

Our Mission:

To stop the defamation of the Jewish people and to secure justice and fair treatment to all.

ABOUT

THE CENTER ON EXTREMISM

The ADL Center on Extremism is the foremost authority on extremism, terrorism and hate, both foreign and domestic. We monitor extremism across the ideological spectrum. Our staff of investigators, analysts, researchers and technical experts strategically monitors, exposes and disrupts extremist threats—on the internet and on the ground. We provide resources, expertise and educational briefings that enable law enforcement officers, public officials and community leaders, as well as internet and technology companies to identify and counter emerging threats. Learn more about COE's work and the latest in the fight against extremism by visiting adl.org/coe.

ADL (Anti-Defamation League) fights antisemitism and promotes justice for all. Join ADL to give a voice to those without one and to protect our civil rights.

Learn more: adl.org

ABOUT

ADL

ADL is the leading anti-hate organization in the world. Founded in 1913, its timeless mission is "to stop the defamation of the Jewish people and to secure justice and fair treatment to all." Today, ADL continues to fight all forms of antisemitism and bias, using innovation and partnerships to drive impact. A global leader in combating antisemitism, countering extremism and battling bigotry wherever and whenever it happens, ADL works to protect democracy and ensure a just and inclusive society for all.



Contents

1.	Introduction	4
2.	Key Statistics	5
3.	Antisemitism	7
4.	Notable Extremist Activity	9
	. White Supremacists Target Illinois with Propaganda	9
	. Law Enforcement with Extremist Ties	10
	. Anti-Abortion Extremism Inspires Acts of Terrorism and Vandalism	11
5.	Additional Extremist Activity	12
	. Illinois is Home to the Nation of Islam	12
	. Anti-Government Extremism	13
	. Anti-LGBTQ+ Activity Targets Illinois	14
	. QAnon Targets Chicago Hospital	16
	. Extremist Sects Within the Black Hebrew Israelite Movement	16
	. Islamist Extremists Arrested for Targeting Shi'ite Mosque in Chicago	17
6.	Recommendations for Policymakers	18



In May 2023, a man outraged over abortion rights set his sights on a building in Danville, Illinois, that was slated to become a clinic offering women's health services, including abortions. The man, Philip Buyno of Prophetstown, allegedly filled containers with gasoline and loaded them into his car. His alleged efforts to destroy the clinic — by ramming his car into the building and throwing a gas can into the space — failed, and he was arrested. He later told the FBI he'd "finish the job" if given the chance.

Buyno was an extremist, intent on attacking his perceived enemy no matter the cost. Over the past several years, Americans have witnessed a barrage of extremist activity: attacks on our democratic institutions, antisemitic incidents, white supremacist propaganda efforts, vicious, racially motivated attacks, bias crimes against the LGBTQ+ community and violent threats to women's healthcare providers.

Illinoisians have watched these same hatreds — and more — manifest in their own state.

This report explores a range of extremist groups and movements operating in Illinois and highlights the key extremist and antisemitic trends and incidents in the state in 2021 and 2022. It also includes noteworthy events and incidents from the first half of 2023.

There is no single narrative that tells the story of extremism and hate in Illinois. Instead, the impact is widespread and touches many communities. As in the rest of the country, both white supremacist and antisemitic activity have increased significantly over the last two years, but that's not the whole story.

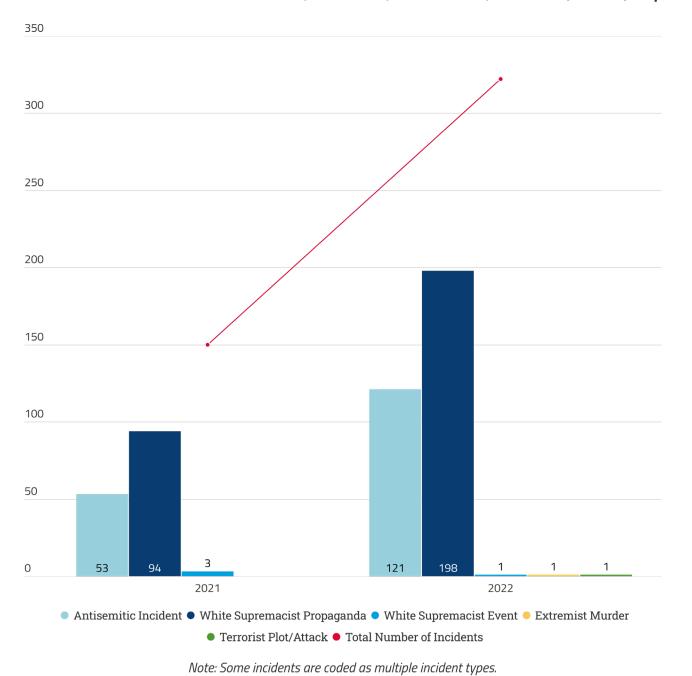
The Prairie state is also home to a sizeable number of current and former law enforcement officers who have at one point belonged to or associated with extremist organizations or movements. Our research additionally shows a continued threat to Illinois' women's health facilities, which have been targeted with arson and other violent plots by anti-abortion extremists. This reflects the broader, national threat to reproductive rights.

