

**THE U.S. NATIONAL
STRATEGY TO
COUNTER
ISLAMOPHOBIA AND
ANTI-ARAB HATE**

DECEMBER 2024



**THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON**



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December 12, 2024

This October, [we marked](#) the passage of one year since the brutal killing of six-year old Wadee Alfayoumi, an American Muslim boy of Palestinian descent, who was viciously killed in his home in Illinois. The attacker also repeatedly stabbed and gravely wounded his mother, Hanan Shahin. Wadee's parents came to the United States in search of what we all seek: a fair chance at pursuing the American dream. These heinous acts shattered an American family. And they spread a wave of horror and fear across our nation.

Over the last year, we have experienced a sharp increase in discrimination and violence against Muslim, Arab, and Jewish communities in the United States.¹ Across the Biden-Harris Administration, we are working with our partners at all levels to keep all communities safe and hold perpetrators of violence accountable.

Since the first day of my Administration, we have prioritized the need to combat hatred in all of its forms and to protect the religious freedom of all Americans. At our 2022 United We Stand Summit against hate-fueled violence, we established a White House Initiative to Counter Hate-Motivated Violence to address violence and bias against all communities. We then launched a whole-of-government effort to counter Antisemitism, Islamophobia, and related forms of bias and discrimination. Last year, we released the first-ever National Strategy to Combat Antisemitism, and today, we are releasing the first-ever National Strategy to Counter Islamophobia and Anti-Arab Hate.

The latest rise in Islamophobia and anti-Arab hate follows other similar episodes in our nation's history. On September 11, 2001, Al Qaeda terrorists attacked our homeland, murdering nearly 3,000 Americans and injuring over 6,000 more.² Muslim, Arab, and Sikh Americans — who were among those killed — shared in the trauma and grief all Americans experienced.³ And many of them suffered in other ways too, targeted because of the color of their skin, their religion, or ethnicity. On September 15, 2001, Balbir Singh Sodhi, a Sikh American entrepreneur in Mesa, Arizona, was murdered in one of the first post-9/11 hate crimes. In the first six years after 9/11, the Department of Justice investigated more than 800 incidents involving violence, threats, vandalism, and arson against Muslims, Arabs, and South Asians.⁴

For decades, these Americans have frequently faced discrimination, hatred, and violence as a result of baseless stereotypes, fearmongering, and prejudice against each of their communities. In some cases, they have been targeted because they are perceived to be Muslim. But let me be clear: community members, such as Arabs and Sikhs, are also routinely targets of hate, bias, and discrimination simply for being who they are.

Individuals and institutions, including places of worship, have been targeted. College students have been shot or assaulted as they walked down streets. Children have been bullied at school, including by having their religious head coverings ripped off. Workers have been denied jobs or demoted due to their faith. Citizens and nonprofit organizations have had their applications for loans, credit cards, and bank accounts denied and their charitable donations blocked merely because of their names. This is wrong. It is unacceptable. And it must change.

The very idea of America is that we are all created equal and deserve to be treated equally throughout our lives. We must realize the dream upon which this country was founded: that freedom and opportunity are for everyone. Muslims and Arabs deserve to live with dignity and enjoy every right to the fullest extent along with all of their fellow Americans. Policies that result in discrimination against entire communities are wrong and fail to keep us safe. This is why, on my first day in office, I rescinded the discriminatory travel ban that prevented individuals

from Muslim-majority and African countries from entering the United States. That ban was a stain on our national conscience and inconsistent with our long history of welcoming people of all faiths and backgrounds.

This first-ever National Strategy to Counter Islamophobia and Anti-Arab Hate is a historic step forward to live up to our ideals. It seeks to deepen understanding of these communities and the discrimination and bias they have long faced across a number of sectors. The Strategy also sets forth a whole-of-government and whole-of-society effort to combat these forms of discrimination. It includes more than 100 commitments to counter hate, discrimination, and bias against Muslims and Arabs. As with the National Strategy to Counter Antisemitism, while we focus on communities who have experienced a sharp rise in hatred, the actions that this Strategy puts forward also seek to protect the freedom and safety of other religious and ethnic communities.

This Strategy creates a path for progress, in partnership with all levels of government, civil society, and the private sector. History has taught us that civil society leaders and state and local governments have critical roles in countering hate. The Strategy focuses on short, medium, and long-term actions that will protect individuals and communities from bias, discrimination, and hatred. We urge our state, local, and international counterparts, as well as civil society, to pursue similar strategies and other initiatives in consultation and partnership with these communities. Over the past year, we have implemented a number of the Strategy's commitments. And although we may not immediately achieve all the change we seek, this Strategy is a critical step in identifying the challenges we face and identifying solutions that civil society and state, local, and national governments can implement over time.

Let us walk forward together, upholding our highest ideals and advancing our collective prosperity. We are the United States of America. There's nothing beyond our capacity if we act together. The power is within each of us to transform the story of our time, to rise together against hate, and to build a nation that treats everyone with dignity and respect. I urge every American to join us in this cause.


A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Joe Biden". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial "J" and "B".



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Our Strategic Approach

This Strategy aims to advance the enduring goal of securing equal rights and equal opportunities for everyone in America. As we continue to take concrete actions to counter all forms of hate, we do so cognizant of both the common and unique ways in which hate affects various communities. As President Biden has emphasized, “History teaches that hate never fully goes away; it only hides until it is given just a little oxygen.” Those who spread vile, hateful ideologies often target multiple racial, religious, and ethnic communities, including Black, Jewish, Muslim, and Arab Americans. The steps we take to address hatred aim to create a better America for all of us and bring us closer to forming a more perfect Union.

Islamophobia is hatred, discrimination, or bias directed at Muslims or those perceived to be Muslim. It can have a profound negative impact on people of all ages and backgrounds, threatening their personal safety and their ability to fully exercise their constitutional rights. This Strategy also seeks to counter hate targeting Arab Americans because they are Arab. It is important not to conflate Muslims with Arabs and Sikhs, who also often experience unique forms of hate, bias, and discrimination because of who they are, not because they are perceived to be Muslims.

This Strategy sets forth actions to counter hate, discrimination, and bias affecting these communities, remaining mindful of their unique experiences. We have listened to community and civil society leaders, as well as subject matter experts from various backgrounds throughout the development of this Strategy, and they have shared both their common and distinctive concerns.

For far too long, it has been common to conflate Arabs and Muslims. As we note in this Strategy, the majority of Arab Americans are not Muslim, and the vast majority of Muslim Americans are not Arab. Arab Americans practice a number of religions, including Christianity and Islam, and they are ethnically and racially diverse. Throughout this Strategy, we identify unique challenges facing Arab Americans and emphasize the importance of avoiding conflation with other communities, even as we put forward a number of common strategies to address many forms of hatred.

To develop this Strategy, the White House and federal agencies gathered input from Muslim, Arab, and Americans from other religious and ethnic communities, as well as from a wide range of other stakeholders, including leaders from civil rights communities; advocacy organizations; heads of business and nonprofit organizations; Members of Congress, state, and local officials; students; scholars and subject matter experts; artists; philanthropic and charitable organizations; and many others. Stakeholders shared their perspectives, expertise, and ideas about how Islamophobia and hate, bias, and discrimination against Arabs manifest today and how they should be addressed.

This Strategy recognizes that countering Islamophobia and hatred against Arabs requires confronting these challenges outside and within government. We acknowledge this truth, identifying course corrections that have already been made, introducing policy reforms, and welcoming further conversations about potential additional changes in policies and practices.

The problem of Islamophobia and hate against Arabs and other religious and ethnic communities in the United States requires not only a whole-of-government strategy, but also a whole-of-society approach. Leadership from the private and nonprofit sectors, including faith communities, is essential to making progress. If we truly value religious liberty, people of all faiths and beliefs must demand it in equal measure for everyone.

While Islamophobia and hate against Arabs continue to present pernicious global problems, the focus of this Strategy is domestic. The U.S. government, led by the Department of State, will also continue, beyond our borders, to counter Islamophobia and hatred against Arabs in coordination with our allies and partners, international organizations, international nongovernmental organizations, and civil society around the world.



It is also important to note that, as we confront these forms of hate, we do so with profound fidelity to and respect for our democratic traditions, including free expression and speech protected by the First Amendment.

The Strategy also calls on Congress, state and local governments, and nongovernmental entities throughout society to address Islamophobia and hate, discrimination, and bias against Arabs in the United States. We urge everyone to join us in seizing this historic opportunity to strengthen our country by living up to its highest ideals.



Overview

President Biden ran for office to restore the soul of our nation — and he and Vice President Harris have been clear that hate, bigotry, and violence have no place in America. Our American values are at risk when Americans cannot freely participate in the basic activities of everyday life — like going to school, shopping at the grocery store, or attending their places of worship — without fear of being targeted, discriminated against, or physically attacked for who they are.

President Biden and Vice President Harris have been tackling hatred from Day One of this Administration. On his first day in office, President Biden rescinded the Muslim travel ban.⁵ In his first week in office, President Biden issued a presidential memorandum directing all federal agencies to combat the pandemic-era resurgence of xenophobia against Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders.⁶

In May 2021, President Biden signed into law the COVID-19 Hate Crimes Act, which includes the Khalid Jabara and Heather Heyer NO HATE Act, to enhance hate crime data collection and provide community-centered solutions to assist hate crime victims and their communities. Since then, Attorney General Merrick Garland has appointed the Department of Justice’s (DOJ) first-ever Anti-Hate Crimes Resources Coordinator and designated staff to oversee expedited review of hate crimes. DOJ also launched the [United Against Hate](#) program in all 94 of its U.S. Attorneys’ Offices (USAOs) to train community members on how to identify and report hate crimes and hate incidents. The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) has elevated hate crimes and criminal civil rights violations to its highest-level national threat priority, increasing the resources for hate crimes prevention and investigations and making hate crimes a focus for all FBI field offices.

In September 2022, President Biden and Vice President Harris convened the United We Stand Summit at the White House to bring together communities, including Muslim and Arab leaders, from across the country to counter hate-fueled violence and put forward a shared vision and agenda for working toward a more united America.⁷ At the summit, the Administration announced a White House Initiative to Counter Hate-Motivated Violence to address violence and bias against all communities, including Black, Arab, Latino, Asian American, Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander, people with disabilities, Jewish, Muslim, and LGBTQI+ communities.

In December 2022, President Biden established an interagency group to increase and better coordinate U.S. government efforts to counter Antisemitism, Islamophobia, and related forms of bias and discrimination within the United States.⁸ During the May 2023 Eid-al-Fitr reception at the White House, President Biden reaffirmed that confronting all forms of hate, including Islamophobia, is a top Administration priority. He emphasized that, “Standing up against anti-Muslim hate is essential to who we are as a country founded on freedom and justice for all.” Later that month, Second Gentleman Douglas Emhoff and other senior Administration officials held a listening session with U.S. Muslim leaders to discuss efforts to counter Islamophobia, including the development of a national strategy to counter this form of hate.⁹

Last year, the President released the first-ever [National Strategy to Counter Antisemitism](#), which included more than 100 actions by the Biden-Harris Administration to raise awareness of Antisemitism and Jewish American heritage, reverse the normalization of Antisemitism, protect Jewish communities, and build cross-community solidarity. Many faith communities were involved in the development of that Strategy, and a number of its actions address hate more broadly, including specific actions to counter Islamophobia. The Biden-Harris Administration continues to implement the National Strategy to Counter Antisemitism, focusing on school and campus safety, online safety, and prevention and protection for Jewish and other individuals, institutions, and communities. These interconnected initiatives are referenced throughout this Strategy.



In November 2023, President Biden and Vice President Harris announced longstanding plans for the Biden-Harris Administration to develop the first-ever National Strategy to Counter Islamophobia and Anti-Arab Hate as an important part of its broader work to counter hate-fueled violence, discrimination, and bias against all Americans. This Strategy is the first national U.S. government initiative focused on countering Islamophobia and hatred, bias, and discrimination against Arab communities in U.S. history.

The Strategy takes a number of concrete actions to counter hatred against Muslim Americans, a community that includes people of many different races, ethnicities, and national origins. It also addresses hatred against Arabs, a community composed of people of varied races and religions, including Christianity and Islam. This Strategy aims to increase understanding of the common and unique aspects of hate against these communities so that we may counter such hatred more effectively. It also underscores the threat that hatred poses to our country as a whole.

The Strategy promotes a whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach that complements and bolsters ongoing efforts. The Strategy is divided into four priority areas that take steps to:

- Increase Awareness of Hatred Against Muslims and Arabs and Broaden Recognition of These Communities' Heritages
- Improve Safety and Security for Muslims and Arabs
- Tackle Discrimination and Bias Against Muslims and Arabs and Appropriately Accommodate Their Religious Practices; and
- Continue to Build Cross-Community Solidarity and Collective Action to Counter Hate

As noted throughout the Strategy, many actions have already been completed. This Strategy calls for actions by all sectors of society, both now and over the long term. Effective implementation of this Strategy will create a more prosperous future for everyone.



Framing the Challenge and Solution

The history of Muslim and Arab communities in America began before our founding, and generations of these Americans have helped build our nation. They are first responders, members of our military, elected leaders, physicians, scientists, authors, inventors, entrepreneurs, workers across the economy, teachers, artists, and athletes.

The history of our nation also contains chapters marred by patterns of hate, discrimination, and bias against these communities. Exclusion of Muslims and Arabs was common during immigration in the 18th, 19th, and 20th centuries.¹⁰

International events of the 20th century fueled prejudice and hostility towards Arab and Muslim communities. Hate crimes against Arab Americans, for example, increased significantly after the onset of the Gulf War in 1990, prompting President George H.W. Bush to declare that “death threats, physical attacks, vandalism, religious violence, and discrimination against Arab-Americans must end.”¹¹ Troubling depictions of Arabs and Muslims in the media as violent, extremist, misogynistic, and anti-American continued through the turn of the century, stoking stereotypes and generating fear and hostility towards Muslim and Arab people and cultures.¹²

The horrific attacks of September 11, 2001, changed our country forever. Al Qaeda terrorists murdered nearly 3,000 people and injured over 6,000 more.¹³ Muslim, Arab, and other religious and ethnic communities, including Sikhs, in the United States shared the victimization, shock, and fear that all Americans felt after the attacks, and the resulting fallout impacted these communities again as they faced violence, harassment, and discrimination simply because of their race, ethnicity, or religion.¹⁴ In the decades since, they have expressed apprehension and fear of surveillance and profiling. Comforts that most Americans take for granted, such as unimpeded return to their homes after overseas travel, can prove arduous and anxiety-laden for communities who are concerned that they experience repeated screenings, questioning, and travel delays.¹⁵

Recent events have again fed bias, discrimination, and violence aimed at Muslim and Arab communities in the United States. The most harrowing examples include the heinous killing of six-year-old Wadee Alfayoumi and assault on his mother, Hanan Shahin, in Illinois; the shooting of three young men in Vermont; and the stabbing of a young man near a college campus in Texas. Palestinian Americans were targeted in each of these cases.¹⁶ And as we continue to reject all forms of hate and those who engage in violence, we also acknowledge that many who have peacefully expressed support for Palestinian civilians have been falsely accused of supporting Hamas.

This Strategy draws on the full weight of the federal government to counter this hate, bias, and discrimination to ensure these communities are fully included in the promises of liberty and opportunity upon which our country was founded. The Strategy emphasizes that a threat to one American community is a threat to all and to our democratic system. Hatred of Arabs and Muslims erodes our democracy by spreading manipulative falsehoods, encouraging people to act based on fear instead of fact, promoting prejudice and dehumanization, discouraging active citizenship, and driving people toward authoritarianism. In short, Islamophobia and hate against Arabs impact everyone. All Americans have ample reason to join the effort to counter these forms of hate and build greater unity in our country.

Through the executive branch actions and calls to action, the Strategy emphasizes the importance of education to better understand these communities. That includes their common concerns, their unique experiences, and the resources that will enable them to fully exercise their rights without enduring bias or discrimination.

This Administration aspires to a future in which all Americans can send their children to school and know that they will be safe. Every person should have confidence that their government will treat them fairly.



All communities should have the opportunity to thrive economically and live their lives free from discrimination. And everyone should be able to peacefully practice their First Amendment rights — including their rights to assemble and petition the government — without fear of retribution. Through this Strategy, we call on all sectors of society to rededicate themselves to these principles.

The history of Islam and Muslims in America is intertwined with America’s founding and history. Thomas Jefferson owned a Quran and was the first President to host an iftar.¹⁷ He also penned the Virginia Statute for Religious Freedom, a precursor for the religion clauses of the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. The Virginia statute, Jefferson insisted, was intended “to comprehend, within the mantle of its protection, the Jew and the Gentile, the Christian and Mahomedan.” Muslims have fought in wars to establish and defend the United States, including in the War for Independence. During President Obama’s visit to the Islamic Society of Baltimore in February 2016, he recognized this history, emphasizing, “Islam has always been part of America. Starting in colonial times, many of the slaves brought here from Africa were Muslim. And even in their bondage, some kept their faith alive. A few even won their freedom and became known to many Americans. And when enshrining the freedom of religion in our Constitution and our Bill of Rights, our Founders meant what they said when they said it applied to all religions.”

As we work tirelessly to protect the rights of all Americans, it is important to remember that even in our darkest hours, presidents have called upon Americans to resist the temptation to dehumanize one another and cast some into the camp of the “other.” Just days after the 9/11 attacks, during a visit to the Islamic Center of Washington, D.C., President George W. Bush drew a clear line between the terrorists who attacked us and the millions of American Muslims who make “an incredibly valuable contribution to our country” and should be treated with respect by fellow Americans. More recently, President Biden stated, “We recognize the violence and hate that Muslims worldwide too often face because of their religious beliefs — and the ugly resurgence of Islamophobia in the wake of the devastating war in Gaza. And, we rededicate ourselves to building a world where people of all faiths and all backgrounds are free to live without fear of persecution. That includes right here at home.”

