidents. In 2023, under the old reporting framework, police reported 24 hate incidents.

9. <https://chicago.suntimes.com/other-views/2024/04/25/hate-crimes-acts-antisemitism-racism-rising-what-chicago-is-doing-311-debra-silverstein>
10. https://codelibrary.amlegal.com/codes/chicago/latest/chicago_il/0-0-0-2603267

How Hate Is Reported and Tracked in Chicago



The Chicago Police Department (CPD) is responsible for investigating and processing hate crimes in the City of Chicago. The department's more than 12,000 officers receive regular training in recognizing and dealing with hate crimes, and the department works with community organizations to ensure accurate reporting and to build trust with diverse communities.

The department's Civil Rights Unit is primarily tasked with responding to reported hate crimes. According to CPD, the Civil Rights Unit works in conjunction with the Bureau of Detectives, Bureau of Patrol, and Youth Investigations Division to investigate hate crimes in a timely manner and attempt to arrest all persons alleged to have violated the law and rights of others.

When arrests are made, investigators present evidence to the Felony Review Unit of the Cook County State's Attorney's Office for further review and approval of charges.¹¹

CPD's Hate Crime in Chicago dashboard, a public online database with information about hate crimes and non-criminal hate incidents, is populated by data collected in accordance with the FBI's Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Program.¹²

Illinois UCR participants, such as CPD and other law enforcement agencies, submit incident-level hate crime data to both the Illinois State Police and FBI using required codes and categories.¹³

9. <https://chicago.suntimes.com/other-views/2024/04/25/hate-crimes-acts-antisemitism-racism-rising-what-chicago-is-doing-311-debra-silverstein>

10. https://codellibrary.amlegal.com/codes/chicago/latest/chicago_il/0-0-0-2603267

11. https://home.chicagopolice.org/wp-content/uploads/DRAFT-G04-06_Hate-Crimes.pdf

12. <https://home.chicagopolice.org/statistics-data/data-dashboards/hate-crime-dashboard/>

13. https://ucr.fbi.gov/additional-ucr-publications/ucr_handbook.pdf

CPD reports hate crimes based on UCR guidelines. Since 2016, UCR requires law enforcement agencies to classify hate crime incidents based on six bias motivation categories: (1) Race/Ethnicity/Ancestry; (2) Religion; (3) Sexual Orientation; (4) Disability; (5) Gender; and (6) Gender Identity.

The bias categories also include bias group categories that provide further detail about hate crimes. For example, the Race/Ethnicity/Ancestry bias motivation category includes nine subgroups such as anti-Black, anti-Latino or anti-Arab. Under the Religion bias motivation category there are 14 group categories. In all, there are 34 UCR bias groups.

UCR guidelines also require CPD to report hate crime location codes, a list of 44 types of locations that provide information about where the hate crime occurred (for example, a home, bar or school). CPD also collects data regarding the types of crime and demographic data for offenders.

A primary source of information on hate crimes in Chicago is CPD's Hate Crime Annual Report.¹⁴ The commanding officer, Special Activities Section, is responsible for compiling and publishing an annual statistical report to the Superintendent of Police on hate crimes, or *Hate Crimes Report*, and other incidents motivated by hate. While once the publicly-available annual report was mandated under the CPD consent decree, the *Hate Crimes Report* is now required permanently under the CHI vs Hate ordinance.¹⁵

Under CPD guidelines, the *Hate Crimes Report* summarizes reported hate crimes and non-criminal incidents motivated by hate during the previous calendar year; provides information regarding the total number of such incidents, citywide and per police district, organized by type of crime, classification of bias motivation, and disposition of hate crimes investigation; provides information on what constitutes a hate crime; and provides methods of reporting hate crimes. Chicago maintains hate crime data going back to 1992 and prior years' data is available through the FBI.

The State of Illinois has endeavored to provide additional resources to report hate crime and hate incidents. Public officials' actions at the state level include Illinois Governor JB Pritzker reactivating the Illinois Commission on Discrimination & Hate Crimes in 2021.

The Commission released their inaugural annual report in April 2022 and provides regular updates to the public via regular reports.