Key Statistics

- Antisemitic Incidents: According to ADL's annual Audit of Antisemitic Incidents, Illinois has seen a dramatic rise in antisemitic incidents in recent years. In 2022, the number of incidents increased by 128% from 2021 levels, rising from 53 to 121. The state's total was the seventh-highest number of incidents in the country in a year when ADL tracked the highest-ever number of antisemitic incidents nationwide. This is a dramatic increase from 2016, when there were 10 incidents. Preliminary numbers through June 2023 indicate that there have been at least 33 additional antisemitic incidents in the state.
- Extremist Plots and Murders: In 2021 and 2022, ADL documented one extremist murder in Illinois. In November 2022, a man allegedly intentionally drove the wrong way on an interstate highway and crashed into another car, killing the driver. The man said he wanted to kill himself after being convicted for crimes committed while participating in the January 6 insurrection, and he has been charged with additional crimes, including first-degree murder.
- **Extremist Events:** Since 2021, ADL has documented four white supremacist extremist events in Illinois, predominately marches and protests.
- White Supremacist Propaganda: In 2022, ADL documented 198 instances of white supremacist propaganda distributions across Illinois, an increase of 111% from 2021 (94). Through May 2023, there have been an additional 64 white supremacist propaganda incidents. Patriot Front was responsible for a large majority of white supremacist propaganda throughout Illinois.
- Hate Crimes Statistics: According to the latest FBI hate crimes statistics available, there
 were 101 reported hate crimes in Illinois that targeted a variety of communities, including
 Jewish, Black and Asian American and Pacific Islander. This total was an increase of 80%
 from the 56 incidents recorded in 2020.
- Insurrection Statistics: Thirty-six of the 968 individuals logged by the George Washington
 University Program on Extremism who have been charged in relation to the January 6, 2021
 attack on the U.S. Capitol are Illinois residents.
- ADL and Princeton University's Bridging Divides Initiative Threats and Harassment
 Dataset: The Threats and Harassment Dataset (THD) tracks unique incidents of threats and
 harassment against local U.S. officials between January 1, 2020, and September 23, 2022, in
 three policy areas (election, education and health). Illinois recorded six incidents of threats
 and harassment against local officials.

Incidents in Illinois by Type, 2021-2022

Data from the Center on Extremism Hate, Extremism, Antisemitism, Terrorism (H.E.A.T.) Map



Antisemitism

ADL's 2022 Audit of Antisemitic Incidents documented the highest number of antisemitic incidents since reporting began in 1979, with more than 3,697 acts of assault, vandalism and harassment nationwide, a 36% increase from 2021. Illinois reported 121 antisemitic incidents in 2022, the seventh highest in the nation. Instances of vandalism increased by 171 percent (46 incidents in 2022, compared to 17 in 2021), while harassment increased by 111 percent (74 incidents in 2022, compared to 35 in 2021). Assaults remained the same year-over-year, with one in 2021 and one in 2022.

Instances of antisemitism in Illinois include:

- In May 2023, antisemitic comments were directed toward Jewish students from Deerfield High School playing a soccer game against St. Viator High School.
- In December 2022, an individual harassed a rabbi outside a Jewish high school in Chicago, threatening to "burn [them] in a gas oven" and referenced Nazis.
- In November 2022, swastikas were spray painted on 16 vandalized headstones at a historic Jewish cemetery in Waukegan.
- In September 2022, a Highland Park Chabad received a threatening message with antisemitic conspiracy theories regarding the Mossad and Israel. The sender also said, "Jan 6th was child's play compared to what's in store for you kikes. You can count on it. The Goyim Know."
- In May 2022, the phrases "Death to Israel" and "Israelis kill children" were written in chalk on the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign campus.
- In January 2022, six Jewish institutions and Jewish-owned businesses in Chicago were vandalized over the course of a weekend. The vandals broke windows, smashed doors and spray-painted swastikas.
- In November 2021, a woman in Chicago approached a bartender wearing a Star of David necklace, said, "Take the necklace off you stupid whore" and stated that she hates Jews. She then proceeded to throw a drink cup at the victim. The woman has been charged with a hate crime.
- In May 2021, a group of demonstrators stood across the street from Temple Beth Israel in Skokie and chanted, "Intifada!" and "From the river to the sea, Palestine will be free."

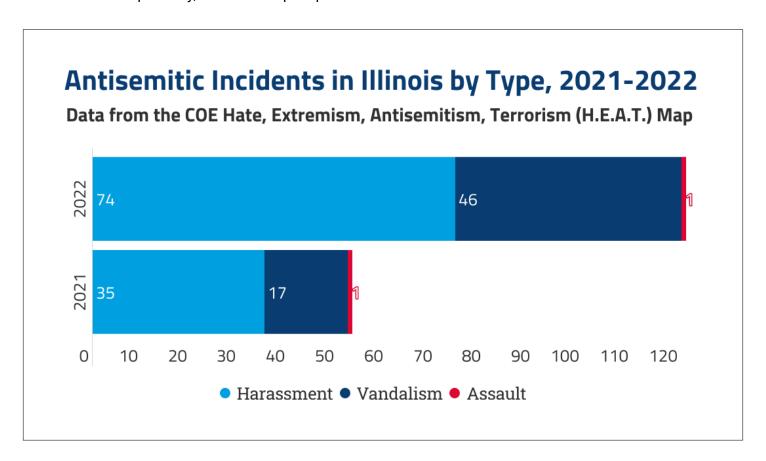


Two of the 16 tombstones at Am Echod Jewish Cemetery in Waukegan that were vandalized with swastikas in November 2022 (CBS).

Also of note, the Goyim Defense League (GDL), a small network of virulently antisemitic provocateurs, distributed at least 25 pieces of antisemitic propaganda across Illinois, in places such as Mattoon, Glenview, Skokie and Urbana. This propaganda was explicitly antisemitic, with messages like "Every single aspect of gun control is Jewish," "Every single aspect of the COVID agenda is Jewish" and "Every single aspect of the media is Jewish."