America is founded on the concept of *E Pluribus Unum*, the idea that out of many, we are one. During the opening of the Islamic Center of Washington, D.C. in 1957, President Eisenhower said, “under the American Constitution, under American tradition, and in American hearts, this Center, this place of worship, is just as welcome as could be a similar edifice of any other religion . . . This concept is indeed a part of America, and without that concept we would be something else than what we are.”¹⁸

With this Strategy, we seek to bring Americans together to recognize our common humanity, affirm our shared values and history, and embrace equal justice, peace, and security for all.



Priority 1: Increase Awareness of Hatred Against Muslims and Arabs and Broaden Recognition of These Communities' Heritages

Muslims and Arabs have long been a part of the story and history of America. For generations, members of these communities have contributed to the enrichment and prosperity of our nation through their public, military, and community service, in addition to many other pioneering achievements.

Muslims are adherents of the religion of Islam. In the 1500s, the Muslim population in America included people who immigrated, converts to Islam, and as many as 30% of the people who were enslaved and brought to these shores from Africa.¹⁹ Today, there are approximately 3.5 million Muslims in the United States.²⁰ Our nation has one of the most diverse Muslim populations in the world. Although many are first-generation immigrants, approximately half were born in the United States. One third of the American Muslim community is Black, one third is of South Asian descent, one quarter is of Arab descent, and the rest are from all over the world, including a growing Latino Muslim population. Roughly one out of 100 Americans is Muslim.²¹

Arabs are part of an ethnic group sharing the common language of Arabic, which has many dialects. Arab Americans trace their roots to Arabic-speaking countries spanning the Middle East, North Africa, and Sub-Saharan Africa. Arab heritage encompasses a variety of ethnic and racial identities, including Black Arabs. Arabs practice a variety of religions, including Christianity and Islam. Today, more Arab Americans identify as Christian — including from the Protestant, Catholic, and Orthodox traditions — than as Muslim.²² According to some estimates, the majority of Arab Americans are Christian.²³ Arabs have immigrated to the United States since the 1880s. Today, there are more than 3.5 million Arab Americans living in the United States.²⁴

Both Muslims and Arabs as well as other religious and ethnic communities are impacted by Islamophobia, which is hate, discrimination, or bias directed at Muslims or those perceived to be Muslim.²⁵ Such hate, discrimination, and bias can manifest in interpersonal relationships, in public narratives and messages, and in institutional practices.

But it is critical to note that members of these communities also often experience hate, discrimination, and bias precisely because of who they are, and not rooted in any misperception that they are Muslim. We must also understand the hate directed at individuals and institutions because they are Arab.

Even as they have often faced discrimination, Muslims and Arabs have played leading roles in the United States, helping to build our country and achieving at the highest levels in many fields. Perhaps the most well-known Muslim American of all time, the “people’s champ,” Muhammad Ali, dominated his sport while fighting for social justice at home and around the world.²⁶ In 2016, fencer Ibtihaj Muhammad became the first American woman to compete in the Olympics in a hijab, the first Muslim-American woman to win an Olympic medal, and the first Black woman to win an Olympic medal in the sabre event.²⁷ Arab American inventor Anthony Fadell is known as “the father of the iPod,” and went on to help develop the first three generations of the iPhone.²⁸ Steve Jobs, whose father was born and raised in Syria, was the innovative force behind Apple.²⁹ These Americans’ leadership continues to inspire others, including younger generations, to reach their full potential.



Strategic Goal 1.1 — Increase Education About Hatred Against Muslims and Arabs and About Their Heritages

In 2001, FBI reported a 1600% increase from the previous year in anti-Muslim hate crime incidents.³⁰ In the first six years after 9/11, DOJ investigated hundreds of incidents involving violence, threats, vandalism, and arson against Muslims, Arabs, and individuals of South Asian origin.³¹ Other spikes in hate crimes against Muslim Americans include a significant rise in assaults between 2015 and 2016, easily surpassing the number of post-9/11 assaults on members of this community. Over the past year, we have witnessed yet another wave of violent and sometimes deadly attacks on Muslim Americans.

Arab American community members have also expressed deep concerns about the recent spike in incidents of hate and discrimination in the aftermath of the October 7, 2023 Hamas terrorist attacks on Israel, concerns they say mirror their community's experiences following the 9/11 attacks. This hate includes violent attacks on children and students, bullying of children in school, and workplace discrimination. Arab American leaders and others have noted a strong correlation between these incidents and public rhetoric implying that Arab Americans, and Palestinians in particular, support or sympathize with terrorists. Incidents of hate and discrimination against Arab Americans, however, are not limited to the aftermath of terrorist attacks. Twenty-four states currently publish annual hate crimes reports that list anti-Arab hate crimes statistics.³² The 2023 FBI hate crime statistics note 123 anti-Arab incidents.³³

Black Muslim communities have noted the challenges of confronting both Islamophobia and anti-Black racism.³⁴ Despite representing nearly one-third of American Muslims, Black Muslims find that their unique experience is often disregarded.³⁵

To address the frequent and pervasive bias, prejudice, and hatred against these and other religious and ethnic communities, it is critically important for all levels of government and society to become better informed about their histories, heritages, and experiences, working with scholars, other experts, and community leaders to increase understanding.

Completed Executive Branch Actions

- President Biden reestablished the position of Liaison to Muslim Communities within the White House Office of Public Engagement.
- On March 15, 2024, President Biden became the first U.S. President to mark the International Day to Combat Islamophobia. [In his statement](#), President Biden recognized the violence and hate that Muslims worldwide too often face because of their religious beliefs — and the ugly resurgence of Islamophobia in the wake of the devastating war in Gaza. He rededicated his Administration to help build a world where people of all faiths and all backgrounds are free to live without fear of persecution.
- In March 2024, the [Office of Management and Budget \(OMB\) announced](#) that Middle Eastern or North African (MENA) is now a reporting category that all federal agencies must use when collecting information on race and ethnicity, including in the decennial census, to generate more accurate and useful data across the federal government. Federal agencies will continue ongoing engagement with MENA communities as they implement this update.
- In 2022, President Biden became the first U.S. President [to recognize](#) Arab American Heritage Month, which is observed in April. In [2023](#) and [2024](#), President Biden issued proclamations honoring this month.
- The Community Relations Service of DOJ has two public training programs: [Engaging and Building Partnerships with Muslim Americans](#) and [Engaging and Building Partnerships with Sikh Americans](#). These trainings are designed to increase community awareness and build



relationships between government officials and Muslim and Sikh American communities. The Community Relations Service also announced the release [of a new training program](#) to educate law enforcement, schools, religious and secular communities, and public and private organizations toward a more positive and supportive engagement with Arab American communities. To request these trainings, email askcrs@usdoj.gov.

- The Institute for Museum and Library Services (IMLS) [partnered with PBS Books to develop content](#) as part of its Visions of America series on the diversity and contributions of Arabs, Muslims, and other religious and ethnic communities. Curricular materials for use in secondary classrooms and materials for public programming in schools, libraries, and museums were also developed.
- The Small Business Administration (SBA) has trained all field staff on cultural competency and ways to combat discrimination and bias against Muslims and Arabs.
- On December 11, 2024, the Department of Education (ED)-funded technical assistance center, National Center for Safe Supportive Learning Environments, hosted a webinar for educators, school leaders, students, and parents highlighting best practices for religious expression and accommodations in public elementary and secondary schools.
- Over the past year, the Department of Agriculture (USDA) has:
 - expanded educational opportunities for rural youth organizations to learn how to identify and counter Islamophobia, anti-Arab forms of bias and discrimination, and Antisemitism;
 - disseminated materials for rural universities on how to address incidents of Islamophobia, bias and discrimination against Arab Americans, and Antisemitism; created educational opportunities on the faith, culture, and identity of these communities for students, faculty, and staff; and ensured that university calendars are inclusive and accommodation policies are made known to faculty and students alike; and
 - convened rural institutions of higher education and land-grant colleges to share promising practices to address Islamophobia, anti-Arab forms of bias and discrimination, and Antisemitism.

Ongoing Executive Branch Actions

- IMLS will provide a public webinar to museums, libraries, and archives on strategies for making their programs and facilities welcoming and inclusive for Muslim, Arab, and other religious and ethnic audiences.
- IMLS is highlighting projects in libraries, archives, and museums to illuminate the diversity and richness of Muslim and Arab life across the country.
- ED is [promoting technical assistance opportunities](#) to help school and campus communities improve awareness of different religious cultures and practices and how to accommodate religious observances, including Muslim and Sikh observances, such as observance of the holidays, prayer, and dietary requirements, as well as Arab American Heritage Month and other heritage months.
- The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is developing or expanding educational programs and partnerships to highlight the diversity of the veteran population, including the contributions of Muslim and Arab veterans and VA employees, through sharing their stories with the public. VA will share these programs widely and encourage all veterans and employees to speak out against Islamophobia, anti-Arab hate, and other forms of bias and discrimination against religious and ethnic communities.



- VA is standing up a department-wide team to focus on creating a safe and inclusive environment for Muslim, Sikh, Jewish, and people of all faiths and backgrounds such that everyone at VA feels they are treated professionally and with dignity and respect. The team will work enterprise-wide to combat and eliminate Islamophobic and Antisemitic discriminatory acts and practices; educate and raise awareness throughout VA of religious culture, traditions, practices, and holidays; and develop an incident-response blueprint for use when incidents are reported.
- The Department of the Interior (DOI) will continue highlighting resources on various communities' contributions to American history and disseminating the content through the National Park Service (NPS) digital platforms. These resources will include ones featuring the contributions of Muslim and Arab Americans.
- NPS is providing foundational education and awareness to NPS employees to identify and counter Islamophobia and hatred against Arabs.
- NPS's Community Engagement Program is developing new partnerships with community organizations, including Muslim and Arab community organizations.
- AmeriCorps is distributing resources on Islamophobia and hatred against Arabs and other religious and ethnic communities through its national service programs.
- The Census Bureau is reviewing concerns addressing the underrepresentation of Arab Americans and individuals from the MENA region across Census survey and data products.
- The Department of State is developing and will share digital products to highlight for foreign audiences how Muslims and Arabs are welcome in the United States to help address fears among international students who have been accepted into U.S. colleges and universities. The Department of State serves the American people by communicating U.S. foreign policy priorities to American audiences and engages foreign audiences to enhance their understanding of and support for the values and policies of the United States.
- The Department of State will continue to regularly produce content to mark a wide range of heritage months and holidays celebrating Muslim and Arab communities in the United States and overseas. Other U.S. government departments and agencies will also share content produced by U.S. embassies in the Muslim and Arab world. This content will include information about religious and cultural holidays to foster mutual respect and understanding of diverse religious and ethnic groups. The Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs will develop, promote, and enhance cultural and educational exchanges, including outreach to communities, teachers, and students, and others to counter anti-Muslim hatred and Antisemitism. It will also share resources on best practices for educating communities about these issues, and to enable Americans to build cultural awareness about the diversity within Muslim communities worldwide and across Arab cultures.
- The Department of State, through embassies and cultural spaces globally, will continue to increase awareness of the heritages and contributions of Muslim and Arab Americans. Through hundreds of locations worldwide, the Department of State's American Spaces are cultural centers that provide [resources on American culture and history](#), including on [Muslims](#) and [Arabs](#), in the United States.
- The Department of State is facilitating discussions with members of diaspora groups and international students in the United States to increase the U.S. government's understanding of current needs of Muslim and Arab youth and communities in the United States. These discussions will inform messaging for international exchange programs, education programs, and visa applicants regarding safety in the United States.



- The Department of State’s Foreign Service Institute is updating content on anti-Muslim hate and other forms of hatred within preexisting courses — such as Promoting Human Rights and Democracy, Religion and Foreign Policy, and Islam and the Muslim World — to be available to all civil and foreign service officers, to help counter the use of dehumanizing, anti-Muslim, and anti-Arab language and narratives.

Calls to Congress

- **We call on Congress to** formally recognize Arab American Heritage Month and the International Day to Combat Islamophobia on March 15, as designated by the United Nations (UN) General Assembly.³⁶

Calls to Society

- **We call on all political and other leaders to** address discrimination against Muslim and Arab Americans with the same vigor that they have addressed discrimination against other religious and ethnic communities.
- **We call on scholars and others with expertise in protecting religious freedom and countering discrimination to** continue to develop and amplify educational programs in K-12 schools and across campuses.
- **We call on scholars and other experts at state, local, and municipal levels, including state human rights commissions, to** continue to develop technical assistance materials and training opportunities aimed at increasing awareness about Islamophobia and hatred, discrimination, and bias against Arabs and other religious and ethnic communities, and increasing understanding of these communities’ heritage and culture, including their religious practices.
- **We call on state and local governments to support and work with local and regional education centers and museums to** host discussions and programs about the current and historical contributions of local Muslim and Arab community members.
- **We call on state and local governments, including school districts, to** celebrate heritage months and work with experts to produce appropriate content for these engagements.
- **We call on state Offices of New Americans and other entities serving refugee and immigrant communities to** continue to promote awareness of Muslim and Arab experiences, religious and cultural practices, and relevant histories to facilitate culturally competent services and foster effective integration of such communities into civil society.
- **We call on more nations to** develop strategies to counter Islamophobia and hatred against Arabs and other religious and ethnic communities. The United States will continue to learn from, work with, and support the efforts of our allies and multilateral institutions that are implementing their own robust strategies on these topics.



Strategic Goal 1.2 — Bolster Research on These Forms of Hate and Their Impact on American Society, Including Their Intersections with Other Forms of Hate

In order to confront and counter hate, we must recognize its magnitude and manifestations. We must also understand how certain forms of hate rise in relation to violent conflict abroad, and the imperative to do more to protect the civil rights and security of all who are targeted. Data and evidence are the foundation for understanding and addressing these forms of hate. As part of this effort, we are continuing the work highlighted in Strategic Goal 2.1 of the [National Strategy to Counter Antisemitism](#) to improve collection of data on hate incidents and hate crimes. For example, in 2023, the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy launched an interagency effort to improve our understanding of hate crimes and their reporting. This goal encourages agencies, society, and Congress to increase their efforts to measure hatred and use that information to strengthen awareness campaigns, engagement efforts, and educational initiatives that improve Americans' understanding of how hate affects Muslims, Arabs, and other religious and ethnic communities.

Completed Executive Branch Actions

- The Department of Homeland Security (DHS), FBI and the National Counterterrorism Center (NCTC) have completed an unclassified assessment on violent threats facing Muslim and Arab communities in the United States.

Ongoing Executive Branch Actions

- DHS is working with academia, the private sector, and the interagency to support social science research that increases understanding of acts of violence associated with Islamophobia or hate targeting Arabs.
- With input from community stakeholders and civil rights and civil liberties experts, DHS and DOJ are developing informational materials for state and local partners on Islamophobia and acts of hate against Arabs and other religious and ethnic communities. These materials will include information on effective practices that build trust and cultivate relationships with these communities.

Calls to Society

- **We call on academic and other research institutions to** deepen investments in multidisciplinary research on Islamophobia and anti-Arab hate.
- **We call on academic and other research institutions to** convene forums with community leaders, nonprofits, and scholars to discuss Islamophobia and its relationship to other forms of hate as well as best practices for countering Islamophobia.
- **We call on academic and other research institutions to** create forums for community leaders and teachers to partner with academics on educational resources that teach about Islamophobia and other forms of hate, including hatred against Arabs.
- **We call on civil society organizations with expertise in Islamophobia and hatred against Arabs to** continue to conduct research on these forms of hate and to share findings and recommendations with federal, state, and local stakeholders and through public platforms.
- **We call on state and local governments to** strengthen education on hate-fueled violence and the impacts of discrimination. Such trainings should also incorporate teaching about the heritages and



contributions of various communities in the United States, including Muslims and Arabs. State and local governments should create opportunities to educate youth about the impacts of stereotypes of these communities.

- **We call on philanthropic organizations to** provide more resources to think tanks and nonprofits devoted to monitoring, preventing, and addressing Islamophobia and hatred against Arabs and to increasing civic engagement by members of these communities.
- **We call on academic and other research institutions to** encourage research that examines the particular impacts of Islamophobia on women and girls in the United States. This effort includes examining hate, bias, discrimination, and violence against women and girls who wear hijabs or other head coverings.
- **We call on academic and other research institutions to** encourage research about the obstacles and barriers to reporting violence in Muslim, Arab, and other religious and ethnic communities.
- **We call on academic and other research institutions to** ensure that research and evaluation results are translated effectively for public audiences and are made available in multiple communication formats.

Strategic Goal 1.3 — Use Platforms to Combat Hate and Counter Bias in American Public Life

Particularly during times of increased vitriol in the United States, it is imperative that government leaders call out hate, discrimination, and bias, and urge Americans to come together across their differences.

On October 15, 2023, the day after the heinous killing of Wadee Alfayoumi and the brutal stabbing of his mother, President Biden said, “As Americans, we must come together and reject Islamophobia and all forms of hatred and bigotry... We must be unequivocal: There is no place in America for hate against anyone.” Vice President Harris emphasized, “We unequivocally condemn hate and Islamophobia and stand with the Palestinian, Arab, and Muslim American communities. The Biden-Harris Administration will continue working to protect our communities against hate and senseless violence.” Attorney General Merrick Garland reiterated that DOJ would “use every legal authority at our disposal to bring to justice those who perpetrate illegal acts of hate.”

Every public servant and candidate can speak out not just in the aftermath of violent attacks, but also in response to dehumanizing rhetoric that can lead to violence. This leadership is essential to respect the dignity and rights of everyone in America.

