

A Guide for the Media

Implementing the U.S. National Strategy to Counter Antisemitism

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In May 2023, the White House released the first-ever [U.S. National Strategy to Counter Antisemitism](#)¹. It clearly outlines efforts that the federal government and other sectors must undertake to confront antisemitism in America with urgency.

“This strategy directs action across the Administration and calls on Congress, state and local governments, and nongovernmental entities throughout American society to address both antisemitism and its root causes in the United States.”

AJC has compiled all the action items from the National Strategy for media to employ to counter antisemitism.

¹ <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2023/06/02/the-u-s-national-strategy-to-counter-antisemitism-key-actions-by-pillar-2/>

STRENGTHEN EDUCATION ON JEWS, ANTISEMITISM, AND THE HOLOCAUST

The National Strategy states, “We call on media to use its reach to raise awareness of antisemitism while also ensuring users have credible and factual information about Jewish people, antisemitism, and the Holocaust.”

- **Provide accurate information or redirect users to accurate information**, such as fact-based resources from mainstream, credible organizations.
 - AJC offers dynamic educational tools about antisemitism. Of particular importance are [AJC’s Translate Hate glossary](#)², which explains the history and modern manifestations of antisemitic tropes; and AJC’s annual [State of Antisemitism in America Report](#)³, which illustrates the magnitude and impact of the problem.
 - The U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum (USHMM) teaches millions of people each year about the dangers of unchecked hatred and the need to prevent genocide. The USHMM’s resources include an online [Holocaust Encyclopedia](#)⁴, alongside [educational videos](#)⁵ and [podcasts](#)⁶.
- **Ensure reporting accurately reflects the historical sources of antisemitism and its relationship to other forms of extremism and hate.** The U.S. National Strategy to Counter Antisemitism makes clear that antisemitism does not exist in a vacuum. One of the most important ways to counter antisemitism is to incentivize and elevate articles that examine the interlocking histories of various hatreds, including antisemitism, anti-Black racism, Islamophobia, and homophobia.

² [AJC.org/TranslateHate](https://www.ajc.org/TranslateHate)

³ [AJC.org/AntisemitismReport2023](https://www.ajc.org/AntisemitismReport2023)

⁴ <https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/en>

⁵ <https://www.ushmm.org/teach/key-videos>

⁶ <https://www.ushmm.org/learn/podcasts-and-audio>

Suggested Actions and AJC Resources



RECOGNIZE MEDIA'S ROLE IN SHAPING PUBLIC UNDERSTANDING

The National Strategy states, “Media coverage can shape public perceptions, not just of antisemitism, but of Jews, Judaism, and American Jewish heritage, culture, and identity. This is both a significant opportunity and responsibility.”

- **Strive for reporting that accurately and intentionally broadens appreciation of American Jewish heritage, culture, and identity.** According to [AJC's State of Antisemitism in America 2023 Report](#)⁷, over one in three (37%) U.S. adults do not know someone who is Jewish. As such, many of these Americans only know about Jews and Judaism through other mediums, such as the news. One of the most important ways to counter harmful stereotypes and tropes is to counter them with articles highlighting American Jews' histories and experiences.

AVOID PERPETUATING STEREOTYPES AND MISREPRESENTING JEWS

The National Strategy calls on media outlets to “ensure accurate and faithful representation of the Jewish community in all its diversity, and avoid stereotypical portrayals of Jews, including as mere victims of antisemitism.”

- **Invest in antisemitism trainings.** Antisemitism can be difficult to pinpoint because it is motivated by disparate ideologies. Reporters and journalists need to remember that antisemitism can take many forms, not just swastikas sprayed outside a synagogue or graves desecrated at a Jewish cemetery, for example. Holocaust denial and distortion are an expression of antisemitism as well as the trivialization of the Holocaust. Casual references to Hitler and the Nazis, while not necessarily antisemitic, are at the very least, insensitive and inappropriate. Conspiracies of Jewish power and control continue to threaten the well-being of Jewish communities.
 - AJC has helped train media corporations, from the *Kentucky Courier-Journal* to the [E.W. Scripps](#)

[Media Company](#)⁸, about antisemitism and regularly offers training sessions.

- To schedule a training, contact antisemitism@ajc.org.