14. <https://www.chicagopolice.org/wp-content/uploads/2023-Hate-Crimes-Annual-Report.pdf>
15. <https://www.chicago.gov/content/dam/city/sites/police-reform/docs/Consent%20Decree.pdf>

Local, State & National Anti-Hate Policies and Legislation 2023-2024

CITY OF CHICAGO

CHI vs HATE Year One

CHI vs HATE was approved unanimously by the City Council in fall 2023 and provides an important framework to give residents a safe, accessible and responsive hate crime and hate incident reporting environment.¹⁶

The initiative also establishes clear rules about roles and responsibilities for City entities when it comes to fighting hate.

The primary elements of the CHI vs HATE ordinance are as follows:

- ✓ Adds to the Chicago Municipal Code a new definition for hate incidents: *"Hate incident" means any action that: (A) targets an individual or group based on their actual or perceived race, color, sex, gender identity, age, religion, disability, national origin, ancestry, or sexual orientation; (B) consists of clear and intentional acts of bias, prejudice, or hostility, including but not limited to offensive language, symbols, or threats, that place the targeted individual or group in reasonable apprehension of a hate crime; and (C) is not classified as a criminal offense or as a violation of this Code;*
- ✓ Streamlines process for citizen reporting using 311, the CHI311 app and the 311 online portal;
- ✓ Creates framework to report and track hateful graffiti using 311;
- ✓ Enhances reporting requirements for City agencies so residents and policymakers have access to critical information via annual reports to the Council and the CPD Hate Crime Dashboard, which will be updated at least monthly;
- ✓ Formalizes response roles and responsibilities for City departments including Chicago Commission on Human Relations and CPD, including providing assistance to victims;
- ✓ Requires City departments to formulate strategies, policies and a legislative agenda to respond to hate and reduce hate crimes;
- ✓ Requires regular trainings and courses on hate crimes and hate incidents for CPD including in-service training on methods, strategies, and techniques for recognizing and responding to hate crimes and hate incidents;
- ✓ Ensures privacy protections and gives victims the option of working with City departments outside of law enforcement.

16. https://codelibrary.amlegal.com/codes/chicago/latest/chicago_il/0-0-0-2603267

Hate littering ordinance

In April 2024, Chicago Ald. Timmy Knudsen, 43rd Ward, introduced legislation to levy fines against individuals responsible for hateful flyering, such as the placement of antisemitic flyers on homes or vehicles. Although hate incidents are reportable, they are not punishable by law.

Inspired by a new law in San Diego, California, Knudsen's ordinance prohibits "hate littering" when materials that could intimidate, emotionally abuse, slander or threaten others are left in public places or on private property. The new wording would be added to the municipal code and include a misdemeanor fine of up to \$1,000.

The ordinance was approved July 7.

Reporting pilot program & outreach

CPD, in coordination with the Chicago Commission on Human Relations, is expected to implement a proposed pilot program in 2025 to encourage the reporting of hate crimes, hate incidents and community tensions that may lead to hate crimes in communities that experience higher levels of hate crimes.

"CPD holds an assumption that there is a significant disparity between the true number of hate crimes and those actually reported to law enforcement ... It is critical to report hate crimes to not only help and support the victims, but also to send a clear message that the community will not tolerate these crimes. Reporting hate crimes allows communities and law enforcement to more fully understand the scope of the problem ... and dedicate resources toward addressing and preventing these crimes."

—2022 Annual Hate Crimes Report, Chicago Police Department.

Funded in part by \$400,000 in federal grants, the program includes coordination among City agencies and eight community partners strategically located across the City.¹⁷

Program goals include improved awareness and understanding about hate crimes and an increase in hate crime reporting in selected communities. The City aims to help empower the people who come into contact with community partners by serving as a facilitator for City agencies. Among other responsibilities, CCHR will provide trainings to the community partners about hate crimes and the victim assistance process. CCHR will also assist individuals in making hate crime and incident reports and offer services such as mediation and dispute resolution.