The media and entertainment industries also have important roles to play in countering forms of bias that can fuel hate. Many Americans do not know any Muslims or Arabs.³⁷ Bigoted portrayals in media often shape perceptions of these communities. Muslims have been found to be one of the most negatively portrayed minority groups in America.³⁸ Muslim characters are underrepresented and often stereotyped as violent or as outsiders.³⁹ Muslim women characters are frequently presented as oppressed.⁴⁰ Similarly, in a study of more than 1,000 films depicting Arabs, 932 were found to depict Arabs in a stereotypical or negative light.⁴¹

These depictions contribute to Islamophobia and hatred affecting Arabs. Addressing these misleading narratives and media portrayals is critical to preventing misinformed and biased perceptions of these communities that can lead to discrimination and violence.



Ongoing Executive Branch Actions

- The Biden-Harris Administration will continue to speak out clearly and forcefully against Islamophobia and hatred against Arabs and other religious and ethnic communities and those who peddle these forms of hate. The White House can play a critical role in rejecting these forms of hatred, bias, prejudice, and discrimination. The President and other federal leaders will continue to call out all forms of hatred and use every appropriate opportunity to reaffirm and amplify the Administration's profound commitment to countering all forms of hate. And we will continue to strongly encourage all Americans to do the same.
- The White House will convene a roundtable with leaders from the field of journalism to discuss news coverage of Muslim, Arab, and other religious and ethnic communities in the United States and elicit journalists' ideas on how to increase accuracy and fairness.
- The White House will convene a roundtable with leaders from the entertainment industry to discuss portrayals of Muslim, Arab, and other religious and ethnic communities in the United States and elicit from industry leaders their ideas on how to increase accuracy and fairness.
- The White House will engage mayors to discuss bias against Muslim, Arab, and other religious and ethnic communities in American public life and to elicit their ideas on how to increase accuracy and fairness.

Calls to Congress

- **We call on members of Congress to** continue to speak out against, stigmatize, and condemn statements and actions by prominent individuals and groups, including elected officials, who embrace and perpetuate Islamophobia and other forms of hate, including hatred against Arabs.

Calls to Society

- **We call on leaders and creators in the entertainment industry, including directors, producers, writers, actors, and musicians to** reject stereotyping of Muslims, Arabs, and other religious and ethnic communities and encourage such industries to consult with these communities.
- **We call on the news and media industries to** seek out and include more voices from Muslim, Arab, and other religious and ethnic communities, including amplifying the voices of women and girls. We also call on these entities not to perpetuate stereotypes and refrain from using dehumanizing language.
- **We call on the news and media industries to** avoid promoting misinformation and disinformation about Muslims, Arabs, and other religious and ethnic communities and to consider consulting organizations that have helped enable media corporations, content creators, journalists, and reporters to identify bias and prejudice against these communities.
- **We call on influencers of all kinds — especially those in popular culture such as athletes, gamers, and entertainers — to** use their platforms to speak out against and increase awareness of Islamophobia and hatred against Arabs and other religious and ethnic communities.
- **We call on the entertainment industry to** include more diverse representation of all Americans, including through creating multi-dimensional characters from the Muslim, Arab, and other religious and ethnic communities.
- **We call on media platforms to** make training on cultural competency available for journalists, including understanding the experiences, religious practices, and heritage of Muslims, Arabs, and other religious and ethnic communities.



- **We call on media platforms to** include the perspectives of Muslims and Arabs and to address consumer complaints about biased or prejudicial content.
- **We call on American CEOs and business leaders to** speak out loudly and clearly against hateful speech and conduct, especially when it occurs in communities where their businesses are based. American brands and CEOs have great influence, and failure to speak out only contributes to the normalization of Islamophobia and hatred against Arab Americans.
- **We call on public servants at all levels to** speak out against Islamophobia and hatred against Arab, and other religious and ethnic communities. It is particularly important for elected leaders to speak out when others who hold public office engage in hateful speech and conduct.
- **We call on public servants at all levels to** work with communities to challenge Islamophobic and other stereotypes that can lead to acts of hate, discrimination, and violence. This collaboration is especially necessary when domestic or international events spur the proliferation of such stereotypes.
- **We call on public servants at all levels to** recognize those in their communities who seek to counter hatred, address Islamophobia and hatred against Arabs and other religious and ethnic communities, and work to increase understanding of and appreciation for American pluralism.



Priority 2: Improve Safety and Security for Muslims and Arabs

Everyone in America deserves to live their lives, practice their faiths and beliefs, and engage in their communities without the fear of violence, harassment, or discrimination. Muslim, Arab, and other American communities, however, continue to be targeted by hate-fueled violence and bigotry, including attacks against individuals and groups and vandalization of houses of worship and other religiously affiliated institutions. The proliferation of hatred online has also heightened fears among community members. The [National Strategy for Countering Domestic Terrorism](#) and the [National Strategy to Counter Antisemitism](#) have noted that there remains significant overlap between domestic terrorism and the perpetration of hate crimes.

Although law enforcement and homeland security agencies have taken significant steps to address these concerns, a trust deficit with many communities persists, undermining relations and decreasing cooperation that can be important in improving safety. This Strategy seeks to build trust and increase safety by expanding engagement and addressing all areas of community concerns, including strengthening protection of places of worship.

Strategic Goal 2.1 — Combat Hate Crimes

Following October 7, 2023, Attorney General Merrick Garland reported an increase in threats against Jewish, Muslim, and Arab communities and institutions, and reaffirmed DOJ’s commitment to use every tool available to address hate crimes.⁴² Due to underreporting, official hate crimes statistics represent only a fraction of the actual number of these incidents, which have too often involved violent attacks. The same month Wade Alfayoumi was killed in October 2023, a Florida man attacked a U.S. postal worker, ripping off her hijab and punching her. In April 2024, he pleaded guilty to a federal crime with a hate crime enhancement and was sentenced in August 2024 to three years in prison.⁴³ In May 2024, a woman allegedly attempted to drown a three-year-old Palestinian American child. Before the attack, the child’s mother reported to police that the perpetrator said the mother was not American.⁴⁴ In September 2024, the attacker was indicted on attempted capital murder charges including a hate crime enhancement.⁴⁵

Recent attacks also follow an increase in crimes targeting Arab, Muslim, and other communities over the past decade. At the 2022 United We Stand Summit, the Biden-Harris Administration honored the legacy of three Muslim Americans — Deah Shaddy Barakat, Razan Mohammad Abu-Salha, and Yusor Mohammad Abu-Salha — who were shot to death by their neighbor at point-blank range in their home in Chapel Hill, North Carolina, in 2015. After the killings, President Obama said, “No one in the United States of America should ever be targeted because of who they are, what they look like, or how they worship.”⁴⁶ The killer pleaded guilty to three counts of first-degree murder and was sentenced to three life terms without parole for the brutal killings.⁴⁷

On February 22, 2017, a man shot two Indian nationals, killing one and injuring the other, at a restaurant in Olathe, Kansas after yelling, “get out of my country.” The shooter then shot a third individual while attempting to flee the scene. After the killer was sentenced to life in prison, Attorney General Jeff Sessions noted that he “acted with clear premeditation in murdering one man, and attempting to murder a second man, simply because of their race, religion, and national origin.”⁴⁸

In 2011, an Oklahoma man began terrorizing his Christian Lebanese neighbors, the Jabaras, calling them “filthy Lebanese,” “dirty Arabs,” and “Moo-slems.”⁴⁹ In 2013, the man hit Haifa Jabara, the family’s mother, with his car, and in 2016 the man fatally shot her 37-year-old son, Khalid Jabara, on his front porch. In 2018, the killer was convicted of murder and a hate crime and sentenced to life in prison without



parole.⁵⁰ The COVID-19 Hate Crimes Act includes the Khalid Jabara and Heather Heyer NO HATE Act, honoring Jabara and Heather Heyer, who was killed on August 12, 2017, during the “Unite the Right” rally in Charlottesville, Virginia, when a white nationalist rammed his car into a diverse crowd of peaceful counter protestors.⁵¹

Since taking office, the Biden-Harris Administration has taken numerous steps to prevent and address hate crimes, including efforts to hold perpetrators accountable and help communities recover from hate crimes. Building on the progress of Strategic Goal 2.1 of the [National Strategy to Counter Antisemitism](#), this strategic goal seeks to strengthen our efforts to prevent and combat hate crimes. Increasing accuracy of hate crimes reporting and providing accountability through investigations and prosecutions also builds trust, leading to increases in engagement and reporting, improves responses to threats, and enhances efforts to protect public safety.

Completed Executive Branch Actions

- Since 2021, DOJ has [awarded over \\$100 million in grants](#) to law enforcement and prosecution agencies, community-based organizations, and civil rights groups to address hate crimes through outreach, investigations, prosecutions, community awareness and preparedness, reporting, hotlines, and victim services.
- DOJ continues to support law enforcement agencies’ transition to the [National Incident-Based Reporting System](#) (NIBRS). Beginning in January 2021, NIBRS became the national standard for law enforcement crime data reporting in the United States and the transition to NIBRS represented a significant improvement in how reported crime is measured and estimated by the federal government. Since 2015, DOJ Bureau of Justice Assistance and the FBI have provided more than \$150 million to law enforcement agencies and state Uniform Crime Programs to support their transitions to NIBRS.
- DOJ’s [United Against Hate](#) initiative, led by all 94 USAOs, combats unlawful acts of hate by teaching community members how to identify, report, and help prevent hate crimes, and by building trust between law enforcement and communities. In total, USAOs have held at least 550 United Against Hate engagements, which have included more than 18,500 participants so far.
- Attorney General Merrick Garland directed the FBI and all 94 USAOs across the country to work with local law enforcement and community leaders to protect communities from hate-fueled violence in the last year and recently reaffirmed DOJ’s commitment to combat the disturbing rise in the volume and frequency of threats against Muslim, Arab, and Palestinian as well as Jewish communities here in the United States. DOJ created [a webpage](#) aimed at raising awareness of resources for addressing these threats, and it will continue to publicize its efforts.

Ongoing Executive Branch Actions

- The DOJ Civil Rights Division and USAOs around the country continue to prosecute Islamophobic and other hate crimes, including hate crimes directed at students on campus. In October 2024, a New Jersey man [pleaded guilty to a federal hate crime](#) for breaking into the Center for Islamic Life at Rutgers University in New Brunswick, New Jersey, during the Eid-al-Fitr holiday and damaging and destroying religious artifacts because of the Islamic faith of those associated with the facility.
- NCTC, DHS, and FBI are publishing resource guides and other technical assistance products, including intelligence products such as the Joint Intelligence Bulletin, on threats to the Muslim and Arab communities and products via NCTC Joint Counterterrorism Assessment Team, which produces counterterrorism intelligence products for government and the private sector.



- U.S. Attorneys will continue to undertake engagement with community-based groups, including youth, faith leaders, cultural leaders, and civil rights organizers from Muslim, Arab, and other communities targeted by hate crimes.

Calls to Congress

- **We call on members of Congress to** speak out about hate crimes targeting Muslims, Arabs, and members of other religious and ethnic communities, and increase outreach to constituents who have been victims of hate crimes.
- **We call on Congress to** fully fund the President’s fiscal year (FY) 2025 budget request to fund DOJ grant programs, including programs established under the COVID-19 Hate Crimes and Khalid Jabara-Heather Heyer NO HATE Acts, the Matthew Shepard and James Byrd, Jr. Hate Crime Program, and the Community-based Approaches to Prevent and Address Hate Crimes. These programs support state and local efforts to implement NIBRS, create state-run hate crime reporting hotlines, train officers, and develop protocols for identifying, investigating, and reporting hate crimes. These programs also support community-based organizations and civil rights groups implementing comprehensive approaches to promote community awareness and preparedness, increase victim reporting, strengthen community resilience, and improve response to hate crimes.

Calls to Society

- **We call on state and local governments to** intensify efforts to improve hate crime reporting and ensure that all law enforcement agencies have fully transitioned to NIBRS so that they may submit the best possible hate crimes data to the FBI.
- **We call on state and local governments to** create community liaisons and/or points of contact to build relationships with Muslim, Arab, and other religious and ethnic communities and open lines of communication that can lead to increased trust and reporting for hate crimes.
- **We call on law enforcement and prosecutors to** investigate and prosecute suspected hate crimes and speak out against such crimes when they are committed.
- **We call on state and local governments to** consider seeking federal funding through programs such as the Matthew Shepard and James Byrd Hate Crime Program, which support efforts by state, local, and Tribal law enforcement and prosecution agencies and their partners in conducting outreach, educating practitioners and the public, enhancing victim reporting tools, and investigating and prosecuting hate crimes.
- **We call on local governments to** improve the reporting of hate crimes and on civil society organizations with expertise to educate their communities on hate crime reporting.

Strategic Goal 2.2 — Tackle Online Hate

The [National Strategy to Counter Antisemitism](#)’s Strategic Goal 3.2 calls on Congress and technology companies to address online hate. Work remains to address Antisemitism and hatred against Muslim and Arab Americans online.

Ongoing Executive Branch Actions

- The U.S.-E.U. Trade and Technology Council working group on data governance and technology platform regulation, a venue to advance the governance of online platforms, released [a report](#) that identifies mechanisms for platforms to grant researchers access to online platform data. The basis



for this cooperation is the [shared view](#) that online platforms should exercise greater responsibility in ensuring that their services contribute to an online environment that protects, empowers, and respects its users.

- DHS and ED are updating and amplifying best practices for preventing violent online bullying, doxing, swatting, and other forms of harassment and violence related to race, ethnicity, shared ancestry, or religion, as well as best practices for supporting targeted students, faculty, and staff.
- DHS is sharing multilingual resources on personal security, violence-based doxing, swatting, hoax threats, and campus safety in collaboration with ED's engagements with representatives from schools and college campuses.
- DHS is working with interagency partners to expand support for the Invent2Prevent Program. This program empowers university and high school students to develop innovative projects, often leveraging social media or digital platforms to create a tool, product, or initiative that prevents targeted violence.

Calls to Congress

- **We call on Congress to** pass legislation requiring platforms to enable timely and robust public interest research, including on the spread of Antisemitism and hatred against Muslims and Arabs, using platforms' data and analyzing their algorithmic recommendation systems, while maintaining users' privacy.

Calls to Society

- **As with the [National Strategy to Counter Antisemitism](#), the Biden-Harris Administration encourages all online platforms to** independently commit to the following actions:
 - Ensure terms of service and community standards explicitly cover hatred targeting Muslim or Arab and other religious and ethnic communities.
 - Permanently ban repeat offenders, both personal accounts and extremist websites.
 - Invest in human and technical resources to enable vigorous and timely enforcement of their terms of service and community standards. Platforms should ensure their trust and safety workforce has the necessary expertise and continual training in the culture, norms, values, languages, and politics important to the global diasporas of Muslim, Arab, and other religious and ethnic communities.
 - Improve capabilities to de-rank and stop recommending hateful content. Extensive research has shown that online platforms' algorithmic recommendation and ranking systems — depending on the incentives driving them — can amplify and spread violent extremist and hate-fueled content.
 - Increase the transparency of their algorithmic recommendation systems and data, and allow for public interest research to ascertain how these systems amplify and spread hate speech and related content to inform better content moderation tools and approaches. Hate targeting Muslim, Arab, and other religious and ethnic communities should each be treated as a distinct category in transparency reports, and platforms should report on the volume of hate-fueled content adjudicated on platforms.
 - Encourage and support trusted community moderators who receive dedicated, ongoing training in hate speech and bias.



- Engage frequently with civil society groups and individuals that have expertise in the manifestations of hate content in media and online targeting of Muslims, Arabs, and other religious and ethnic communities to stay abreast of the latest developments.
- Listen to the concerns of Muslim, Arab, and other religious and ethnic communities around the world to understand how these users experience hate online and to ensure hate-fueled content is understood, recognized, and properly addressed.

Consistent with other calls to action to online platforms, including the [National Strategy to Counter Antisemitism](#), any commitments are voluntary and will be based on companies' independent assessments about whether to participate.⁵²

Strategic Goal 2.3 — Increase Efficiency, Safety, and Transparency During Travel

The U.S. government is fully committed to its utmost duties to protect the nation from terrorism and other threats to our security, while safeguarding the civil rights and civil liberties of all.

Following the 9/11 terrorist attacks, the federal government made a commitment to use every tool available to combat terrorism and has made heroic strides in keeping Americans safe. The U.S. government developed national security programs, including terrorism screening and watchlisting, designed to strengthen security for the United States. The Biden-Harris Administration set an early goal of ensuring these and other national security programs are focused, efficient, fair, and rooted in underlying evidence of national security threats. Biased practices are unfair; negatively impact privacy, civil rights, and civil liberties; engender mistrust; and perpetuate negative and harmful stereotypes. Practices, policies, and procedures free from inappropriate considerations, by contrast, strengthen trust in departments and agencies and foster collaborative efforts between the U.S. government and communities.

These programs are subject to a range of independent oversight mechanisms. Key entities, including the Offices of Inspector General, the Government Accountability Office, Congress, and the Privacy and Civil Liberties Oversight Board regularly provide oversight. The Biden-Harris Administration is committed to administering these programs in a manner that safeguards privacy, civil rights, and civil liberties. The U.S. government as a whole is committed to providing oversight and transparency related to appropriate and lawful watchlisting, screening and vetting activities, and travel-related redress mechanisms.

The Biden-Harris Administration, consistent with its commitment to security and fairness across the U.S. government's screening, vetting, and watchlisting processes, has consistently worked with departments and agencies as they assess those procedures to improve their effectiveness and protect civil liberties. This approach has led to a number of program and policy reviews to make sure these programs are not only free of bias and discrimination, but also are accurate, timely, and effective. FBI's April 2024 [Overview of the U.S. Government's Terrorist Watchlisting Process and Procedures](#), for example, provides the public with a detailed description of how the watchlisting and redress processes operate.