In May 2022, ADL published a report highlighting a troubling pattern of antisemitic anti-Israel activity on several college campuses across the Midwest. Most Jews worldwide, regardless of their political views, consider a connection to Israel — and its right to exist — to be part of their Jewish identity. This activity serves to vilify, ostracize and intimidate Jewish communities on college campuses. Seven of the incidents in that report took place in Illinois, including:

- In April 2022, a group of University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign students, led by Students for Justice in Palestine (SJP), protested in front of a Hillel where students were holding a Passover celebration. During the protest, students delivered speeches that were intensely hostile towards Zionism and Hillel. Before leaving, one of the protestors threw an object at the Hillel building. The individual who threw the object has since been charged with a hate crime.
- In December 2021, the SJP chapter of the University of Illinois-Chicago posted a call to boycott Israeli restaurants in the city, asserting that "the money you spend towards Zionist businesses directly funds genocide."
- In June 2021, a description of a student organization at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign College of Law listed Zionism as a "system of oppression" alongside antisemitism itself as well as white supremacy, sexism and queerphobia.



Notable Extremist Activity

White Supremacists Target Illinois with Propaganda

According to data collected by the ADL Center on Extremism, Illinois experienced 198 incidents of white supremacist propaganda in 2022, making it the 11th most targeted state in the country.



Patriot Front attending the March for Life in Chicago on January 8, 2022 (Image Source: NPR News/Getty Images).

The group most responsible for this activity was Patriot Front, a Texas-based white supremacist group with members spread across the country. In 2022, the group distributed at least 142 pieces of propaganda in Illinois, a 92 percent increase from the previous year.

In addition to propaganda, Patriot Front has regularly attempted to participate in the annual anti-abortion event March for Life in Chicago, showing up in 2018, 2019, 2020 and 2022. On January 8, 2022, an estimated 50 members of Patriot Front marched at the event while carrying riot shields, flags and a banner that read "Strong Families Make Strong Nations."

In addition to Patriot Front, the White Lives Matter (WLM) network remains active across the Prairie State. The network's Illinois chapter participates in monthly "Days of Action," during which supporters engage in "pro-white activism," including propaganda distributions and banner drops. In 2022, the group was responsible for at least 21 instances of white supremacist propaganda distribution, often focusing on raising "white racial consciousness."

The Illinois chapter of WLM also frequently collaborates with the antisemitic Goyim Defense League (GDL). For example, on July 11, 2023, individuals associated with WLM and GDL hung a banner in Chicago that read, "White Nations are Being Invaded," a reference to the Great Replacement conspiracy theory.

A newer trend, first tracked in 2023, has been increased activity by the National Justice Party (NJP). NJP is a white supremacist group that initially formed in August 2020 and is virulently antisemitic. Between March and June 2023, the group has been responsible for at least 53 instances of white supremacist propaganda across Illinois, a notable increase from the six pieces of propaganda distributed nationwide in 2022. The group has been particularly active in Chicago, where it has distributed at least 17 pieces of propaganda. This uptick in NJP activity can be largely attributed to the formation of state chapters in 2023, which has encouraged organizers to engage in localized actions.



Members of the National Justice Party hold a demonstration in Chicago on August 28, 2023 (source: NJP).

Law Enforcement with Extremist Ties

A concerning trend that has developed across the Prairie State is the number of law enforcement members connected to various extremist groups and movements. By associating with extremist movements or publicly expressing support for these ideologies, members of law enforcement are behaving in a way that directly contradicts their oaths to serve and protect our communities, imperiling the mission of the profession in a variety of ways. For example, extremist ideologies can affect how officers enforce the law, which could lead to certain communities being disproportionately targeted and undermining those communities' trust in law enforcement. Law enforcement also has access to sensitive areas and information that extremists could use to advance their agendas, as well as weapons and tactical gear to either arm themselves or sell to fund their cause. Lastly, extremists do not exist in a vacuum: if an extremist serves within an agency, that person's conduct and views will inevitably affect their coworkers, eroding trust between officers and compromising safety for all.

Cases of extremists within Illinois law enforcement include:

A 2022 city probe revealed that a Chicago Police Department (CPD) officer failed to tell CPD officials
that he maintained ties to the Proud Boys, a far-right hate group. The officer allegedly attended
a barbeque sponsored by the extremist group and made "contradicting statements" about his
participation in a group chat affiliated with the Proud Boys. He also did not disclose that he was
interviewed by the FBI during an investigation of the Proud Boys. The officer resumed his duties for
CPD in March 2023 following a 120-day suspension.

- The same investigation found that an unidentified CPD officer admitted to being a former member of the Oath Keepers, an anti-government organization that is part of the broader militia movement, having joined in 2010 or 2011 for three to four years. The officer did not face disciplinary action, with CPD allegedly claiming that membership in "organizations" does not violate department policy. A 2021 NPR investigation of the leaked Oath Keepers membership claimed that Chicago had an additional 12 active law enforcement officers affiliated with the group.
- In March 2023, the Chicago Office of the Inspector General reopened an investigation into a Chicago
 Police officer who allegedly wore a face mask bearing a Three Percenters logo while on duty at
 a June 2020 protest. Three Percenters (also known as 3%ers, III%ers, and Threepers) are antigovernment extremists who are part of the militia movement.
- In April 2022, a Springfield Police Department officer resigned after he allegedly shared white supremacist and antisemitic sentiments on Gab. The account allegedly linked to the officer made several posts throughout 2022 expressing reverence for Hitler and hatred for Jews and Black people.
- Several sheriffs in the state have shown support for the constitutional sheriffs' movement and the
 Constitutional Sheriffs and Peace Officers Association (CSPOA), an anti-government extremist
 group whose primary purpose is to recruit sheriffs into the anti-government "patriot" movement. In
 March 2023, Illinois sheriffs Jim Root (Macon County) and Jeff Bullard Sr. (Jefferson County) were
 listed as sponsors for a CSPOA event in Springfield that featured CSPOA leader Richard Mack as a
 speaker. Both sheriffs appeared on Mack's online show earlier in 2023.