17. https://www.usaspending.gov/award/ASST_NON_15PBJA23GG05356HATE_1550/

STATE OF ILLINOIS

New statewide hotline

In October, Illinois Governor JB Pritzker, the Illinois Department of Human Rights and the Illinois Commission on Discrimination and Hate Crimes **announced Help Stop Hate, a confidential service to provide support and resources to people affected by hate.**¹⁸

Help Stop Hate Illinois is a hotline that provides services in a number of languages from specialists trained in trauma-informed care. It was established using \$1.1 million in grant dollars from the US Department of Justice (DOJ) under the Jabara-Heyer No Hate Act. The Jabara-Heyer No Hate Act has provided funding for hotlines in a number of states. Reports can be made anonymously via the new hotline by calling 877-458-HATE from noon to 9 pm, Monday through Friday or online at any time at ILStopHate.org.

The DOJ is also providing funding for training for Illinois law enforcement on hate crime protocols through the Illinois Office of the Attorney General. Gov. Pritzker and the Illinois General Assembly provided ongoing support for the program in 2024 with \$5 million in budget funds.

ILLINOIS GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Senate Bill 3552 (SB3552) - Hate crime training for law enforcement

Advocates have asked members of the Illinois General Assembly to pass SB3552/HB5368. The legislation requires all law enforcement in Illinois to receive ongoing training and education on state and federal hate crime laws and how to identify, report, and respond to bias-motivated criminal activity.

SB 3552/HB 5368, which is based on a 2023 recommendation from Governor Pritzker's Commission on Discrimination and Hate Crimes, unanimously passed both the Illinois State Senate and the House committee of jurisdiction prior to the General Assembly's recess in June 2024. Passage of the bill would make Illinois the 15th state in the country to require law enforcement in the State to receive hate crimes training and education.

Sponsors include Illinois Sens. Sara Feigenholtz and Laura Fine and Reps. Bob Morgan and Kam Buckner.

18. <https://gov-pritzker-newsroom.prezly.com/gov-pritzker-announces-the-launch-of-help-stop-hate-a-new-statewide-service-to-report-hate-acts-in-illinois>

House Bill 5178 (HB5178)—Banning firearms in polling places

Rep. Morgan's bill to amend the State's Election Code to prohibit firearms in polling places remains in committee. The bill provides that any person who carries or possesses a firearm while present in a polling place, except a peace officer in the performance of his or her official duties, shall be guilty of a Class C misdemeanor.

Senate Bill 32346 (SB3246)—Requiring local police to report hate crimes to Illinois State Police

Sen. Fine's bill would amend the Uniform Crime Reporting Act and require that state law enforcement agencies submit a report to the Illinois State Police after receiving a complaint of a hate crime or other bias-related complaint within two weeks of receiving the complaint.

It further would require that the Illinois State Police must identify patterns and analyze the information reported to it for the purpose of connecting the information to other reported crimes or incidents, create a reporting form or process to receive this information, review all reports, and disseminate to potentially affected law enforcement agencies and create a process for the sharing of all the reported incidents with law enforcement agencies across the State.

The bill is currently held in committee and would require further support before full vote by the legislature.

House Bill 4133 (HB4133)—Bullying in schools

Rep. Margaret Croke's bill amends the Courses of Study Article of the State's School Code to ensure that provisions concerning bullying prevention apply to nonpublic, sectarian schools. The bill is in committee.

INNOVATIVE POLICIES FROM ELSEWHERE

The State of Oregon

Since it created the first hate crime laws in 1981, Oregon has been a national leader in developing anti-hate policies and passing them into law.

The state's mandated annual Bias Crimes Report by the Oregon Criminal Justice Division is a 125-page document that includes summary data and analysis of bias crimes and non-criminal bias incidents collected via the state's Bias Response Hotline and Oregon's National Incident Based Reporting System (NIBRS) maintained by State Police as well as data from the State's 34 district attorneys' offices. In addition to presenting extensive research findings, it includes strategies for new ways to protect vulnerable communities.

