



SUMMARY REPORT

Task Force for Combating Antisemitism

June 2026



JEWISH FEDERATION
GREATER VANCOUVER

Introduction

The atrocities committed in Israel on October 7th, 2023 and their aftermath marked a profoundly destabilizing and horrific moment for Jews and Jewish communities worldwide. For those in the diaspora, including here in BC, the corresponding surge in antisemitism that followed was swift, disorienting, and unsettling. Amid this turmoil, the Jewish community in Vancouver mobilized with urgency and purpose, responding with strength at both grassroots and institutional levels.

Recognizing the need for long-term, strategic investment, the Jewish Federation of Greater Vancouver (“the Federation”) created the Task Force for Combatting Antisemitism in November 2024. Seventeen community members with a range of professional backgrounds were invited to undertake this work.

The mandate of the Task Force was to assess the nature and extent of antisemitism in British Columbia and to propose strategic recommendations to guide the Federation’s efforts in addressing this challenge and to strengthen community resilience.

This report summarizes the comprehensive report prepared by the Task Force for Combatting Antisemitism, for the Jewish Federation of Greater Vancouver. It includes a summary of what the Task Force heard, observed and reviewed; and presents a summary of the recommendations presented to the Board to guide Federation’s vision and strategic direction in response to rising antisemitism. The Task Force recognizes that some of these initiatives are already underway, and supports the continuation or expansion of these efforts. The Task Force also recognizes the importance of responding to antisemitism in a manner that is iterative and nimble, given the constantly changing nature of antisemitism.

Our Vision

The vision guiding the Task Force was a future in which Jews and Jewish communities are resilient, connected, and proud, supported by strong institutions, engaged allies, and a broader society that recognizes and rejects antisemitism.

This vision includes a thriving Jewish community that embraces the full spectrum of its members

while sustaining its deep and ongoing connection with Israel; adapts to the evolving forms of antisemitism, based on the working definition established by the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA); and continues to contribute positively to society.

Our Process

To ensure a comprehensive understanding of antisemitism in British Columbia, the Task Force engaged with a wide cross-section of the community. The Task Force reviewed local and national surveys, data from law enforcement, and a broad range of articles, academic papers, and community submissions.

Through presentations from Jewish organizations and community members from diverse backgrounds, we learned of their experiences, concerns, successes, and recommendations on what needs to be done.

The presenters included teachers, parents, students, health care professionals, lawyers and artists. We also heard from a broad range of groups, including synagogues and community organizations, and reviewed an array of research papers, articles, videos, and lectures.

We thank the local, regional, national, and international subject matter experts, including Federation and its partner agencies, as well as unaffiliated non-profit and grassroots groups that have emerged out of this crisis, for their presentations and insights which were invaluable in our understanding of the lived realities of so many in our community. We extend our deep gratitude to those who shared difficult personal experiences. Many also shared stories of non-Jewish allies who have stood with our community and shown us that we are not alone. We are impressed by the strength and resilience of the Jewish community, and what has been achieved to date. While there is much work to be done, we believe the recommendations contained within this report will build on the work undertaken by many to date and will allow the community to continue addressing immediate and longer-term challenges.

The State of Antisemitism in BC

Since October 7, 2023, the Jewish community in BC has experienced a significant rise in antisemitic incidents. A Federation survey¹ conducted between December 2024 and March 2025 revealed:

- » **62%** of Jewish respondents experienced at least one antisemitic incident;
- » **93%** reported feeling less secure than before the October 7th attack;
- » **61%** avoided wearing visible Jewish symbols;
- » **65%** reported avoiding public spaces or events for safety reasons; and,
- » **61%** reported sustained mental health challenges.

These lived experiences are supported by data. In 2023, the Vancouver Police Department recorded a 62% increase in antisemitic incidents. Of 47 hate-related incidents, 33 occurred after October 7th. The VPD also investigated 50 criminal offences related to the Israel–Hamas war.²

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- 1 Community Survey on Antisemitism, Jewish Federation of Greater Vancouver (March 2025).
 - 2 100-Day Hate Crime Report, Vancouver Police Department (January 2024).



