

Governor Phil Murphy

AG Platkin Issues Bias Incident Report for 2021 and 2022 and Releases 2023 Preliminary Bias Data

03/7/2024

Public Awareness Bias Campaign and Interactive Public Bias Data Dashboard Launched to Help Combat Rising Number of Bias Incidents

[Bias Incident Report](#)

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[Combating Bias & Hate Summary](#)

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[Bias Incident Dashboard](#)

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TRENTON – Attorney General Matthew J. Platkin announced today the release of a [report](#)

https://urldefense.com/v3/_https://t.e2ma.net/click/v59lcl/7ys5259b/ri9257_!!J30X0ZrnC1oQtbA!KWBHorDEldJIOKT60AnhE1s4i5b2g1aO79ZYzbOKvaHvUslK5atIziPRCMQ? analyzing final bias incidents statistics in New Jersey in 2021 and 2022. Consistent with national trends, the report shows that incidents of bias and hate remain on the rise and 2022 had the highest number of reported bias incidents since the State began reporting bias incidents nearly three decades ago. Preliminary data for 2023 was also released today, indicating that the upward trend in reported bias incidents has continued – with an initial showing of a 22% increase in reported incidents in 2023 compared to 2022. To help combat the rising tide of bias and hate, a public awareness bias campaign and an interactive bias data dashboard were also launched today.

Attorney General Platkin has made combating bias and hate a top priority and is committed to using every tool and resource available to tackle this problem to ensure that all New Jerseyans are safe and free to live without fear. The Department of Law and Public Safety (LPS) continues to [work tirelessly to address](#) https://urldefense.com/v3/_https://t.e2ma.net/click/v59lcl/7ys5259b/7aa357_!!J30X0ZrnC1oQtbA!KWBHorDEldJIOKT60AnhE1s4i5b2g1aO79ZYzbOKvaHvUslK5atIziPRCMQ? steady rise in reported bias incidents through criminal prosecution, civil enforcement, education, training, outreach, and prevention efforts.

The report released today finds that there were 2,211 bias incidents reported to law enforcement agencies throughout New Jersey in 2022, eclipsing the previous record of 1,885 set in 2021. The year 2022 was the seventh consecutive year that the number of reported bias incidents has risen in New Jersey.

In both 2021 and 2022, Black individuals were the most frequent targets of bias incidents. The Jewish community was the religious group most frequently targeted, and the Hispanic or Latinx/e community was the ethnic group most frequently targeted. In 2021, residences were the most frequent locations of bias incidents, while in 2022 bias incidents most frequently occurred in elementary and secondary schools.

The rise in reported bias incidents likely reflects a combination of statewide improvements in reporting and community outreach as well as other factors such as the spread of misinformation and bias on social media platforms, political divisiveness across the nation, and the lingering effects of backlash to the global racial justice movement that began in 2020, as indicated in the 2021-2022 report.

“As we witness the alarming rise in incidents of bias and hate across our nation, New Jersey is not immune to this epidemic. While we can attribute our state’s significant rise in part to an increased willingness to report such acts, it is our duty to ensure New Jerseyans can live and work free from violence, fear, and intimidation,” **said Governor Phil Murphy**. “I commend Attorney General Platkin and the Department of Law and Public Safety for the continuation of this report and for the implementation of new initiatives to raise awareness and dissuade people from participating in this unacceptable behavior. It is our administration’s collaborative goal to create a state where all are welcomed, all are respected, and where all can live without fear.”

“As one of the nation’s most diverse states, New Jersey continues to be a leader in taking comprehensive steps to prevent and combat bias and hate. Protecting New Jersey residents from acts of bias and hate is one of my top priorities,” **said Attorney General Platkin**. “Sadly, rising numbers of reported bias incidents have been a national trend, and we are not immune. We are committed to doing everything within our power to curb that trend across our state.”

“No one should ever experience acts of bias or hatred, and we will continue to work tirelessly to protect our residents from the tide of hate rising nationally and here in New Jersey,” **said Sundeep Iyer, Director of the Division on Civil Rights**. “These statistics paint a troubling picture, and the rise in antisemitism and Islamophobia we have seen in recent months only amplifies these trends. Make no mistake: There is no place for hate in our state, and we will continue to use every available resource to confront this challenge head-on.”

“Hate and bias crimes are unacceptable, and in New Jersey, they will not be tolerated,” **said J. Stephen Ferketic, Director of the Division of Criminal Justice**. “The Division of Criminal Justice is committed to ensuring that each one of these incidents is thoroughly investigated and, when the conduct is criminal, prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law.”

“The New Jersey State Police encourages anyone who has witnessed or been the victim of acts of hatred or a bias crime to report these incidents,” **said Colonel Patrick Callahan, Superintendent of the New Jersey State Police**. “We are committed to eradicating such incidents in New Jersey, and to succeed, we must work with community leaders, fellow law enforcement, and the residents of this great state.”

Bias incidents are suspected or confirmed acts of bias intimidation motivated by a victim’s perceived or actual race, color, ethnicity, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, disability, gender, gender identity, or gender expression.