In this strategy, the Biden-Harris Administration re-commits to these goals and builds on efforts to protect the safety and civil liberties of all Americans.

Completed Executive Branch Actions

- In April 2024, FBI published a new transparency document titled [Overview of the U.S. Government's Terrorist Watchlisting Process and Procedures](#). This document advances transparency by providing a general description of this system and mechanisms to ensure that concerns about it are handled in a timely and fair manner.



- On January 20, 2021, President Biden [rescinded](#) the discriminatory travel ban that prevented individuals from Muslim-majority and African countries from entering the United States, which was inconsistent with our nation’s foundation of religious freedom for all. At President Biden’s direction, the Department of State conducted a review of visa applications and has taken various corrective actions to process applications that were impacted by the travel ban, including reconsidering previously denied applications and implementing a one-time fee credit for certain applicants.

Ongoing Executive Branch Actions

- As part of community and industry outreach, the Visa Outreach team in the Department of State’s Bureau of Consular Affairs will continue community outreach efforts — including with religious groups — regarding the visa application process.
- The Department of State, in coordination with DHS, will launch a public briefing on religious pilgrimage for members of all faith communities traveling overseas to learn about relevant U.S. government resources and processes for American travelers. The Department of State will also proactively message and conduct outreach to American audiences and diaspora populations to raise awareness of safety and security issues for religious pilgrimage travelers.

Strategic Goal 2.4 — Reinforce Physical Security of Muslim and Arab Individuals and Institutions

Muslim, Arab, and other religious and ethnic communities continue to face hate-fueled violence in the United States. One of the deadliest attacks occurred on the morning of August 5, 2012, at the Sikh Temple in Oak Creek, Wisconsin, when a violent white supremacist murdered six people and wounded five innocent worshippers, including one who years later succumbed to wounds he suffered.⁵³ The Oak Creek shooting was the deadliest attack on Sikh Americans in our nation’s history. At the time, it was also the deadliest bias-motivated attacks on an American house of worship since the 1963 church bombing in Birmingham, Alabama. Mosques and other Islamic institutions have also frequently been targeted. For example, on the morning of August 5, 2017, a pipe bomb was thrown through the window of an imam’s office at Dar al-Farooq Mosque in Bloomington, Minnesota.⁵⁴

Houses of worship across the country continue to be attacked and vandalized. Early in 2024, three Hindu mandirs in the San Francisco Bay Area were vandalized.⁵⁵ In September 2024, two additional mandirs — in Melville, New York, and Sacramento, California, respectively — were vandalized with hateful language.⁵⁶

Threats and acts of violence against Muslim and Arab communities have increased since the October 7 terrorist attacks. In May 2024, an individual believed to have been involved in prior violent incidents at a Minneapolis mosque struck a man with a minivan in the mosque’s parking lot.⁵⁷ On November 25, 2023, a gunman shot three college students of Palestinian descent in Burlington, Vermont, while they were walking to a relative’s home.⁵⁸ On February 4, 2024, an individual in Austin, Texas, dragged a Palestinian American out of a vehicle and stabbed him.⁵⁹ FBI and local law enforcement have documented numerous additional reports of property damage, arson, and harassment of Muslims and Arabs. Other threats, such as doxing campaigns, particularly near educational institutions, have targeted Muslims and Arabs, creating a highly threatening environment.

These ongoing threats require the federal government to continue to provide resources to safeguard American communities and institutions. Building on the steps outlined in Strategic Goal 2.3 of the [National Strategy to Counter Antisemitism](#), this Strategy seeks to further enhance the support for communities through the following actions.



Completed Executive Branch Actions

- Through the FY 2024 National Security Supplemental, President Biden secured an additional \$400 million to fund security improvements and training to nonprofits and houses of worship, including mosques.⁶⁰
- DHS and DOJ published a resource guide titled, [Protecting Places of Worship: Six Steps to Enhance Security Against Targeted Violence](#), outlining actions Muslim and other faith-based communities and houses of worship can take to increase security through easily implementable steps that sustain an open and welcoming environment.
- DHS conducted a series of regional and online workshops on protecting places of worship, including with Muslim organizations and communities, which featured opportunities for communities to offer feedback to help inform DHS policies and practices.
- ED [launched a webpage](#) for PreK-12 schools and institutions of higher education highlighting a set of resources to keep schools and campuses safe, and in July 2024, ED, DOJ, and DHS hosted a webinar that delivered resources supporting campus safety.
- In January 2024, ED released its 2024 [National Educational Technology Plan](#), which emphasizes the importance of maintaining a healthy and empowered relationship with technology and the digital world while using technology appropriately and safely.
- In July 2024, ED released its [Designing for Education with Artificial Intelligence: An Essential Guide for Developers](#), which is intended to support developers of AI-enabled educational technology tools as they actively manage and mitigate risks (including malicious uses of AI like cyberbullying) to fully realize AI's benefits.
- DHS published two resource guides to help faith communities and others address swatting, hoax threats and doxing. The [DHS Resources for Swatting and Hoax Threats](#) provides information on how to handle swatting calls and hoax threats, while the [DHS Resources for Individuals on the Threat of Doxing](#) infographic defines what doxing is and outlines proactive steps individuals can take to prevent doxing.
- The DOJ Bureau of Justice Assistance updated its [frequently asked questions](#) to clarify that Byrne Justice Assistance Grant funding can be used by state and local governments for crime prevention efforts to bolster the security of at-risk nonprofit organizations including mosques, churches, gurdwaras, temples, synagogues, and other places of worship.
- DHS FEMA and the DHS Center for Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships (DHS CFBNP) launched the first-ever Protecting Places of Worship Weeks of Action in September 2022 and has continued this annual initiative. During these weeks of action, DHS CFBNP and the White House Office of Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships hosted workshops to encourage partnerships to take collective action against hate-based violence, including Islamophobic violence and hate crimes against Arabs. This emphasis has included promotion of [a DHS guide](#) to applying for Nonprofit Security Grant Program funding.
- In 2022, DHS re-established the [Faith-Based Security Advisory Council](#) to provide advice and recommendations on matters related to protecting houses of worship, preparedness, and enhanced coordination with the faith community.

Ongoing Executive Branch Actions

- DHS has [announced](#) that it will distribute \$210 million in [Nonprofit Security Grant Program](#) funds for projects projected to start on May 1, 2025. This funding is the second tranche of supplemental funding the Biden-Harris Administration secured to protect faith-based institutions



and nonprofit organizations against targeted attacks. The Notice of Funding Opportunity posted on October 28, 2024, [is here](#), while a related Frequently Asked Questions document [is here](#).

- ED’s Center for Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships (ED CFBNP) is promoting technical assistance opportunities for educators and school leaders on preventing and addressing the effects of bullying, violence, and hatred, while also supporting school safety, school-based mental health, and positive school climates for students, including Muslim and Arab students.
- DHS is conducting a series of regional and online workshops on countering Islamophobic and other forms of hate-motivated violence. These workshops are providing information to assist Muslim and Arab Americans and Americans from other religious and ethnic communities in mitigating risk and understanding the resources that are available to address targeted violence.
- DHS and its Faith-Based Security Advisory Council are amplifying resources and tools to improve the physical security of Muslim, Arab, and other religious and ethnic communities nationwide.
- FEMA and DHS CFBNP will continue to collaborate to ensure Nonprofit Security Grant Program funds are easier to access (including greater language access and accommodations) for interested nonprofit organizations. This cooperation will include enhanced and tailored training, refined technical assistance, and engagements with rural and underserved communities to ensure they are aware of the purpose and requirements for this grant program.
- FEMA and DHS CFBNP are socializing a national outreach and engagement strategy that incorporates religiously literate and culturally competent messaging and insights in disaster preparedness messaging and programs like [Community Emergency Response Team Training](#) and [You Are the Help Until Help Arrives](#), and amplifying preparedness resources and initiatives on protecting the safety and security for places of worship.
- DHS is assessing the feasibility of expanding security capacity-building for historically targeted organizations, such as houses of worship, community centers, and religious schools. These services may include risk assessments, planning assistance, exercises, cybersecurity, and active shooter and bomb prevention-related training.
- The U.S. Fire Administration and DHS CFBNP have updated and are socializing content and information on [arson prevention for places of worship](#) and other entities.
- DHS continues to strengthen community-based violence prevention efforts and will conduct consultations with additional Muslim, Arab, and other religious and ethnic communities to gather new input on the design and implementation of programs.

Calls to Congress

- **We call on Congress to** fully fund the DHS Targeted Violence and Terrorism Prevention and Nonprofit Security Grant Programs, which have successfully prevented violence that targets these communities and improved the physical security of community-based organizations.

Calls to Society

- **We call on local jurisdictions to** create grant programs that support mosques, churches, gurdwaras, temples, synagogues, and other places of worship to evaluate their security needs and create security plans.
- **We call on state and local jurisdictions to** consider applying for the Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grants to fund law enforcement efforts that bolster the security of at-risk



nonprofit organizations, including mosques, churches, gurdwaras, temples, synagogues, and other places of worship.

- **We call on mayors and governors to** create faith-based advisory councils that include representatives from Muslim and other religious communities and can make recommendations to improve the safety of these communities.
- **We call on educational institutions to** develop policies to ensure campuses are safe from doxing and provide assistance to students who feel threatened by such campaigns.

Strategic Goal 2.5 — Support Survivors and Victims of Hate Crimes and Violence

Survivors of hate crimes face long-lasting physical, psychological, and financial harms. They should be able to access timely assistance to aid them in healing and readjusting to their lives. The federal government uses a comprehensive approach to assist survivors of hate crimes that includes federal, state, and local government in collaboration with civil society and the private sector to provide services.

Ongoing Executive Branch Actions

- DOJ's Office on Violence Against Women (OVW) has created several grant programs that help community-based organizations increase pathways to justice and safety by addressing barriers that historically marginalized survivors face and by supporting culturally specific services for survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, dating violence, and stalking. In FY 2023, OVW awarded a Training and Technical Assistance grant to the Asian Pacific Institute on Gender-Based Violence to build the capacity of MENA advocacy organizations and victim service providers to serve survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault from MENA communities.
- DHS is promoting its [Gender-Based Violence Pamphlets and Flyers](#) to empower these communities with relevant knowledge and useful resources. DHS provides updated information and resources on its [Council on Combatting Gender-Based Violence](#) webpage.

Calls to Society

- **We call on state and local governments to** strengthen social services to support survivors of hate crimes and their communities and to proactively reach out to Muslim, Arab, Sikh, and members of other ethnic and religious communities in their jurisdictions to raise awareness about support resources that are available to these communities.
- **We call on civil society organizations with expertise in providing direct legal and social services to survivors and victims of hate crimes and violence to** address factors such as language barriers, financial barriers, and other influences that may hinder individuals from seeking or accessing resources and services.

Strategic Goal 2.6 — Address Foreign Support for Islamophobia and Other Forms of Transnational Repression

Hate knows no boundaries. As noted in the [National Strategy to Counter Antisemitism](#), hatred and violence targeting Jewish, Muslim, Arab, Sikh, and other communities in the United States can originate or be supported by foreign individuals or entities. Some violent extremists draw from online,



international, or transnational networks for material, ideological, or financial support, which can fuel hate and Islamophobic discourse in America.

Transnational repression (TNR) continues to target American communities as foreign governments silence, intimidate, or exact reprisal against individuals outside of their sovereign borders. Some foreign governments target U.S. citizens, members of diaspora populations including political opponents, civil society activists, human rights defenders, journalists, and members of ethnic or religious minority groups. TNR actors reach beyond their borders to intimidate, kidnap, or even murder individuals and their family members. By design, TNR is intended to have a chilling impact that extends beyond the people who are directly targeted. TNR may involve threatening citizens and others abroad, which endangers public safety and our national security.

In response to TNR, the federal government, including law enforcement, is building awareness — and resilience within — communities while degrading transnational and foreign support for hate-based violence. We will also continue to partner with like-minded governments and international organizations to increase awareness of TNR as we advocate for policies that uphold and protect human rights and fundamental freedoms.

Ongoing Executive Branch Actions

- DOJ, DHS, and the Department of State are meeting with representatives from civil society and diaspora communities to share resources and to learn the extent of TNR impacts. Community stakeholder engagements have focused on raising awareness of available resources and identifying how government agencies can address community needs. During engagements, DOJ and DHS have provided communities with information about applicable resources to advance the physical, personal, and cyber security of civil society and to support the cyber resilience of high-risk communities.
- The Department of State will continue to use human rights accountability mechanisms, including visa restrictions, where possible and in accordance with U.S. law, to prevent U.S. entry for individuals responsible for human rights abuses targeting Muslims, Arabs, Sikhs, and others on account of their religious beliefs or identity. Where possible, and consistent with visa record confidentiality, the Department of State will also report on steps taken to impose visa restrictions on the basis of human rights violations, including anti-Muslim hatred as well as violence against Muslim communities.
- The Department of State is conducting outreach to nongovernmental organizations and advocacy groups and will actively consider data on human rights violations to inform potential visa restrictions.
- The Department of State is engaging governments to amplify the United States' priority to counter TNR, including against members of Muslim, Arab, and Sikh communities.
- The Department of State will continue to document human rights abuses and violations, including religious freedom violations, impacting Muslims, Sikhs, and other groups through the Department of State's annual human rights and religious freedom reports, thereby contributing to Americans' understanding of global trends, issues, and threats. Public messaging will highlight global trends related to Islamophobia and successful policies and programs for countering such conditions and incidents.
- DHS will continue to make available easy-to-access public resources — where possible, in multiple languages — on its website to inform all stakeholders, including victims and religious and minority groups, of TNR and a what-to-do guide for those who believe they are victims of TNR.



- DHS will continue to educate state and local law enforcement about threats of TNR in the Muslim, Arab, and Sikh communities.
- The Department of State is conducting listening sessions at relevant embassies and with government and civil society partners around the world to gather and share best practices on countering Islamophobia and related forms of discrimination, and has published internal guidelines for identifying and reporting on anti-Muslim and other forms of hate.

Calls to Congress

- **We call on members of Congress to** speak out against hatred targeting Muslims, Sikhs, and Arabs, including Islamophobia and related forms of hatred spread by foreign actors seeking to undermine U.S. democracy and values.

Calls to Society

- **We call on state and local governments to** hold roundtables with communities affected by TNR efforts to learn about threats such communities are facing and better allocate their law enforcement and security efforts.
- **We call on state and local law enforcement to** ensure that their victim support services programs are creating relationships with communities affected by TNR, so they can effectively provide support to these communities.
- **We call on social media companies to** study how foreign governments are using their platforms to engage in TNR efforts, including digital repression, and identify best practices to counter these efforts.



Priority 3: Tackle Discrimination and Bias Against Muslims and Arabs and Appropriately Accommodate Their Religious Practices

Muslim and Arab American communities have long faced discrimination in a variety of settings, including education, employment, public accommodations, land use, housing, health care, and access to financial services. Numerous federal and state laws prohibit discrimination and require appropriate accommodation of religious practices in these and other contexts. The Biden-Harris Administration is taking a range of steps to address these matters.

Strategic Goal 3.1 — Ensure Law Enforcement and Security Practices are Free of Bias and Discrimination

The federal government remains focused on ensuring that the laws of the United States are enforced fairly and without bias or discrimination. President Biden has noted that “[o]ur criminal justice system must respect the dignity of all persons and adhere to our fundamental obligation to ensure fair and impartial justice for all. This is imperative — not only to live up to our principles as a Nation, but also to build secure, safe, and healthy communities.” The [President’s Executive Order on Advancing Effective, Accountable Policing and Criminal Justice Practices to Enhance Public Trust and Public Safety](#) is improving engagement, building critical relationships, and strengthening public safety. Pursuant to this executive order, DOJ and the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) developed an evidence-informed training module for law enforcement officers on implicit bias and avoiding improper profiling based on the actual or perceived race, ethnicity, national origin, limited English proficiency, religion, sex (including sexual orientation and gender identity), or disability.⁶¹

Under this executive order, DOJ also engaged extensively with stakeholder organizations to update its [Guidance on the Use of Race, Ethnicity, Gender, National Origin, Religion, Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity, and Disability](#). DOJ applies this guidance to law enforcement and intelligence activities in order to determine when federal law enforcement may consider protected characteristics and ensure appropriate and training and accountability with respect to their use. In conjunction with this guidance, DOJ has conducted training for its personnel.

Members of Muslim and Arab communities have also expressed concern about the impacts of some law enforcement practices on their communities. For example, they note that some surveillance practices and reports of the placement of informants within places of worship have undermined trust with local communities. Muslims, Sikhs, Arabs, and others have also described treatment that may violate their rights to religious freedom, such as forcible removal of a hijab or turban during screenings. Some law enforcement agencies have [taken steps](#) to [issue guidance](#) and implement training to respect religious observances and practices in this context.

Members of the Muslim and Arab communities have also voiced concerns about facing unnecessarily lengthy security clearance reviews while seeking to serve their country at national security and intelligence agencies. This problem has led some Muslim and Arab Americans to express concerns that their own government views them as a national security risk and subjects them to greater scrutiny in various processes. The Suitability and Security Clearance Performance Accountability Council (PAC) has



studied the issue of bias and discrimination in the security clearance process and did not find evidence of bias in decision making. PAC did find delays impacting naturalized U.S. citizens, but those delays are most often associated with an increased frequency and degree of foreign nexus that must be thoroughly examined before issuing the clearance. As part of its ongoing effort to improve the security clearance process for applicants and holders, however, the PAC continues to study bias and discrimination to address concerns. It is also examining the workflow process to reduce wait times and improve the experience of those who might have increased foreign nexus.