The most recent Statistics Canada report released in July 2025 showed that Jewish people were the victims of approximately one-fifth of all hate crimes in Canada and were the group most targeted by hate crimes in Canada in any protected category, despite constituting less than 1% of the Canadian population. When adjusted for population, this means that Jewish Canadians are 20 times more likely to experience a hate crime than the average Canadian. When that frame is limited to “religiously motivated” hate crimes, Jewish Canadians were on the receiving end of 70% of all religiously motivated hate crimes, eclipsing any other group by orders of magnitude and continuing the trend from previous years.³

Antisemitism has affected nearly every sector:

- » **Healthcare:** Harassment of Jewish staff; antisemitic content in professional settings
- » **Education:** Students singled out, teachers spreading misinformation
- » **Post-secondary institutions:** Jewish students and faculty have faced threats, isolation, and hostility
- » **Public institutions:** Elected officials have amplified harmful narratives
- » **Housing:** Jewish tenants pressured to remove visible signs of identity

Many incidents go unreported due to fear of reprisal or disbelief. Yet within this landscape, we also observed powerful grassroots responses.

In the workplace in BC, Jewish professionals reported high levels of antisemitism in health care (33 percent), education (30 percent) arts and culture (12 percent), and the provincial public service (10 percent).⁴ On university campuses, Jewish students have been physically surrounded, verbally abused, and asked to leave public areas for their own “safety,” while faculty and instructors have glorified or justified the October 7th attacks in class.⁵

The following examples come from reports to Federation/CIJA and from stories heard by the Task Force.

K-12 EDUCATION

In K-12 schools, there have been individual and systemic incidents raised by teachers, parents and students⁶. Jewish students have reported being singled out by teachers and subjected to hate speech from peers. In one case, a student was told to sit in the hallway after complaining to their teacher about the teacher’s derogatory comments about Israel in the classroom. In another example, a teacher asked Jewish students to self-identify as Jewish and then

3 Police-reported crime statistics in Canada, 2024, Table 6- Police-reported hate crimes, by detailed motivation, Canada, 2020 to 2024.

4 Community Survey on Antisemitism, Jewish Federation of Greater Vancouver (March 2025).

5 Reported incidents from post-secondary institutions in BC (October 2023–May 2025).

6 This report reflects what the task force heard in late 2024-early 2025, and it’s important to note that antisemitism mutates quickly. For instance, more recent reports from stakeholders indicate a significant escalation in the number of incidents involving student to student antisemitism than at the time the Taskforce convened in 2024-2025.



asked them questions about the Israel-Palestinian conflict in front of their peers. A BC high school rejected a proposal to have a Holocaust survivor speak to students because the survivor's statements could not be pre-vetted.

We heard repeatedly from both Jewish parents and students about the erosion of their sense of belonging in public education, and the undermining of their right to learn and participate fully in their child's education. One example that was shared with the Task Force was of a parent advisory board meeting at a school district level, in which Jewish parents spoke of the harm of escalating antisemitism in public schools and asked the board to support the community by hosting an educational session for parents on antisemitism. In response, a board member reportedly criticized them for not first addressing Israel's actions in Gaza, echoing the antisemitic trope that Canadian Jews are responsible for the war between Israel and Hamas and seemingly suggesting both that Jewish safety in Canada is conditional on the decisions made in Israel, and that antisemitism is a legitimate response to Palestinian suffering.

Concerns have been reported about apparent antisemitism in the B.C. Teachers Federation (BCTF) — the union representing all public-school teachers in B.C. Educators applied for official union recognition as a Provincial Specialist Association dedicated to providing teaching resources on the Holocaust and antisemitism inspired by the B.C. Government making Holocaust education mandatory. Their application

was denied despite meeting all the requirements to be recognized except for the final vote. It is reported that this was the first time in PSA history that an application for a PSA was voted down despite meeting all requirements. In addition, more than 25 incidents of anti-Jewish and anti-Zionist discrimination involving the BCTF resulted in a complaint against the union, currently before the BC Human Rights Tribunal.

