

THE POLICY GAP: WHY CURRENT GUIDELINES, STANDARDS & POLICIES FAIL TO INCORPORATE JEWISH IDENTITY - & HOW TO FIX THEM

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Special thanks to

Association of Jewish Psychologists

for hosting this series of policy webinars!



INTRODUCTION

Welcome &
Introductions

Learning
Objectives

Overview of this
3-part series

Participant Tools
& Orientation



OVERVIEW OF 3-PART SERIES

Webinar # 1: Navigating the Policy Landscape

- What does **policy terrain** look like?
- Wide-angle view of **policy ecosystem** that guides psychology.
- Broad overview of key issues in Jewish psychology both for professionals and the individuals | communities served.
- Spotlight on gaps|opportunities in the policy and knowledge landscape.

Webinar # 2: Psychology Policy Leadership

- How can we take **meaningful action**? What is psychology's **leadership** potential?
- How to work with institutions, systems, and policymakers to advance better understanding and equitable relationships inclusive of Jewish identity and culture, Jewish voices, experience, and an acknowledgement of antisemitism?
- How to create environments where Jewish professionals, patients|clients, students and trainees, and other individuals and communities can **thrive**?

Webinar # 3: The Policy Gap

- What **policy tools** define and guide the profession?
- How can we engage in and evolve the policy architecture? How can we advance language and best practices for incorporating Jewish identity and culture into policy, and addressing key issues that matter?
- What new professional resources are needed?
- How can we become empowered to navigate and influence the policy landscape in health, non-health, and applied settings?

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Upon completion of this webinar, participants will be able to:

NO 1: Analyze Policy Architecture: Identify specific structures and language within professional Codes of Conduct, guidelines, and standards that can be modified to incorporate Jewish identity, culture, and protective measures.

NO 2: Develop Inclusive Policy Themes: Identify key, actionable themes to incorporate into policy landscapes—including clinical, academic, and applied settings—to address rising antisemitism, exclusion, and the need for culturally competent care.

NO 3: Apply Strategies for Advocacy: Identify concrete mechanisms for influencing professional guidance, such as public comments, committee service, editorial board participation, and conference planning.

NO 4: Promote Psychological Wellbeing: Strengthen strategies to promote the health and safety and inclusion of Jewish individuals as members of a marginalized ethnic, religious, and multiracial group within broader diversity, equity, and human rights frameworks.

NO 5: Generate Professional Resources: Generate actionable ideas for developing new professional tools, guidelines, and educational materials that address the specific needs of Jewish psychologists and their allies and the communities they serve.

FRAMING & EXPECTATIONS

The Basics

- Session is recorded . May be accessed on the AJP website – along with others!
- Use of chat available but may be limited to specific questions or issues.
- 15/20 minutes before ending = general discussion. Raise hands to be unmuted.
- Please generalize. Do not include PII or specific case examples in chat or discussion, as possible.

The Process

- Diverse audience of scientists, practitioners, educators and trainers, supervisors and consultants, students, and allies.
- Respectful engagement, a learning | sharing opportunity.
- Awareness of intersectional identity, lived experience, and diversity within Jewish communities.
- Sensitivity to and awareness of Jewish trauma and resilience narratives.
- Interested in sharing insights from across professions and other settings.

WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED ABOUT JEWISH IDENTITY & CULTURE

Jewish identity is a globally recognized ethnic group, constituting 2.4% of the US population.

Jewish people continue to face hate, persecution, and threats to safety in the US and around the world.

1

Jewish identity is **complex** and **multifaceted**, not monolithic. Differences in race, ethnicity, culture, denomination, lived experience, and political viewpoints are poorly understood or ignored, leading to identity erasure, exclusion, hate, bias, and other serious harms.

2

Jewish identity is often misperceived as universally “privileged” or skewed in data collection as “majority” and “white”, which can result in exclusion from legal and regulatory frameworks, policy coverage, opportunities, funding, and resources.

3

Jewish identity is frequently overlooked in policy, including EDI, human rights, and diversity frameworks.

WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED ABOUT POLICY?

Policy is not just one document; it is a collection of components that establish and guide a course of action.