This Strategy continues to build on this progress.

Completed Executive Branch Action

- DOJ, in collaboration with DHS, updated its [Guidance for Federal Law Enforcement on the Use of Race, Ethnicity, Gender, National Origin, Religion, Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity, and Disability](#). The updated guidance establishes clear benchmarks and timelines for implementation of stronger training, data collection, and accountability mandates.
- In May 2024, DOJ's Community Relations Service and Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS), in collaboration with the Divided Community Project at The Ohio State University Moritz College of Law, [published guidance](#) for state and local law enforcement agencies on best practices for conducting dialogues aimed at strengthening relations and improving communication between law enforcement agencies and communities.

Ongoing Executive Branch Actions

- DOJ will continue to report on efforts to increase awareness about guidance, technical assistance, and training available for state, Tribal, local, and territorial investigators and prosecutors on best practices for investigating and prosecuting civil rights violations.
- All training materials and presentations must be consistent with professional standards, goals, and instructions of departments and agencies, and adhere to applicable federal law, including the Constitution. This compliance is particularly important for training related to counterterrorism, policing, and intelligence. After significant efforts in 2012 to review law enforcement-related trainings, reference materials, and presentations, the federal government has adopted a series of practices to ensure that inaccurate, biased and/or discriminatory information is not provided through its trainings or through engagements with external experts. The U.S. government also screens these materials for inaccurate, biased, and/or discriminatory information. To ensure that these policies are fully instituted on an ongoing basis, all departments and agencies assert that:
 1. All trainings are consistent with the Constitution and other applicable federal law and policy.
 2. All trainers are experts in their respective fields and the training materials provided are vetted by content-matter experts drawn from outside of government, when appropriate.
 3. All trainings are free from inaccurate or biased information and contain clear learning objectives that are tailored and focused on improving employee or stakeholder knowledge, and training content supports these objectives.
 4. All trainers must concur with the training materials and objectives and agree not to deviate from the material or offer personal opinions to students that conflict with course objectives.
 5. All trainings will have effective remedial measures to receive and adequately address complaints or allegations about training content, including concerns about bias and prejudice on the basis of protected classes.



6. All contracts and grants for training will include language that ensures that all awardees comply with these requirements
 - PAC will continue to study bias and discrimination and develop policy, process, and communication recommendations to improve the experience of individuals undergoing the personnel vetting process.

Calls on Society

- **We call on state, local, and Tribal law enforcement agencies to** implement training on mitigating bias in law enforcement practices, including as it relates to Muslim and Arab communities.
- **We call on all state, local, and Tribal law enforcement agencies to** ensure their use of technology does not perpetuate bias or discrimination against minority groups, including Muslims and Arabs.
- **We call on state, local, and Tribal law enforcement agencies to** implement guidance and training to ensure every individual’s right to religious freedom is protected in the course of all law enforcement activities, including during searches of individuals wearing religious attire or other articles of faith.

Strategic Goal 3.2 — Counter Employment Discrimination and Appropriately Accommodate Religious Practices in the Workplace

All workers deserve a fair shot in America. Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act makes it illegal to discriminate against workers on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, or sex. The law also prohibits employers from retaliating against employees for complaining about discrimination, filing a charge of discrimination, or participating in an employment discrimination investigation or lawsuit. It requires that employers reasonably accommodate applicants' and employees' sincerely held religious practices, unless doing so would impose an undue hardship on the operation of the employer's business. Title VII defines the term “religion” broadly to include “all aspects of religious observance and practice, as well as belief.”⁶²

Nonetheless, many Muslim, Arab, and Sikh Americans face persistent workplace discrimination, including failure to appropriately accommodate their religious practices and observances. Since 2002, the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) has filed over 100 lawsuits against employers alleging religious and national origin discrimination involving Muslims, Sikhs, and Arabs, many of which involved harassment. In January 2024, for example, [EEOC settled a lawsuit](#) against an employer that failed to accommodate a Muslim employee’s religious observance by requiring him to be clean-shaven. In January 2023, EEOC filed an [amicus brief](#) in support of a Muslim woman who was required by a male supervisor to remove her hijab in his presence. Numerous other judgments have affirmed rights related to prayer in the workplace, religious attire, religious grooming observances, and protection from harassment on the basis of national origin.

Studies have found that Arab Americans in various fields face workplace discrimination, such as lower callback rates, lower real wages, demotion, or termination of employment based on their race.⁶³ Muslims and Sikhs also frequently experience discrimination in employment due to their religious practices.⁶⁴

The federal government must set the standard in terms of employment nondiscrimination, including appropriate religious accommodation, for all employees. It must vigorously enforce its authorities



prohibiting employment discrimination in both governmental and nongovernmental workplaces. EEOC and DOJ have and will continue to serve at the forefront of litigating cases on behalf of Muslims, Arabs, Sikhs, and others to guard against discrimination, harassment, and retaliation in the workplace and to promote appropriate accommodation of their sincerely held religious beliefs, practices, and observances.⁶⁵

Completed Executive Branch Actions

- EEOC published a fact sheet titled, [Anti-Arab, Anti-Middle Eastern, Anti-Muslim, and Antisemitic Discrimination are Illegal](#), highlighting employees' rights related to disparate treatment, segregation, harassment, religious accommodations, and retaliation.
- The Department of Labor (DOL) [released a resource](#) for union members on discrimination based on actual or perceived religion, shared ancestry, or ethnic characteristics.
- Federal agencies have incorporated information about bias and discrimination related to religion — including Islamophobia and Antisemitism, national origin, race, and ethnicity, and about workplace religious accommodations in training programs as they carry out their obligations under [Executive Order 14035](#).
- OPM has published the [Workplace Rights Federal Toolkit](#), a compilation of resources for employees of the federal government, including information about their rights to nondiscrimination and religious accommodation.
- The Department of Defense (DOD) leveraged existing survey data to estimate the prevalence of potential Islamophobic and Antisemitic behavior in the military to evaluate its policies to counter discrimination. [This analysis](#) was the first to specifically estimate the prevalence of Islamophobic and Antisemitic activity in the military, with the goal of identifying gaps to be addressed in future policies, programs, and procedures.
- In November 2023, DOL sent [a letter](#) to American Job Centers and other public workforce entities reminding them about their legal obligations to enforce prohibitions on discrimination based on actual or perceived religion, shared ancestry, or ethnic characteristics — including Islamophobia, Antisemitism, and related forms of discrimination — in federally funded activities and programs. The letter also included [a fact sheet](#) with examples of these forms of discrimination in the workforce development system.
- EEOC has published a fact sheet titled [Religious Accommodations in the Workplace](#), which explains how the law aims to prevent individuals from being forced to choose between their religious convictions and practices and their job. EEOC also has published a fact sheet titled [Examples of EEOC Enforcement Efforts for Failure to Provide Religious Accommodations to Muslims](#), which provides examples of EEOC lawsuits against employers that the EEOC determined had unlawfully denied needed religious accommodations.

Ongoing Executive Branch Actions

- To protect religious freedom and ensure that all employees continue to feel welcome and able to satisfy the need for reflection, meditation, or prayer in the federal workplace, President Biden and Vice President Harris have encouraged all federal agencies to be proactive in ensuring that their workplaces are inclusive with respect to religious and non-religious expression, including by providing space, where possible, for reflection, meditation, or prayer, consistent with agency policy. Federal agencies are also encouraged to familiarize their employees with their right to reasonable religious accommodations. Agencies have also been reminded that [they must respond](#) promptly to accommodation requests and must reasonably accommodate sincerely held religious practices where the accommodation does not pose an undue hardship to the agency's operations.



Consistent with this policy, the White House, the Department of State, Department of Transportation (DOT), VA, DHS, the Office of the Director of National Intelligence, SBA, and the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office have dedicated spaces for reflection, meditation, or prayer, and the Department of Commerce (Commerce), Health and Human Services (HHS), DOI, and IMLS are working to establish such spaces.

- DOL Civil Rights Center is developing a training for its investigators on gathering information needed to resolve discrimination complaints. This training will ensure that requests for information related to discrimination or bias against Muslims, Arabs, and Sikhs are included as appropriate.
- DOL is reviewing existing materials dealing with religious and ethnic discrimination for programs, including Job Corps, the nation's largest free career training and education program for low-income young adults ages 16 through 24. This review will make adjustments as needed to ensure that the materials discuss discrimination against Muslims, Arabs, and Sikhs.
- DOD will draft a Know Your Rights guide on religious accommodations in the military. This guide will provide plain-language Frequently Asked Questions and Answers summarizing service members' rights to make requests for religious accommodations and ways to seek such accommodations, including examples of accommodations that have been made according to each Service's policies. DOD will disseminate these materials to ensure broad awareness on how to appropriately request and grant accommodations requests.
- DOD will host a roundtable with a diverse representation of chaplains and civilian leaders of diverse religious communities to engage in a dialogue regarding the Department's religious accommodations policies and practices.
- Federal departments and agencies pledge to continue to strive to hire a federal workforce that represents the diversity of the American people — including Muslim, Arab, and Sikh Americans — to decrease barriers between the federal government workforce and the American people it serves.
- Federal departments and agencies will continue to consult with employee resource and affinity groups on issues of bias and discrimination facing their members and empower employee groups to create safe and supportive spaces for members.

Calls to Congress

- **We call on members of Congress to** fully fund all agencies tasked with remedying and preventing unlawful discrimination, including discrimination based on race, religion, national origin, and ethnicity.
- **We call on Congress to** provide sufficient funding to support the government-wide adoption of OMB's [Revisions to Statistical Policy Directive No. 15: Standards for Maintaining, Collecting, and Presenting Federal Data on Race and Ethnicity, 89 Fed. Reg. 22182](#) (Mar. 28, 2024), which would add MENA as a reporting category for federal data collections about race or ethnicity.
- **We call on members of Congress to** amend the statutory caps on damages available under federal anti-discrimination laws, so that those who have been affected by discrimination — including those who have suffered anti-Muslim, anti-Arab, or anti-Sikh hate and bias — may be more fully compensated for the discrimination they have endured, and so discriminators can be appropriately punished and deterred.



Calls to Society

- **We call on employers to** ensure that their policies and practices on discrimination and harassment are clear and vigorously enforced. When providing examples in company policy and training, employers should include both blatant and more subtle examples of discrimination and harassment, including anti-Muslim, anti-Arab, and anti-Sikh discrimination and harassment.
- **We call on employers to** ensure that workers are aware of employers' legal duty to accommodate workers' sincerely held religious beliefs or practices unless the accommodation would impose an undue hardship on an employer's business, and to develop strong procedures for ensuring that accommodation requests are handled expeditiously and in compliance with the law.
- **We call on employers to** encourage the formation of employee affinity or resource groups that support all employees, including Muslims, Arabs, and Sikhs.
- **We call on employers to** ensure that their employees are trained in preventing prohibited discrimination.
- **We call on employee affinity and resource groups to** continue to build allyship across groups and among their members to educate and build awareness within their organizations about the experiences of workers from Muslim, Arab, Sikh, and other religious and ethnic communities, and to support members in understanding policies and procedures for addressing issues or complaints of bias and discrimination in their workplaces.
- **We call on employers to** promote inclusive recruiting practices across all sectors. This includes recruiting and hiring a diverse workforce inclusive of Muslim, Arab, and Sikh Americans.
- **We call on sports networks and agencies to** respect athletes' choices of religious attire and requirements such as the maintenance of religiously mandated hair (i.e., uncut hair or beard).
- **We call on law firms, including those specializing in religious liberty, to** provide pro bono assistance to people of all faiths.

Strategic Goal 3.3 — Counter Discrimination and Appropriately Accommodate Religious Practices in Schools and on Campuses

Everyone in America should have access to education free from discrimination. Since October 7, 2023, Antisemitism,⁶⁶ Islamophobia, and other forms of hate have spiked on college campuses. Muslim and Arab students, faculty, and staff, have been subject to violence, discrimination, hate, harassment, bullying, and online targeting, in both pre-K-12 schools and higher education.

As President Biden emphasized, “There is no place for hate speech or violence of any kind, whether it’s Antisemitism, Islamophobia, or discrimination against Arab Americans or Palestinian Americans.” Yet some student protestors, despite having condemned Hamas and terrorism and engaging in only peaceful protests, have been accused of supporting terrorism merely due to their advocacy for the human rights of Palestinian civilians. Student protestors of diverse faiths and ethnicities who have engaged in peaceful protest have sometimes been subjected to violent attacks, threats, discrimination, and doxing, which refers to gathering an individual’s personally identifiable information and releasing it publicly for malicious purposes.⁶⁷ President Biden has made it clear that there are two fundamental principles that must be respected during these protests: “The first is the right to free speech and for people to peacefully assemble and make their voices heard. The second is the rule of law. Both must be upheld.” The right to free speech certainly includes the right to criticize the policies of one’s own government and peacefully protest for



that purpose. As the President noted, “peaceful protest is in the best tradition of how Americans respond to consequential issues.” He added that violence and “threatening people, intimidating people, instilling fear in people is not peaceful protest.”

Second Gentleman Douglas Emhoff and Ambassador at Large for International Religious Freedom Rashad Hussain have made a series of visits to colleges and universities to hear students’ concerns and to express support for their safety and civil and constitutional rights. In November 2023, they traveled to Cornell University to meet with Jewish students in the wake of Antisemitic death threats against students there.⁶⁸ In February 2024, Emhoff, Hussain, and U.S. Ambassador to the UN Linda Thomas-Greenfield visited with Jewish, Muslim, and Arab American young leaders to discuss the sharp rise in Antisemitism, Islamophobia, and hatred against Arab and other Americans in the wake of the October 7 terrorist attacks in Israel.⁶⁹ Also in November 2023, Second Gentleman Emhoff and Ambassador Hussain met with a Muslim Arab American and Stanford University student who was hit by a car in broad daylight on the university’s campus, an incident that is being investigated by local authorities as a hate crime.⁷⁰

Other concerns in the educational context include the fact that more than a third of Muslim American students surveyed reported being bullied at school because of their religion in the previous month, and more than a quarter reported being cyberbullied because of their religion in the same time frame.⁷¹ Seventy-seven percent of Sikh students who wore a religious head covering reported at least one bullying experience.⁷² Young Sikhs who wear turbans are twice as likely to be bullied as the average American child.⁷³ Initial qualitative data shows that young Arab Americans also report higher rates of bullying as a result of religious and cultural backgrounds.⁷⁴ Students have had their religious clothing forcibly removed, and those who groom themselves consistent with their faith, or who wear articles of faith like hijabs, turbans, and patkas, have been denied opportunities to participate in activities including sports.⁷⁵ Muslim students also often have trouble accessing halal options in public schools and on college campuses.⁷⁶

Building on the First Amendment’s bedrock protections of free speech, assembly, and religious freedom, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 is a critical tool in protecting individuals from discrimination based on race, color, or national origin in any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance. Title VI prohibits discrimination against individuals based on shared ancestry or ethnic characteristics. ED’s Office for Civil Rights (ED OCR) enforces this law with respect to federal financial assistance flowing to educational institutions. DOJ enforces other civil rights protections prohibiting religious discrimination in public schools. Illustrative cases resolved by ED OCR and DOJ appear in the Appendix.

The Biden-Harris Administration will continue to enforce relevant laws and take additional actions to counter hate, violence, discrimination, and bullying; to protect free speech, including the right to peacefully protest; and to promote religious liberty, including religious accommodations, in schools.

Completed Executive Branch Actions

- To mark the 2024 International Day to Combat Islamophobia, ED OCR issued a Dear Colleague Letter on [Addressing Discrimination Against Muslim, Arab, Sikh, South Asian, Hindu, and Palestinian Students](#), reminding schools of their legal obligation under Title VI to address discrimination, including harassment, based on race, color, or national origin.
- ED OCR added language to complaint forms specifying that Title VI’s protection from discrimination based on race, color, or national origin includes discrimination against individuals based on shared ancestry or ethnic characteristics, including those who are or are perceived to be Muslim, Arab, Sikh, South Asian, or Jewish. ED OCR also created and is conducting [internal and external trainings](#) on Title VI’s coverage of shared ancestry and ethnic characteristics discrimination and [recorded a video](#) explaining the Title VI complaint process.



- In March 2024, DOJ issued a fact sheet titled [Confronting Discrimination Based on Religion in Schools: A Resource for Students and Families](#), which discusses scenarios involving students' rights to pray and wear religious attire in schools.
- On May 7, 2024, ED OCR issued a Dear Colleague Letter on [Protecting Students from Discrimination, such as Harassment, Based on Race, Color, or National Origin, including Shared Ancestry or Ethnic Characteristics](#). This letter explains how OCR evaluates, investigates, and resolves complaints raising allegations of Antisemitic, anti-Muslim, and anti-Arab harassment and similar forms of discrimination. The letter also includes a section on First Amendment considerations.
- On July 2, 2024, ED OCR issued a fact sheet on [Harassment Based on Race, Color, or National Origin on School Campuses](#), reminding schools of their federal civil rights obligations under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and its implementing regulations to take prompt and effective action to respond to harassment that creates a hostile environment. ED OCR continues to investigate and resolve claims of shared ancestry discrimination under Title VI at schools. For example, in September 2024, ED OCR entered into a [resolution agreement](#) with the Ann Arbor Public Schools in Michigan to address concerns about a hostile environment for students based on shared Muslim/Arab Palestinian ancestry.
- ED shared [federal campus safety resources](#) that schools, faculty and staff, parents, and students can use, including a [hate crime threat response guide](#), a [resource guide](#) on the threat of doxing, and information about [how to file a complaint](#) alleging discrimination based on race, color, or national origin.
- In July 2024, ED released [Free to Learn: Leading Inclusive Learning Environments in Higher Education](#), a new resource guide for fostering safe and inclusive campuses through the Israel-Hamas conflict and beyond. This resource is the latest effort in ED's [Free to Learn](#) initiative, launched in May 2023, to help educational institutions improve their ability to prevent hate-based threats and bullying, recover from hate-based violence, and enhance overall school safety.
- In August 2024, DOJ and the Divided Community Project [published guidance](#) for campus leaders and administrators on best practices to handle campus conflicts and tensions.
- In the summer of 2024, ED issued a [Dear Colleague Letter on Voluntary Disclosure of Hate Crime Sub-Categories](#) to colleges and universities reminding them that they may voluntarily provide information about hate crimes to members of their campus communities beyond what is required by the Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Crime Statistics Act. Having accurate data enhances the ability of governments, campuses, and communities to effectively respond to acts of hate and ensure that all students are safe on campus.