POST-SECONDARY

Jewish students and faculty on post-secondary campuses in British Columbia have reported numerous deeply troubling incidents that reflect both overt hostility and institutional inaction. One example included a student wearing a Star of David being surrounded by a mob who screamed at them through close-range megaphones. In another case, a group of Jewish students wearing kippahs were verbally targeted by protestors; campus security removed the Jewish students "for their safety" while protestors cheered. In one case, a teaching assistant in a science class reportedly told students that if they were uncomfortable with commentary they considered antisemitic, they could withdraw from the class, and in another instance, a professor repeatedly stated that the massacre of Jews on October 7th was justified, asserting that Jews "got what was coming to them." Instructors reportedly regularly used class time to present biased and often inaccurate information about Zionism and Israel

that was outside the scope of the course. In one particularly painful example, a Jewish student shared with the Task Force that her graduation project, a capstone work publicly displayed alongside those of her peers as the culmination of their studies, was defaced by her peers with anti-Israel and pro-Palestinian graffiti. In some of the most shocking examples, Jewish faculty members were targeted, buildings vandalized and property destroyed for accepting philanthropic funding from a Jewish donor and including Israeli academics in a conference.

Some of the stories we heard from students at post-secondary institutions related to systemic failures at these institutions, including an apparent failure to follow their own policies to protect Jewish students. Students described how they had engaged their institutions' formal complaint mechanisms, and that, in their understanding, procedures were reportedly not followed, their complaints ignored or investigations into the complaints were not conducted. Students shared their sense that those working in equity, diversity, and inclusion capacities in their institutions lacked basic knowledge and cultural competence in antisemitism and, in particular, the ways in which anti-Israel sentiment may cross into antisemitic discrimination.

Moreover, even where efforts were made by a university equity and inclusion office to address and define antisemitism through education, the resulting process and materials on antisemitism and Zionism marginalized mainstream Jewish perspectives and placed disproportionate weight on a small anti-Zionist Jewish minority, thereby distorting representations of Jewish identity and the lived experience of antisemitism on campus. Corresponding materials on Islamophobia and anti-Palestinian discrimination contained a distorted definition of Zionism and undermined Jewish indigeneity and connection to Israel.

HEALTH CARE

In the health care sector, a Jewish physician reported being physically assaulted by another physician for speaking out against Hamas, while others

faced harassment from colleagues who denied the reality of October 7th. A physician reported that his concerns about antisemitism creating an unsafe working environment were dismissed by his regulatory body, which responded to his complaint by stating that they did not get involved in "international conflicts."

In addition, the results of a survey of Jewish health care professionals was shared with us. 52% of respondents have avoided publicly wearing, carrying, or displaying things that might identify them as a Jew, out of fear of antisemitism. 45% experienced antisemitism at work within the previous year, and 52% of those who experienced it tried to do something about it. 30% have felt concern for patients because of antisemitic bias of colleagues, while 17% have considered leaving the profession.

COMMUNITY INCIDENTS

Community incidents have also escalated. In May 2024, Congregation Schara Tzedek in Vancouver was the target of an arson attack. That same month, a young Jewish woman was assaulted while being called a "f—king Jew" at a rally, and rallies at the Vancouver Art Gallery mere days after the October 7th massacre included speakers who praised the October 7th attacks as "beautiful" and "heroic". Jewish tenants have been told by landlords to remove Israeli flags from windows and balconies, Jewish public servants have been told that wearing a Star of David is a symbol of "genocide" that is causing discomfort to co-workers, and city councilors have used public office to elevate anti-Israel and antisemitic messaging. Additionally, in August 2025, the front entrance of Congregation Emanu-El synagogue in Victoria was defaced with vitriolic anti-Jewish graffiti.

ORGANIZED LABOUR

Political institutions and organized labour have also seen growing normalization of antisemitic rhetoric. BC unions have brought forward resolutions supporting Boycott, Divestment, and

Sanctions (BDS), a movement broadly condemned by Jewish groups and by the federal government, including by Parliamentary motion in 2016, and by former Prime Minister Trudeau in 2019 who explicitly labelled BDS “antisemitic.” Complaints from Jewish workers about antisemitic messaging and social media content by their unions and membership have been lodged across numerous unions and professional bodies. These unions have also endorsed campaigns, educational materials and training for union members that erase and distort Zionism, Jewish identity, and indigeneity/ ancestral ties to Israel, without consultation from mainstream Jewish community members or with exclusive consultation with fringe groups within the Jewish community associated with anti-Zionist organizations.