1

Policy matters! It influences our lives, communities, work settings, and professions. It acts as the "what" and "why" behind public and organizational actions.

2

Policy is found within in a **multi-level, complex ecosystem**, from community and organizational to national and international.

3

Policy is a **broad, overarching framework**—a system of plans, principles, and intentions—designed to guide decisions and achieve specific goals for a government, organization, or system.

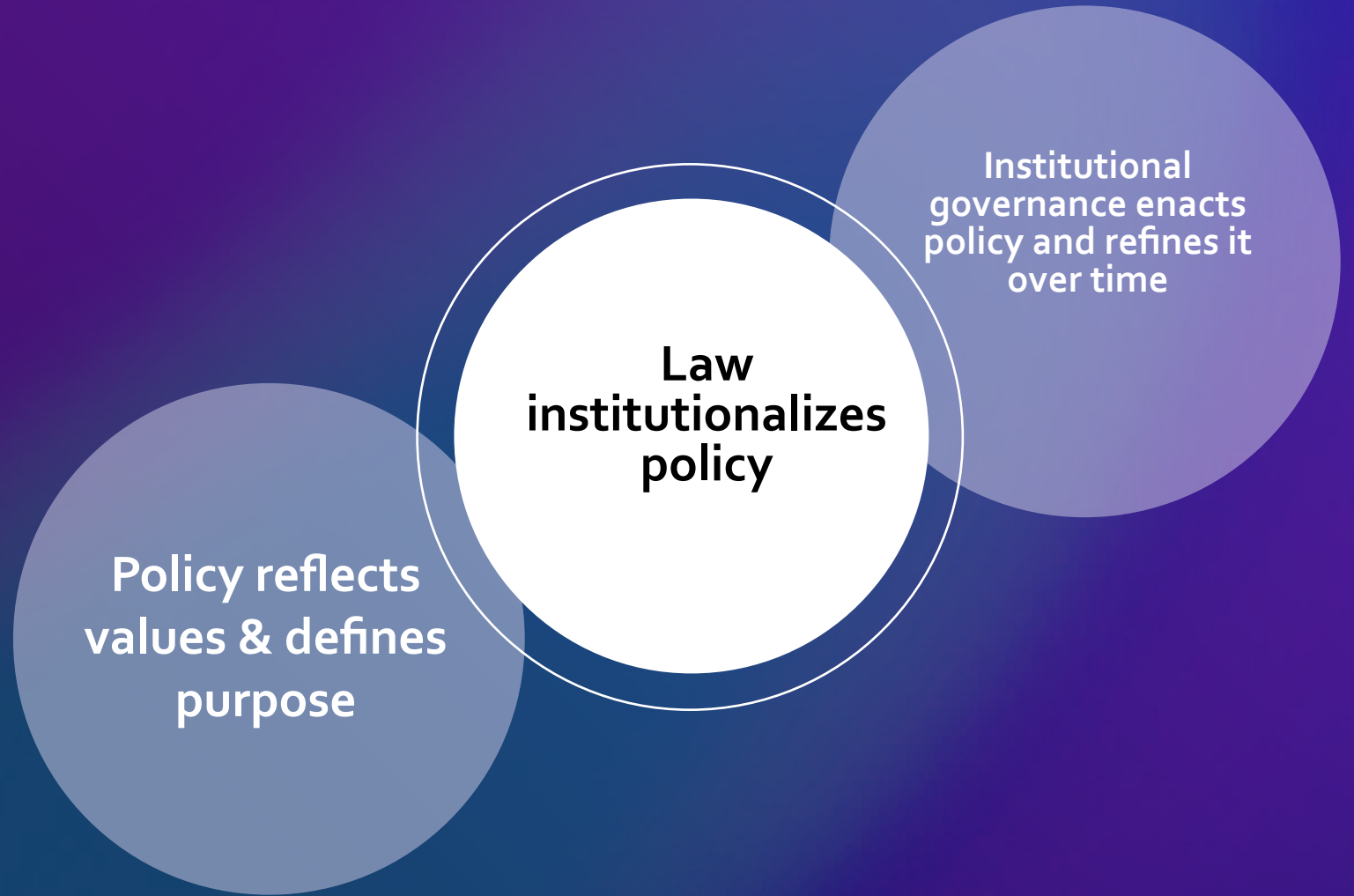
LAW & POLICY

LAW is a form of public policy, but it's not the only form.