Ongoing Executive Branch Actions

- DOJ, HHS, and ED are reinstating the interagency working group, Federal Partners in Bullying Prevention, to identify and amplify resources from across the federal government to assist school communities in addressing bullying and harassment related to race, color, national origin, ethnicity, shared ancestry, and religion. HHS will continue to update [StopBullying.gov](#) accordingly, and ED and DOJ will continue to conduct outreach to school leaders and impacted communities to inform them of the latest federal resources available to prevent and address bullying and harassment in PreK-12 schools.
- ED will spotlight notable examples of efforts by to prevent and address anti-Muslim, anti-Arab, and anti-Sikh discrimination and bias in schools. Under the [National Strategy to Counter Antisemitism](#), ED took similar steps with respect to Antisemitism.



- ED OCR is providing Know Your Rights trainings on Title VI’s nondiscrimination protections. ED OCR will continue to be available to provide technical assistance to schools and organizations that request assistance in complying with any aspect of the civil rights laws OCR enforces, including Title VI’s protection of every student’s right to equally access educational opportunities without discrimination based on race, color, or national origin, including shared ancestry or ethnic characteristics.
- ED CFBNP is producing and will disseminate a new resource highlighting best practices for religious accommodations in PreK-12 schools and universities, dovetailing the [May 2023 guidance](#) on religious expression in schools.
- ED OCR will continue to collect data on allegations of harassment or bullying in public schools based on 14 categories of religion, including Islam, Christianity, Sikhism, and Judaism.
- ED OCR will continue to actively investigate allegations of discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin, including shared ancestry or ethnic characteristics, under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. On a weekly basis, ED is publishing an updated list of institutions under investigation for discrimination involving shared ancestry via this [public landing page](#). ED OCR will also continue to publicize resolutions of these investigations in a timely manner.
- ED will continue to engage subcommunities within Muslim, Arab, and Sikh communities, including Palestinian communities and Black American Muslim communities, as part of its ongoing outreach to a wide range of faith-based and community organizations.
- ED will continue coordinating with other agencies to amplify resources for educators and staff who experience workplace discrimination related to race, ethnicity, shared ancestry, or religion.
- ED has amplified the [OMB revisions](#) regarding updating Race and Ethnicity Statistical Standards, published on March 28, 2024, which include MENA as a race/ethnicity in federal data collection. In addition, ED will continue engaging in stakeholder outreach targeting underserved MENA communities.

Calls to Congress

- **We call on Congress to** fully fund the President’s FY 2025 Budget request of \$23 million for ED’s American History and Civics Education programs. History and civics education is designed to improve the quality of teaching and learning regarding American history, civics, and government education. The programs are, in part, to promote new and innovative evidence-based instruction and professional development for teachers, principals, or other school leaders.
- **We call on Congress to** fully fund the President’s FY 2025 Budget request of \$162.4 million for ED OCR. This request is a \$22.4 million increase from the 2024 enacted level. The additional requested funds would strengthen OCR’s enforcement capabilities under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 in the midst of a dramatic increase in discrimination on the basis of shared ancestry in K-12 schools and on college campuses.

Calls to Society

- **We call on schools to** identify accessible, nondenominational spaces that can be used by students of all religious and nonreligious backgrounds for prayer and reflection. Schools should take care to remain neutral in creating and implementing such spaces.
- **We call on PreK-12 schools and institutions of higher education to** foster inclusive learning environments for all students through appropriate religious literacy training for educators, administrators, and staff.



- **We call on PreK-12 schools and institutions of higher education to** create, expand, and update policies on appropriate religious accommodations to effectively meet the needs of students. These policies could include accommodations for absences during religious holidays and inclusive meal options.
- **We call on PreK-12 schools and institutions of higher education to** provide fair access to resources, including spaces for religious observances and cultural events, for all students, including Muslim and Arab members of the school community.
- **We call on college and university leaders to** ensure that school policies are comprehensive, accessible, and understandable to all members of campus communities. Universities should adopt a regular review process and avoid conducting reviews of school policies exclusively in response to particular incidents.
- **We call on college and university leaders to** adopt clear reporting mechanisms and ensure that all students know how to report a violation of campus codes of conduct as well as local, state, and federal law. They should understand obstacles and barriers to reporting — including for individuals from underrepresented and marginalized communities — and consider steps to proactively foster trust to ensure that students feel comfortable coming forward.
- **We call on college and university leaders to** engage with students across all viewpoints and identities. University leaders should build and maintain these relationships both proactively and in response to any questions or concerns.
- **We call on college and university leaders to** condemn doxing and other forms of online harassment and to provide students and faculty with resources and support.

Strategic Goal 3.4 — Address Discrimination in Housing, Public Accommodations, Land Use, Health Care, and Beyond

The Fair Housing Act prohibits discrimination in housing-related transactions, including by direct providers of housing (such as landlords and real estate companies), based on a person’s actual or perceived race or color, religion, sex, national origin, familial status or disability.⁷⁷ Also, Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act bars discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin, including discrimination on the basis of shared ancestry or ethnic characteristics, in housing programs receiving federal financial assistance.⁷⁸

More work is needed to realize the goals of these laws. A study on housing discrimination in Philadelphia found that 16% of Muslims — compared to 4% of people of other faiths — experienced such discrimination.⁷⁹ Members of Muslim and Arab communities have often faced obstacles in renting and using public and private gathering spaces. This issue has become more prevalent following the Hamas terrorist attacks on Israel on October 7, 2023.

The federal government has several tools to address discrimination and protect religious liberty, including Title II and Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, the Religious Land Use and Institutionalized Persons Act (RLUIPA), and the Religious Freedom Restoration Act, which are briefly explained below.



Title II of the 1964 Civil Rights Act

Title II of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, and national origin in certain places of public accommodation. Public accommodations are privately owned spaces that are open to the general public, including restaurants, hotels, gas stations, and places of exhibition or entertainment — such as bars with live music, sports stadiums, and movie theaters. States and some localities also have enacted laws prohibiting various forms of discrimination in public accommodations, including some protections broader than Title II. DOJ has [published a resource](#) explaining Title II.

Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act

Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, and national origin in all federally funded programs and activities. These protections extend to individuals who have experienced discrimination, including harassment, based on their actual or perceived (i) shared ancestry or ethnic characteristics, or (ii) citizenship or residency in a country with a dominant religion or distinct religious identity. Thus, Title VI prohibits discrimination based on race, color, or national origin against individuals of any religion or ethnicity where the discrimination involves, for example:

- Racial, ethnic, or ancestral slurs or stereotypes;
- How a person looks, including skin color, physical features, or style of dress that reflects both ethnic and religious traditions; or
- An accent or name from a different culture or different national origin group, or speaking a language other than English.

Religious Land Use and Institutionalized Persons Act

Zoning codes and land use regulations continue to be used to discriminate against houses of worship, including mosques, churches, gurdwaras, temples, and synagogues around the country. Certain local governments, for example, have sometimes sought to block such religious assemblies from locating or expanding their presence. In such cases, DOJ has often taken legal action under RLUIPA to protect religious freedom. RLUIPA shields religious institutions from unduly burdensome or discriminatory land use regulations. For example, after DOJ's intervention, a court in 2022 found that the city of Troy, Michigan, had imposed an unjustified substantial burden on an Islamic center's exercise of religion when the city denied variance requests that would have allowed the center to establish a place of worship at a building previously used as a restaurant and banquet hall. DOJ has [published a resource](#) explaining how RLUIPA protects religious institutions and how to file a complaint with the Civil Rights Division when it is believed that rights under RLUIPA have been violated.



Religious Freedom Restoration Act

The Religious Freedom Restoration Act (RFRA) prohibits the federal government from substantially burdening a person’s exercise of religion, unless the federal government demonstrates that application of such burden to the religious adherent is the least restrictive means of achieving a compelling governmental interest. RFRA [applies to all actions](#) by federal administrative agencies, including rulemaking, adjudication or other enforcement actions, and grant or contract distribution and administration.

The DOJ Civil Rights Division has recently published two resources explaining federal protections on [national origin](#) and [religious](#) discrimination.

Discrimination against these communities sometimes also occurs in transportation programs receiving federal financial assistance, such as air travel, subways, and buses. DOT is charged with taking appropriate action to address such cases.

Other federal laws prohibit discrimination in the provision of health care. HHS enforces nondiscrimination regulations regarding patient or resident visitation at hospitals, critical-access hospitals, long-term care facilities, and other health care organizations on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, or disability. HHS also enforces laws protecting certain health care providers, patients, and other participants who refuse to participate in some health care programs on religious freedom or conscience grounds.

Completed Executive Branch Actions

- To mark the 2024 International Day to Combat Islamophobia, Attorney General Merrick Garland [issued a statement](#) recommitting DOJ to protect Muslim Americans from discrimination and hate-fueled violence.
- In March 2024, DOJ [sent a letter](#) to state, county, and municipal officials reminding them of the obligation of public officials to comply with the land use provisions of RLUIPA and to inform the officials about documents issued by DOJ that may help them apply this federal civil rights law.
- The Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) [created a webpage](#) on protections against housing discrimination on the basis of religion, shared ancestry, or ethnic characteristics, which include the Fair Housing Act of 1968 and Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. The webpage provides examples of Islamophobic, Antisemitic, and related types of housing discrimination, as well as steps on how to file a fair housing complaint with HUD.
- On May 24, 2024, HUD announced the availability of \$500,000 to support partnerships between state and local fair housing agencies and community-based organizations. Among the overall funds available to support state and local partnerships to combat housing discrimination, HUD has made these funds available to combat religious discrimination, including Islamophobia and Antisemitism, through education and outreach activities.
- On May 25, 2023, HUD [issued a letter](#) to more than 200 federally funded Fair Housing Initiatives Programs and Fair Housing Assistance Programs on how to identify and counter Antisemitism, Islamophobia, and related forms of bias and discrimination in housing.
- In January 2024, the HHS Office for Civil Rights (HHS OCR) issued a [Dear Colleague Letter](#) and [guidance to U.S. hospital and long-term care facility administrators](#), reminding organizations of their legal obligations under relevant regulations and federal civil rights laws to ensure that



facility visitation policies do not unlawfully discriminate against patients or other individuals receiving care, including on the basis of religion.

- The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services amended [a regulatory requirement](#) for Medicare Advantage plans to ensure that services are provided in a culturally competent manner and to promote fair access to all enrollees, including people who are members of ethnic, cultural, racial, or religious minority groups. Medicare Advantage organizations may implement activities such as improving communication, developing and using linguistically and culturally appropriate materials, hiring bilingual staff, community outreach, or similar activities.
- HHS OCR has [produced reference materials for health care providers](#) on discrimination in patient care on the bases of race, religion, ethnicity, and national origin, as well as discrimination against health care providers on the basis of their religious beliefs.
- HHS OCR has modernized its [conscience and religious freedom webpages](#). These updates provide greater clarity to health care providers, including Muslim, and Arab providers, regarding protections against conscience and religious discrimination.
- DOJ has published resources on combating [religious discrimination](#), combating [national origin discrimination](#), and [religious land use protections](#).
- DOT provided a number of resources related to travelers' rights and opportunities [to file a complaint](#) when there may be an instance of discrimination by airlines or recipients of federal funding, including discrimination on the basis of religion or national origin. The [Passengers' Right to Fly Free from Discrimination](#) is a guide designed to explain DOT's role in protecting aviation passengers from unlawful discrimination. Similarly, the [Guidance for Airline Personnel on Non-discrimination in Air Travel](#) assists airline personnel in understanding their legal obligations not to discriminate against passengers. For example, this guidance notes that it is impermissible to remove a passenger from a flight simply because he is holding a book that appears to be a Quran.
- For the first time, eight agencies — USDA, HHS, DHS, HUD, DOI, DOL, DOT, and the Department of Treasury (Treasury) — [clarified in writing](#) in September 2023 that Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act prohibits discrimination based on shared ancestry or ethnic characteristics, including certain forms of Islamophobia, Antisemitism, and related forms of discrimination in federally funded programs and activities.

Ongoing Executive Branch Actions

- HUD is issuing a letter to its Fair Housing Initiative Program and Fair Housing Assistance Program partners to provide examples of Islamophobic, anti-Arab, anti-Sikh, anti-South Asian, and Antisemitic discrimination that could lead to investigations for violations of Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act. Also, HUD is:
 - issuing guidance on preventing and addressing religious discrimination in HUD-assisted housing;
 - expanding training, technical assistance, and other resources to provide individuals with information on their fair housing rights;
 - conducting targeted outreach to communities, including Muslim and Arab communities, to share more information about HUD's home ownership programs and providing resources and/or referring households that report discrimination to the appropriate fair housing agencies; and



- continuing to take reasonable steps to ensure meaningful access to programs and activities for persons with limited English proficiency, including by translating materials into Arabic, Farsi, Urdu, and other common languages.
- DOJ will continue its efforts to educate the public and work to raise awareness about the requirements of Title II of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and RLUIPA.
- HHS's Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, which leads public efforts to advance the nation's behavioral health, including for Muslims and Arabs, is developing resources focused on trauma-informed and culturally informed resources for people, families, and communities experiencing bullying, discrimination, hate-based violence, or trauma related to hearing about international conflicts, mass violence, terrorism, hate crimes, or other forms of violence motivated by prejudice.
- HHS will promote fairness and mitigate health disparities through expanding the collection, reporting, and analysis of standardized data to include additional response options, such as the MENA category and the detailed race categories that include majority Muslim countries in South Asia, the Pacific Islands, and sub-Saharan Africa. Collecting, analyzing, and publishing disaggregated data will help identify important areas for future work by uncovering insights such as where these populations are experiencing differential health and human services outcomes and how well members of these populations are being reached by public health and human services programs.
- The HHS Center for Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships (HHS CFBNP), in cooperation with Muslim community leaders, subject matter experts, researchers, and others, is creating resources that will address linkages between hate and violence and the increase in substance use disorders in youth.
- Ten federal agencies — DOJ, ED, USDA, HHS, DHS, HUD, DOI, DOL, DOT, and Treasury — [have made clear](#) that Title VI's protections prohibit discrimination on the basis of shared ancestry or ethnic characteristics, including certain forms of Islamophobic, Antisemitic, and related forms of discrimination and bias in federally funded programs and activities. More agencies are now clarifying that they share this interpretation of Title VI, including Commerce, VA, Department of Energy, the Environmental Protection Agency, the National Aeronautics and Space Agency, and the National Science Foundation.
- USDA, HHS, DHS, and DOT are issuing new guidance through Dear Colleague Letters to provide examples of Islamophobic, anti-Arab, anti-Sikh, anti-South Asian, and Antisemitic discrimination that could lead to investigations for violations of Title VI. These agencies and DOL are also:
 - revising or adding language to complaint forms or their accompanying websites specifying that Title VI's protection from discrimination based on race, color, or national origin includes discrimination against individuals based on shared ancestry or ethnic characteristics, including those who are or are perceived to be Muslim, Arab, Sikh, South Asian, or Jewish;
 - creating and conducting internal and external trainings on Title VI's coverage of shared ancestry and ethnic characteristics discrimination and creating a video or other user-friendly resource explaining the Title VI complaint process; and
 - continuing to open investigations into complaints alleging discrimination based on shared ancestry or ethnic characteristics.
- DOT is sharing information with transit agencies across the country and encouraging them to post resources, such as Know Your Rights posters, at transit locations to raise awareness of Muslim,



Arab, Sikh, South Asian, Jewish, and other individuals' rights to be free from discrimination while riding public transit.

- DOJ is expanding training, technical assistance, and other resources to assist law enforcement agencies in complying with their obligations under Title VI to provide meaningful language access services to people with limited English proficiency.

Calls to Congress

- **We call on Congress to** fully fund agency offices for civil rights so that they can more rapidly address complaints regarding Title VI and other civil rights laws.

Calls to Society

- **We call on state and local governments to** familiarize themselves with the land use provisions of RLUIPA and with their obligations under this federal civil rights law.
- **We call on state and local governments to** review their anti-discrimination laws and other authorities to ensure that they have tools available to prevent and remedy any discrimination that violates the Fair Housing Act.
- **We call on state and local governments to** revise, update, establish, and evaluate housing policies and guidance that take into consideration the barriers experienced by survivors and victims of hate crimes and violence such as housing discrimination.
- **We call on state and local governments to** provide technical assistance and other resources on fair housing to individuals in their communities.
- **We call on civil society organizations at the national, regional and local levels to** identify and provide evidence-based solutions to housing discrimination and work to eliminate housing discrimination across the United States.
- **We call on state and local governments to** collaborate with nongovernmental partners to support local projects that educate individuals about their rights under the Fair Housing Act.
- **We call on state and local governments to** provide technical assistance and other resources to individuals in their communities on discrimination in public accommodations.
- **We call on bar associations and other legal networks to** increase awareness about legal authorities prohibiting discrimination in public accommodations.
- **We call on local businesses, civil society, community leaders, and other leaders to** ensure that they do not discriminate and to speak out when discrimination occurs, including discrimination against Muslims and Arabs in places of public accommodation, housing, land use, and health care in their communities.
- **We call on health care providers at the state and local levels to** actively address social determinants of health and violence prevention, including housing, homelessness, and food insecurity, and to ensure that they are providing culturally competent care for all their patients.
- **We call on advocacy and community organizations to** share Title VI fact sheets with community members and assist them in filing any appropriate complaints about potential Title VI violations.
- **We call on recipients of federal financial assistance to** familiarize themselves with Title VI requirements.