Anti-Abortion Extremism Inspires Acts of Terrorism and Vandalism

Since the 1970s, anti-abortion extremism has inspired acts of violence, including terrorism, across the United States, as opponents seek to prevent the provision of critical health services. Following the June 2022, U.S. Supreme Court ruling overturning Roe v. Wade, observers have noted an uptick in incidents targeting both abortion providers and anti-abortion groups. In Illinois, several abortion providers and supporters have been targeted by vandalism and violent plots in recent years:

- On May 20, 2023, Danville police arrested Prophetstown resident Philip Buyno after he allegedly rammed a car carrying several containers of gasoline into the entrance of an abortion clinic, hoping to start a fire. Buyno got stuck in the vehicle and could not run away; he now faces federal arson charges. A few weeks later, the clinic was targeted again when a vandal tore down repairs and tried to gain access to the building.
- On January 15, 2023, a man threw a Molotov cocktail inside a Planned Parenthood Health Center in Peoria before fleeing the scene. While no one was hurt, the attack caused an estimated million dollars' worth of damage to the facility and forced it to close for several months, impeding the clinic's ability to provide the local community with needed health care resources. After the perpetrator was arrested, he claimed he had targeted the facility because he opposed his exgirlfriend's abortion and wanted to prevent other people from accessing those services. In August 2023, the man was sentenced to 10 years in prison.
- In August 2022, the Second Unitarian Church of Chicago in Lakeview was vandalized after it
 displayed a sign expressing support for abortion rights. The sign was targeted by two women who
 threw rocks at it, shattering the glass. As the attackers left, one of the women was recorded making
 crude comments about the sign.

Chicago resident Michael Barron was reportedly linked to 19 attacks on three Planned Parenthood
clinics in the Chicago area between January and June 2021. In 14 of these incidents, Barron used
a slingshot to fire ball bearings and in five cases he placed glue in the locks of a clinic's doors.
Barron has already admitted to damaging two Chicago clinics and is facing federal prosecution for
the other cases.



On May 20, 2023, a man drove a vehicle carrying containers of gasoline into an abortion clinic in Danville (Source).

Violence targeting abortion providers and facilities is far more common than violence against anti-abortion targets. Over the last two and a half years, just one such incident has surfaced: In May 2021, the Women's Care Clinic, an anti-abortion center in Peoria, was damaged by a fire that law enforcement believes was intentionally set. As of this writing, there are no leads and no arrests have been made in the case. The Women's Care Clinic is located next door to the former site of Whole Women's Health, which did provide abortions until it closed in 2019.

Additional Extremist Activity

Illinois is Home to the Nation of Islam

Headquartered in Chicago, the Nation of Islam (NOI) is a notoriously antisemitic Black nationalist organization that has maintained a significant global presence for decades. Established in Detroit, Michigan, in the 1930s by W. Fard Muhammad, it relocated its headquarters to Chicago under his successor, Elijah Muhammad. Louis Farrakhan has headed the group for more than 40 years.

Muhammad Mosque No. 2, commonly called Mosque Maryam, is located on Chicago's South Side and has served as the NOI's headquarters since the 1970s. Chicago is frequently the site of some of the group's most high-profile antisemitic activities. The group broadcasts weekly sermons from Mosque Maryam, often delivered by Student National Assistant Minister Ishmael Muhammad or other prominent NOI figures. The NOI's weekly newspaper, The Final Call, is produced in Chicago and distributed both locally and around the country. NOI members regularly host programs or appear as guests on various local radio stations.

Large annual events, including
Saviours' Day in late February and the
Holy Day of Atonement in October,
also often take place at Mosque
Maryam or other local venues, such
as Wintrust Arena or the United
Center in Chicago, or Allstate Arena
in Rosemont. Regularly drawing tens
of thousands of supporters in person
and online, the keynote speeches
and plenary sessions at these events
serve as a significant platform
for disseminating a wide range of
antisemitic, conspiratorial, anti-



Louis Farrakhan delivering his annual Saviours' Day address in February 2023 at Wintrust Arena in Chicago.

LGBTQ+ and other bigoted views. For example, at these events, Farrakhan and other speakers have rationalized Hitler's genocidal actions against Europe's Jews, characterized Jews as satanic, blamed Jews for 9/11, claimed that Jews control the U.S. government, accused Jews of condoning pedophilia and more.

