

Dear Local Jewish Community,

Cincinnati Pride wants to intentionally keep lines of communication and community building open with the Jewish Community and its leaders. We owe you an explanation for recent events, including the resignation of two Jewish leaders in our organization. The harassment that both of these individuals faced by those protesting Cincinnati Pride is horrendous. This was a calculated and focused attack because we had both a Jewish board and committee member. As an organization we condemn these actions to the highest degree. We have learned from this experience that as an organization we must take a proactive approach to combating antisemitism and other forms of oppression. There is no place for hate of any kind, especially antisemitism, in any Cincinnati Pride space, or any space in which we participate in as an organization. We recognize how inactions, lack of representation, and ignorance within our own organization resulted in additional harm of the individuals impacted and have contributed to systems of oppression. We are committed to continuing this dialogue and learning to operate in better ways moving forward.

We are committed to systems change within our own organization and for all Cincinnati Pride spaces. We will invest time in ongoing communication and meetings with JCRC leaders. We will begin with intentional recruitment efforts during our next board election cycle, including outreach to the Jewish community. We will work with Jewish leadership on incorporating best practices from JCRC on combating antisemitism. We also look forward to welcoming experts from JCRC into the Cincinnati Pride onboarding process, to educate Cincinnati Pride Board Members on the local Jewish community and on strategies to combat various forms of discrimination against the Jewish community.

Safety is a priority for all of our events, including the annual Cincinnati Pride Parade & Festival. Every year, we make every effort to ensure the safety of our attendees at the Cincinnati Pride Parade and Festival. In this time of heightened safety concerns for the LGBTQ+ community, members of our team have talked regularly with local, county, and federal agencies, including the Cincinnati Police Department and the FBI. There will be a meeting next week that will include representatives from Cincinnati Pride, local authorities, and a representative from experts on safety and security within the Jewish community.

We are grateful to the leadership within the Jewish community who have extended hours of emotional labor to ensure that this relationship of community building and belonging continues within our organization.

In service and solidarity,

Benjamin Morano
President
Cincinnati Pride Board of Directors