- **Be equipped to identify antisemitic terms and tropes.**
 - AJC's [Translate Hate glossary](#)⁹ is a visual glossary to expose antisemitic tropes, words, and symbols that often hide in plain sight. In print or online, *Translate Hate* can be used to explain why something is antisemitic.
 - A great deal of antisemitism is cloaked under the guise of criticism of Israel. There are [numerous examples](#)¹⁰ that show how anti-Israel statements and actions can become antisemitic. [The International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance \(IHRA\) Working Definition of Antisemitism](#)¹¹, the authoritative definition of antisemitism, provides practical examples that provide context to determine whether something is antisemitic. Examples include discrimination and hatred of Jews, conspiracy theories, Holocaust denial and distortion, and antisemitism related to Israel.
- **Aim for accurate, context-specific depictions.** Media coverage can shape public perceptions, not just of antisemitism, but of Jews and Judaism. There are numerous instances in which an antisemitic attack against a Jew occurred, yet media outlets aired only images of “visibly Jewish” Orthodox Jews. [Accuracy in reporting](#)¹² can help raise awareness vital for prevention.
- **Know who to call.** While the Jewish community is diverse—politically, religiously, ethnically, and in every other way—there are sources that represent mainstream perspectives. The [local AJC office](#)¹³, Jewish Federation, and leaders of large synagogues are good places to start. Reporters and journalists should keep at the ready a list of unbiased resources on antisemitism and issues related to Israel to make sure they are correctly interpreting an incident or a statement and its antisemitic implications.

⁷ [AJC.org/AntisemitismReport2023](https://www.ajc.org/AntisemitismReport2023)

⁸ [AJC.org/news/american-jewish-committee-scripps-partner-to-combat-antisemitism-in-us](https://www.ajc.org/news/american-jewish-committee-scripps-partner-to-combat-antisemitism-in-us)

⁹ [AJC.org/TranslateHate](https://www.ajc.org/TranslateHate)

¹⁰ [AJC.org/RecognizingAntisraelActions](https://www.ajc.org/RecognizingAntisraelActions)

¹¹ [AJC.org/WorkingDefinition](https://www.ajc.org/WorkingDefinition)

¹² [AJC.org/reporting-antisemitism-guide](https://www.ajc.org/reporting-antisemitism-guide)

¹³ [AJC.org/regionaloffices](https://www.ajc.org/regionaloffices)

- **Reduce Bias.** Antisemitism emerges from the far-left, the far-right, and religious extremists. The media should be aware of the sources of antisemitism and raise awareness among their audiences as well. Media outlets with an ideological bent should report on antisemitism within their own encampment, as well as on the opposite side.

INTERNALLY AND EXTERNALLY, DO NOT TOLERATE ANTISEMITISM.

The National Strategy calls on media outlets to “hold people accountable for their antisemitic comments.”

- **Challenge antisemitism, including Holocaust trivialization.** Reporters and journalists should be trained in how to respond if a person being interviewed says something antisemitic or inappropriately distorts the Holocaust. When this happens, the media has the power to hold offenders accountable and demand public apologies. *AJC's Translate Hate* can be used to explain why something is antisemitic.
- **Standardize company policies.**
 - Media outlets should implement a comprehensive policy on addressing antisemitism, either for internal use or to share with concerned audiences.
- **Adopt zero-tolerance terms of service and community standards**
 - Media companies should adopt terms of service and community standards indicating that antisemitic speech will not be permitted on their online platforms and will not facilitate access to services that do not prohibit it. Relatedly, they must guarantee appropriate safeguards to allow initial judgments deeming content to be antisemitic (or not) to be appealed and reviewed. To effectively do this, the [IHRA Working Definition of Antisemitism](#)¹⁴, as the global, authoritative definition of antisemitism, should be incorporated within community standards.

¹⁴ [AJC.org/WorkingDefinition](https://www.aicj.org/WorkingDefinition)

- **Enforce proper disciplinary measures** when the company's terms of service and community standards are violated, including intimidation, harassment, threats, and unprotected hate speech.
 - Companies need to be prepared to enforce these disciplinary measures without equivocation, including permanently banning repeat offenders.

GUARD AGAINST VISUAL DISPLAYS OF HATE

The National Strategy calls on media outlets to “guard against visual displays of hate and be mindful to not amplify antisemitism while carrying out their responsibility to educate audiences.”

- **Consider blurring hateful symbols and words:** When an antisemitic incident is being covered on television and other visual media outlets, media outlets should consider whether blurring hateful symbols and words can prevent the dissemination of hate, or whether sharing the images within an educational context can show the impact it has on the Jewish community. Context is critical. Antisemites often seek public attention, and the media can inadvertently feed that desire. At the same time, media outlets are responsible for educating their audiences.

American Jewish Committee (AJC) is the global advocacy organization for the Jewish people. With headquarters in New York and more than 75 offices, institutes, and international Jewish community partnerships worldwide, AJC's mission is to enhance the well-being of the Jewish people and Israel, and to advance human rights and democratic values in the United States and around the world.

Following the historic unveiling of the U.S. National Strategy to Counter Antisemitism by the White House, AJC CEO Ted Deutch announced the creation of the AJC Task Force to Implement the U.S. National Strategy to Counter Antisemitism. AJC's Task Force is designed to ensure the execution of the National Strategy, which includes dozens of AJC's recommendations closely resembling [**AJC's Call to Action Against Antisemitism in America**](#), in a meaningful and timely manner. For more information on AJC's Task Force visit [**AJC.org/NationalStrategyNews**](#).