



## THANK YOU FOR HELPING KEEP JEWISH CLEVELAND SAFE

When it comes to security, success is invisible. In many ways, it can be difficult to illustrate the impact of our security measures because by nature nothing happens if they are done right. Threats do not come to fruition and the efforts keeping us safe are largely imperceptible by our community as well as those who may want to cause us harm. But behind every visible element – such as patrol vehicles and security officers – there are countless activities going on behind the scenes to mitigate threats, identify and investigate suspicious activity, share intelligence and alerts, prevent harassment, deflect abuse, deter vandalism, and more.

As we face dangerous surges in antisemitism from all corners, steadfast support from our community makes all the difference in helping to keep Jewish Cleveland safe. In gratitude, we have prepared this report outlining the nationally recognized security program brought to life by your generosity. Your impact is indelible and deeply appreciated.

*Thank you.*



### COMMUNITY SECURITY INITIATIVE IMPACT REPORT

## TEN YEARS OF VIGILANCE TO KEEP HATE FROM HITTING HOME

The Jewish Federation of Cleveland's Community Security Initiative, one of the first of its kind developed by a Jewish community in the United States, was launched in 2013.

Over the past ten years, we have steadily increased security efforts as a response to the national increase in antisemitism, hate, and attacks targeting Jews. Helping to keep Jewish Cleveland safe by doing everything we can to prevent, prepare for, and respond to potential security threats – while preserving our community's open and welcoming spirit – is a top priority for the Federation and our security provider, JFC Security, LLC.



We strive to empower Jewish Cleveland and our organizations to foster a culture of community security through four pillars – creating increased awareness in the community to understand the threats we face, target hardening our facilities, training community members, and maintaining a strong partnership with local and national law enforcement departments to increase cooperation and intelligence sharing.

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## EXTENSIVE ASSESSMENT AND TRAINING

All JFC Security officers go through a rigorous hiring process, which includes a credit and FBI/BCI criminal background check, review of law enforcement personnel files, personality assessment, firearms proficiency test, physical fitness for duty health checkup, evaluation of decision-making under stress, and psychological assessment.

Ongoing training covers annual firearms proficiency testing, use of deadly force, casualty care, defensive tactics, and tactical training with a high-tech simulator system. Our security officers participate in training with the Cleveland FBI's Critical Incident Response Group, Department of Homeland Security's Critical Infrastructure Protection Unit, Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) the EDGE Regional SWAT/BOMB team, and local police departments to better coordinate and improve response capabilities before, during and after a critical incident.

Jewish Cleveland was one of the first Jewish communities in North America to be selected by the Israeli Ministry of Diaspora to receive its specialized security training, known as CARE (Community Awareness and Resilience Education). Additionally, JFC Security provides training for community members through a wide range of security educational programs, including Active Shooter (Run-Hide-Fight), Project Safe Classroom, Stop the Bleed, Usher/Greeter training, Situational Awareness, Bomb Threat Protocols, Handling Suspicious Mail, Emergency Communications, and more.

Along with developing and delivering extensive community training programs and full-scale emergency simulation exercises, JFC Security is a trusted partner and valued consultant for the Jewish community and law enforcement agencies regionally and nationally, working closely with the FBI's Joint Terrorism Task Force, Department of Homeland Security, Northeast Ohio Regional Fusion Center, JFNA's LiveSecure program, Secure Community Network (SCN), and ADL.

## SAFEGUARDING OUR COMMUNITY AFTER OCTOBER 7 AND SKYROCKETING ANTISEMITISM

Before the horrific events of October 7, the Federation and JFC Security were already on heightened alert due to the ongoing increase in antisemitism and recent incidents such as the 13-year-old in Canton who was arrested after sharing details on the gaming messaging platform Discord about his plan to carry out a mass shooting at the Temple Israel in Canton.

Even as our community mourned the lives lost and those forever altered by the horrific terrorist attacks Hamas unleashed on Israel, JFC Security immediately worked in cooperation with local, state, and federal law enforcement to scale multiple layers of security measures as needed. We issued a community security alert with detailed instructions to help secure Jewish Cleveland in the coming days, weeks, and months. Intense mobilization and contingency planning were also required to cover several community events drawing thousands that the Federation organized in the aftermath.

In the following months, antisemitism has exploded beyond already record levels. Statistics show how disproportionately our Jewish community is targeted by hate and violence. The Department of Homeland Security cited an increase in threats to the Jewish community since October 7, noting that “hate directed at Jewish students, communities, and institutions have added to a pre-existing increase in the level of antisemitism in the United States and around the world.”