The law defines the crime of bias intimidation as an offense committed to intimidate – or with knowledge that such an action would intimidate – an individual or group of individuals because of the characteristics listed above. Bias offenses can include harassment, vandalism, assault, terroristic threats, arson, criminal mischief and homicide, among other offenses. Attorney General Platkin has made it a priority that all acts of hate, bias, and discrimination will be investigated and resolved or prosecuted where appropriate. Between 2021 and 2023, 217 unique individuals have been charged with the crime of bias intimidation in New Jersey.

As part of the Attorney General’s continued effort to combat bias and hate, the Department of Law and Public Safety (LPS) received over \$1 million in grant funding to increase public awareness of and to enhance the reporting of bias incidents and crimes. The Matthew Shepard and James Byrd, Jr. Hate Crimes Program awarded LPS \$300,000 to improve bias incident reporting. A \$750,000 grant from the Collaborative Approaches Toward Preventing and Addressing Hate Crime-Demonstration Projects Program is being used to support a public awareness campaign.

LPS will launch its Bias Crimes Public Awareness Campaign later this year, using the tagline, No Hate in the Garden State. The campaign will seek to increase public



awareness of incidents of bias and hate, increase reporting of those incidents, and prevent future bias incidents and crimes with the use of television, print, radio, digital, and social media. The campaign will also educate the public on the resources available to victims of bias incidents and bias crimes.

Also released today are 2023 preliminary bias statistics. According to the preliminary data, there were 2,699 total bias incidents reported to law enforcement agencies throughout New Jersey in 2023. Compiled by the New Jersey State Police, [the statistics](#) (https://urldefense.com/v3/_https://t.e2ma.net/click/v59lcl/7ys5259b/n3a357_!!J30X0ZrnC1oQtbA!KWBHorDEldJlOKT60AnhE1s4i5b2g1aO79ZYzbOKvaHvUsLK5atlziPRCMQ?) for 2023 are preliminary and remain subject to change as the reporting is finalized.

The 2023 preliminary data shows that anti-Black and anti-Jewish bias continued to be the most common race- and religion-based motivations for reported bias incidents in 2023, as in past years. Anti-Black bias was cited as a motivation for 1,101 reported bias incidents in 2023, representing 34% of all reported bias motivations in 2023. Anti-Jewish bias was cited as a motivation for 708 reported bias incidents in 2023, representing 22% of all reported motivations in 2023. The preliminary data also reflects notable increases in 2023 in reported anti-Muslim and anti-Arab bias. There were 61 reported incidents involving anti-Muslim bias in 2022, compared with 107 incidents in 2023, for an increase of 75%. There were 46 reported incidents involving anti-Arab bias in 2022, compared with 78 incidents in 2023, for an increase of almost 70%.

As is trending nationally, bias incidents in educational institutions are also on the rise in New Jersey. There was a substantial increase in reported bias incidents in colleges and universities in 2023. There were 53 reported bias incidents that occurred in colleges and universities in 2022, compared with 115 incidents in 2023, representing a 117% increase. There were 451 reported bias incidents that occurred in elementary and secondary schools in 2022, compared with 603 incidents in 2023, for an increase of 34%. The data highlights that bias incidents too often threaten the safe and equitable learning environment our students deserve.

In addition to the release of today's Report and 2023 preliminary bias data, LPS also launched a new data dashboard. Developed by the Office of Justice Data, the [Bias Incident Dashboard](#) (https://urldefense.com/v3/_https://t.e2ma.net/click/v59lcl/7ys5259b/3vb357_!!J30X0ZrnC1oQtbA!KWBHorDEldJlOKT60AnhE1s4i5b2g1aO79ZYzbOKvaHvUsLK5atlziPRCMQ?) gives the public access to comprehensive bias incident statistics across New Jersey. The public dashboard is searchable, interactive, and provides visual displays of data related to reports of bias incidents. Through the dashboard, users can see the locations of bias incidents, the motivations reported for those incidents, demographic information relating to bias incidents, and much more. The dashboard provides greater transparency into bias incidents across the state, making it a critical tool in LPS's fight against bias and hate.

"New Jersey now has a new tool to combat bias and discrimination," said **Dr. Kristin Golden, Chief Data Officer for the Office of Justice Data**. "The Bias Incident Dashboard provides a clear picture of bias incidents in New Jersey, where they happen, and the patterns of these incidents. By sharing this information broadly and consistently, we can more readily understand how bias impacts our communities and work to improve how we address the problem of bias together."

The data released today are based on reports of bias incidents submitted to New Jersey's Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) System by every law enforcement agency in the state. By law, every state, county, and local law enforcement agency must submit information to the UCR System on any suspected or confirmed bias incident reported to them. Because of the ongoing nature of bias incident investigations and reporting, all bias data remain subject to change.

Members of the public are encouraged to report bias incidents to their local police departments, or via the NJBIAS online portal at <https://bias.njcivilrights.gov> (https://urldefense.com/v3/_https://t.e2ma.net/click/v59lcl/7ys5259b/joc357_!!J30X0ZrnC1oQtbA!KWBHorDEldJlOKT60AnhE1s4i5b2g1aO79ZYzbOKvaHvUsLK5atlziPRCMQ?) or by calling 800-277-BIAS.

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