The annual Bias Crimes Report is required under Senate Bill 577, which the Oregon legislature passed in 2019. SB577 updated 17 different Oregon laws and established new hate crime and hate incident laws and is the product of a panel convened by the state's attorney general that was tasked with closing gaps in the system experienced by victims of hate and bias.

"Hate crime ... involves acts of violence and intimidation, usually directed towards already stigmatized and marginalized groups. As such, it is a mechanism of power and oppression, intended to reaffirm the precarious hierarchies that characterize a given social order. It attempts to re-create simultaneously the threatened (real or imagined) hegemony of the [defendant's] group and the 'appropriate' subordinate identity of the victim's group. It is a means of marking both the Self and the Other in such a way as to re-establish their 'proper' relative positions, as given and reproduced by broader ideologies and patterns of social and political inequality ... Oftentimes, the specific victim is almost immaterial. The victims are interchangeable ... hate crimes are symbolic acts aimed at the people "watching"

— *In The Name of Hate: Understanding Hate Crimes*, Barbara Perry.

State leaders have continued to build on their innovative work, expanding housing, employment and legal protections to bias crime victims and helping ensure the safety of bias crime victims by requiring no contact orders for defendants and providing access to the state's Address Confidentiality Program. In 2021, Oregon made it illegal to knowingly place a noose on public or private property with the goal of causing fear of imminent bodily harm. Also in 2021, legislators added "gender identity" to all laws that used "sexual orientation" in its text, making gender identity a distinct protected class in Oregon's housing, employment, public accommodations, education, health care and law enforcement profiling laws.



Examples of Hate Crimes and Hate Incidents in Illinois 2023-2024

- ✕ Zoom-bombings of public meetings with anti-semitic and racist statements and threats
- ✕ Racist statements during public testimony portions of public meetings
- ✕ Violent threats online and in person
- ✕ Public displays of known hate symbols or symbols associated with established hate groups
- ✕ The distribution of anti-semitic flyers and other materials ^{19, 20}
- ✕ Efforts to ban books and the defacement of public library books by black, brown and LGBTQ+ authors
- ✕ The targeted, attempted murder of an Orthodox Jewish man on his way to synagogue ²¹
- ✕ A man wielding a hammer smashing a glass door and shouting homophobic slurs at customers at an LGBTQ+-owned bar ²²
- ✕ Claims that immigrants and asylum seekers are dangerous and carry disease ²³



- ✘ The murder of a trans woman on Chicago's West Side ²⁴
- ✘ The attempted murder of a trans woman at a Chicago skatepark following verbal harassment ²⁵
- ✘ Vandalism and criminal damage to places of worship ^{26, 27}
- ✘ Harassment of elected officials on the basis of religion ²⁸
- ✘ Pride flags torn down or damaged ²⁹
- ✘ A police standoff with a gun-wielding man who displayed a swastika on his roof ³⁰
- ✘ Bomb threats against public libraries ³¹
- ✘ An individual caught on video making a Nazi salute outside a Chicago Jewish school
- ✘ Threats and violence between pro-Israel and pro-Palestine supporters ³²
- ✘ Racist and antisemitic social media posts by public officials ³³
- ✘ Harassment of public sector workers, such as librarians