LAWS are authoritative. They are passed by legislative bodies (like Congress, Parliament, state or provincial legislatures) and are legally binding. They mandate action.

Policy is broader: Policy can be internal to an organization, voluntary, or non-binding, whereas law must be complied with.

Relationship: Law and policy are intertwined. For example, policies often inspire laws, and laws establish the boundary within which policies can operate.



POLICY ARCHITECTURE

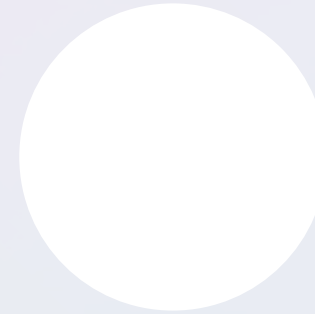
Differentiating between policies and the systems they guide:

Policy: Rules, regulations, guidelines, principles, protocols, directives.

System: Processes, procedures, infrastructure, mechanisms, workflows, financial, HR, and other frameworks



STANDARDS
&
GUIDELINES



POLICY
STATEMENTS &
RESOLUTIONS



ETHICAL
PRINCIPLES |
CODES OF
CONDUCT



STRATEGIC
PLANS & OTHER
FRAMEWORKS
(EDI, HUMAN
RIGHTS &
DIVERSITY)



PRINCIPLES,
PROTOCOLS &
DIRECTIVES

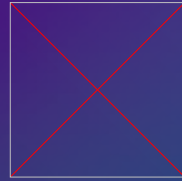


OTHERS

KEY ASPECTS OF THE LAW–POLICY RELATIONSHIP

- **The Feedback Loop:** Policy ideas are often translated into legislation; subsequently, those laws dictate future policy directions.
- **Implementation & Action:** Policies often require regulations (laws) to be effective. For example, state licensing laws may provide the frameworks for optimal professional practice within a jurisdiction.
- **Framework vs. Action:** Laws create legal frameworks (e.g., statutes, constitution), while policies set forth priorities, goals, plans, implementation guidance, and operational methodologies.

CHALLENGES & OPPORTUNITIE S



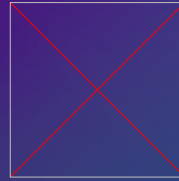
Policy often identifies the need for new laws, while laws (especially judicial review) can limit, expand, or dictate the scope of public policy.

Laws may influence the context for and content of professional standards and guidelines.

While they should work together, conflict can arise where the legal system narrows the scope or creates other barriers for effective policymaking.

DIFFERENCE BETWEEN RULES & REGS

Rules and regulations are the "how" of policy. They are detailed, specific requirements created to implement the law.



Regulations (or Administrative Law): Rules created by government agencies that carry force of law, outlining how a broader piece of legislation (law) is to be implemented.

Rules: More specific, actionable instructions meant to ensure consistent application of policy.

Laws = mandates
Regulations = enforcement mechanisms
Policies = strategic plans



Key Steps Professional Policymaking

1. Critical incidents and environmental scanning
2. Development of key issues | Themes
3. Scenario analysis | Future proofing
4. Goal setting: What do we want to see happen? Ideally? Realistic and Achievable?
5. Consideration of timing (Immediate, Mid- and Long-Term Strategy)
6. Tap into scientific research, scholarly literature, networks, and other resources.
7. Consider and adapt policy strategies and models.
8. Importance of coalitions and networks: Don't go it alone, if possible. (e.g., AJP)
9. Know what you want before you move forward. Be flexible along the way.
10. Attend to the immediate or address the crisis first, including documenting, reporting, and addressing harms, creating safe spaces.

- What happened?
- What can I do about it?
- Who else can work with me on this?

Elements of Good Policy

Effective policy is (1) specific, (2) open and transparent, (3) equally enforceable, (4) proactive and forward looking (vs. responsive to crises), (5) timely, relevant, and operational.