FBI hate crime statistics released in the previous month showed levels overall at the highest point since collection began in 1991. Among those, were

1,122 hate crimes driven by anti-Jewish bias – the highest number recorded in almost three decades and the second-highest number on record.



Additionally, a preliminary report from the ADL Center on Extremism released in January 2024 showed a 360% increase in antisemitic incidents in the US in the three months after October 7. The total of 3,283 incidents recorded in this period is more than what is usually seen in an entire year and represents an average of nearly 34 incidents a day.

Several of these incidents have been reported in our area, including vandalism at Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland and Chesed Shel Emeth Cemetery in Brooklyn – where 23 headstones were defaced with swastikas. The numbers also include a shocking swath of swatting (making false threats or

fake emergency calls to elicit security or police responses that cause disruption and distress) incidents impacting 200 Jewish institutions across the country, including several area synagogues, in the weekend before Christmas.

Our community security program is an absolute necessity to help prevent the emboldened acts of hate-fueled violence we have seen surrounding us from all sides. By going above and beyond to help keep our community safe, steadfast supporters like you are crucial to ensuring we have the full resources to do so. Without a doubt, we would not be able to respond in the “Cleveland way” – with a sophisticated, vigorous, and comprehensive program that sets the standard for vigilance – were it not for your generous ongoing support.

## SAFETY IN NUMBERS

JFC Security:

- Provides security coverage across a service area with nearly 100 Jewish organizations.
- Serves over 60 synagogues for services and Sunday schools, 8 early childhood programs, 9 Jewish day school locations, the Mandel JCC, the Maltz Museum, and many social service organizations in the Greater Cleveland Jewish community.
- Employs more than 55 highly trained and seasoned professionals (along with another 85 off-duty police as independent contractors), including former FBI agents, a SWAT team commander, Explosive Ordnance Specialist, and 5 former police chiefs. JFC Security leadership has a combined 160+ years in law enforcement.
- Operates a fleet of 7 mobile patrol vehicles that canvas the community thousands of hours annually, day and night, to provide enhanced security oversight 7 days a week.
- Maximizes security technology by connecting 28 Jewish agencies, 1,140 surveillance cameras, 26 automated license plate readers, and 75 portable two-way emergency radios to the Chagrin Valley Regional Dispatch Center (CVRD).
- Runs a wide range of security training programs, training more than 3,700 community members since 2019.



**365/7**  
COVERAGE



**7**  
MOBILE  
PATROLS



**55+**  
OFFICERS



**60+**  
SYNAGOGUES  
AND AGENCIES



**17**  
SCHOOLS AND  
EARLY CHILDHOOD  
CENTERS

## COMPREHENSIVE CONNECTIVITY AND SMART TECHNOLOGY

Our cutting-edge partnership with the CVRD makes Jewish Cleveland the only faith-based community in the US to have our schools, synagogues, and agencies linked directly to a regional police dispatch center that monitors our community 24/7 for added protection. JFC Security has embedded a dispatcher within the CVRD to work side by side with area police, fire, and EMS personnel to monitor our community emergency radios, cameras, and automated license plate readers. Area police departments that patrol our community access participating agencies' cameras in a live stream for forensic review when a crime or suspicious incident has been reported.

In 2021, we worked with the Cincinnati, Columbus, Youngstown, Dayton, and Toledo Jewish Federations to form the Ohio Regional Intelligence and Analysis Center (ORIC) to better understand threats in real-time and take decisive action as needed to protect our Jewish community.

Thanks to the continuous commitment of generous supporters like you, ORIC employs two full-time intelligence analysts who use the latest technology and sophisticated techniques to monitor and scan data across every nook and cranny of the digital world – along with information from commercial intelligence agencies, police scanners, and local/national media sources – to detect and determine risk so we can help mitigate against potential attacks.

Additionally, JFC Security has recently implemented further advanced technology programs to facilitate instant identification of threatening individuals and digital reporting mechanisms for officers and first responders. To preserve their efficacy, the details of these programs are confidential.



## FUNDING SECURED

JFC Security guides local Jewish agencies on applying for federal and state nonprofit security grants. From 2017–2023, JFC Security assisted with grant applications resulting in 135 grants being awarded to 40 Jewish Cleveland agencies totaling \$11,757,800. The grants improve community security with the addition of hundreds of high-definition cameras, locks, intrusion alarms, bollards, fences, automated license plate readers, and bullet-resistant glass.

