

**Statement against Antisemitism in Canada**  
**Approved by the BCASW Board of Directors September 19, 2025**

Social work is a profession of compassion, and it is dedicated to the wellbeing of all people. Social workers affirm the inherent dignity of all humans and are committed to advancing equity and fairness for any group that is targeted, disadvantaged, or oppressed. The BC Association of Social Workers acknowledges that hatred towards Jews exists in Canada and around the world. In a time of record-high antisemitic actions and sentiment, these are dangerous times for some members of Jewish communities.

Antisemitism is defined as anger or hatred towards Jewish people based on race, ethnicity, or religion. In today's age it also encompasses the different perceptions people have of Jews that blame them for real or perceived problems. It is antisemitic to believe in or spread negative stereotypes or harmful characterizations, whether in person or online. Further, denying the fact, the intention, the severity, or mechanisms of genocide of the Jewish people in World War II is antisemitic (International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance, 2025).

Jewish people experience antisemitism in multiple facets of life. In May of this year in Vancouver, a group of 11-year-olds at lunch break were confronted with antisemitic slurs by children from a neighbouring school (Grochoweski, 2025). In various cities in Canada, windows of synagogues have been broken and firebombed, buildings and stores shot at, vandalized and graffitied. In 2024 and 2025 in separate incidents in Vancouver, Burrard bridge and UBC campus were graffitied with antisemitic hatred (Kerr-Lazenby, 2025). Artificial intelligence is also used to create hateful propaganda online, reinforcing harmful stereotypes, misconceptions, and prejudice. Currently, there are no laws in place to prevent or limit the use of artificial intelligence for targeting specific groups with hate (Zimonjic, 2024).

In 2024, BC experienced a 44.3% rise in antisemitic incidents, including police-reported crimes such as arson, online harassment, hate graffiti, and a troubling increase of in-person harassment. (B'nai B'rith, 2025). Across Canada, it is estimated there are 18 incidents of antisemitism a day. Among religious hate crimes, the highest number is directed toward Judaism. Social media sees hatred toward Jewish people politically from both the left and the right (B'nai B'rith, 2025).

Social work is a profession of action, and we share a call to confront discrimination, inequality, and barriers that prevent people from living their lives to the fullest. The condemnation of hatred or oppression toward any group is a central value of social work. Antisemitism denies a person their dignity and humanity. We have a moral and ethical responsibility to condemn antisemitism and to advocate for the safety, rights, and opportunity of all people.

In addition to action, social work as a profession is committed to the structural changes that uphold systems of power and discriminate against groups. Incidents of antisemitism that are minimized, not called out, not adequately addressed or punished is systemic racism. Social workers can make a difference by consciousness raising, challenging discrimination, removing systemic barriers, and providing services that both address the immediate effects of racism and meet the needs of those most affected. The BC Association of Social Workers condemns any and all forms of antisemitism and affirms its commitment to the wellbeing of all people.



## References

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- International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance. (2025). *Working Definition of Antisemitism*. <https://holocaustremembrance.com/resources/working-definition-antisemitism>
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