Defines Antisemitism: Form of hatred, prejudice, discrimination, or violence targeting Jewish individuals and communities, and their identity. One that is a persistent global issue that causes both physical and psychological harms. Be sure to broaden the understanding of antisemitism as “targeting Jewish identity (not just people), which the AJP defines as encompassing ethnicity, culture, shared ancestry, peoplehood, and religion” (AJP). Also, see IHRA definition.

Protective Measures: Against hate speech, conspiracy theories and tropes, Holocaust denial, anti-Jewish symbols, images, harassment, etc.

Fair and Equitable Enforcement: Across all groups, protects against ethnic, cultural, and religious discrimination and antisemitism.

Reporting & Rapid Response: Prioritizes safety and security and provides easy access to anonymous reporting tools. Ensures transparent, credible, and timely investigation and outcomes. Use of objective investigators, credible parties.

Elements of Good Policy



Physical & Digital Safety : Secure access to facilities, patients/clients, and staff, trained security and other staff, and monitor digital/social media for anti-Jewish comments, harassment, or antisemitism.

Inclusion in Policy Frameworks that Matter: EDI, human rights, and diversity frameworks: Assures that organizational policy centers Jewish identity and the commitment to ensure health, safety, and wellbeing of students, staff, and others.

Religious Accommodation: Proactively adjust calendars to avoid scheduling major events, exams, or meetings on Jewish holidays. Allows sufficient time (and space, if needed) for religious observance.

Employee Resource Groups (ERGs) | Safe Spaces: Establish and fund ERGs for Jewish professionals to foster cohesion, community, support, and advocacy. Establish secure and safe spaces for students and staff to meet.

Education, Training, and Civil Discourse Policies: Establish ongoing steps to educate, train, and raise awareness. Implement rules that govern polite, respectful dialogue while prohibiting intimidation and harassment, even when it involves political issues.

Effective Policy = Benefits and Uplifts the Entire Community!

WHAT ARE THE KEY POLICY FRAMEWORKS FOR PSYCHOLOGISTS?

Primary Ethical & Legal Frameworks

[APA Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct \(Ethics Code\)](#): The foundational document for most U.S. psychologists. It includes five aspirational **General Principles** (Beneficence, Fidelity, Integrity, Justice, and Respect) and ten enforceable **Ethical Standards**. (APA)

[Universal Declaration of Ethical Principles for Psychologists](#): A global framework that provides a common moral ground for psychological communities worldwide, focusing on dignity, well-being, and social responsibility. (IUPsyS)

State Licensure Laws: Mandatory statutes that vary by jurisdiction and define the legal scope of practice and requirements for maintaining a professional license. (For Canada: “Each province and territory has a psychological regulatory body (e.g., colleges) whose mandate is to ensure and oversee the licensure of the psychologists in a respective province or territory” (CPA).)

Statutes & Case Law: In applied areas like forensic work, practitioners must also adhere to specific legal authorities, such as the US Federal Rules of Evidence or state-specific administrative codes. (For Canada: “Each province mandates that psychologists be registered with their respective regulatory body to practice forensic psychology” (ACPRO).)

Policy Considerations - APA Ethics Code Revision

Human Rights Focus: Include specific principles for *Human & Civil Rights* and *Justice & Social Justice*, aiming to modernize the code to protect human rights and dignity.

Protection Against Antisemitism: This year, APA Council of Representatives updated its *Resolution on Antisemitism*, reaffirming APA's commitment to opposing prejudice based on religion and ethnicity. This *Res* acknowledges the *psychological impact of hate crimes and antisemitism* and commits to protect members and public from such harms.

Discrimination Clause: Prohibits psychologists from engaging in *unfair, biased, or prejudiced treatment of people based on factors including religion and ethnicity*.

Potential Policymaking Actions

- **Meet & Discuss.** Gaps in policy? Submit Individual & Group Comments (or letters) via [Portal](#)
- **Submit formal comments** on revised draft during Public Comment Period
- **Key questions:** Does the revised Code adequately center Jewish identity and culture? Address key issues? Protect against antisemitism and other harms? How does the new work protect all marginalized groups or address relevant matters?
- **Future Work:** Case books, articles, data collection & scenarios to support E&T on the Ethics Code, once finalized and approved. If gaps exist, how can they be filled? What else is needed (i.e., Policy Statement, Resolution, Meetings, Petitions, other action?)

