

Orthodox Jewish Community Safe Against Threat of Arrest for Practicing Their Faith for Now

First Liberty Institute obtains agreement protecting Los Angeles area synagogues and members threatened in lawsuit brought by animal rights activists.

LOS ANGELES, California—On the eve of the Jewish High Holy Days, attorneys with First Liberty Institute obtained assurances from attorneys representing animal rights activists that Orthodox Jews practicing kaporos will *not* be physically assaulted and placed under “private persons arrest.” