



Illinois Commission on  
Discrimination and Hate Crimes

CALENDAR YEAR 2023

# ANNUAL REPORT

Administered by the Illinois Department of Human Rights, the CDHC is a Governor-appointed commission working to counter and prevent bias and hate.

[cdhc.illinois.gov](https://cdhc.illinois.gov)

#IllinoisvHate



## CDHC MISSION

The mission of the Illinois Commission on Discrimination and Hate Crimes (CDHC) is to identify and uproot sources of discrimination and bias at the source, while assisting with the development of resources, training, and information that allow for a swift and efficient response to hate-motivated crimes and incidents.

“Hate should never have a home here in Illinois.

Alongside the Illinois Commission on Discrimination and Hate Crimes, I call on all Illinoisans to reject hate, alienation, and bias in favor of empathy.

When we treat one another with respect and dignity, it protects us all.”

Governor JB Pritzker, from statement, *“Illinois Hate Crimes Commission Calls for Unified Rejection of Hate”*,  
December 5, 2023

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# LETTER FROM THE CHAIR AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

To the People of Illinois,

In times of great challenge, our state is stepping forward with vision and great courage. These are indeed times of polarization and civil unrest that test the bonds that hold us together as a community.

We at the Illinois Commission on Discrimination and Hate Crimes are proud to stand shoulder-to-shoulder with our remarkable Commissioners and with partners throughout the state, working together to reduce hate and bias in Illinois and ensure that Illinois is a welcoming and safe place for all.

In a difficult year, the CDHC gained stability and strength, made progress on its goals, and addressed the needs of the moment with an agile, strategic approach. Our work is critical. Throughout 2023, the Commission met, strengthened the bonds between us, articulated a clear vision for a healthier and safer state community, and began work on practical projects to prevent the spread of hate and aid those affected by hate and bias.

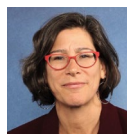
We are fortunate to work with a remarkable group of Governor-appointed Commissioners -- advocates, educators, and leaders in their communities who are united in their commitment to ensure that Illinois lives up to democracy's promise that each of us, with our inherent diversity, deserves to live in freedom and safety.

We enter 2024 holding competing truths simultaneously. We see a world of rising hate, polarization, and extremism. We also see the overwhelming good work of our fellow Illinoisans and we feel great hope.

In solidarity,



**Jim Bennett**  
Chair, CDHC  
Director, IDHR



**Elana G. Kahn**  
Executive Director  
CDHC

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### *Illinois is a Welcoming State for All*

Illinois has a strong tradition of combating discrimination and working to counter and prevent acts of hate. In the face of increased social challenge, Illinois' Commission on Discrimination and Hate Crimes has invested time, careful thought, and data-driven approaches to provide effective responses to hate incidents, build systems to ensure accurate counts, support community-driven resources, and to develop effective preventative efforts.

The Illinois Commission on Discrimination and Hate Crimes was established in 2005 through Executive Order and then, in 2007, codified into state law through legislation.<sup>1</sup> The work of expanding common ground and building bridges is complicated and sometimes fragile work. In 2021, after a period of dormancy, the Commission was revived under the leadership of Governor JB Pritzker and Chair Jim Bennett, also Director of the Illinois Department of Human Rights.

As Chair, Bennett has led the Commission through a process of research, community convening, and careful analysis. Over the course of two years, the Commission hosted virtual town halls, invited subject matter experts to share research and best practices, and developed a set of recommendations to guide the Commission's work, which are in the process of being funded and implemented.

In 2023, the CDHC developed momentum to rise and meet the extraordinary needs of the moment. By securing important state funding, securing a federal grant, and hiring its first permanent full-time executive director, the Commission is advancing the 2022 recommendations while responding to the critical needs of the moment.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY (continued)

In 2023, the CDHC sharpened its strategic focus by organizing its work on the following five focus areas:

- Strengthen responses to hate.
- Develop tools and resources to support people affected by hate and prevent the spread of hate.
- Increase education and understanding about hate.
- Improve data and research, both inputs and outputs.
- Coordinate efforts between government, community-based organizations, law enforcement, academia, and other relevant actors.

The CDHC is committed to developing and articulating a clear vision for eradicating hate and supporting social and cultural diversity. As interest in these issues increases, the CDHC is focused on convening, coordinating, identifying gaps, and working with public and private partners to ensure a comprehensive, forward-looking, and data-driven approach.

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**“No person and no community in this country should have to live in fear of hate-fueled violence.”**

United States Attorney General **Merrick Garland**, at a November 2023 United Against Hate Virtual Forum

## COMMISSION OVERVIEW

### *Commission Appointees*

The Commission is comprised of 21 Governor-appointed Commissioners who are community leaders, subject-matter experts, constitutional law specialists, law enforcement and other state agency professionals. They reflect a diversity in expertise and thought leadership as well as a diversity in identity and culture that mirrors the people of Illinois. The following page outlines the Commissioners who served on the Commission in 2023.

### *Leadership – Elana G. Kahn*

During 2023, the CDHC hired its first permanent, full-time Executive Director. With a long career in bridge-building and peacemaking, Elana G. Kahn joined the CDHC in August 2023. As part of a career dedicated to community building and navigating strategies of healthy conflict, she has experience in various modalities of conflict resolution, facilitation, and strategic communication.

She previously served as Associate Dean for Outreach at Spertus Institute for Jewish Learning and Leadership, Director of the Jewish Community Relations Council (JCRC) of the Milwaukee Jewish Federation and Editor of the Wisconsin Jewish Chronicle.

She has launched and led many interfaith and intergroup efforts, and currently serves as board chair of Repairing Together, a youth program focused on empowering young people with knowledge and relationship across lines of difference.

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## Commission Appointees

James (Jim) Bennett, Chair	Director, Illinois Department of Human Rights
Hilda Bahena	Associate Judge, Circuit Court of Cook County
Anita Banerji	Senior Director of Strategy and External Relations, Funders' Committee for Civic Participation
Cindy Buys	Law Professor, Southern Illinois University School of Law
Mitchell R. Davis III	Chief of Police, Village of Hazel Crest, IL
David Goldenberg	Midwest Regional Director, Anti-Defamation League
Julie Justicz (until 12/30/23)	Executive Director, Legal Council for Health Justice
Melineh Kano	Executive Director, Refugee One
Brendan Kelly	Director, Illinois State Police
Rabbi Seth M. Limmer	Founder, RePair Consulting
Amy Meek	Civil Rights Bureau Chief, Illinois Attorney General's Office
Mona Noriega	Chair, Illinois Human Rights Commission
Grace Pai (from 12/14/23)	Executive Director, Asian Americans Advancing Justice-Chicago
Channyn Lynne Parker	Chief Executive Officer, Brave Space Alliance
Jason Rosensweig	Director of Legislative Affairs and Policy, Illinois Department of Human Rights
Dr. Dilara Sayeed	President, Illinois Muslim Civic Coalition
Marvet M. Sweis	Board of Director, Arab American Bar Association
Karen Tamley	President and CEO, Access Living Chicago
Molly Uhe-Edmonds	School Principal, North Mac School District #34

Organizations listed for identification purposes only..



## COMMISSION OVERVIEW (continued)

The purpose of the CDHC, pursuant to the Illinois Commission on Discrimination and Hate Crimes Act (20 ILCS 4070/15), is to identify and uproot sources of discrimination and bias at the source, while assisting with the development of resources, training, and information that will allow for a swift and efficient response to hate-motivated crimes and incidents. This mandate includes, but is not limited to:

1. Working with community leaders, educators, religious leaders, social service agencies, elected officials, and the public to identify and uproot sources of discrimination and bias at the source.
2. Partnering with local governments, law enforcement officials and prosecutors, educators, and community organizations by assisting with the development of resources, training, and information that allow for a swift and efficient response to hate-motivated crimes and incidents.
3. Educating Illinoisans and assisting educators throughout the state on issues concerning discrimination and hate, teaching acceptance, and embracing diversity at academic institutions.
4. Ensuring that this State's laws addressing discrimination and hate-related violence are widely known and applied correctly to help eradicate and prevent crimes based on discrimination and intolerance.
5. Making recommendations to the Governor and the General Assembly for statutory and programmatic changes necessary to eliminate discrimination and hate-based violence.
6. Helping implement recommendations by working with State agencies, the General Assembly, the business community, the social service community, and other organizations.

### Committees

- Legal Committee -- Chair: Cindy Buys
- Resource Network Committee -- Chair: Mona Noriega
- Understanding Hate Committee -- Chair: Marvet Sweis
- Youth and Education Committee -- Chair: Molly Uhe-Edmonds

## THE STATE OF HATE

### *New challenges, emerging crises, and Illinois strengths*

Illinois is at the forefront of the work fighting bias, discrimination and hate. Our hate crimes law is among the strongest in the nation, protecting more people in our diverse state. Illinoisans are also protected by a robust Illinois Human Rights Act, which prohibits discrimination in housing, employment, and beyond.

Illinois is one of the few states with a commission dedicated to countering and preventing acts of hate. In Illinois, the work is concrete, long-term, and expanding.

Yet our collective challenge is significant. After years' long increases in extremism, polarization, and reported hate incidents, 2023 was marked by an alarming spike of hate incidents.

Only days after the start of the Israel-Hamas war, Illinois rose to national headlines when a Palestinian woman and her child, residents of Plainfield, were stabbed by their landlord and friend. The attack, a result of anti-Arab animus, resulted in the death of six-year-old Wadea al-Fayoune.

"While the hub of the conflict may be thousands of miles away, its spokes extend to our homeland," said US Deputy Attorney General Lisa O. Monaco in a speech at University of Chicago Law School on November 3, 2023.<sup>2</sup>

Initial data from law enforcement agencies and community-based organizations points to a rising tide of bigotry, fueling discrimination and acts of hate. At the end of 2023, the Federal Bureau of Investigation reported<sup>3</sup> that it was tracking dramatically increased numbers of threats against both Jewish and Muslim Americans. The Anti-Defamation League reported in early 2024 a total of 3,291 incidents between Oct. 7 and January 7, marking a 361 percent increase from the same time period one year earlier.<sup>4</sup>

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Other national reports support this. According to the Center for the Study of Hate and Extremism at California State University, Chicago is one of four large cities that broke hate crimes records during 2023, including a 300% year-over-year increase in anti-Muslim hate crimes.<sup>5</sup>

Data about hate crimes, however, do not draw an accurate picture of the problem of hate in Illinois or in the country. Many victims do not report incidents. When victims do report, law enforcement officers may or may not record or investigate those incidents as hate crimes. Additionally, federal law does not require local and state law enforcement agencies to collect or report hate crimes, leading many municipalities, even those who have highly publicized hate incidents within them, to be on record with zero hate crimes. This lack of consistent and accurate data is a call to action for the CDHC.

## *Noted Trends:*

**Schools:** According to FBI data<sup>6</sup>, one in 10 hate crimes occurs in schools and college campuses, including elementary through high schools as well as college campuses. According to data collected from 2020-2022, the number of hate crimes at schools more than doubled, from 500 in 2020 to more than 1,300 in 2022. The most common bias type was anti-Black or African American.

**Law Enforcement:** The nationwide problem of far-right extremism among law enforcement officers is an issue of grave concern. The issue has been well documented, including a 2023 investigation<sup>7</sup> by WBEZ, the Chicago Sun-Times, Organized Crime and Corruption Reporting Project, which found that a significant number of current and former law enforcement officers have at one point belonged to extremist and antigovernment organizations, mostly with impunity.

**Political Violence:** Based on national data<sup>8</sup>, acceptance of political violence has risen sharply over the last several years. Scholars and pundits warn of the potential for political violence during the 2024 presidential campaign.

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Hate incidents are a threat to our communal welfare. They are unique in their capacity to destabilize communities and sow fear, division, and distrust. In Illinois, we are building a coordinated effort, developing resources and tools, and supporting local communities to make our state safer and more welcoming for all.

“We Illinoisans—Muslims, Jews, Christians, Buddhists, Sikhs, atheists, and adherents to the range of world religions—know the cost of hate. We have all, at one time or another, been its target. And we know what happens when we allow our differences to expand and rupture, multiplying the harm.

Many in our communities have connections in Israel and Palestine and have spent the week watching the news, checking on loved ones, and awash in anxiety, grief, and fear. Difficult times can fray our connections and exacerbate our differences. Our work is delicate, and we are just at the beginning. We must take great care as we build the kind of community that supports our entire diverse community.

While we cannot control the war in the Middle East, we can focus on the values we share by living out the values of our diverse democracy through respectful and peaceful dialogue, centering our common humanity, and reinforcing our connections to each other.”

***CDHC Public Statement, October 16, 2023***

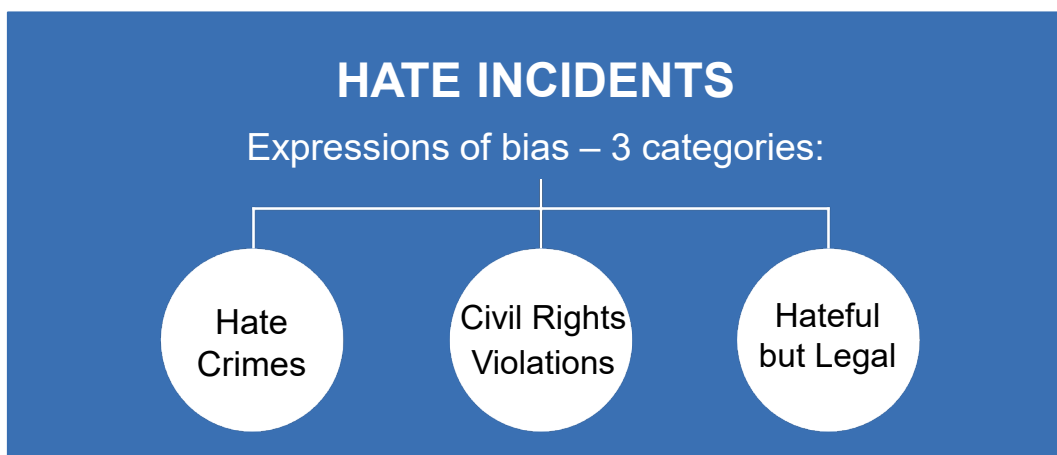
## WHAT IS A HATE CRIME?

Not every act of hate is a hate crime. Acts of hate, “hate incidents,” are expressions of underlying bias against people or individuals based on their actual or perceived race, color, creed, religion, ancestry, gender, sexual orientation, physical or mental disability, citizenship, immigration status, or national origin. There are three types of hate incidents:

**Hate crimes** – In order for something to be classified as a hate crime, it must be both bias motivated and a crime. Illinois hate crimes law includes the following crimes: Assault, battery, aggravated assault, intimidation, stalking, cyberstalking, misdemeanor theft, criminal trespass to residence, misdemeanor criminal damage to property, criminal trespass to vehicle, criminal trespass to real property, mob action, disorderly conduct, transmission of obscene messages, harassment by telephone, or harassment through electronic communications ([720 ILCS 5/12-7.1](#)).

**Civil rights violations** – Hate incidents that may not be crimes but violate one’s civil rights, such as discrimination.

**Hateful, but legal** – Many incidents are hateful but are nonetheless legally protected expression, such as hate speech that does not include an underlying crime or civil offense. Though legal, these incidents cause harm.



## FOCUS:

**STRENGTHENING RESPONSES TO HATE**

Bigotry thrives in silence. For victims of hate, a firm response – from family and loved ones, community, or law enforcement and the legal community – can act as a balm to wounds, repair one’s sense of connection, strengthen communal identity, and serve as a warning to future potential perpetrators.

*What does it take for a community to respond to hate?***We need strong laws.**

Strong hate crimes laws communicate that Illinois takes hate crimes seriously, that bias-motivated crimes will be punished with extra severity. Illinois already benefits from strong human rights and hate crimes laws. Nevertheless, CDHC is continually working with IDHR, elected officials, and community-based organizations to strengthen the law by expanding the list of crimes or to expand the protected classes.

- CDHC reviews, advises, and offers recommendations to improve or address concerns about proposed legislation relating to hate incidents. In 2023, CDHC worked on the following legislative efforts:
- Racism Free Schools: With proponents, sponsors, advocates, and other education stakeholders, CDHC/IDHR worked to improve the Racism Free Schools bill (SB 90), increase its fairness and feasibility, and lead the creation of a cross-cutting implementation workgroup.
- CHI v. Hate, an amendment of City of Chicago Municipal Code Section 2-120-518 establishing reporting and tracking procedures regarding hate incidents.
- Proposed legislation aiming to increase information sharing between law enforcement agencies.
- The CDHC has discussed, advised, and provided input on a variety of proposed legislation that affects hate crime and adjacent laws and policies.

### Victims need to report hate crimes to law enforcement.

CDHC is working to increase community education to help Illinoisans recognize hate crimes, understand their legal options, and know how to navigate relevant systems. In 2023, CDHC and Illinois State Police, along with other state and local partners, began a series of listening sessions with community leaders from protected classes. The first three sessions were with Middle East North African (MENA) community leaders, MENA religious leaders, and Asian American Pacific Islander communities.

### Law enforcement needs to investigate crimes as hate crimes. Prosecutors and judges need to prosecute hate crimes as hate crimes.

Based on a 2022 CDHC recommendation, Commission staff and Commissioners made strides toward mandated hate crimes training for law enforcement. CDHC has conducted research, legal analysis, and support-building conversations across jurisdictions. The effort has gained traction among community-based organizations, government agencies, and some law enforcement leaders.

### Community needs to support victims with trauma-informed care, connection, and access to relevant services.

During 2023, CDHC stepped up to help communities in crisis, communicating support and providing information to empower people targeted by hate.

**“No person and no community in this country should have to live in fear of hate-fueled violence.”**

United States Attorney General **Merrick Garland**, at a November 2023 United Against Hate Virtual Forum

## Strengthening responses to hate

“These are uncertain and dangerous times, but we are not powerless. We cannot control what happens across the world, but each of us has power to do something. We can interrupt hateful speech and bigotry when we hear it, particularly when it comes from people with whom we are usually aligned. We can do our best to lower the temperature in our shared community. We can show up for each other and actively advocate for each other. Even if people balk, we must be committed to caring for each other and ensuring a safe community for all.”

“Our fates are inextricably bound to each other – Muslims, Jews, Christians, and people of all faiths and ethnicities. Let the violence of recent days be a call to action to protect each other and together build the kind of community that we deserve.”

“The question we at CDHC ask ourselves: How do we build the kind of community that we want for ourselves and our children?”

CDHC Executive Director Elana Kahn  
Speaking at a Press Conference with the Arab  
American Bar Association, Oct. 2023



CDHC Executive Director Elana Kahn (fifth from right) at a press conference convened by Arab American Bar Association, Oct. 2023



CDHC Executive Director Elana Kahn speaks at a press conference convened by the Anti-Defamation League Midwest, Oct. 2023.



## FOCUS:

### DEVELOPING TOOLS & RESOURCES

**We listened.** Tools and resources must reflect a community’s needs. So, in partnership with the Illinois State Police, the Cook County State’s Attorney’s Office, and various local partners, CDHC conducted a series of listening sessions with the goals of learning communities’ needs, using that information to develop necessary responses, and providing relationships and access to existing resources.