Strategic Goal 3.5 — Provide Appropriate Accommodations for Religious Dietary Needs in Federally Funded Feeding Programs, Federal Prisons, and Other Settings

USDA seeks to accommodate the religious dietary needs of the Americans it serves in administering federally funded programs. These programs include the Emergency Food Assistance Program, which supplements the diets of low-income individuals by providing them with emergency food assistance at no cost, and the National School Lunch Program, which provides nutritionally balanced, low-cost or free lunches to children each school day in public and nonprofit private schools and residential child care institutions. Beneficiaries of these programs, however, still sometimes experience challenges in accessing food that meets their religious dietary needs, such as halal or kosher food.

To address this concern, USDA made a historic commitment in the [National Strategy to Counter Antisemitism](#) to ensure equal access to all USDA feeding programs for USDA customers with religious dietary needs. USDA has made great strides toward this goal. As part of this Strategy, more work is being done to ensure that everyone can access these federally funded feeding programs.

Muslim, Jewish, and other religious and civil rights groups have also raised concerns about inadequate access to halal and kosher food, and other inadequate religious accommodations within prisons and other confining institutions such as long-term care facilities and mental health facilities. RLUIPA provides protections for religious exercise in state prisons and certain other state and local institutions. The Federal Bureau of Prisons (BOP) provides inmates requesting a religious diet with reasonable and fair opportunities to observe their religious dietary practices within the secure and orderly running of the institution and the BOP through religious diet menus. Over 1,200 individuals in BOP custody receive halal-certified food. More needs to be done to ensure that state and local jails and prisons fully comply with federal law in providing religious accommodations for all individuals — including those from Muslim, Sikh, and Jewish communities.

Completed Executive Branch Actions

- USDA has worked to increase [access to culturally appropriate foods](#) for USDA customers with religious dietary needs, including those who need halal or kosher food.
- In April 2024, USDA [hosted a discussion](#) with the commercial U.S. halal food industry to discuss opportunities for further collaboration, including to address food insufficiency in schools and underserved communities across America.
- In November 2024, USDA held two webinars on how to become a USDA Foods Vendor. One webinar was tailored for halal and kosher food producers, processors, and vendors. The other webinar highlighted the work that school districts are doing to expand halal and kosher food access.
- HHS [has worked to ensure that](#) patient rights to receiving visitors in hospitals and long-term care facilities are not infringed upon simply because visitors are bringing patients halal and kosher food as opposed to nonreligious dietary foods.
- HHS OCR issued a final rule, entitled [Safeguarding the Rights of Conscience as Protected by Federal Statutes](#). The final rule clarifies the process for enforcing federal conscience laws and strengthens protections against conscience and religious discrimination.

Ongoing Executive Branch Actions



- USDA will continue to work to ensure equal access to all USDA feeding programs for USDA customers with religious dietary needs. These efforts will continue to include expanding outreach and technical assistance for halal or kosher food producers, processors and vendors; expanding and creating greater awareness of the number of halal or halal-certified or kosher or kosher-certified foods in USDA's food procurement that are available to program operators; training schools on how to meet students' religious dietary needs for the National School Lunch and School Breakfast programs; working with state agencies to increase the number of halal and kosher restaurants that participate in the [Restaurant Meals Program](#); and developing resources for food bank partners.
- VA is ensuring all VA hospitals accommodate halal and kosher meal requests for inpatients and patient residents, as well as culturally appropriate nutrition education and counseling to meet the religious dietary needs of veterans.
- BOP is meeting with leaders of religious traditions that have religious dietary needs, including Muslim, Sikh, and Jewish leaders, to discuss the accommodation of those needs as part of the federal prison system.

Calls to Congress

- **We call on Congress to** support grant funding to state agencies and nonprofit organizations for the purchase of halal, kosher, and other foods for individuals with religious dietary needs.

Calls to Society

- **We call on state and local leaders to** join the federal government in increasing access to halal, kosher, and other foods required to meet religious dietary requirements.
- **We call on state and local leaders, and school board members to** diversify the food menu options in the National School Lunch Program, increasing access to halal, kosher, and other foods required to meet religious diets, and proactively work with community partners and parents regarding staff training and input to meal planning.
- **We call on state agencies that administer federal feeding and food programs to** ensure that stakeholders from Muslim, Jewish, and other religious communities are included in all decision-making processes related to the operation of these programs such as the Emergency Food Assistance Program, National School Lunch Program, and the Commodity Supplemental Food Program.
- **We call upon private industry such as food companies and vendors that support federal food programs to** evaluate which of their products could become halal- or kosher- certified with ingredient and process changes.



Strategic Goal 3.6 — Counter Bias and Discrimination in Financial Services Sector and Promote Financial Inclusion

Access to banking and financial services is a prerequisite to participating fully in our nation’s economy, including for individuals and organizations as they make daily purchases, grow or expand their businesses or nonprofit activities, or support humanitarian causes abroad. Some Americans, however, including Muslims and Arabs, have documented how financial institutions — banks, money service businesses, and other entities — have halted financial transactions, denied their loan and credit card applications, prevented them from opening bank accounts or closed bank accounts, and blocked their donations and money transfers to humanitarian organizations without any explanation.⁸⁰ Several agencies within the Biden-Harris Administration are taking action to help address these financial access barriers.

Completed Executive Branch Actions

- Some Americans, including many Muslims and Arabs, have documented how financial institutions use de-risking, a practice to terminate or restrict business relationships indiscriminately with broad categories of clients rather than analyzing and managing the risks of clients in a targeted manner. To help address de-risking, Treasury published its [National De-Risking Strategy](#).
- In July 2022, Treasury released a Joint Statement on [Customer Due Diligence with federal banking agencies](#), which reiterates Treasury’s longstanding position that no customer type — for instance, a customer from a specific country — represents a single level of uniform risk, and that financial institutions are required to apply a risk-based approach to customer due diligence.
- In December 2022, Treasury released [Historic Humanitarian Sanctions Exceptions](#) to support the flow of legitimate humanitarian aid to those in need around the globe, including to countries with significant Muslim populations, following the UN Security Council’s adoption of a historic resolution, co-led by the United States, to create a clear carveout for humanitarian efforts across UN sanctions regimes.
- In April 2024, the [Financial Literacy and Education Commission](#) — which is composed of the heads of 24 federal agencies including the federal banking agencies — held a [session on Access to Financial Services and Products for Muslim and Arab Americans](#) during its April public meeting to inform federal representatives of the financial barriers faced by people and organizations seeking to send remittances abroad.
- Muslim American consumers can face special challenges accessing financial services and products that meet their needs. On August 13, 2024, Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB) Director Rohit Chopra, held [a public hearing](#) in St. Paul, Minnesota on “contract for deed” financing, which are real estate transactions that happen directly between the buyer and seller without a third-party lender. Government officials, community leaders, and consumers shared testimony about how these alternative home financing arrangements are sold to Muslim American communities as a means of purchasing a home consistent with their religious beliefs, but are often costly and disadvantageous for buyers. CFPB [announced measures](#) to ensure financial providers meet their legal obligations to make borrowers aware of the true cost of these products and to determine borrowers’ ability to repay the loans.
- Inconsistent language access creates barriers to financial products for people who are most comfortable communicating in languages other than English. Through engagement with consumers with limited English proficiency and organizations that serve these communities, CFPB has received valuable feedback on how to make financial tools and resources more accessible to multilingual consumers. CFPB accepts telephone complaints in 180 different



languages about a financial product or service. In 2023, CFPB launched newly redesigned website landing pages in [Arabic](#), [Chinese](#), [Haitian Creole](#), [Korean](#), [Russian](#), [Tagalog](#) and [Vietnamese](#), to make it easier to navigate CFPB resources and learn more about the banking and financial system. CFPB has also developed a range of multilingual resources that can be utilized by financial institutions to improve access and facilitate standard translations, including glossaries of financial terms in [Arabic](#), [Chinese](#), [Haitian Creole](#), [Korean](#), [Russian](#), [Spanish](#), [Tagalog](#), and [Vietnamese](#).

- On June 26, 2024, Treasury and CFPB conducted a [listening session](#) to hear from affected groups — including Muslim and Arab Americans — to focus on understanding how financial institutions create barriers to financial access for individuals, businesses and non-profit organizations.
- SBA signed Strategic Action Memos with partners from Muslim and Arab American communities to support agency efforts to reach more businesses, provide access to capital, extend counseling assistance, and expand government contracting and education into new communities.
- SBA hosted an event with Muslim and Arab organizations from across the country to ensure that business owners from these communities are aware of SBA resources and to gather information for new ways SBA can support such communities.

Ongoing Executive Branch Actions

- Treasury is developing Promising Practices: Identification for Vulnerable Communities, a publication that outlines strategies to improve financial inclusion for marginalized groups, including Muslim Americans, by addressing barriers to obtaining valid identification. Developed in alignment with key White House initiatives, this resource highlights the critical role of identification in accessing financial services, housing, employment, and broader societal participation. The report provides actionable recommendations for financial institutions and policymakers, such as adopting non-documentary verification methods, collaborating with community organizations, and implementing tailored risk assessments to meet regulatory requirements while promoting fairness.
- In June 2024, Treasury issued a [proposed rule](#) to improve the effectiveness of how banks manage potential risks associated with anti-money laundering and counter-financing of terrorism in a risk-based manner, while avoiding one-size-fits-all approaches that can lead to financial institutions declining to provide financial services to entire categories of customers.
- Muslim Americans, in addition to several other communities, have reported challenges with debanking, or having their bank account frozen or closed because they were misidentified. In recent years, CFPB has brought several enforcement actions for unlawful practices by financial institutions related to the freezing of consumer accounts.⁸¹ CFPB has also taken action to address concerns about the role of data brokers in selling consumers' data to financial institutions. Data inaccuracies and biases can lead to account denials, freezes, and closures. On December 3, 2024, CFPB [proposed new rules](#) to rein in the sale of consumers' sensitive personal and financial information and ensure data brokers comply with legal requirements around accuracy to help prevent misidentification and mitigate debanking based on inaccurate information.
- Homeowners with limited English proficiency can struggle to get critical information about their mortgages from mortgage servicers in languages they understand. Such language barriers can increase the risk of foreclosure for homeowners. On July 10, 2024 CFPB [proposed new rules](#) to make it easier for homeowners to get the help they need and reduce avoidable foreclosures. Specifically, CFPB proposed to require mortgage servicers to make translated notices and oral interpretation services available for the most critical conversations about avoiding foreclosure.



- To reduce the risk that refugees fall victim to financial scams, HHS’s Office of Refugee Resettlement’s (ORR) technical assistance provider is creating two resources to inform new Americans, and the organizations that serve them, how to assess financial offerings that are fraudulently marketed and result in consumers losing their savings. ORR’s technical assistance provider already offers resources on financial access and identifying and reporting scams, but these additional resources will speak specifically to navigating additional concerns. These materials will be made available to ORR’s network of over 1,000 resettlement service providers working with all eligible refugees and newcomers.

Call on Congress

- **We call on Congress to** pass legislation requiring bank account holders to be notified when their accounts are frozen and to have recourse for such actions.

Calls to Society

- **We call on banks to** stop unlawful transactions while ensuring fair access to bank accounts by formulating and instituting reasonable procedures for assessing risks and verifying identities.
- **We call on banks to** routinely audit lending, appraisal, and banking policies and practices — and publicly release audit results — to identify, assess, and eliminate any biases against Muslim, Arab or other religious and ethnic communities.
- **We call on banks to** train all staff and contractors, including underwriters, tellers, and appraisers, to root out any bias toward Muslim, Arab, or other religious and ethnic communities that results in lower appraisal values, freezing of funds, and lack of access to financial capital.
- **We call on the business community to** provide mentorship and development opportunities for entrepreneurs from Muslim, Arab, and other religious and ethnic communities.
- **We call on reporting agencies to** use reasonable procedures to confirm accuracy of possible violations of the law.
- **We call on employers to** offer alternative retirement and investment funds that appropriately accommodate religious practices.



Priority 4: Continue to Build Cross-Community Solidarity and Collective Action to Counter Hate

Protecting the safety of all Americans will always be a paramount priority for the Biden-Harris Administration. Increasing cross-community collaboration is a critical part of this effort. That is why President Biden [honored “Uniters” from different beliefs and backgrounds](#) who work across their communities to combat hate at the United We Stand Summit in September 2022, and why the [National Strategy to Counter Antisemitism](#) focused on increasing allyship across key communities. We understand that efforts to counter hate require not just a whole-of-government approach but also the efforts of every sector of our society. With this Strategy, we pledge to continue our work to build bridges of understanding and cross-community partnerships aimed at ensuring that hate is given no safe harbor in our country.

Strategic Goal 4.1 — Continue to Identify and Scale Effective Cross-Community Solidarity Building Efforts

Government and civil society can play powerful roles in bringing people together and creating partnerships that address shared challenges and build and strengthen alliances. We will continue to work with Americans of all backgrounds to support effective cross-community efforts at the local and national levels to counter hate, discrimination, and bias.

Completed Executive Branch Actions

- HHS leveraged the [National Youth Sports Strategy](#) and the [President’s Council on Sports, Fitness & Nutrition](#) to spotlight how activities like sports, fitness, dance, cooking, volunteering and more can build community solidarity to counter Antisemitism, Islamophobia, and other forms of hate. This initiative included a summer 2023 digital campaign led by members of the President’s Council on Sports, Fitness & Nutrition encouraging the public to share personal stories of how activities like sports or cooking have promoted connection, inclusion, and cross-community solidarity.
- In May 2024, the President’s Committee for the Arts and the Humanities (PCAH), the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA), IMLS, and the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) launched [Artists for Understanding](#), a new initiative that brings together a diverse community of artists and cultural luminaries who share a common belief in the power of the arts and humanities to counter all forms of hate, including bias and discrimination against members of Muslim, Arab (including Palestinian), Sikh, South Asian, and Jewish communities. In-person convenings have taken place so far in New York, Michigan and Minnesota. Forthcoming convenings are scheduled for California, Texas, and Colorado.
- [AmeriCorps](#) hosted a webinar with grantees and sponsors to amplify examples of projects and partners who successfully build relationships across diverse faith and non-faith traditions to solve pressing social challenges through service and volunteerism.



Ongoing Executive Branch Actions

- IMLS is partnering with non-profits, PCAH, NEA, and NEH to host a series of cultural convenings for museums, libraries, and archives on countering Islamophobia. Building upon the Artists for Understanding launch, these gatherings will focus on building cross-community solidarity, sharing model resources for cultural leaders raising awareness of Islamophobia and Muslim American heritage, and developing training programs and materials supporting community arts and humanities leaders and related organizations in countering Islamophobia and anti-Arab hate. This work will also include the development of a funded program to support cultural workers who are creating community-based arts and humanities content, including those related to countering Islamophobia and lifting up the histories and contributions of Muslims and Arabs in America.
- AmeriCorps is working with Service Year Alliance, a nonprofit that promotes national service, to develop resources and provide access to training materials for members and volunteers to deepen their capacity to build bridges across diverse cultures, faith and non-faith traditions, viewpoints, and backgrounds.

Call on Congress

- **We call on Members of Congress to help foster cross-community solidarity by convening constituents of diverse beliefs and backgrounds with the objective of promoting understanding and meaningful relationships.** Such activities can also help inform legislation that further supports these objectives.
- **We call on Members of Congress to lift up exemplary cross-community partnerships to counter hate, discrimination, and bias in their districts and highlight best practices from those partnerships.**

Calls to Society

- **We call on students in K-12 schools and higher education to advance efforts to prevent and address hate, discrimination, and bias, including preventing and responding to hate and bias incidents on their campuses and holding forums on countering Islamophobia, Antisemitism, and other forms of hate.**
- **We call on all Americans to engage in collective action to prevent acts of hate, discrimination, and bias.** Consider forming or joining a cross-community coalition to call for changes that address the needs of diverse communities.

Strategic Goal 4.2 — Continue to Expand and Mobilize Multi-Faith Partnerships

The First Amendment protects the religious freedom of individuals of all faiths and beliefs, contributing to America's vibrant, diverse religious landscape. Many Americans identify with faith communities connected to houses of worship, religiously-affiliated schools, faith-based service organizations, denominational conventions and associations, advocacy movements on public issues, and informal groups dedicated to the study of scripture, prayer, and mutual support. It is crucial to continue to expand and mobilize multi-faith partnerships to counter all forms of hate, discrimination, and bias.

