

UNITED STATES

UCLA settles antisemitism lawsuit with \$6.13M payout, including donations to Jewish groups

The settlement is the largest of its kind in a campus antisemitism case and includes funding for Hillel, the ADL and others.



People walk around UCLA on Thursday, July 10, 2025 in Westwood, CA. (Juliana Yamada / Los Angeles Times via Getty Images)

BY ASAF ELIA-SHALEV JULY 29, 2025 4:20 PM



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The University of California has agreed to a sweeping settlement in a high-profile lawsuit that accused UCLA, one of 10 campuses in the UC system, of enabling antisemitic discrimination during campus protests in 2024.

The agreement, announced Tuesday, includes roughly \$6.13 million in payments, according to Becket, the religious liberty law firm that backed it – a number that may resonate with many Jews. It also includes a permanent court order requiring the university to prevent the exclusion of Jewish students from public spaces.

The lawsuit, *Frankel v. Regents of the University of California*, was filed by students and supported by Becket. It alleged that during last year's pro-Palestinian encampment, UCLA

officials allowed protestors to establish what the lawsuit called a “Jew Exclusion Zone,” barring Jewish students and faculty from accessing parts of campus, including classrooms and libraries.

A federal judge **granted preliminary relief** last summer, ordering UCLA to ensure the free movement of Jewish students, and this week’s agreement makes that injunction permanent.

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“When antisemites were terrorizing Jews and excluding them from campus, UCLA chose to protect the thugs and help keep Jews out,” said lead plaintiff Yitzchok Frankel, a recent UCLA Law graduate. “That was shameful ... but today’s court judgment brings justice back to our campus.”

The settlement comes amid growing national scrutiny of how universities handle campus protest and antisemitism — and mounting pressure from the federal government for them to take a hard stance. In the aftermath of the UCLA encampment, the university set up a task force, which acknowledged the university allowed antisemitism to fester amid pro-Palestinian protests, citing incidents such as swastikas drawn inside classrooms, hateful slogans like “Israelis are native 2 hell,” and assaults on Jewish students and staff that went insufficiently addressed by administration.

Still, UCLA initially fought the lawsuit for over a year before conceding to a judgment and settlement. In a joint statement with the plaintiffs, both parties said, “We are pleased with the terms of today’s settlement. The injunction and other terms UCLA has agreed to demonstrate real progress in the fight against antisemitism.”

As part of the settlement, UCLA will contribute \$2.33 million to eight Jewish and antisemitism-focused organizations, including Hillel at UCLA, the Anti-Defamation League, and the Jewish Federation of Los Angeles’s Campus Impact Network. An additional \$320,000 will go to UCLA’s Initiative to Combat Antisemitism, a program launched earlier this year by Chancellor Julio Frenk, who is Jewish and assumed his position on Jan. 1.

The total financial outlay, including damages to the plaintiffs and attorney’s fees, makes the deal the largest private settlement in a campus antisemitism case, according to Becket. Columbia University recently agreed to pay more than \$200 million in a settlement with the Trump administration over antisemitism allegations there.

University of California officials framed the agreement as an extension of ongoing efforts to combat antisemitism systemwide.

“Antisemitism, harassment, and other forms of intimidation are antithetical to our values,” UC Board of Regents Chair Janet Reilly said in a statement. “Today’s settlement reflects a critically important goal that we share with the plaintiffs: to foster a safe, secure and inclusive environment for all.”

Daniel Gold, Hillel at UCLA’s executive director, applauded the settlement as a move in the right direction.

“This settlement is an important and meaningful step forward in addressing the very serious challenges that Jewish students have faced at UCLA,” Gold said in a statement. “There is still much more work left to be done to build a safer, more welcoming, and more supportive campus that is free from antisemitic harassment and intimidation, and we look forward to working closely with the university and the UC system to counter antisemitism and bias at every turn.”

The Jewish Federation of Los Angeles also welcomed the outcome.

“Accountability is a vital first step,” its board chair Orna Wolens and CEO Rabbi Noah Farkas said in a statement. “While no settlement can erase the sense of isolation and fear that so many Jewish students continue to feel, this settlement clearly affirms: antisemitism has no place at

UCLA or on any campus.”

The case sets a legal precedent, said Mark Rienzi, Becket’s president. “Campus administrators across the country willingly bent the knee to antisemites during the encampments,” he said in a statement. “They are now on notice: Treating Jews like second-class citizens is wrong, illegal, and very costly.”

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