19. <https://www.chicagotribune.com/2024/04/08/scores-of-antisemitic-flyers-substance-with-appearance-of-rat-poison-found-in-lincoln-park-alderman-says/>
20. <https://nadinnews.com/anti-semitic-racist-messages-found-on-cars-in-portage-park-jefferson-park-for-2nd-time-since-mid-october/>
21. <https://www.nbcnews.com/news/us-news/hate-crime-terrorism-charges-filed-jewish-man-shot-targeted-attack-rcna178348>
22. <https://www.losangelesblade.com/2023/01/17/homophobe-with-hammer-attacks-lgbtq-owned-bar-in-chicago/>
23. <https://x.com/byaliceyin/status/1661148560359051270?s=20>
24. <https://chicago.suntimes.com/crime/2024/09/10/transgender-woman-murdered-fatally-shot-west-side-hate-crime>
25. <https://chicago.suntimes.com/2023/6/30/23780242/woman-recounts-stabbing-grant-park-thanks-skateboarders-for-working-to-make-sure-i-didnt-die>
26. <https://chicago.suntimes.com/crime/2023/5/23/23735121/suspected-arson-causes-significant-damage-to-shrine-of-our-lady-of-guadalupe-in-des-plaines>
27. <https://blockclubchicago.org/2024/09/11/after-lincoln-square-gym-nearby-mosque-shot-at-muslim-chicagoans-fear-targeted-attacks/>
28. <https://www.chicagotribune.com/2023/04/30/muslim-trustee-from-dupage-township-faces-racist-comments-during-public-meeting/>
29. <https://patch.com/illinois/grayslake/grayslake-college-student-tore-down-pride-flag-charged-prosecutors>
30. <https://chicago.suntimes.com/crime/2023/6/3/23747999/humboldt-park-nazi-swastika-man-dead-police-standoff-chicago-police>
31. <https://www.chicagotribune.com/2023/08/18/bomb-threats-made-to-north-suburban-lake-county-public-libraries/>
32. <https://chicago.suntimes.com/crime/2023/10/24/23931186/hate-crime-aggravated-battery-charges-pro-palestinian-protest-israeli-solidarity-event-skokie>
33. <https://www.nytimes.com/2024/11/01/us/chicago-school-board-president-resigns.html>

High Profile Hate Crimes In Chicago

HATE FLYERING IN CHICAGOLAND

Fall 2023 marked the start of an anti-semitic flyering campaign covering Chicago neighborhoods and nearby communities. During these incidents, custom-made cardboard squares with hateful content were placed on vehicles parked on City streets. Affected neighborhoods included Edgewater, the Gold Coast, Jefferson Park, Lincoln Park, Old Irving, Ukrainian Village and West Ridge, among others. Brookfield, Elmhurst, Evanston and LaGrange Park also reported incidents. The materials were linked to established hate groups.³⁴

On April 8, 75 baggies filled with what appeared to be rat poison were left on vehicles in Lincoln Park.³⁵ Upon further analysis, the material was identified as wood pellets. In some instances it was reported that Jewish homes were specifically targeted by the people distributing flyers under the cover of night. Although video recordings were made of the masked perpetrators, no arrests were made.

Stakeholders tracked and documented flyering incidents, amplified the issue and leveraged relationships with media, policymakers, law enforcement and other stakeholders. The incidents led to informal conversations among City ward offices, neighborhood organizations and municipalities affected by the flyering. Elected and community leaders took steps to ensure there was awareness among leadership in the CPD districts and areas where the incidents were taking place. Progress was made in creating a template for a comprehensive response to this type of citywide hate activity. The last—and final—incident was reported on May 13.

34. <https://chicago.suntimes.com/crime/2024/02/28/antisemitic-posters-white-supremacist-bucktown-hate-crime-jewish-crime>

35. <https://blockclubchicago.org/2024/04/08/antisemitic-flyers-with-rat-poison-like-substance-found-in-lincoln-park-alderman-says/>

ATTACKS ON MUSLIM-OWNED BUSINESSES & PLACES OF WORSHIP

A series of attacks on local Muslim-owned businesses in Chicago have gone unsolved. Nabala Cafe, a Palestinian-owned business in Uptown, has been targeted twice. On September 2, a masked vandal used a baseball bat to smash the glass out of three windows and a door, causing thousands of dollars in damage. Over the Labor Day weekend, a window was smashed and a Palestinian flag that was on display was moved.³⁶

The Muslim Community Center in Mayfair was hit by gunfire during two incidents this past fall. On September 2 and September 6, damage was reported to the center's front doors. Center users were unable to determine if the three doors were damaged by BBs from a BB gun or by bullets from an actual gun.³⁷

A vandal damaged windows and doors at a Muslim-owned martial arts gym in Lincoln Square on September 7. Security footage of the incident showed a vehicle circling the area before pulling up to the gym. Flashes could be seen coming from the vehicle and at least three bullet holes were discovered. The business owner is a well-known YouTube personality.³⁸

The Chicago branch of the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR) has called for an investigation into the two incidents at the Mayfair community center and the attack on the Muslim-owned gym. The incidents were condemned by local officials and investigated by Chicago police.

