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UCLA Reaches \$6.5 Million Settlement Over Campus Antisemitism Allegations

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The University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) has agreed to pay \$6.5 million to settle a lawsuit brought by Jewish students and a professor, who alleged the university failed to protect them from antisemitic threats and intimidation during last year’s pro-Palestinian protests. The settlement is a clear signal that institutions must take stronger action to ensure campus safety and uphold equal treatment for all students, regardless of background or belief.

Filed in 2023, the lawsuit accused UCLA of allowing antisemitic harassment to occur “with the knowledge and acquiescence” of university officials. Protesters were said to have blocked access to parts of the campus and issued threats toward Jewish students during the demonstrations, which coincided with widespread unrest related to the conflict in Gaza. Under the settlement terms, UCLA will provide \$2.33 million to eight Jewish-affiliated campus groups, allocate \$320,000 toward a campus initiative to combat antisemitism, and pay \$50,000 to each of the named plaintiffs.

“We are pleased with the terms of today’s settlement,” the plaintiffs and university stated jointly, adding that the agreement reflects “real progress in the fight against antisemitism.”

The protests at UCLA were among the most intense in a wave of nationwide demonstrations. The campus drew national attention, not only for its pro-Palestinian encampment but also for violent clashes involving counter-protesters. The university is currently facing a separate lawsuit from over 30 pro-Palestinian demonstrators who claim UCLA security failed to intervene during what they described as a “brutal mob assault.” Their legal team, led by attorney Thomas Harvey, criticized the university earlier this year for what he called “four-plus hours of unmitigated violence” while campus security stood by.

Meanwhile, in a broader effort to address antisemitism in higher education, the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) launched an investigation this spring into the University of California system for potential violations of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which prohibits discrimination based on race, color, or national origin in federally funded programs.

UCLA has since issued statements emphasizing its commitment to inclusivity and has made policy changes, including publicizing restrictions on campus encampments, rejecting academic boycotts of Israel, and establishing a more detailed anti-discrimination framework systemwide. Janet Reilly, chair of the University of California (UC) Board of Regents, acknowledged the university’s prior failures and stressed its future direction. “We have been clear about where we have fallen short, and we are committed to doing better moving forward,” she said. “Today’s settlement reflects a critically important goal that we share with the plaintiffs: to foster a safe, secure, and inclusive environment for all members of our community and ensure that there is no room for antisemitism anywhere.”

As university campuses across the country continue to wrestle with heightened political tensions and competing narratives, the UCLA settlement underscores a broader

expectation: institutions must not turn a blind eye to any form of discrimination, and student safety must remain a non-negotiable priority.