OTHER IMPORTANT FRAMEWORKS IN PSYCHOLOGY?

Standards

Per APA policy, “standards” include any criteria, protocols, or specifications for conduct, performance, services, or products in psychology or related areas, including recommended standards. Standards are considered to be **mandatory** and may be accompanied by an **enforcement mechanism**.

Examples: *Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct* (APA, Under revision); *Criteria for the recognition of organizations that provide certifications in specialties and subspecialties in professional psychology* (APA, 2030); *Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing: A joint framework* (AERA, APA, NCME)

Guidelines

Per APA policy, “guidelines” include pronouncements, statements, or declarations that suggest or recommend specific professional behavior, endeavor, or conduct for psychologists or for individuals or organizations that work with psychologists. In contrast to standards, guidelines are **aspirational in intent**.

Examples: *APA Guidelines for Psychological Evaluations in Child Protection Matters* (APA, 2024); *APA Guidelines for Child Custody Evaluations in Family Law Proceedings* (APA, 2022); *APA Guidelines on Evidence-Based Psychological Practice in Health Care* (APA, 2021); *APA Professional Practice Guidelines for Operational Psychology* (APA, 2023); *Guidelines for the Practice of Telepsychology* (APA, 2024); *APA Guidelines for the Optimal Use of Social Media in Professional Psychological Practice* (APA, 2021); and *Multicultural Guidelines: An Ecological Approach to Context, Identity, and Intersectionality* (APA, 2017).

Clinical practice guidelines: Recommendations based on an independent systematic review of the research on treatments for specific disorders or health conditions. (APA) Subject to systematic review and grading of evidence, and public comment.

Professional practice guidelines: Guide psychologists in practice relevant to roles, populations, or settings, and are supported by the current scholarly literature but do not focus upon specific disorders or treatments. (APA) Subject to public comment.

ANATOMY OF A GUIDELINE

HOW ARE **APA PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE
GUIDELINES** ORGANIZED?

Introduction

Sections | Topical Areas

Guidelines Statement

- Rationale
- Application

Conclusion

References

Appendix



Policy Challenges of Professional Practice Guidelines

Definition: Anything that guides the practice of psychology may be considered a guideline under Association Rules 30-8, and thus subject to rigorous review (including legal review and public comment) and approval.

Topic: Broad or Narrow

Focus: Role, Setting, Population, Issue

Length: Brief (40 p. and under) or Comprehensive (50 p. and over)

Language: Aspirational, generally constructed to “hold” quite a bit, not all encompassing (no or few lists, etc.). Liberal use of “may” and other aspirational language vs. “will” which is only allowable with a standard.

Scholarship: Guidelines are grounded in the scholarly literature, evidence, and science. They should reflect professional consensus on how the work is done, with whom, and where. What the challenges are and how best to address them.

Citations (within 10 yrs or foundational); References (peer-reviewed, scholarly, authoritative sources.)

Impact: Optimize practice. Highlight key issues, scientific support, innovation, professional consensus, opportunities, gaps, and where new work is needed. Adapted in legislation or rulemaking. Valued by decision makers, courts, etc.

Reach: International; highly cited in the scientific and professional literature, other frameworks.

In Effect: Maximum of 10 years, unless otherwise specified.

Developers must grapple with scope, topic, nuances of professional practice or patient/client populations. Also, the contradictions that may emerge. It's about reaching professional consensus on what represents the profession and its unique issues and challenges in a specific context. That's why guidelines are a work in progress, always evolving and subject to input and review, as conditions and context change.

Model Act for State Licensure of Psychologists (APA, under revision)

The Act establishes a strong framework for diversity, equity, inclusion, and freedom from discrimination or harassment by requiring multicultural competence, adherence to the APA Ethics Code, and provides mechanisms for enforcement.

1. EDI & Multicultural Competence

Requires psychology training programs to provide **education and training in individual and cultural diversity**.

