

Combating Bias and Hate



Under Attorney General Matthew J. Platkin's leadership, the New Jersey Department of Law and Public Safety expanded its efforts to combat bias and hate.

Addressing Bias Incidents in K-12 Schools and on College and University Campuses

- Issued a [statement](#) on the legal obligations of K-12 schools, colleges, and universities under New Jersey's civil rights laws to proactively respond to bias incidents when they occur.
- In partnership with the New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE), Attorney General Platkin issued [guidance for K-12 schools](#) on preventing, addressing, and responding to bias incidents.
- Issued [guidance for K-12 schools](#) on preventing and addressing discrimination in school disciplinary policies and practices.
- In partnership with NJDOE, [encouraged schools](#) to develop anti-bias initiatives, and explained how New Jersey law may apply when schools decide to discontinue anti-bias initiatives.
- In partnership with the New Jersey Office of the Secretary of Higher Education, issued [guidance for colleges and universities](#) on preventing, addressing, and responding to bias incidents on campus.

Using Enforcement Authority to Respond to Bias and Hate

- Secured a [\\$575,000 settlement](#) to resolve allegations that Jackson Township in Ocean County engaged in religious discrimination against Orthodox Jews, providing broad equitable relief prohibiting the Township from discriminating against Orthodox Jews, requiring the Township to adopt new policies and procedures to protect religious freedom and to repeal ordinances that discriminated against Orthodox Jewish residents.
- Initiated enforcement actions against individuals or entities that violated the New Jersey Law Against Discrimination (LAD) by denying service on the basis of race, national origin, religion, or another protected characteristic – bringing, for example, an [enforcement action](#) against municipalities that published on their websites marriage licensing information that limited the availability of licenses to opposite-gender couples and excluded marriage license applicants with a nonbinary gender identity.
- Between 2021 and 2023, 217 unique individuals have been charged with the crime of bias intimidation in New Jersey.

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Combating Bias and Hate *(continued)*

- Strengthened our process for handling complaints filed by the public, resulting in significant increases in investigations completed and compensation to victims of discrimination and bias-based harassment, ultimately recovering over \$2 million for complainants (a 40 percent increase over 2022).

Engaging in Public Education, Training, and Outreach Across New Jersey

- Issued a [report](#) on white supremacy in New Jersey, analyzing the rise in white supremacist recruitment and violence and the painful and profound impact that white supremacy has on targeted communities, especially on young people.
- Provided free trainings on [13 different anti-bias topics](#) to members of the public, including trainings on Having Anti-Bias Discussions in Class, Strategies for Effective Bystander Intervention, and Understanding Implicit Bias – totaling 159 free trainings to the public, reaching over 6,000 participants.
- Conducted community outreach to educate the public on the New Jersey Law Against Discrimination and how to file a complaint – participating in over 170 outreach events across all 21 counties in New Jersey.
- Hosted events on combatting bias and hate at college campuses across New Jersey, including events at Rowan, Rutgers, and Kean universities, and a planned event at Camden County College in the spring of 2024.
- Participated in and hosted events addressing antisemitism and anti-Muslim bias across New Jersey, in partnership with federal, state, and local law enforcement partners, non-profit organizations, and houses of worship.
- Developed training for administrators and educators in K-12 schools on how to effectively prevent, address, and respond to bias incidents.
- Developed training for students on how to effectively and respectfully facilitate and navigate anti-bias conversations.
- Launched a Youth Ambassador Program to train the next generation of leaders to help eliminate bias and discrimination in their communities, and to encourage students to act as community change agents through education on the LAD.
- Expanded our crisis response and community mediation efforts during protests or in the aftermath of possible bias incidents, including by engaging in crisis response or community mediation efforts on 17 occasions in 2023.
- Released [additional resources](#) to help members of the public understand how to file a complaint at bias.njcivilrights.gov.
- Attorney General Platkin hosts ongoing law enforcement briefings bringing together members of the law enforcement community and members of faith communities to educate and prepare for religious holidays, including the Jewish High Holidays and Islamic season of Ramadan. These sessions have resulted in increased patrols to ensure safety during holidays.
- We review all reported bias incidents from across the State thanks to our robust reporting system and bias investigation standards.
- We host ongoing discussions and establish collaborations with different community and law enforcement leaders to combat bias and hate.
- In collaboration with other law enforcement agencies, we created bias awareness programs for community members.

*Members of the public are encouraged to report bias incidents via the NJBIAS online portal at bias.njcivilrights.gov, to their local police departments, or by calling **800-277-BIAS**.*