

EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 2 OF 2022

WHEREAS, antisemitism, including harassment on the basis of actual or perceived Jewish origin, ancestry, ethnicity, identity, affiliation, or faith remains a persistent, pervasive, and disturbing problem in American society, including here in Westchester County; and

WHEREAS, antisemitic incidents reached an all-time high in the United States in 2021, according to the Anti-Defamation League, as there were 2,717 incidents in 2021, representing an increase of 34% over 2020 and the highest on record since the Anti-Defamation League a New York-based Jewish civil rights group started tracking such cases in 1979.

WHEREAS, anti-Jewish hate crimes in 20 major U.S. cities surged to 373 incidents in 2021, an increase of nearly 59% from 2020, according to a report by the Center for the Study of Hate and Extremism at California State University, San Bernardino, with the bulk of the incidents taking place in New York City, where 207 anti-Jewish hate crimes were registered last year, up from 121 in 2020; and

WHEREAS, the violence and abhorrent rhetoric comes both in person and online. The Anti-Defamation League found that on Twitter, more than 17,000 tweets used variations of the phrase "Hitler was right" between May 7, 2021 and May 17, 2021; and

WHEREAS, the deadliest attack against the American Jewish community took place on October 27, 2018, at the Tree of Life Synagogue in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, killing eleven worshippers and injuring several more; and

WHEREAS, on January 15, 2022, a 44-year-old British Pakistani terrorist believing in antisemitic conspiracy theories took hostages during Sabbath services at Congregation Beth Israel in Colleyville, Texas for over eleven hours; and

WHEREAS, antisemitic graffiti has been found in high schools, on Westchester County and other municipal-owned property, on playgrounds, bridge underpasses, at train station parking lots, and at homes throughout Westchester County.

WHEREAS, when left unchecked, antisemitism enables prejudice and active discrimination against multiple communities within societies, threatening the rule

of law and human rights protections. It emboldens intolerant members of society wherever they may be; and

WHEREAS, the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA), by consensus vote of its member states, adopted a Working Definition of Antisemitism in May 2016, which has become the internationally recognized, authoritative definition for use by governments and international organizations; and

WHEREAS, the non-legally binding definition reads in full:

“Antisemitism is a certain perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred toward Jews. Rhetorical and physical manifestations of antisemitism are directed toward Jewish or non-Jewish individuals and/or their property, toward Jewish community institutions and religious facilities.”; and

WHEREAS, the IHRA working definition of antisemitism has become a widely used definition of antisemitism across the world. Since its adoption by the IHRA, dozens of countries, cities, government institutions, universities, civil society organizations and sport clubs have used the definition as a resource in projects that seek to educate on the ways that antisemitism appears, as well as for initiatives focused on recognizing and countering manifestations of antisemitism; and

WHEREAS, bigotry, violence, hate, antisemitism and racism have no place in Westchester County; and

WHEREAS, Westchester County reaffirms its unwavering commitment to promoting and encouraging dignity, respect and equality for all and will not tolerate antisemitism in any form;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, George Latimer, County Executive of the County of Westchester, in accordance with my statutory duties, do hereby order that all County Departments, agencies, boards, and commissions, and officials shall be guided by the IHRA Working Definition of Antisemitism, in complying with, implementing and enforcing laws and regulations that prohibit acts of antisemitic discrimination of harassment; and it is further

RESOLVED, that it shall be the policy of the County’s government to utilize the said working Definition of antisemitism and attendant illustrative examples, in a continuing endeavor to cooperate with recognized organizations in educating residents about identifying acts of antisemitism, and available procedures for

reporting acts of antisemitism which have occurred or may occur in the County of Westchester; and it is further

RESOLVED, that this Executive Order shall take effect immediately and shall remain in effect until otherwise superseded or revoked.



GEORGE LATIMER
County Executive

Dated: December 16, 2022
White Plains, New York