- *Doctoral programs must include coursework and demonstrate competence in "individual and cultural diversity" and "training relevant to the development of competence to practice in a diverse and multicultural society.*
- *Master's programs must also demonstrate that they provide "training relevant to the development of competence to practice in a diverse and multicultural society.*

Mandates that licensees maintain **competence in multicultural areas**, and boards may require continuing education in multicultural competence.

- *A psychology program must offer courses and practical experiences that prepare students to work effectively with clients from diverse backgrounds, including racial, ethnic, religious, gender, and other differences.*

Model Act (cont.)

2. Freedom from Discrimination and Harassment. Incorporates APA Ethics Code as the standard of conduct for all licensees. The Code has explicit prohibitions against discrimination and harassment based on protected characteristics (such as race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, etc.). Grounds for suspension or revocation of licenses include "harassment, intimidation, or abuse, sexual or otherwise, of a client or patient" and "violation of the relevant ethical standards of the Code.

**If a psychologist engages in discriminatory or harassing behavior toward a client or colleague, this is grounds for disciplinary action, including suspension or revocation of their license.*

3. Social Justice and Protected Areas. While the Act does not use the term "social justice" directly, its requirements for multicultural competence, non-discrimination, and inclusion of diverse perspectives in training and practice reflect a commitment to social justice principles. The Act requires board composition to "reflect a diversity of practice specialties" and include representation from various teaching, training, and practice areas.

4. Antisemitism and Other Specific Protections. The Act does not mention antisemitism or other specific forms of hate or discrimination by name. However, by adopting the APA Ethics Code and requiring non-discrimination and multicultural competence, the Act covers all protected areas, including religion and ethnicity.

**Discriminatory conduct against Jewish clients or colleagues would be prohibited under the general non-discrimination and ethical provisions.*

5. Complaint, Investigation, and Enforcement Mechanisms. The Act provides mechanisms for investigating and disciplining licensees who engage in unprofessional conduct, including discrimination, harassment, or violations of ethical standards.

**If a complaint is filed alleging discrimination or harassment, the Board is empowered to investigate and, if warranted, impose sanctions.*

Is this language and protection sufficient?

How best to ensure that both the Act and Ethics Code are protective and inclusive?

HOW TO IMPACT GUIDELINES & STANDARDS?



ACTION STEPS

[APA Portal](#) – Active Calls for Comment

[APA Portal](#) – Board and Committee Nominations

[APA Webpage](#) – Other Ways to Get Involved | B&C's, Divisions, Journals, Accreditation, Media Referral, Mentorship, Calls for Papers, Programs & Submits

*Seek out opportunities via Divisions, State Associations, SIGs and subgroups that are developing guidelines, including as a developer, reviewer, or technical advisor

*Submit comments as individuals & as part of groups

*Propose guideline topics to APA, other professional associations

*Identify key policy frameworks across the larger ecosystem that guide your work. Track for revision and input.

*Consider how to best communicate with stakeholders, including those who may have different perspectives on the topic.

PRACTICE SESSION – POLICY GAPS

1. School Psychology

- **The Scenario:** A school district's "Diversity & Inclusion Calendar" excludes Jewish holidays, and the "Anti-Bullying Policy" only lists "Race" and "Religion." Some minimize the issue as "not a big deal." Some students are finding ways to suppress their ethnic identity and report to their counselors that "it's easier that way?"
- **Prompt:** What language would you use to advocate for the inclusion of Jewish identity in the district's **EDI, human rights, and diversity frameworks**? How do you re-write the **Anti-Bullying definitions** to include "Shared Ancestry"? Other action that needs to be taken along with policy changes? What's the priority here?

2. Clinical Psychology Practice

- **The Scenario:** A group practice's "Cultural Competency" manual defines Jewishness strictly as a faith-based preference, ignoring the ethnic and traumatic impact of antisemitism. When this issue has arisen before in staff meetings, some defended the current language as "sufficient" because "the majority of patients and clients present as Latino."
- **Prompt:** Draft a 3-sentence "Policy Amendment" for the manual that incorporates "Jewish ancestry," "ethnic identity," and "shared ancestry," Jewish identity, history, and culture. Also, language that draws on psychological insights on antisemitism, its impact and harms, trauma, and resiliency. How does this change the way you screen for trauma in your intake process? Or assess over time?