In times of crisis, faith community leaders are often among the first at the scene of an emergency. For example, in October 2018, following the horrific mass shooting at the Tree of Life Synagogue in



Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania — the deadliest attack on the Jewish community in U.S. history — local faith leaders rushed to the assistance of the victims. In the aftermath of the massacre, the local Muslim community raised hundreds of thousands of dollars to assist victims’ families with funeral costs and the Christian community provided worship space for Jewish congregants.⁸² In a similar act of solidarity, when the only mosque in Victoria, Texas, was burned to the ground in a 2017 hate crime, the leaders of the city’s only synagogue gave their Muslim neighbors keys to the local synagogue so they would have a place to worship while their mosque was being rebuilt.⁸³

These religious leaders did not wait for a crisis to build relationships across faiths. And their collaboration had a powerful impact during critical times. Simply knowing people of other backgrounds and beliefs can increase understanding and mutual respect. The Pew Research Center found that non-Muslim Americans who personally know a Muslim are more likely to have positive feelings towards Muslims.⁸⁴ Another report found that 73% of people who know someone who is Jewish say Antisemitism is a problem in the U.S. today, compared with 59% who do not know anyone who is Jewish.⁸⁵ A strong, diverse network of relationships — fostered over time, through consistent engagement — paves the way for more united communities and a stronger response to hatred. Government can play a helpful role in building these relationships by using its convening power to bring together diverse leaders and groups to make connections, share best practices, and find more ways to stand in solidarity with one another.⁸⁶

Completed Executive Branch Actions

- In May 2024, USDA convened a dialogue with religious leaders from across rural America to assess the state of Islamophobia, Antisemitism, and related forms of discrimination and highlight effective strategies to counter them, centered on building solidarity across faiths.
- HHS has [worked with hospital chaplains](#) to promote and expand multi-faith partnerships in healthcare settings.
- In 2023, Commerce held its first-ever [National Muslim American Leaders Convening](#) and its first-ever [National Jewish American Leaders Convening](#). These events enabled Commerce to learn from these leaders’ experiences and to promote job creation and economic growth.
- AmeriCorps encouraged multifaith service projects for its 9/11 Day of Service. Through these service projects, Americans of different religions had the opportunity to increase understanding and work together towards common service goals.

Ongoing Executive Branch Actions

- HHS CFBNP will host a webinar series to highlight how faith communities are overcoming fear and bias to bring leaders and communities together to reduce Islamophobia and hate against Arabs.
- HHS CFBNP has formed a youth interfaith collaborative that visited a variety of cultural and religious museums as they work to build greater understanding across backgrounds and beliefs. Participants will share their learning experiences in a public forum and create a youth public service announcement on multi-faith partnerships.
- VA is expanding its chaplain partnership with Muslim, Sikh, Jewish, and other chaplain associations and facilitate local multi-faith partnerships among chaplains of diverse faiths.

Calls to Congress

- **We call on Members of Congress of different faith affiliations to** continue and expand efforts to come together across religions and political parties to speak out against hate, discrimination, and bias.



Calls on Society

- **We encourage all faith leaders to** speak out publicly — and wherever possible, collectively — when anyone is attacked for their faith or religious identity. An attack on one must be treated as an attack on all.
- **We encourage people of faith to** develop creative initiatives to strengthen multi-faith partnerships and efforts. Such initiatives could include hosting an event to develop online solutions to counter hate, bias, and discrimination in faith communities; organizing open houses at places of worship; and developing new conflict resolution methods.
- **We encourage faith leaders to** educate their communities about the core American principle that people of all faiths have equal rights to religious liberty.
- **We encourage faith leaders to** urge their communities to speak up against hateful speech targeting faith communities, including Muslims.
- **We encourage all faith leaders to** continue the long and proud tradition of calling for full recognition of others' civil and human rights.



The Way Forward

For far too long and in far too many places, hate against Muslims and Arabs has been too pervasive. Members of these communities have faced discrimination and violence simply because of their race, national origin, ethnicity, or religion. This is not the American way. Through this first-ever National Strategy to Counter Islamophobia and Anti-Arab Hate, the Biden-Harris Administration takes another historic step toward fully realizing the promises of the U.S. Constitution.

We recognize that realizing the goals of this Strategy will require efforts far beyond January 2025, and we urge government, civil society, and private sector leaders to commit to a sustained and collaborative effort. Throughout this process, we will continue to collaborate with the dedicated leaders and community members who called for this Strategy and have helped shape it every step of the way.

We ask each person and every sector of society to come together to counter hate, and help safeguard the rights and safety of all Americans, including Muslims and Arabs. We all have a role to play in continuing our work to build a more perfect union.



Appendix

Summaries of Illustrative Federal Enforcement Actions to Counter Discrimination Against Muslims and Arabs

As described in this Strategy, the U.S. government enforces an array of legal authorities prohibiting various forms of discrimination. The following are summaries of illustrative enforcement actions that the federal government has taken pursuant to those laws that have provided protection to Muslims and Arabs.

Equal Employment Opportunity Commission

- In January 2024, [EEOC settled a lawsuit against Blackwell Security Services](#) regarding its failure to accommodate a Muslim employee. Blackwell had refused to exempt the employee from a company policy that all employees be clean-shaven, forcing him to choose between his job and his religious observance even though an accommodation would not have imposed any cost or burden on Blackwell. Blackwell paid \$70,000 in compensation and agreed to train management employees on religious discrimination and report complaints to EEOC.
- In January 2023, [EEOC filed an amicus brief in *Billings v. Murphy*](#) in support of a Muslim woman who was required to remove her hijab in front of a male supervisor, despite her request to remove it in front of a female supervisor. The brief urged the Second Circuit to hold that a plaintiff may challenge the denial of a religious accommodation without showing a separate “material adverse event” other than the denied accommodation. The Second Circuit [agreed](#), reversing the dismissal of Billings’s lawsuit.
- In November 2021, [EEOC settled a lawsuit against Greyhound Lines Inc.](#), obtaining \$45,000 for a Muslim woman who was denied an accommodation to wear an abaya and therefore had to withdraw from Greyhound’s driver training program. Greyhound also agreed to a consent decree enjoining discrimination based on religion and requiring additional training and reporting.
- In June 2021, [EEOC settled a lawsuit against JBS Swift](#), a meat-processing plant, to resolve allegations that a class of approximately 300 Muslim employees were denied the ability to pray and were harassed for praying during scheduled breaks. JBS Swift agreed to pay up to \$5.5 million to the employees and to provide clean, quiet, appropriate, and safe locations for religious observances, including daily prayer.
- In April 2020, [EEOC obtained a default judgment of over \\$520,000](#) for six Muslim women who were fired for refusing, on religious grounds, to comply with Aviation Port Services’ employee uniform policy requiring them to wear pants or knee-length skirts.
- In October 2019, [EEOC settled a lawsuit against Halliburton Energy Services](#), obtaining \$275,000 for two Muslim employees, one of Syrian national origin, and the other of Indian national origin. The two employees were subjected to harassment and disparate terms and conditions of employment due to their national origins and religion, and one was terminated in retaliation for his complaints about the treatment. In addition to monetary relief, EEOC obtained a consent decree requiring training on national origin and religious discrimination, reporting of any future complaints to the EEOC, and other steps.
- In December 2018, [EEOC entered into a \\$4.9 million settlement agreement with United Parcel Service](#) to resolve its lawsuit alleging that UPS prohibited its supervisory and customer contact employees from wearing beards or growing their hair below collar length; failed to provide a



religious accommodation for Muslims, Sikhs, and others whose religious practices conflicted with that policy; and segregated those employees in back-of-the-facility positions. UPS also agreed to amend its religious accommodation process and conduct nationwide training, among other measures.

- In November 2016, [EEOC entered into a conciliation agreement with J.B. Hunt Transport](#) on behalf of four Sikh job applicants. J.B. Hunt had denied the applicants an accommodation from a policy requiring applicants to provide hair samples for drug testing, which conflicted with the applicants' religious practices regarding hair cutting. The employer agreed to pay the applicants \$260,000, provide the requested accommodation, and extend them conditional job offers. The employer also agreed to designate an equal employment opportunity consultant; develop written complaint procedures; and conduct training for all employees who participate in the hiring, compliance, or internal grievance process.

Department of Education Office for Civil Rights

- **University of Michigan:** In June 2024, ED OCR resolved an investigation at the University of Michigan to ensure the university's compliance with Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act (Title VI) in response to allegations of discrimination or harassment, including based on shared Jewish ancestry and shared Palestinian or Muslim ancestry. Based on its review of 75 reports the university received alleging shared ancestry harassment and/or discrimination from the 2022-23 school year through February 2024, OCR found no evidence that the university either complied with its Title VI requirements to assess whether incidents individually or cumulatively created a hostile environment for students, faculty, or staff, or that the university took steps reasonably calculated to end the hostile environment, remedy its effects, and prevent its recurrence. According to one report, when a student reported to the university in November 2023 that someone yelled at her that she had "terrorist" friends because she participated in a pro-Palestinian protest, the University reported that it held "restorative circles" to address the incident but took no further action to address the incident's effects on students. Another report stated that students were upset by comments made by a staff person, including once when he advocated getting rid of hijabs. To resolve the complaint, the university made comprehensive commitments that include: an ongoing review of complaints of discrimination; sharing with OCR its responses to reports of discrimination; policy revisions; improved coordination by the university's Equity, Civil Rights, and Title IX office; training; and a climate assessment.
- **City University of New York, system-wide:** In June 2024, ED OCR announced the resolution of nine complaints against the City University of New York (CUNY) and several of its campuses, addressing allegations of discrimination from academic year 2019-20 to that time. As part of its investigation, OCR examined whether the university and/or Hunter College, CUNY School of Law, and Queens College had discriminated against students on the basis of their actual or perceived national origin/ancestry, including shared Jewish ancestry and shared Arab, Muslim, and/or South Asian ancestry, since October 2023. For example, a complaint alleged that Hunter discriminated against Palestinian, Arab, and Muslim students by failing to respond to threats against them following a pro-Palestinian rally. Another complaint alleged that CUNY Law School cancelled an event hosted by a Muslim student group without adequate justification for doing so. Because ED OCR identified concerns regarding systemwide fulfillment of CUNY's federal nondiscrimination obligations, CUNY committed to resolve all nine complaints to ensure every one of the 25 CUNY campuses protects all students against shared ancestry discrimination that violates Title VI without further delay.
- **Lafayette College:** In June 2024, ED OCR announced that Lafayette College entered into a resolution agreement to ensure its compliance with Title VI when responding to allegations of



discrimination or harassment based on shared ancestry, notices of anti-Arab / anti-Muslim and antisemitic discrimination it received during fall 2023 and more recent events. ED OCR's investigation found that college records showed inconsistent responses to the same conduct depending on whether it occurred on or off campus. The college declined to address allegations of harassment occurring on social media because it did not consider the harassment to constitute a direct threat. But its Title VI obligation to redress a hostile environment is not limited to conduct that occurs on campus or outside social media. To resolve OCR's concerns, the college resolved to review its nondiscrimination policies and procedures, provide training to staff and students regarding Title VI's applicability to discrimination based on shared ancestry and ethnicity, and to review each report of discrimination and harassment that it received during the 2023-24 school year to determine whether the alleged conduct created a hostile environment.

- **Brown University:** In July 2024, ED OCR announced that Brown University in Rhode Island entered into a resolution agreement to ensure compliance with Title VI after an investigation of alleged harassment of students based on national origin, including Jewish, Palestinian, Arab or Muslim ancestry. For example, a Palestinian-American student's roommate berated them about their Palestinian-American identity for weeks. Another Palestinian student alleged they were aggressively accosted. The university appeared to have taken no or little action in response other than to acknowledge receipt of the reports, offer support resources, and request to meet with complainants. Relatedly, ED OCR noted distinct variation among the half-dozen university entities responding to these reports, leaving university students and staff without consistent redress. To resolve the range of concerns identified in the investigation, the university agreed to further revise its policies and procedures to ensure all university offices consistently and effectively comply with Title VI, including with respect to protests and demonstrations; conduct annual training on nondiscrimination and harassment for all students and employees; maintain records related to complaints or reports of discrimination under Title VI; conduct a review of the university's response to complaints and reports of antisemitic and other shared ancestry discrimination during the 2023-2024 and 2024- 2025 academic years, and take remedial actions if required; and analyze the results of, and create an action plan in response to, climate survey(s) and/or other review(s) focused on shared ancestry discrimination.
- **Ann Arbor Public Schools:** In September 2024, OCR announced a resolution agreement with the district following an investigation of the district's compliance with Title VI in response to reports of discrimination and harassment based on shared Muslim, Arab, and Palestinian ancestry. The investigation raised concerns that the district appears to have failed to assess whether a hostile environment existed following an initial incident in which a counselor responded to questions from a student of Palestinian and Muslim ancestry by saying "I don't negotiate with terrorists." The incident contributed to the student feeling unsafe on campus, including facing hostility from others in the school community after reporting the incident. The wider community, moreover, perceived the incident as reflecting increased animus towards Muslim, Palestinian, and Arab students.

During its investigation, OCR also discovered that the district's Title VI procedures limited who can file a complaint and required the district to respond only to written complaints, in violation of its obligation to respond promptly and effectively to any hostile environment about which it has knowledge, through written complaints or other means. To resolve OCR's Title VI compliance concerns, the district entered into a resolution agreement to conduct a climate assessment with respect to race, color, and national origin, including Muslim/Arab ancestry, and the extent to which students are subjected to or witness this particular type of discrimination; analyze the results of the climate assessment and create an action plan; draft a policy, subject to OCR approval, that governs how the district will meet its Title VI obligations, including its response to notice of a hostile environment; and provide training to students, staff, school board members,



and parents on the new policy and Title VI's prohibition of discrimination and harassment, including on the basis of shared ancestry.

- **John Doe School District:**¹ In March 2016, ED OCR resolved a complaint alleging that a student perceived to be Arab American was subjected to a hostile environment created by repeated acts of harassment based on perceived national origin and race. Shortly after the student began to wear a hijab, the student alleged that she was the target of a series of public, humiliating acts of both verbal and physical harassment by other students. These incidents, which led to the student leaving the district, included being referred to as a “terrorist” in school hallways. ED OCR found that, while the school did respond to each individual incident and indicated that the student had access to a guidance counselor and a peer mentor, the school treated each incident as isolated rather than also addressing the broader hostile climate of the school. Additionally, ED OCR found that there were no efforts to extend counseling to the impacted student despite the school’s awareness of the degree to which the harassment upset her. To remedy the hostile environment, the district entered into a resolution agreement with ED OCR that requires it to revise its definition of harassment in its policies; release a statement supporting its commitment to combating harassment; provide prompt trainings about harassment to teachers, administrators and students; and invite the student to return to the district. Additionally, the agreement required the district to develop a climate survey to administer in the student’s former school and to plan additional steps based on the results.

Department of Justice

- **United States v. City of Troy:** On November 23, 2022, the court in *United States v. City of Troy* (E.D. Mich.) entered a stipulated order resolving the United States’ motion seeking additional relief in its RLUIPA lawsuit against the City of Troy, Michigan. The [complaint](#) related to the Adam Community Center’s (Adam) efforts to establish an Islamic place of worship in Troy at a building previously used as a restaurant and banquet hall. On March 18, 2022, the Court issued an order granting the United States’ motion for summary judgment by finding that Troy violated RLUIPA. In granting the United States’ motion for summary judgment the Court specifically held that Troy (1) imposed an unjustified substantial burden on Adam’s exercise of religion when it denied Adam’s variance requests that would have allowed Adam to worship at the building; and (2) violated RLUIPA’s equal terms provision by requiring places of worship to abide by more onerous zoning restrictions than places of nonreligious assembly. The Court also enjoined Troy from enforcing its discriminatory zoning restrictions and denied Troy’s motion for summary judgment.⁸⁷
- **Federal Way Public Schools:** On November 12, 2020, DOJ and the U.S. Attorney’s Office for the Western District of Washington entered into a [Settlement Agreement](#) with Federal Way Public Schools in Federal Way, Washington to resolve an investigation into allegations of peer-on-peer harassment on the basis of religion and national origin between 2014 and 2018, and a failure by the District to properly communicate with parents and guardians who are not English-language proficient. The Department initiated its investigation under Title IV of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 in response to complaints by parents alleging their children had been subjected to severe and pervasive religion- and national-origin-based harassment that went unaddressed by the District. The complaints alleged that other students repeatedly called Muslim students “terrorists,” pulled off their hijabs, and physically assaulted them, and told a Latina student to “Go back to Mexico,” threatened to kill her, and physically assaulted her. Under the Agreement, the District agreed to take proactive steps to improve its ability to prevent and appropriately

¹ ED OCR has not disclosed the actual name of the institution in this case because of privacy considerations.



respond to peer-on-peer harassment based on religion and national origin. Those steps include a review of the District's harassment policies, practices, and procedures, as well as training on and implementation of protocols for such policies by the District. The Agreement also required the District to work with the consultants to assess its resources and build capacity at individual schools and at the District level to ensure that anti-harassment policies are properly implemented. Under the agreement, the District also agreed to provide training for students and faculty, and survey the educational environment and effectiveness of measures taken pursuant to the Agreement.



Legal Disclaimer

The U.S National Strategy to Counter Islamophobia and Anti-Arab Hate does not supersede, modify, or direct an interpretation of any existing federal, state, or local statute, regulation, or policy. It does not constitute binding guidance for the public, states, localities, or federal agencies and therefore does not require compliance with the principles described herein. The Strategy does not purport to alter or preempt existing statutes, regulations, policies, or the requirements of the federal, state, or local agencies that enforce them. The Strategy shall therefore be implemented consistent with applicable law and subject to the availability of appropriations. Nothing in this Strategy shall be construed to impair or otherwise affect or influence the authority of DOJ, including FBI, in the performance of their responsibilities with regard to the direction, conduct, control, planning, investigation, organization, equipment training, exercises, or other activities concerning counterterrorism, intelligence, and law enforcement activities. Such activities are outside the scope of the Strategy. This Strategy should also therefore not be construed to discuss or comment on any ongoing federal litigation or investigation. The appropriate application of the principles set forth in the Strategy depends significantly on the context in which the principles are being applied. In some circumstances, application of these principles in whole or in part may not be appropriate. Even in contexts where these principles may not apply in whole or in part, federal departments and agencies remain subject to existing laws, regulations, and policies. The Strategy is not intended to, and does not, create any legal right, benefit, or defense, substantive or procedural, enforceable by law or in equity by any party against the United States, its departments, agencies, or entities, its officers, employees, or agents, or any other person, nor does it constitute a waiver of sovereign immunity.



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