Examples of the antisemitism and bigotry shared in recent years by prominent Nation of Islam figures during sermons and other events in Chicago:

- "Somebody has to take on the Synagogue of Satan...They're gathering their forces. We cannot let them take the country...They got a stranglehold on America and the government." Louis Farrakhan, Saviours' Day 2023 keynote address ("The War of Armageddon Has Begun"), 2/26/2023
- "The Synagogue of Satan is the real enemy. And they are the ones that exercise power and control
 over government and the people of our planet. And it is this wicked synagogue that falsely charges
 our Minister Farrakhan with all kinds of ugly labels. Because they oppose anyone that exposes
 them." Ishmael Muhammad, "Satan: The Real Enemy (Part 2)", 12/4/2022
- "There are some things that come with [being labeled an antisemite]...You start to find things
 happening with your bank accounts. Things suddenly appear on and off your taxes. You see? So,
 we're dealing with a very, very wicked Satan right here." Ilia Rashad Muhammad, Saviours' Day
 2021 plenary session ("Defending Farrakhan"), 2/27/2021

Despite the group's long, well-documented history of hate, the NOI continues to be given a measure of legitimacy by some elected officials, celebrities and others who choose to highlight the group's efforts to support the Black community while minimizing or ignoring the NOI's antisemitism and bigotry.

Anti-Government Extremism

The sovereign citizen movement is a loosely organized collection of groups, networks and individuals who believe that virtually all existing government in the U.S. is illegitimate and has no jurisdiction over them. Adherents frequently employ a variety of harassment and intimidation tactics against the government and other forms of authority and occasionally even resort to violence. Sovereign citizens remain active across Illinois, hosting seminars to spread their conspiratorial, anti-government beliefs and occasionally running into legal trouble.

- In March 2022, Springfield-based sovereign citizen Derick Turner filed documents with the county recorder's office in which he named three Sangamon County prosecutors as "debtors" and placed liens totaling \$100,000 on their homes and other property. In May 2022, the lawyers filed a civil lawsuit against Turner, alleging he had tried to intimidate them when he placed the liens against their homes earlier that year. Turner is also facing a felony charge for one of those false liens. This lawsuit is an unusual effort by county-level government officials in Illinois to discourage "paper terrorism."
- In December 2022, Tim Dever, of Downers Grove, and two other individuals were indicted in North Carolina on 62 counts of interstate threatening communications and one count of conspiracy to kidnap for sending phony writs of execution to elected officials. In spring 2020, Dever was one of the co-founders of the People's Bureau of Investigation (PBI), a QAnon-influenced sovereign citizen group that seeks to "expose" and investigate government corruption in the United States by instructing members to "serve" fictitious writs against public officials.
- Sovereign citizen guru Bobby Lawrence, who teaches sovereignty with a QAnon bent, taught the "American State National" seminar in Elmhurst in October 2022.

Sovereign citizens are not the only anti-government extremists active in Illinois. Chicago radio station WBEZ reported in June 2021 that Joshua Ellis of Antioch owned MyMilitia, an online forum for far-right anti-government militia supporters. Ellis gained control of the site in 2020 when its creator handed it over to him. Ellis had previously been involved with We The People Three Percent, an Illinois-based militia group, and was active in anti-lockdown protests in 2020. For a time, the site was a place where people interested in participating in the militia movement could meet like-minded individuals, learn about militias in their vicinity and consume far-right propaganda and conspiracy theories. The site also hosted tactical guides and manuals for building weapons. Some users were arrested for making threats. However, since the January 6 insurrection, the site has become a virtual ghost town, with users migrating to other sites and/or extremist causes.

According to a published database, 883 Illinois residents have paid membership dues to the Oath Keepers, a large right-wing organization that has been part of the militia movement, since the group's founding in 2009. A Center on Extremism analysis of this information published in September 2022 found that this list included three individuals holding or running for public office as of August 2022, 21 individuals believed to be active members of law enforcement, two believed to be active members of the military and ten believed to be first responders.

Anti-LGBTQ+ Activity Targets Illinois

Since the start of 2022, there has been a national wave of bigoted action against the LGBTQ+ community perpetrated by extremists and those espousing conspiracy theories such as the baseless, dangerous groomer narrative. Extremists have mobilized across the country to disrupt Pride celebrations, and in November 2022, a shooting at an LGBTQ+ club in Colorado left five people dead.

Between the start of 2022 and June 2023, ADL has tracked ten anti-LGBTQ+ incidents in Illinois. These include:

- In March 2023, a fire hydrant, already painted in the colors of the Pride flag, was graffitied with the word "rope," a death threat referencing a hanging.
- In January 2023, an unknown individual posted an anti-LGBTQ+ and antisemitic threat in a Facebook group for LGBTQ+ Jewish students at the University of Illinois.

- In December 2022, a Chicago school received a bomb threat after a video published by the right-wing group Project Veritas alleged that the school was "grooming" and "indoctrinating" kids.
- In July 2022, an individual shattered the windows of UpRising Bakery and Café, a local cafe in Lake in the Hills, the night before it was to host an all-ages drag show. The perpetrator wrote slurs — including "groomers" and "pedophiles" — on the walls. He pleaded guilty to a hate crime in August 2023.



Vandalism at the UpRising Bakery and Cafe in Lake in the Hills (link)

One group that has actively been pushing an anti-LGBTQ+ agenda is Awake Illinois, which describes itself as a grassroots "anti-woke" group seeking to combat "gender grooming ideology." The group garnered attention for several anti-LGBTQ+ campaigns, including targeting the UpRising Bakery and Café for hosting a drag brunch (mentioned above) and harassing the Downers Grove Public Library for hosting a drag queen bingo event. The café ultimately was the victim of an anti-LGBTQ+ act of vandalism and closed permanently in June 2023 with an individual recently pleading guilty for a hate crime. The library ultimately canceled its event after receiving threats, including a bullet.

