

Massachusetts Saw Nearly 200% Rise In Antisemitic Incidents Last Year

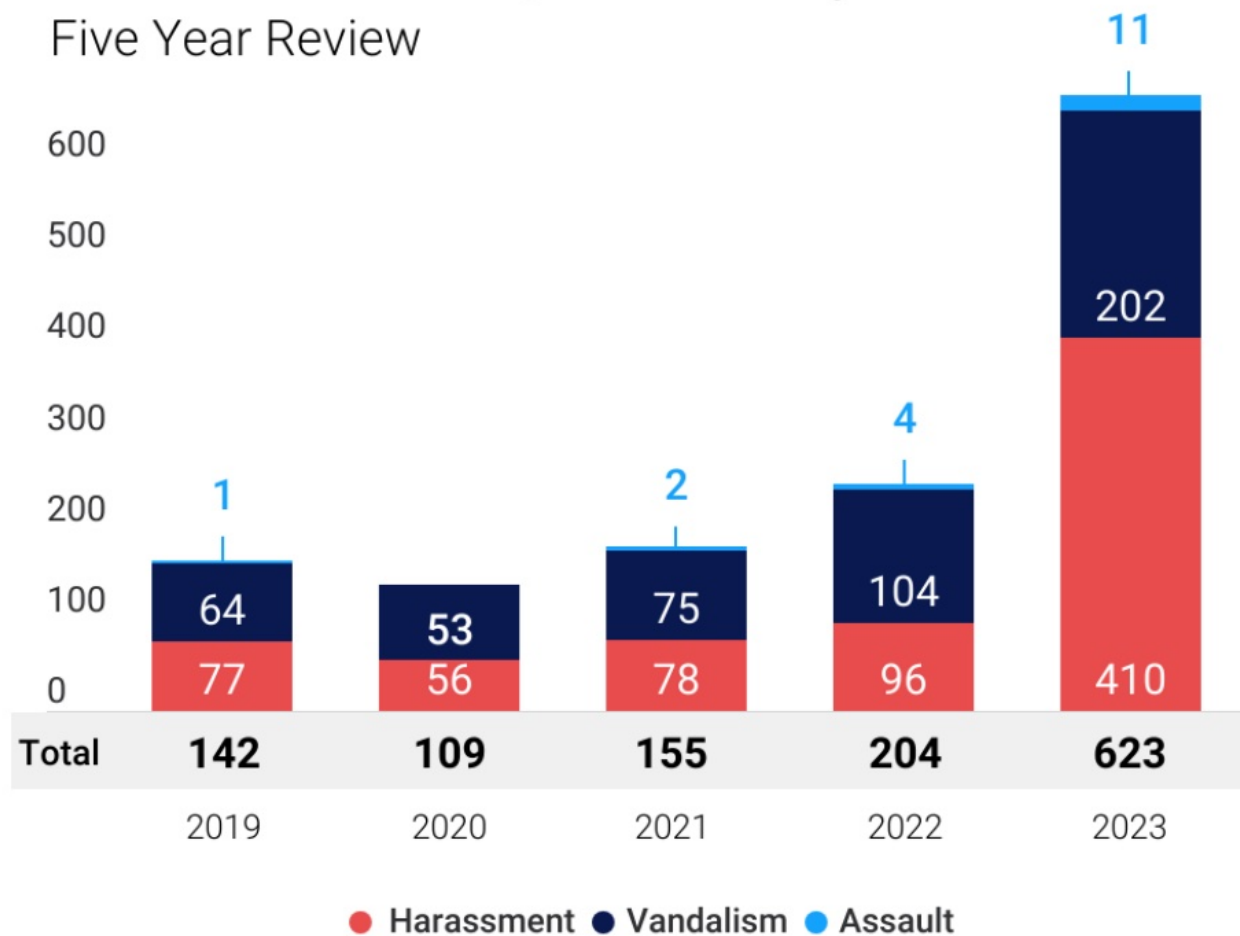
By Alison Kuznitz

State House News Service

New England saw a staggering surge in antisemitic incidents last year that exceeded the increase logged nationally, the Anti-Defamation League said in a new report released Tuesday.