Additionally, the Federation has been advocating alongside JFNA, ADL, SCN, and other groups for Congress to increase the funding for FEMA's Nonprofit Security Grant Program (NSGP). Our community has benefited from NSGP grants for over a decade, but the increasing threat of violent antisemitic actions necessitates even higher levels of funding.

## IMPACT IN THEIR OWN WORDS

“JFC Security, LLC — the Federation’s security provider — adds one more layer (of security) that we’re happy to have.”

*Christopher Kostura, Chief of Police, Orange Police Department*

“When a person who was unfamiliar to our congregants entered the building, we knew how to approach him because of the training we received.”

*Renee Higer, Executive Director, Temple Emanu El*

“In an emergency situation, you really have to have a toolbox on what to do when there is a real problem. And I think this really helped to fill that toolbox and to really make sure that our community agencies are doing whatever they can to educate as many people as possible.”

*Dassi Shtern, Director of Special Education and SEGULA, Jewish Education Center of Cleveland*

“The Federation security team has been a fabulous partner, one that can be relied upon in the changing world in which we live.”

*Rabbi Simcha Dessler, Educational Director, Hebrew Academy of Cleveland*

“...the people who are here, from the questions that they ask, for the actual interest, is definitely showing us how strong is this community and how capable because people here take care of one another.”

*Yonatan Yagodovsky, Director/Instructor, Magen David Adom*

“Kids know they can come to school and feel safe and not worry.”

*Rochel Fine, Parent, Hebrew Academy of Cleveland*

“We work closely with the Jewish Federation of Cleveland, as well as surrounding departments, and share information on a regular basis on any matters of concern.”

*Lt. Todd Kinley, Public Information Officer, University Heights Police*



## **BUILDING ON PARTNERSHIPS AND INVESTING IN THE FUTURE**

Over the years, we have learned that public-private partnerships and cooperation are one of the most critical and effective components of creating and maintaining safe and secure communities. Working closely together with emergency responders hardens our vulnerabilities and allows us to respond quickly to prevent threats from becoming real-world violence.

We are the best prepared Jewish community in the US in terms of budget to population size and institutional coverage. However, to be most effective, security requires foresight and flexibility to predict and respond to the shifting environment. Combined with the current societal uncertainties, we know that there will likely be changes and adaptations made during the coming year, but we are confident that we will be able to adjust and redeploy resources – human, financial, and technological – to continue securing our Jewish community as needs evolve.

### **JFC Security's future plans include:**

- Further investment in our high-tech intelligence capabilities
- Maximizing security technology adoption and usage throughout Jewish Cleveland through community-wide technical support and emergency notifications systems
- Adding strategic physical infrastructure
- Growing the numbers of skilled security professionals to meet growing needs
- Increasing use of volunteers through the continued implementation of the Community Security Service program
- Readiness and effectiveness testing of security protocols and personnel
- Connecting additional automated license plate readers and camera video feeds to the CVRD for remote monitoring

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## **YOUR SUPPORT MAKES THIS ALL POSSIBLE**

With security expenses topping \$5 million a year, this comprehensive program depends on additional ongoing philanthropic support. All charitable contributions help ensure that our security program continues to meet the growing needs in Jewish Cleveland while continuing our tradition of innovation and enabling our community to remain a model for others in this area.

Cleveland's security program is considered by Jewish communities around the world as the gold standard. And every year, generous support takes our exceptional security to new levels, constantly innovating and learning, as the protection of our Jewish community

requires it. From Islamic extremists to violent white supremacists, the current threats we face are complex, varied, and real. We have a responsibility to protect our community and who we are, ensuring that every one of our Jewish schools, synagogues, and agencies remain open and vibrant while being safe and secure from those who might seek to cause us harm. The security measures we have in place across the community strengthen our ability to address the rise in antisemitism, extremism, and hate – so that we all can be better protected and live active Jewish lives without hesitation or fear.



## EXPLORE MORE

Scan the QR codes to read more about the Community Security Initiative.



Learn more about the history and development of our Community Security Initiative and celebrate ten years of our culture of security.



Get details on community vigilance in the wake of October 7.



Watch a video about the First 7 Minutes training offered in Cleveland by Magen David Adom's most experienced paramedics.



Learn how the partnership between JFC Security and local police keeps a watchful eye on Jewish Cleveland year-round, but especially during the High Holy Days.



**Jewish Federation**  
OF CLEVELAND  
**HERE FOR GOOD**

### COMMUNITY SECURITY INITIATIVE IMPACT REPORT

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