**We asked:**

- What sorts of incidents of hate crime or discrimination do members of your community experience?
- Where might they report or seek services to address hate incidents?
- What barriers keep members of your community from reporting?

We conducted sessions with Middle Eastern North African (MENA) and Asian American Pacific Islander (AAPI) communities. More sessions are planned for 2024.



At left: Listening session with religion leaders from the Middle Eastern North African communities, Sept. 2023.



At left: Listening session with leaders from the Asian American Pacific Islander communities, Nov. 2023.

### *We are answering the call.*

Building on its 2022 recommendation to establish a hate crimes and bias incident helpline, separate from law enforcement, to serve victims of hate, CDHC received a **Department of Justice grant to launch the Illinois v. Hate Helpline in April 2024.**

Many victims and witnesses to acts of hate do not report them due to fear of retaliation, lack of trust, and language or cultural barriers. Helplines provide a safe, anonymous reporting option for victims and witnesses by offering a way to report what happened and receive support without contacting law enforcement, unless they wish.

**Illinois v. Hate** - a new Helpline will provide a safe space for survivors, witnesses, and community members affected by hate to obtain information and receive support and referrals to relevant services.

#### **Illinois v. Hate** will:

- Help hate crime victims receive trauma-informed assistance and support.
- Provide better hate crime reporting and data collection in Illinois.
- Encourage state and local authorities to improve their approach to responding to hate crimes.
- Improve outcomes and justice for victims of hate.

The Illinois v. Hate Helpline will provide a unique and valuable service to individuals, communities, organizations, law enforcement, and ultimately the entire State of Illinois.

# #IllinoisvHate

## FOCUS:

# INCREASING EDUCATION & UNDERSTANDING

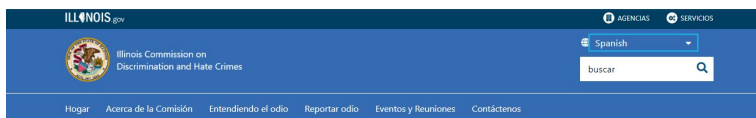
In 2023, CDHC filled important gaps in education and understanding about hate through trainings, educational programs, outreach, public statements, and public appearances.

**We offered educational programs and trainings to raise awareness, empower communities, and articulate a vision of interconnectedness and mutual responsibility.**

In these times of increased polarization, the CDHC entered the public square through press conference appearances, social media, and public statements.

During 2023, the CDHC reached thousands of people through its outreach efforts:

- 31,598 social media impressions
- 3,500 people visited us at State Fair 2023
- 2,000 people visited CDHC website pages regarding hate crimes
- 150 people attended town halls and other programs



Comisión de Illinois sobre Discriminación y Crímenes de Odio

Juntos podemos garantizar que no haya espacio para el odio en Illinois.

La Comisión de Illinois sobre Discriminación y Delitos de Odio es una comisión designada por el Gobernador que trabaja para contrarrestar y prevenir los prejuicios y el odio.

The CDHC expanded its use of new website technology to offer more navigable content and translation resources to visitors.

Left, CDHC homepage with Spanish translation.

### *In programming and media:*

**We were more visible.** CDHC supported or spoke at numerous press conferences and programs – often at critical junctures for impacted communities.

- Ald. Silverstein’s resolution to establish May as Jewish American Heritage Month, May 2023.
- Anti-Defamation League Press Conference on “Hate in the Prairie State,” October 2023.
- Arab American Bar Association press conference on rising hate, October 2023
- Responded to an urgent request with a session on “Hate and Community: What We Can Do” with Arab American Family Services, October, 2023.
- Presented the model of the CDHC and its work as a model for other states and units of government around the country at the International Association of Official Human Rights Agencies annual conference in Washington, DC, August 2023.
- Sponsored and spoke at Combating Hate Crimes: Resources and Support for Communities Under Attack: A Panel Discussion on Resources and Pathways to Justice in Illinois,” with CAIR Chicago, Cook County State’s Attorney’s Office, the Cook County Commission on Human Rights, and the Chicago Commission on Human Relations, December 2023.
- Sponsored and spoke at Chicago premiere of “Repairing the World: Stories from the Tree of Life,” with Cook County United Against Hate, Not in Our Town, Facing History & Ourselves, Temple Shalom, JCC Chicago, Chinese American Service League, and Interfaith America, December 2023.



“Hate and Community: What We Can Do,” a virtual program of the CDHC in partnership with Arab American Family Services, Oct. 2023.