Illinois also has a chapter of the New Independent Fundamental Baptist (New IFB) movement, a loose network of independent churches connected by their belief in certain religious doctrines and a shared brand of deeply anti-LGBTQ+, antisemitic and other bigoted teachings. New IFB pastors frequently call for LGBTQ+ people to kill themselves or be killed by the government and make other disparaging remarks about the LGBTQ+ community. Their antisemitic beliefs include claiming that Jewish people today worship Satan and are not "true" Jews.

Liberty Baptist Church in Rock Falls, led by antisemitic pastor Tommy McMurtry, is affiliated with the New IFB. In recent years, the New IFB movement has faced internal turmoil as some pastors have chosen to split from prominent New IFB pastor Steven Anderson. However, they maintain their religious doctrines and bigoted beliefs. McMurtry is part of the faction that no longer associates with Anderson, though McMurtry regularly associates with other extremists and conspiracy theorists both within and outside the movement.

QAnon Targets Chicago Hospital

QAnon is a decentralized, far-right political movement rooted in a baseless conspiracy theory that the world is controlled by a cabal of Satan-worshipping pedophiles known as the "Deep State," which can only be stopped by former President Trump. The movement has been linked to a wide range of violent acts and harassment.

In September 2021, a Chicago hospital was inundated with threats and harassing phone calls after a local QAnon supporter they were treating for COVID-19 died from the virus.



Veronica Wolski in August 2021. Source: Telegram

The patient, Veronica Wolski, was known for displaying QAnon-themed and antivaccine banners from a bridge in Chicago. After being diagnosed with COVID-19 and suffering complications, her supporters demanded the hospital treat her with ivermectin or release her from their care.

The harassment campaign peaked on September 12, when disgraced attorney and QAnon conspiracist Lin Wood urged his followers to call the hospital and demand they release Wolski so she could be transferred to another facility. Wood even posted a video of him calling the hospital, informing the employee on the line that he was a lawyer, and that the hospital would be "guilty of murder" if Wolski died in their care. The hospital and local law enforcement were

flooded with calls demanding Wolski's release, and hospital staff reportedly called police in response to bomb threats. Several individuals also arrived at the hospital in person to demand Wolski's release. Wolski ended up dying later that night.

Extremist Sects Within the Black Hebrew Israelite Movement

The Black Hebrew Israelite (BHI) movement is a fringe religious movement whose adherents believe that people of color are the descendants of the biblical Israelites. The movement includes both non-extremist sects and extremist sects. Several Jewish institutions are recognized non-extremist affiliates of the BHI movement, including Congregation Beth Shalom Bnai Zaken in Chicago. Beth Shalom is a member of the ADL Midwest Signature Synagogue Program, and head Rabbi Capers Funnye is a recognized member of the Chicago Board of Rabbis.

Extremist BHI sects typically express a range of bigoted beliefs, including alleging that Jewish people are imposters and not "real Jews," promoting bigoted beliefs about LGBTQ+ and Muslim people and claiming that Jewish people and white people are satanic. These beliefs are shared on social media, in organized street teaching activities and through propaganda distribution.

Prominent extremist BHI groups with active local chapters in Illinois include the New York-based Israel United in Christ (IUIC), the Pennsylvania-based Israelite School of Universal Practical Knowledge (ISUPK) and the California-based Sicarii Hebrew Israelites (aka Exodus 1715). These groups regularly engage in street preaching and offer livestreamed classes and other events.

Since late 2022, local extremist BHI chapters, like their counterparts nationwide, have attempted to capitalize on the high-profile antisemitism voiced by Ye (formerly known as Kanye West) and Kyrie Irving by promoting increased antisemitism on their social media accounts and in their street preaching. In November 2022, IUIC's Chicago chapter tweeted: "These fake Jewish people stole our identy [sic], funded our slavery and fund these industries that teach our people to destroy each other." During a street preaching session shared on social media in December 2022, a Sicarii Chicago member described the "so-called Jewish man" as the "most disgusting man on the planet." In March 2023, an ISUPK Chicago member stated in a street preaching session: "The so-called Jewish man, he is not the real Jew. The Jewish man is an imposter. The Jewish man is the devil that the Bible speaks of...They are the synagogue of Satan."

Islamist Extremists Arrested for Targeting Shi'ite Mosque in Chicago

Since a peak in 2015, the number of individuals arrested in the U.S. in connection to crimes motivated by Islamist extremism have fallen thanks to a variety of factors, including the collapse of the so-called Caliphate's territorial holdings and improved counterterrorism techniques. However, ADL Center on Extremism data finds that the U.S. faces a continuing threat posed by violent Islamist extremists. These cases include a plot from February 2022 involving 19-year-old Maine resident Xavier Pelkey and two teens — one of whom lived in Chicago — who had been planning to carry out an ISIS-inspired attack on a Shi'ite mosque in the Chicago area. The trio reportedly communicated via Instagram and plotted to enter the mosque, separate children from the adults and murder the adults in the name of the Islamist extremist group. If they weren't apprehended, the group planned to repeat the attack at another Shi'ite mosque or a synagogue until they were eventually killed by law enforcement. Following search warrants executed at the plotters' homes, officials recovered multiple firearms, homemade explosives and homemade ISIS flags. In April 2023, Pelkey pleaded guilty to conspiring to provide material support to a foreign terrorist organization.