36. <https://chicago.suntimes.com/news/2024/09/02/cafe-vandalized-uptown-palestinian-flag-israel-hamas-war-crime-violence-city-hall-cpd-cpd>

37. <https://chicago.suntimes.com/news/2024/09/07/muslim-community-center-vandalized-cair-irving-park-chicago-cpd-city-hall-religion-islam-news>

38. <https://chicago.suntimes.com/crime/2024/09/09/police-investigate-damage-muslim-owned-martial-arts-studio-eddie-redzovic-lincoln-square-crime-cpd>

WEST RIDGE SHOOTING

On October 26, a 39-year-old Orthodox Jewish man who was on his way to his local synagogue was shot in the West Ridge neighborhood. Immediately following the incident, the 22-year-old gunman engaged in a shootout with police and first responders at the scene. Police shot and arrested Sidi Mohamed Abdallahi of Chicago. About a week after he was charged with six counts of attempted murder and other crimes related to the shooting, hate crime and terrorism charges were added. Abdallahi died in custody while being held awaiting a trial date, apparently by suicide, according to law enforcement officials.³⁹

Not much information about his motives were made public but police determined that Abdallahi had researched West Ridge on the Internet and mapped out specific places of worship in the community.

Anti-Jewish hate crimes in Chicago are up significantly, from 50 reported incidents in 2023 to 78 in 2024, according to CPD. Incidents in West Ridge include two assaults, a bomb threat and vandalism, among others. Incidents across the City included additional bomb threats and vandalism.

Ald. Silverstein was on the scene of the Sabbath attack in her ward shortly after it took place. She spoke with the survivor and his family and coordinated with police for a community-wide response, which included a meeting Sunday with religious leaders and neighbors. In the following days, she pushed the Office of the Mayor to condemn the shooting as an attack on the Jewish community. She publicly expressed support for the added hate crime and terrorism charges and discussed the issue extensively with media and stakeholders.

39. <https://blockclubchicago.org/2024/10/31/hate-crime-terrorism-charges-brought-against-man-who-shot-orthodox-jewish-man-in-west-ridge/>



Opportunities to Fight Hate



Funding

FY2026 federal grant applications are due in spring 2025, meaning the City has several months to identify grant opportunities and hit those deadlines. Increased budget pressures should make this a priority. To increase the odds of obtaining funding, multiple municipal entities should apply for grants—especially federal Department of Justice grants—on an annual basis.

Excluding federal funding for the 2024 Democratic National Convention, since FY2012, the City of Chicago has obtained just \$5 million in grants out of nearly \$1 billion in federal disbursements. One notable grant-funded project is the hate crime outreach pilot program by the Chicago Department on Human Relations. However, the start date for the pilot has yet to be determined.

The City, in large part, has failed to promote the CHI vs HATE initiative to advocate citizen reporting of hate via 311. While the State of California recently funded \$90 million in grants to support its reporting initiative,⁴⁰ Chicago is failing to leverage basic public relations resources to promote the services it provides. Since 2021, California has invested \$200 million in non-law enforcement anti-hate initiatives. This year's City of Chicago budget cut the only CHI vs HATE public awareness campaign—\$4,000 worth of ads on CTA trains and buses. Partnering with private donors could be another mechanism to support City efforts.

40. <https://laist.com/news/from-films-to-counseling-how-california-is-spending-90-million-to-fight-hate>



Boost and create policy

CHI vs HATE is a good start, but as demonstrated by new legislation from Ald. Knudsen and the four items in committee in the Illinois General Assembly, there is renewed interest in policies that can make our communities safe from hate. Legislation like this must be prioritized and delivered for full votes before their legislative bodies. The Johnson Administration must be more visible in the fight against hate, and that means preventing the appointment of problematic individuals as well as making a public stand against hate when it happens. We applaud the Executive Order issues by Johnson in late December creating a taskforce to stop hate against transgendered Chicagoans.⁴¹ We will be working to ensure the new year means the introduction of new anti-hate policies and legislation at the local, state and national levels.