PRACTICE SESSION – POLICY GAPS

3. Counseling Psychology Practice

- **The Scenario:** A university counseling center is creating "Identity-Based Safe Spaces." The current draft excludes a Jewish space because "Jews are not members of an ethnic group or marginalized race."
- **Prompt:** Using the **U.S. National Strategy to Counter Antisemitism (2023)**, or other culturally informed resource, what evidence-based argument would you present to the administration to ensure that Jewish students and staff members are appropriately included in policies that aim to advance health and wellbeing and safety?

4. Applied Psychologists (I/O, Research)

- **The Scenario:** An nonprofit organization's climate survey reports zero incidents of "Religious Bias," yet Jewish employees report feelings of exclusion and "erasure" in qualitative interviews.
- **Prompt:** How do you fix the **data collection policy, including the technology used to analyze this data or the tools used to collect it?** Propose a new set of demographic categories and "belonging" metrics that capture the ethno-cultural experience of Jewish staff members.

PRACTICE SESSION – POLICY GAPS

5. Forensic Psychology Practice

- **The Scenario:** A forensic evaluation protocol for "Hate Crime Motive" does not include modern tropes of antisemitism (e.g., "global control," "dual loyalty" or connection to Israel, Israel-specific, Holocaust distortions or misinformation, digital hate/memetic warfare, or political based).
- **Prompt:** How do you advocate for the adoption of a more comprehensive definition of antisemitism within your state (or court's) forensic protocols to ensure accurate legal reporting? Include the evidence of harm, how tropes dehumanize Jews and "other" them, and what the impact is on Jewish individuals and communities.

5. Professional Guidelines and Standards

- **The Scenario:** A professional practice guideline has been posted in advanced of revision. You understand that a group is forming and that the existing guidelines do not name antisemitism as a harm, nor include Jewish identity and culture as a protected area. The new group appears to be comprised of the same Division-based experts as before.
- **Prompt:** How would you approach the organization, development group or others to engage in this revision process? How do you position yourself as a resource? How would you develop your comments and input? What key issues do you include in the policy scan? What if this guideline is cross-disciplinary? Would this impact your approach? If so, how? How can AJP or other organizations become resources to these important policy framework projects?

SAMPLE POLICY AUDIT CHECKLIST



Use this tool to evaluate your institution's current EDI, human rights, and diversity frameworks.

- **Definition of Identity:** Does the policy recognize Jewish identity as multifaceted and complex, and as a marginalized ethnic, religious, and multiracial group?
- **Specificity:** Is "Antisemitism" or "Anti-Jewish Hate" explicitly named alongside other forms of racism/bias?
- **Legal Alignment:** Does the policy reference relevant legal protections (e.g., Title VI (US DOE OCR) protections regarding "Shared Ancestry"?)
- **Data Inclusivity:** Do demographic forms allow for "Jewish" to be selected as an ethnic/cultural identity? Is the technology or algorithm equipped to identify antisemitism? Or include Jewish populations previously omitted by these platforms?
- **Risk Mitigation:** Are there specific protocols for reporting antisemitic incidents that do not rely on a "religious" framework? Is the reporting structure accessible, protective?
- **Clinical Parameters:** Do guidelines include "Jewish Cultural Humility" and an understanding of intergenerational trauma and resilience as protective factors?
- **Calendar/Holidays:** Is the policy based on "Self-Attestation of Identity" rather than "Clerical Proof"?

“

*A righteous man falls down seven times and gets up.
(King Solomon, Proverbs, 24:16)*

*You can't control the wind, but you can adjust your
sails. (Yiddish Proverb)*

”

*If there is no struggle, there is no progress.
(Frederick Douglas)*

Questions | Discussion



THANK YOU!

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AJP RESOURCES & MEMBERSHIP INFO
[HTTPS://ASSOCIATIONOFJEWISHPSYCHOLOGISTS.COM](https://associationofjewishpsychologists.com)
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RESOURCES

- Association for Jewish Psychologists
<https://associationofjewishpsychologists.com>
- AJP Resources & Webinars
<https://associationofjewishpsychologists.com/resources>
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