

# THE Zekelman HOLOCAUST CENTER

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## **The Zekelman Holocaust Center Announces Security Sector Training for Police Officers**

*Farmington Hills Officers Complete Course/Training Available In Person or Virtual*

**Farmington Hills, Mich., March 14, 2023** – Nearly 100 Farmington Hills Police Department officers have completed in-service training through [The Zekelman Holocaust Center](#) (The HC) that equips them with the tools to combat hate in their roles as community leaders.

The course, “Policing and the Holocaust,” is registered by the Michigan Commission on Law Enforcement Standards (MCOLES), which oversees continuing education for active law enforcement professionals to promote public safety in Michigan.

The course introduced police to The Zekelman Holocaust Center, the nexus for education in the State of Michigan, and included customized tours emphasizing the causes of genocide and the radicalization of police institutions; meetings with the children of Holocaust survivors; and educational discussions about the social factors that lead individuals to perpetrate atrocities or resist them.

The lessons are designed to help officers reflect on how to make ethical decisions in the field when responding to hate-based violence. Participants included patrol officers, detectives, school resource officers, training officers, and others. Post-training surveys showed that over 90% of respondents agreed that the training helped them consider ethical decision-making in the field and showed them how to combat hatred and genocide as law enforcement officers.

The course grew out of a visit to The HC by Farmington Hills Police Chief Jeff King and his executive staff in September 2022.

“It was clear that the power of the lessons learned would benefit our officers in the performance of their duties,” he said. “Specifically, regarding how individuals attempted to use and coerce the legal system and their positions of authority to commit unbelievable atrocities, and the heroic efforts of individuals who resisted those efforts and fought against those evil actions.”

During the department-wide training, law enforcement officers explored case studies of those in uniform who enforced unjust laws, and those who defied immoral orders to help Jewish people survive during the Holocaust. Their encounters with Next Generation Speakers allowed them to reflect on the generational impact of trauma for marginalized communities.

“Many officers told us that the training reminds them of the importance of serving humanity in their role as law enforcement officers,” Katie Chaka Parks, The HC’s Manager of Adult Education, said. “They walked away with a greater understanding of Jewish experiences during the Holocaust and the need to act with cultural sensitivity in their everyday jobs.”

Given the success of the partnership with Farmington Hills’ police department, The HC is offering “Policing and the Holocaust” free, in-person and virtually, to law enforcement agencies throughout the state. “We want to ensure that everyone serving our communities understands the dangers of hate and the importance of courageous leadership,” said Jamie Wise, who coordinates The HC’s Security Sector Education outreach.

“Local police and law enforcement officers are today’s changemakers,” said Rabbi Eli Mayerfeld, The HC’s CEO. “By teaching them the lessons of the Holocaust, we equip them to better protect our communities.”

### ***About The Zekelman Holocaust Center***

*The Zekelman Holocaust Center (The HC) is a 55,000-square-foot museum and Library Archive in Farmington Hills that teaches about the senseless murder of millions and why each of us must respect and stand up for the rights of others if we are to prevent future genocide and hate crimes.*

*The lessons of history are used to create a call to action, teaching visitors through the examples of those who risked their lives to save others, and asking our guests to react to contemporary challenges such as racism and prejudice.*

*Exhibits include artifacts such as an authentic WWII-era boxcar, video testimonies, films, paintings, and a sapling from the tree located outside Anne Frank’s hiding place window that is described in her diary.*

*Located on the second floor above the museum, the Library Archive is an important resource for academics, the media and families researching their heritage. A national leader in innovative genocide education, The HC serves over 100,000 Michiganders each year.*

*Hours: Sunday through Thursday 9:30 am to 5:00 pm and Friday 9:30 am to 3:00 pm. The last admission is one hour before closing. Wheelchair accessible. Free parking. For additional information, visit [www.holocaustcenter.org](http://www.holocaustcenter.org) or call 248-553-2400.*

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