Analyze data

The City of Chicago should analyze available data, particularly new data coming from citizen reporting and CHI vs Hate. This research process could include partnering with a university or other institution to apply for grants and produce studies and outcomes that contribute to hate crime prevention.

Further research should involve collecting and analyzing hate crime and hate incident reports to 311 and 911, cataloging photos of hateful graffiti and other citizen-generated submissions and mapping of current and historical data for the purpose of flagging hate crime and incident hot spots. Interviews with hate crime and incident victims and community groups and the dissemination of that information when appropriate could help City leaders develop a deeper understanding of hate and strategies to reduce it.

Like the State of Oregon,⁴² the State of Illinois should take additional legislative steps to require comprehensive annual reporting on hate, starting with the reporting of data collected via the new statewide hotline and the information that is disseminated to the federal government via the State Police.

41. https://www.chicago.gov/city/en/depts/mayor/press_room/press_releases/2024/december/Transfemicide-Working-Group.html
42. <https://www.oregon.gov/cjc/CJC%20Document%20Library/SB577ReportJuly2024.pdf>



Empower law enforcement

The City should provide additional resources to CPD to boost staffing for its hate crimes unit including additional detectives and investigators. City officials should facilitate collaboration among City departments, local law enforcement agencies, the FBI and the Cook County State's Attorney to increase efficiencies and ensure a comprehensive and holistic response to hate crimes and incidents.



An anti-hate network

The City should engage with like-minded entities across the State and country to help establish a network of cities and states who are aligned against hate. Discussions among policymakers should focus on establishing best practices. Instead of ignoring issues, leaders in Chicago should be quick to respond publicly to attacks on residents, like the flyering campaign that took place in 2023 and 2024.

States like California and Oregon can serve as models for building out deeper reporting requirements and resourcing anti-hate policies. It is critical to establish new relationships with experienced policymakers. The City and State should also seek out and participate in national and regional anti-hate events such as the Eradicate Hate Global Summit in Pennsylvania.



About MAHC

Debra Silverstein is a municipal elected official representing Chicago's 50th Ward and Founder of the not-for-profit Midwest Anti-Hate Collaborative.

An Alderman serving in the Chicago City Council, Silverstein is one of just two female Orthodox Jewish women in the United States to hold public office. Her community includes more than 10,000 Orthodox Jewish households within one of the largest Jewish communities outside of New York. Additionally, the 50th Ward is among the nation's most diverse neighborhoods with a large population of new immigrants, including people from Europe, Central & South America, West Africa, the Middle East and Asia. The 50th Ward, which includes much of the 24th Police District, has been disproportionately impacted by hate crimes. As Alderman, Silverstein serves as the point of contact and constituent service provider for nearly 60,000 residents, local community organizations, City agencies and law enforcement. She is an advocate for advancing laws to fight hate and funding to support efforts to fight hate crimes and hate incidents.





Additional Resources

CA vs Hate

Chicago Commission on Human Relations 2024
Hate Crimes & Hate Incidents Report

Chicago Police Department Annual Hate Crimes
Reports

Chicago Police Department Consent Decree

Chicago Police Department Directives - General
Order-G04-06 - Hate Crimes, Hate Incidents, and
Related Incidents Motivated by Bias or Hate

Chicago Police Department Hate Crimes
Dashboard

CHI vs HATE ordinance

FBI Uniform Crime Reporting Handbook

Illinois Commission on Discrimination
& Hate Crimes

Illinois Commission on Discrimination & Hate
Crimes; "Report of Recommendations," Illinois
Commission on Discrimination & Hate Crimes,
April 2022

Illinois Compiled Statutes and the Illinois Hate
Crime Act (720 ILCS 5/12-7.1)

Illinois Department of Human Rights

Illinois Human Rights Act

LA vs Hate

Oregon Compiled Statutes and Oregon
Senate Bill 577

Oregon Criminal Justice Commission Bias Crime
(2023) Annual Report

The Center for the Study of Hate and Extremism -
California State University, San Bernardino