COMMON EXPERIENCE

It is notable that the tokenization and disproportionate representation of a minority of anti-Zionist Jews and the corresponding exclusion or undermining of mainstream Jewish voices emerged across sectors as a visible strategy in contexts where antisemitism was normalized, functioning to marginalize Jewish accounts of antisemitism and to skew Jewish perspectives in those settings, while simultaneously projecting an illusion of consultation.

We also heard of daily subtle indignities across sectors and groups, including institutional refusal to engage with education about antisemitism, requiring Jews to denounce critical aspects of their identity, including Zionism, as a litmus test for participation in public life, and hesitance to work with Jewish individuals because of “timing” and the war in Gaza, a baldly discriminatory stance that appears to have gained acceptance in many arenas.

Institutions were generally only willing to address antisemitism when done in concert with efforts to combat other forms⁷ of hatred, whitewashing the unique crisis-level of rising antisemitism,

demonstrated by the statistics cited above. We observed a general discomfort decrying antisemitism without also decrying Islamophobia and other forms of hatred, demonstrating a nuance of the new antisemitism: a form of bigotry and growing hatred that many institutions seem uncomfortable rebuking without caveat and without ritually denouncing other forms. This left the distinct impression that hatred, violence and indignity targeting Jewish Canadians is not worthy of rebuke in its own right even when the evidence points to an incomparable targeting of this minority.

The above summary represents only a small fraction of antisemitic experiences reported in British Columbia. Many Jewish individuals, particularly students in post-secondary institutions, reflected that they do not report antisemitic incidents, fearing they will not be believed or that speaking out will lead to further harm.

However, our work also identified clear remedies to address the challenges in incremental ways.



7 “Antisemitism Is an Urgent Problem. Too Many People Are Making Excuses”. The New York Times, June 14, 2025.

What's Working

We want to acknowledge that a great deal of *what is working* stems from the foundations built and resourced by the community in the days following October 7th. The community responded with urgency to this crisis by establishing the Antisemitism Israel Crisis Response Team (AICRT) and its successor, the Combatting Antisemitism committee, and was supported by the ongoing work done by CIJA, as well as the work of grassroots community groups, members, and their allies. The successes below are largely a reflection of these efforts and remarkable commitment.

We heard from students at Hillel BC, who have been supported and mentored as they have learned to advocate for themselves within their classrooms and institutions; from professionals who have successfully fought back in their workplaces and unions; from artists whose work has been protested, cancelled, and excluded from government funding grants because they are ineligible to apply under their diversity/equity/inclusion criteria.

We also heard from CIJA about the work it has been doing, including its longstanding efforts to build relationships with all levels of government, to bridge differences, and to foster reciprocal allyship with other faith communities and ethno-cultural groups.

Jewish healthcare professionals, academics, teachers, artists, lawyers, parents and other groups have come together in a variety of forms, to support each other, take action, and explore solutions to their unique and evolving situations. These grassroots groups are making incremental and important progress and are working hard to challenge and de-normalize antisemitism in their spheres of influence—in their workplaces, in their unions, and in their schools.

These grassroots efforts play a critical role, as they are comprised of individuals who live and work in ecosystems where anti-Jewish discrimination is nurtured from the ground up. Often, the only ones who can advocate for the rights of Jewish

stakeholders are those who have standing in the system: union members, employees, and direct stakeholders such as students and parents.

The Task Force heard how individuals have developed programs with the support of Jewish institutions to support Jewish community members in developing the skills and resources to become their own best advocates; for example, Federation's Power of One Community Toolkit has helped parents address challenges in their children's schools, resulting in positive outcomes.

The Task Force also heard how when an incident arises, community members have been coordinating with CIJA, Hillel, Federation, and their volunteers, who have been able to advise them and provide critical resources.

FRAMING OUR APPROACH

There isn't a magic bullet to fix antisemitism; it will be an incremental process of making it once again unacceptable. That requires building community capacity to recognize it and work effectively against it, building relationships and allies, and building awareness of what antisemitism is, and how it presents itself.