## Supporting youth:

### CDHC led and supported efforts to address hate impacting youth & families:

- Through its Youth and Education Committee, CDHC convened educational leaders to offer recommendations to IDHR for the development of an educator training mandated in the Racism Free Schools Law SB0090 (Public Act 0472).
- Through a \$1M General Assembly appropriation for FY24, CDHC/IDHR is supporting the work of the Simon Wiesenthal Center’s Mobile Museum of Tolerance. This project, including its new Combat Hate: A Digital Media Literacy Workshop, and the development of a new workshop and curriculum specifically about the history and experience of civil rights in Illinois.



CDHC raised its voice to denounce hate and provide a vision for a resilient and unified community.

Above: Sharing contact resources with families impacted by hate.

Right: Clip from a CDHC Instagram post after the hate-fueled killing of six-year-old Wadea al-Fayoume, Oct. 2023.

## FOCUS:

### DATA & RESEARCH

**Data and Research:** In partnership with other public and private stakeholders, the CDHC is building data collection systems and conducting research to increase knowledge about bias and hate in Illinois, which will, in turn serve to improve programs, policies, and fiscal allocations.

During 2023, CDHC took meaningful steps toward the goal of conducting a statewide study of hate, hate crimes, and extremism. The data, information, and analysis compiled for the study will inform policy across IDHR, the CDHC, the State, and local municipalities across Illinois. The study will be a first step in the CDHC's work to establish a statewide data collection and analysis hub.

Three main areas of investigation and analysis:

- A comprehensive risk, vulnerability, and threat assessment of hate, hate crime, extremism, domestic terrorism, and other forms of social conflict and unrest in the state.
- A comprehensive accounting and mapping of existing resources and actors, private and public sector, addressing hate, extremism, and community relations.
- An audit of past hate crime official response, tracing the full lifespan, from report or incident all the way to potential sentencing.

The report will also include important policy recommendations suggested by the research findings.

## FOCUS:

## COORDINATING EFFORTS

As acts of bias and hate increase, many community-based organizations and government bodies work to respond. While more responsive and preventative efforts can lead to more and better solutions, it also risks leading to fragmentation, disconnection, and a resulting chaotic set of options and resources.

As the only state body tasked with preventing and responding to hate, CDHC aims to coordinate efforts between government, community-based organizations, law enforcement, academia, etc. This includes convening; making connections between disparate efforts; elevating and supporting others' work; identifying gaps; and seeking to fill those gaps.

Some of the many city, county, state, and federal agencies, programs, and organizations that worked in partnership with the CDHC during 2023 include:

Access Living	Illinois Office of the Attorney General
Advance Illinois	Illinois Principals Association
American Jewish Committee	Illinois State Board of Education
Anti-Defamation League	Illinois State Police
Arab American Bar Association	Inner-City Muslim Action Network
Arab American Family Services	Institute of Government and Policy
Brave Space Alliance	Affairs, University of Illinois System
Chicago Commission on Human Relations	Institute for Healthcare Delivery Design,
Chinese American Service League	University of Illinois Chicago
Cook County Commission on Human Rights	Jewish United Fund
Cook County State's Attorney	Muslim Civic Coalition
Cook County United Against Hate	National Organization of Black Law
Council on American-Islamic Relations	Enforcement Executives
Illinois Association of Regional	Not in Our Town
Superintendents of Schools	Refugee One
Illinois Association of School Boards	Simon Wiesenthal Center
Illinois Department of Human Services	Southern Illinois University
Illinois Department of Public Health	Teach Plus
Illinois Emergency Management Agency	United States Department of Justice
and Office of Homeland Security	University of Illinois System

## PROGRESS UPDATES

### *Updates on CDHC Prior-Year Recommendations:*

**Recommendation #1:** *Establish a hate crimes and bias incident helpline, separate from law enforcement, to serve victims of hate crimes and bias incidents.*

**Progress Update:** In March 2023, CDHC received a three-year grant of \$1,116,341 from the United States Department of Justice's Office for Victims of Crime to establish a statewide Bias and Hate Incident Helpline. With a "soft launch" in late April 2024, and an official launch in Fall 2024, the Helpline will assist individuals and communities affected by bias and hate crimes. See "Developing Tools and Resources," on Page 18.

**Recommendation #2:** *Establish a grant program for community-based social service agencies to develop and deploy resources and programs to serve victims of hate crimes and bias incidents within their respective service areas.*

**Progress Update:** This recommendation requires legislative and agency action.

**Recommendation #3:** *Mandate comprehensive hate crimes basic and in-service training module for local law enforcement agencies.*

**Progress Update:** With Department of Justice funding, Illinois Attorney General Kwame Raoul's Office has developed specialized hate crime training to law enforcement officers and prosecuting attorneys in Illinois. CDHC has worked with elected officials, law enforcement officials, and community-based organizations on potential legislative efforts. See "Strengthening Responses to Hate," Page 14. The CDHC has also advised on legislative initiatives to increase and mandate hate crime training for law enforcement officers.



