

REPORTED ANTISEMITIC INCIDENTS IN THE GTA: MAY 2021

PRESENTED BY UJA COMMUNITY SECURITY ON BEHALF OF
UJA FEDERATION OF GREATER TORONTO



UJA FEDERATION
of Greater Toronto

There is a clear correlation between anti-Israel activism and antisemitism in Canada. Though criticism of a particular Israeli government policy or decision is not necessarily antisemitic, we have seen time and time again that anti-Israel agitation can lead to attacks on Jewish community members verbally, physically, and online. Since the beginning of renewed hostilities between Hamas and Israel on May 10, 2021, and the corresponding renewal of anti-Israel protests and actions in Canada, UJA Community Security has recorded a sharp increase in the average number of reported antisemitic incidents in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA).

5X SPIKE IN ANTISEMITIC INCIDENTS:

**50+ REPORTED ANTISEMITIC INCIDENTS IN MAY
VS. APPROXIMATELY 10-12 INCIDENTS
PER MONTH BETWEEN JANUARY AND APRIL 2021**

UJA Community Security has compiled this data via direct reporting from Jewish community members over the month of May.

The purpose of this report is to summarize and communicate key facts about this significant increase in antisemitic activity, including specific examples of incidents. Please note this document is not exhaustive. Incidents that have been recorded but not verified (usually because complainants were reluctant to cooperate or report to police) have not been included. The incidents outlined in this report represent only a sampling of activity that has taken place in the community during the month of May and were reported to UJA Community Security. The unknown figure of crime can be presumed to be significantly larger than this document might indicate, especially from segments of our community not active within the UJA Community Security program, who are therefore less likely to report. Some incidents among the 50+ recorded in May have been reported to police by UJA Community Security but not included in this document, due to ongoing security sensitivities.

UJA Federation of Greater Toronto established the Community Security team in 2019, with the aim of protecting Jewish life and the Jewish way of life in the GTA. The UJA Community Security program helps community members and organizations in many ways, including but not limited to:

- **Police coordination and incident support:** Acting as a bridge between the Jewish community and local police forces, remaining in ongoing contact with senior police officials in Toronto and York Region.
- **24/7 hotline:** UJA Community Security can be contacted by Jewish community members and institutions at any time for security issues, concerns, and questions.
- **Ongoing communications about security:** Notifying the community of security incidents related to our collective safety.

SUMMARY OF ANTISEMITIC INCIDENTS IN THE GTA, MAY 2021*

**Please note that the map below does not include all incidents reported in May 2021.*



INCIDENT TYPES INCLUDE:

- Harassment
- Graffiti
- Vandalism
- Physical assault
- Suspicious phone calls, letters, emails
- Suspicious behaviour by a person/s on foot and/or by vehicle

INCIDENT LOCATIONS INCLUDE:

- Private residences
- Commercial businesses
- Jewish organizations
- Public places

SELECT EXAMPLES OF INCIDENTS DURING THE RECENT PERIOD OF ESCALATION IN THE ISRAELI-HAMAS CONFLICT:

THURSDAY, MAY 13

- **Bathurst Street and Glen Park Avenue, Toronto:** A group of young men, located at a public bus stop, were captured on video deliberately antagonizing identifiable Jewish community members walking on the street, chanting “free, free Palestine.” Incident reported to Toronto Police Service.

FRIDAY, MAY 14

- **Glengrove Avenue, North York:** Over the course of two nights, unknown males in a black sedan yelled slurs at community members and drove aggressively in their direction as if to hit them. Incidents reported to Toronto Police Service.
- **Livingstone Avenue, Toronto:** A Jewish community member was verbally harassed and chased out of a retail business for being Jewish.
- **University Avenue, Toronto:** A father and his young child were verbally abused with antisemitic slurs by an unknown male, including comments that they should have been “gassed” and “burned”.

SATURDAY, MAY 15

- **Nathan Philips Square, Toronto:** A community member was verbally assaulted by an unknown male and told that “Jews are inbred.” Complainant claims that bottles were thrown at him and he escaped an attempted assault. This is one among multiple incidents of verbal and physical assault that took place near a Gaza protest at Nathan Philips Square.
- **York Region:** A family was verbally harassed by occupants of a vehicle flying a Palestinian flag. The family were called “baby killers.” Incident reported to York Regional Police.
- **Lawrence Avenue West, Toronto:** Unknown males in a vehicle verbally harassed Jewish community members, including by loudly playing antisemitic music, yelling, and driving slowly in front of a synagogue.
- **North York:** Unknown males in a vehicle yelled antisemitic slurs at community members on the street. Incident reported to Toronto Police Service.

SUNDAY, MAY 16

- **Almore Avenue, North York:** Unknown suspect drove around yelling at Jews and sticking the middle finger at them.
- **Major Mackenzie and Keele Street, Vaughan:** Jewish community member states that her car window was smashed by somebody she got into an argument with online about the Gaza conflict. Incident reported to York Regional Police.

TUESDAY, MAY 18

- **The Annex neighbourhood, Toronto:** Mock eviction notices were posted on the doors of multiple private residences. These flyers featured anti-Israel messaging and were distributed to residences with mezuzot (mezuzot are fixed to the doors of Jewish homes and a visible sign of Jewish occupants). The flyers call for boycotts of Israel. UJA Community Security continues to investigate.

WEDNESDAY, MAY 19

- **Overbrook Place, North York:** The words “F*CK YOU” were written in chalk on the wall of the parking lot of a synagogue and Jewish daycare. Incident reported to Toronto Police Service.



HOW TO REPORT AN ANTISEMITIC INCIDENT TO UJA COMMUNITY SECURITY

Have you been a victim or witness to an antisemitic crime?
In an emergency, your first call should be to 911.

Step 1: Call Police. Toronto Police Service can be reached at 416-808-2222.
York Regional Police can be reached at 866-876-5423.

Step 2: Contact UJA Community Security. UJA Community Security's 24/7 Hotline can be reached at 416-635-5600. Incidents can also be submitted online at www.jewishtoronto.com/community-security.

Jewish community members in the GTA are encouraged to contact UJA Community Security at any time for security issues, concerns, and questions.



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