There were 623 antisemitic incidents of assault, harassment and vandalism in the ADL's New England region – which includes Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island and Vermont – in 2023. The total, a record high for the region, represents a 205 percent increase over 2022, the ADL said.

Antisemitic Incidents | ADL New England Five Year Review



ADL New England serves Massachusetts,
Maine, New Hampshire, Rhode Island & Vermont.



The New England region saw a 205 percent increase in antisemitic incidents in 2023 compared to the prior year, according to a new report from the ADL.

Rabbi Ron Fish, ADL New England's interim region director, called the data "simply stunning."

"We have observed a significant rise of incidents, followed by a surge, followed now by a tsunami. Behind each tracked data point is a family, a synagogue, a school, or a child who has been targeted for hate, simply because of their Jewish identity," Fish said in a statement. "This is intolerable in New England as it is anywhere in the country. We call upon

everyone who cares about living in a decent society to unite and stop this rise in anti-Jewish hate.”

A dramatic spike in antisemitism unfolded in New England after Hamas’s attack on Israel last fall. The ADL said 44 percent of all incidents in the region last year occurred after Oct. 7.

Nationally, there were 8,873 incidents last year, another record figure since the ADL starting tracking the data in 1979. That number represents a 140 percent increase from 2022.

There were 440 antisemitic incidents in Massachusetts in 2023, a nearly 190 percent increase compared to 152 incidents in 2022. Massachusetts also recorded the fifth-highest number of incidents per state in the country, trailing behind California, New York, New Jersey and Florida.

“Incidents of vandalism increased by 70 percent (139 incidents in 2023, compared to 82 in 2022),” the ADL said of Massachusetts data. “Incidents of harassment increased by 444 percent (293 incidents in 2023, compared to 66 in 2022). Massachusetts recorded 8 assaults, doubling the number recorded in 2022.”

Some 127 Massachusetts cities and towns recorded at least one antisemitic incident last year, including assaults, white supremacist propaganda, vandalism of Jewish institutions, and incidents at K-12 schools.

The ADL said there were 52 antisemitic incidents last year in Rhode Island, 43 in Vermont, 35 in New Hampshire and 53 in Maine. Incidents of harassment increased by 327 percent in the region, while vandalism climbed by 94 percent.

Across New England, incidents increased significantly at Jewish institutions and schools, non-Jewish K-12 schools, college campuses, public areas like parks and transit, private businesses, and homes. There were 81 incidents on college campuses last year, compared to 15 the prior year. At K-12

schools, incidents nearly doubled, from 53 in 2022 to 101 in 2023.

“Antisemitism is not a Jewish problem,” Fish said. “It is a societal problem. We can only solve it together.”

During an advocacy event at the State House last week, leaders of faith-based schools called on Beacon Hill lawmakers to support increased funding for nonprofit security grants amid rising hate crimes and antisemitism. Gov. Maura Healey proposed funding the state program at \$1.5 million in her fiscal 2025 budget proposal, while the House’s pitch calls for \$3 million.

“I no longer feel safe, not in my school, not for my students, not for my children and the children of our community’s parents,” Rabbi Yaakov Green, head of Maimonides School in Brookline, had said. “The math doesn’t lie – dramatic rises in hate crimes and the incredibly out-of-whack percentage that are focused on Jews can no longer be quaintly ignored.”

Healey voiced her support for Israel over the weekend after Iran fired hundreds of missiles and drones at the country.

“Massachusetts stands with the people of Israel and @POTUS in the face of this unprecedented attack by Iran,” Healey wrote on X on Saturday night. “We are continuing to monitor the situation and communicate with state law enforcement and public safety officials.”