Recommendations for Policymakers

ADL advocates for a range of policies and activities that can help address antisemitism, hate and extremism while preserving civil liberties. ADL's PROTECT Plan outlines categories of policies to address domestic violent extremism, our COMBAT Plan outlines categories of policies to combat antisemitism and our REPAIR Plan outlines categories of policies to facilitate transparency and accountability in the technology sector. Beyond those frameworks, ADL recommends that Illinois policymakers take on the following initiatives.

1. Convene Cross-Sector Stakeholders to Address Hate-Fueled Violence

It is necessary to study hate-fueled violence and how Illinois can reduce the alarming statistics and incidents contained in this report. To that end, we urge Governor Pritzker to convene a United We Stand Summit. In September of last year, following calls from ADL and coalition partners, the White House held the first United We Stand Summit, bringing together a cross-section of national leaders representing communities at risk of hate-fueled violence, civil rights leaders and experts in addressing hate and extremism. Illinois should follow up on this type of effort by holding a state-specific Summit to align a cross-section of statewide stakeholders.

2. Prevent and Counter Domestic Terrorism

State of Illinois officials should consult ADL's PROTECT Plan — our comprehensive plan to address domestic violent extremism while preserving civil liberties. Some adaptations of these concepts for Illinois could include:

• Create a Domestic Violent Extremism Commission and Terrorism Prevention Grant Program: It is difficult to pursue a whole-of-government approach without a comprehensive strategy. At the federal level, the Biden Administration released the National Strategy to Counter Domestic Terrorism in June 2021. ADL is pleased to see real progress from the state of Illinois, beginning with an annual report by the Illinois Terrorism Task Force. In addition, the state has developed Domestic Violent Extremism and Targeted Violence Prevention Strategies. Maryland created a commission to study the state's efforts in addressing domestic extremism, in partnership with state government agencies and diverse communities. A commission like this in Illinois could ensure the Strategies are implemented effectively and transparently, and that any gaps in current state law are shared with the public and policymakers alike.

The National Governors' Association (NGA) — with ADL's support — developed a **roadmap** and **toolkit** for creating terrorism prevention programs at the state level, mirroring the public health-style programming supported by the DHS Center for Prevention Programs and Partnerships. We applaud the Illinois Terrorism Task Force's strong engagement in the NGA's policy academy culminating in a new prevention strategy. However, a strategy must be properly funded. The DHS program has provided grants to programs at Southern Illinois University Edwardsville and Lewis University that focus on terrorism prevention in Illinois — including an effort to strengthen media literacy and online critical thinking initiatives. These types of projects make Illinois a leader for terrorism prevention capabilities. As part of a domestic violent extremism commission, the State should study and consider proposing a state grant program for these types of initiatives.

- Create a Subcommittee Focused on the Intersection of Hate Crimes and Domestic Violent Extremism: At the federal level, the U.S. House of Representatives passed the Domestic Terrorism Prevention Act (H.R. 350) in the 117th Congress to: (1) create offices to specialize in domestic terrorism issues at DHS, FBI and the Department of Justice; (2) require those offices to release biannual reports and for resources to be used proportionate to the threats identified in the reporting; (3) provide training on domestic violent extremism; (4) explore the connection between hate crimes and terrorism through analysis and grants; and (5) consider white supremacist infiltration of law enforcement agencies. We applaud the current proposal within Illinois to create a standing Prevention Committee of the Illinois Terrorism Task Force with targeted subcommittees. We encourage Illinois to consider including one subcommittee focused on the intersection of hate crimes and domestic violent extremism.
- Continue funding to supplement the Nonprofit Security Grant Program: In the 2023 budget, the Illinois Emergency Management Agency took an important first step in helping to protect houses of worship from extremists by supplementing the federal Nonprofit Security Grant Program with state funding. The Illinois Not-for-Profit Security Grant Program provides funding support for target hardening and other physical security enhancements and activities to nonprofit organizations that are at high risk of terrorist attack. Illinois should continue to supplement the existing federal program and increase funding to meet the needs of the community in the coming years.

3. Hold Social Media Platforms Accountable and Enhance Access to Justice for Targets of Hate

Social media platforms have created an unprecedented opportunity for individuals around the world to build communities and connect with one another; however, they have also created an avenue for the amplification and spread of rampant hate, harassment and extremism. The ADL Center for Technology and Society's 2023 Online Hate and Harassment Report and Support for Targets of Online Hate Report Card demonstrate that although identity-based hate and harassment are at record highs, social media platforms are not doing enough to keep their users safe. It is imperative that social media platforms implement anti-hate policies and adopt a victim-centered approach to supporting targets of online hate. ADL is a strong proponent of transparency by social media platforms so that users can understand the processes and business decisions that directly impact their lives. Similarly, we recommend the creation of a task force to conduct research and develop best practices for reducing hate on social media platforms in Illinois.

In addition to ensuring social media platforms do their part to promote user safety and combat online hate, harassment and extremism, we must encourage policymakers to create laws that take the seriousness of online abuse—especially doxing and swatting—into account and offer victims access to justice. This year, Illinois has already had successes on this front. ADL played a leadership role in spearheading HB 2954, Illinois' Civil Liability for Doxing Act, which provides remedies for individuals who are doxed. Doxing involves intentionally publishing the personally identifiable information of another person without their consent, with the intent that it be used to harm or harass that person, and with knowledge or reckless disregard that the person would be reasonably likely to suffer death, bodily injury or stalking as a result. The new Illinois law specifically enables victims of doxing to bring a civil action to recover damages for the harm that they experience as the result of a doxing incident. ADL encourages other states to follow Illinois' example and champion justice for doxing victims and other targets of online hate.