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**Recommendation #4:** *Establish a statewide data collection and analysis hub for hate crimes and bias incidents.*

**Progress Update:** CDHC is developing a formal relationship with an academic institution to create a statewide study of hate and an ongoing system for tracking hate incidents. That study in combination with data from the Illinois v. Hate Helpline is substantial progress toward this goal. See “Data & Research,” Page 22.

**Recommendation #5:** *Through IDHR, assess the capacity to research best practices and develop educational programs discouraging hate crimes for each protected class that may satisfy requirements for order of probation or conditional discharge for offenders.*

**Progress Update:** Under the CDHC’s Legal Committee, this recommendation is a topic for continued research and investigation.

**Recommendation #6:** *Explore and engage in partnership opportunities with an academic and research institution, to develop and deploy evidenced-based radicalization inoculation interventions to reduce the number of hate and bias incidents in Illinois.*

**Progress Update:** During 2023, CDHC met with academics, researchers, and other subject matter experts to explore partnerships to develop pre-preventative efforts within a public health model. The statewide study of hate is an essential first step in this initiative. See “Data & Research,” Page 22.

**Recommendation #7:** *In consultation with State and local units of government, develop and implement a comprehensive strategic community and organizational partner outreach plan.*

**Progress Update:** CDHC’s Resource Network Committee has begun this work and plans to launch a statewide partner network in early 2024.

## RELATIONSHIPS: THE POWER OF SHOWING UP

At the CDHC, we value relationships as the basic atoms of all social change. As such, we prioritize strengthening connections between Commissioners as a stated goal; by developing trusting relationships between our diverse Commissioners, we model social cohesion and resilience. Additionally, relationships between Commissioners translates to increased understanding and cooperation between communities.

With that in mind, in 2023, after two years of solely virtual meetings, the Commission began holding hybrid meetings, held an in-person informal holiday gathering, and planned its first ever in-person retreat for early 2024.

CDHC staff and Commissioners strengthen community through the simple act of showing up, investing in each other, and building a more connected and more trusting community.



## 2024 AND NEXT STEPS

### *Expanding our reach, engaging more partners and community*

CDHC enters 2024 with new energy, bolstered by the wisdom and contributions of its extraordinary Commissioners, whose expertise and professional networks pave paths toward great impact. After three years of thoughtful study, CDHC is stepping boldly into the work of developing real-world, programmatic solutions to serve the entire state community, thinking pragmatically while remaining focused on high level strategic approaches.

The programmatic work includes the April 2024 launch of the Illinois v. Hate Helpline, trainings and sessions on hate for communities in need, multiple convenings of community-level organizations involved in anti-hate work.

The helpline, along with a game-changing state study of hate, will provide data and insights to inform anti-hate work throughout the state. In partnership with an academic institution and subject matter experts, the CDHC study will provide data on the quantity and characteristics of hate incidents throughout the state, on assets and resources available to counter and prevent hate incidents, and an analysis of the life cycle of hate crimes, from commission through involvement with law enforcement and the legal community, to disposition.

Alongside the work of developing resources and programs, CDHC stays focused on developing new ways to understand, respond, and prevent expressions of hate. During 2023, CDHC began talking about hate as a public health issue, a preventative, data-driven approach that expands community's capacity to foster individual and communal resilience. CDHC's burgeoning partnership with Illinois Department of Public Health will certainly bear fruit in 2024, beginning with collaboration on the statewide study and summit.

In times of rising hate, it is our shared work to support the vast majority of community members who are committed to building an inclusive and safe state community, to lift up the peacemakers and bridge-builders, to weave together an unbreakably strong community.

## GLOSSARY

**Ableism:** The marginalization and/or oppression of people who have disabilities, including temporary, developmental, physical, psychiatric and/or intellectual disabilities.

**Anti-Bias:** An active commitment to challenge bias within oneself, others, and institutions.

**Antisemitism:** Discrimination, prejudice, or hatred toward Jews (per Deborah Lipstadt, Special Envoy to Monitor and Combat Antisemitism, [U.S. Department of State](#)).

**Bias:** An inclination or preference, either for or against an individual or group, that interferes with impartial judgment.

**Bias-Motivated Civil Rights Violation:** Hate incidents that may violate one's civil rights, such as discrimination and harassment. The Illinois Human Rights Act serves as a protection for such violations and victims can file a charge with the Illinois Department of Human Rights

**Bullying:** Repeated actions or threats of action directed toward a person by one or more people who have (or are perceived to have) more power or status than their target to cause fear, distress, or harm. Bullying can be physical, verbal, psychological or any combination of these three.

**Bystander:** An individual who observes or witnesses a bias-motivated incident or violence and has the opportunity to either condone, intervene, or do nothing.<sup>9</sup>

**Discrimination:** The denial of justice, resources and fair treatment of individuals and groups (often based on social identity), through employment, education, housing, banking, political rights, etc.

**Explicit Bias:** The conscious attitudes, stereotypes, and overt intentional actions (positive or negative) toward members of a group merely because of their membership in that group.