The stories from community reflected the lessons of Jewish history, which teaches us that antisemitism manifests both through violence and through erasure of identity, pressures to assimilate, or to accept conditional belonging. As a result, the Task Force committed to developing recommendations that address immediate threats while also investing in long-term community resilience, identity, and strength—a framing the Task Force characterized as putting out fires and planting trees. Putting out fires refers to the urgent work of responding to hate, protecting Jewish life, and ensuring physical and emotional safety. Planting trees speaks to the longer-term, equally critical work of nurturing Jewish identity, memory, resilience, and belonging; and expanding this work beyond established Jewish

infrastructure and institutions. In essence, our work in combatting antisemitism must address immediate risks while not losing sight of the future, which requires creating and maintaining lasting opportunities for Jews, especially young people, to connect with the education, community, knowledge, and support they need to thrive and continue to develop from a place of confidence.

We build upon the foundation laid by AICRT/ Combatting Antisemitism, CIJA's advocacy work, and a broad network of grassroots initiatives. Our recommendations reflect that legacy and point the way forward.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations contained in the comprehensive *Antisemitism Task Force Report* informed the development of Federation's three-year Combatting Antisemitism Strategic and Fundraising Plans which were adopted by the Federation Board of Directors on September 2, 2025.

In preparing this summary report, we have chosen not to publish the full set of recommendations. In the current climate, some of the detailed measures raise security considerations that make it inappropriate to release them publicly. What follows is a high-level summary intended to give the community an understanding of the areas of focus and the types of work we believe are most important at this time. This summary reflects the spirit of the recommendations while protecting sensitive information.

1 – Strengthening Communication and Collaboration

The Task Force recommended a strengthening of communication and transparency between Jewish institutions, grassroots groups, and the broader community. This is aimed at ensuring community members understand the complexity and nature of the work being done to address antisemitism, successful outcomes and challenges, as well as to ensure that our community understands the resources available to them when faced with discrimination, and how to avail themselves of those supports. The Task Force also recommended

expanding locally tailored outreach across the province, empowering regional leaders and unaffiliated individuals to build community-based solutions with support from established institutions, as well as adapt programming to ensure accessibility for geographically dispersed communities.

2 – Fostering Identity, Resilience, and Belonging

The Task Force recommended investing in programs that foster Jewish pride, cultural connection, and resilience, with a particular focus on youth, families outside core Jewish institutions, and suburban communities. The Task Force also recommended devoting more resources to mental health supports, alongside leadership development opportunities that ensure Jewish representation in decision-making spaces.

3 – Building Community and Allyship

The Task Force recommended supporting both established agencies and grassroots sector-specific groups, both current and emerging, to continue responding to antisemitism. The Task Force also recommended ongoing support for organizations and leaders in developing flexible, mobile community engagement strategies that bring cultural, educational, and community-building resources directly to unaffiliated individuals and geographically dispersed populations to reduce barriers to access.

The Task Force recognized that fighting against anti-Jewish discrimination cannot be done without the voices of allies who are empowered to speak and stand up for their Jewish friends and colleagues. In that spirit, deepening of reciprocal allied relationships with other faith and ethno-cultural communities was recommended, along with a communal shift to understand that relationship-building is the work of our community and not only our institutions.

4 – Countering Harmful Narratives

The Task Force recommended that Jewish institutions work together to recognize and address the harm of misinformation and disinformation that is becoming increasingly entrenched in Canadian institutions and which fuels prejudice and division.



Our Final Reflections

October 7th could have paralyzed the Jewish community. Instead, it sparked action, unity and purpose. The surge in antisemitic incidents that followed could have led to withdrawal or silence. Instead, it sparked an extraordinary wave of mobilization and a resurgence of Jewish pride. Individuals connected through informal channels that quickly evolved into grassroots organizations and networks. These efforts grew rapidly, mobilizing hundreds of members across sectors and experiential groupings, connecting them not only in shared grief, but in action, pride, and joy.

It has been our honour to witness what this community and the Jewish people are capable of in the face of the unimaginable events of October 7th and the profoundly painful experiences since. We are left in awe, brimming with pride and admiration. Though the future remains uncertain, one thing is clear: the strength, resilience, and unwavering resolve of our people endures.

**COMBATTING ANTISEMITISM
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