4. Strengthen Illinois' Response to Hate Crimes

Comprehensive, multi-pronged approaches to countering and addressing hate crimes are critical to fighting antisemitism, hate and extremism. Governor Pritzker and state legislators should consider approaches to:

- Continue to explore innovative ways to address hate and extremism: ADL applauds the reconstitution of the Illinois Commission on Discrimination and Hate Crimes in 2021 and the work that the commission has already done to date, including a production of recommendations included in its 2022 annual report. This is a critically important step for the state in terms of developing a roadmap to improve the state's response to hate crimes. In order to be successful, any potential roadmap not only needs strong support from state officials, but also continued significant input from the communities that have been historically disproportionately targeted by hate crimes.
- Mandate law enforcement agencies to report hate crimes data to the FBI: Law enforcement agencies
 in Illinois should be required to report hate crimes data to the FBI pursuant to the data collection
 process under the Hate Crime Statistics Act. Absent comprehensive and inclusive data, policymakers
 will lack the critical information that is needed to address these concerning trends.
- Require hate crimes training for law enforcement: Illinois should require training for all law enforcement officers on identifying, investigating, responding to and reporting hate crimes. Although Illinois law currently requires the Division of Academy and Training to provide hate crimes training for Illinois state police officers, there is currently no across-the-board requirement for all local law enforcement to receive training on hate crimes. Training at both the academy level and through requirements for continuing education is essential to ensure that the people who are often first-responders in the wake of a hate crime are prepared to effectively investigate, respond to and report hate crimes. We applaud the Illinois Commission on Discrimination and Hate Crimes for including this recommendation in its 2022 annual report.
- Promote whole-of-society approaches to hate crime reduction: Whole-of-society approaches that prioritize the voices and needs of the marginalized communities disproportionately targeted by hate crimes are necessary in order to effectively address hate crimes. Victim-centered solutions including a) support services and financial support for hate crime victims and the community organizations that directly serve them, b) alternative mechanisms for victims to report hate crimes that take into account the significant barriers that communities often face when reporting to and interacting with police, and c) restorative justice approaches such as education and community service, when welcomed by the impacted community should be strongly considered. In addition, although hate crimes laws are a critically important tool to respond to hate crimes when they occur, it is of course preferable to prevent hate crimes in the first place. Approaches should include antibias education for young people. We are grateful for the recommendations in the 2022 annual report of the Illinois Commission on Discrimination and Hate Crimes that are focused on developing a hate crime hotline along with partnering with non-government institutions to provide intervention resources, trainings and research.

5. Protect Civil Rights

Protecting the civil rights of all people in Illinois, especially members of marginalized communities, is crucial for countering discrimination and bias. By way of example, ADL has long supported measures that would extend nondiscrimination protections to LGBTQ+ people in employment, housing and public accommodations; measures that counter antisemitism; measures that would remove discriminatory barriers that prevent equitable access to the ballot; measures that address racial discrimination and injustice; and measures that help protect the safety, dignity and well-being of immigrants and refugees. In recent years, various measures were introduced in order to create protections for marginalized communities. For example, ADL supports the continued expansion and updates to the Illinois Human Rights Act. Most recently, Governor Pritzker supported enforcing non-discrimination policies in public spaces and expanding the Illinois Human Rights act to cover hair-based discrimination.

Additionally, Illinois has been a leader in inclusive education policy. In 2021, Governor Pritzker signed into law SB 564, which requires history courses to teach about the contributions of different faiths. That same year, the Governor signed the Teaching Equitable Asian American Community History (TEAACH) Act, which made Illinois the first state in the nation to require the teaching of Asian American history. As a next step, Illinois should consider enhancing access to inclusive education curriculum requirements by providing additional resources to teachers for existing instructional mandates, including Holocaust and genocide education as well. ADL also recommends the creation of grant programs to support school districts — especially underresourced districts — in delivering these critical education programs.

Finally, as Illinoisans head to the polls in future elections it is critical that the right to vote and participate in the democratic process be safeguarded. There are rules that prohibit electioneering within a certain distance of polling places to ensure that voters can make decisions and cast their ballots in a "neutral zone." We have accepted these time, place and manner restrictions on First Amendment rights to protect the sanctity of the ballot box. In many states, however, Illinois included, lawmakers have not similarly physically safeguarded the right to vote because they have not restricted the carrying of firearms in or near places where voting occurs. This problem must be rectified if we intend to protect the right to vote and put voters first. Policymakers should consider prohibiting firearms within 100 feet of polling places while elections are occurring in order to protect voters' safe access to vote — free from interference and intimidation.

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Join the Fight Against Antisemitism

1. SPEAK UP

Report an incident. If you have experienced or witnessed an incident of antisemitism, please contact ADL. Together, we can work toward making our communities, country and world a safer place for all.

2. SHARE FACTS

Learn about antisemitism. Explore Antisemitism Uncovered: A Guide to Old Myths in a New Era for historical, fact-based descriptions of antisemitic myths, contemporary examples and calls-to-action for addressing this hate.

3. SHOW STRENGTH

Sign the Pledge to Fight Antisemitism. Sign online or text Audit to 72572 and commit to being an ally of the Jewish community, publicly condemning acts of antisemitism, advocating for policy solutions and encourage your elected officials to do the same.

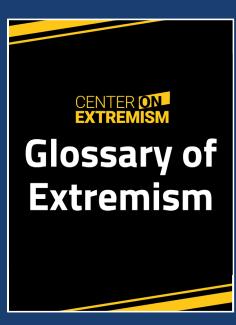
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