**Harassment:** Behavior directed toward a protected class that becomes so severe or pervasive that it creates a hostile environment.

**Hate Incident:** A hostile expression or action committed in whole or in part because of a person's actual or perceived membership in a protected group, including race, color, disability, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, or gender, including gender identity. There are three types of hate incidents: 1. Hate crimes; 2. Bias-motivated civil rights violations; and 3. Acts of hate that may not violate the law but are nonetheless harmful.

**Hate Crime:** A crime motivated by bias against race, color, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, or disability. A hate crime must include both a bias motivation and an underlying crime.

**Identity-Based Bullying:** Refers to any bullying related to the characteristics considered unique to a person's identity, such as their race, religion, sexual orientation, or physical appearance.

## GLOSSARY (continued)

**Implicit or Unconscious Bias:** Feelings, assumptions, perceptions, or fears about members of a group merely because of their membership in that group that one is not consciously aware of.

**Islamophobia:** Prejudice, hatred, or hatred toward Muslims or those perceived to be Muslim.

**Prejudice:** A premature judgment or belief formed about a person, group, or concept before gaining sufficient knowledge or by selectively disregarding facts.

**Racism:** Racism is different from racial prejudice, hatred, or discrimination. Racism involves one group having the power to carry out systematic discrimination through the institutional policies and practices of the society and by shaping the cultural beliefs and values that support those racist policies and practices. [Source: DRworks, retrieved from <https://www.dismantlingracism.org/racism-defined.html> on March 19, 2024]

**Segregation:** The separation or isolation of individuals or groups on the basis of race, class, etc.

**Sexism:** The marginalization and/or oppression of women, based on the belief in a natural order based on sex that privileges men.

### Speech:

**Hate Speech:** Hate speech is public speech that expresses hate, prejudice, and/or bigotry or encourages violence towards a person or group based on race, religion, skin color, sexual identity, gender identity, etc. Generally, hate speech is protected under the First Amendment of the United States Constitution unless it directly incites imminent criminal activity or consists of intimidation and threats of violence targeted against a person or group on the basis of their race, religion, skin color, sexual identity, gender identity, etc.

**Free Speech:** Free speech is the right to express ideas and opinions without government censorship. The First Amendment of the United States Constitution establishes and protects our freedom of speech, including speech that is deemed to be hate speech.

**Stereotype:** An oversimplified generalization about a person or group of people without regard for individual differences.

*Sources: Anti-Defamation League, Illinois Department of Public Health, and U.S. Department of State.*

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS & ENDNOTES

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### ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup> Illinois General Assembly (2007.) Commission on Discrimination and Hate Crimes Act (20 ILCS 4070/), retrieved from <https://www.ilga.gov/legislation/ilcs/ilcs3.asp?ActID=2927&ChapterID=5> on Feb. 26, 2024.

<sup>2</sup> Deputy Attorney General Lisa O. Monaco Delivers Remarks on the Justice Department's Role in Combating Modern National Security Threats | United States Department of Justice. Retrieved from <https://www.justice.gov/opa/speech/deputy-attorney-general-lisa-o-monaco-delivers-remarks-justice-departments-role> on Feb. 26, 2024.

<sup>3</sup> F.B.I. Tracks Increased Threats to Jews and Muslims After Hamas Attack - The New York Times (nytimes.com). Retrieved from <https://www.nytimes.com/2023/10/15/world/middleeast/threats-jewish-muslim-americans-israel-attack.html> on Feb. 26, 2024.

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<sup>5</sup> Hate crimes reached record levels in 2023. Why 'a perfect storm' could push them higher (msn.com). Retrieved from <https://www.msn.com/en-us/news/us/hate-crimes-reached-record-levels-in-2023-why-a-perfect-storm-could-push-them-higher/ar-AA1mwAzD> on Feb. 26, 2024.

<sup>6</sup> FBI: Reported Hate Crimes at Schools: 2018-2022. Retrieved from <https://cde.ucr.cjis.gov/LATEST/webapp/#/pages/explorer/crime/special-reports> on Feb. 26, 2024.

<sup>7</sup> Chicago police officers with ties to extremist Oath Keepers stay on the force. Some have troubling records. - Chicago Sun-Times (suntimes.com). Retrieved from <https://graphics.suntimes.com/extremism-ranks/2023/oathkeepers-investigation-chicago-police-extremism-insurrection/> on Feb. 26, 2024.

<sup>8</sup> The Rise in Political Violence in the United States and Damage to Our Democracy - Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. Retrieved from <https://carnegieendowment.org/2022/03/31/rise-in-political-violence-in-united-states-and-damage-to-our-democracy-pub-87584> on Feb. 26, 2024.

<sup>9</sup> Rodenhizer-Stämpfli et al., 2018; Barnyard, 2011, as cited in Henson et al., 2020, as cited in the American Psychological Association, as cited in <https://www.apa.org/pi/health-equity/bystander-intervention.pdf>. Retrieved on March 19, 2024.

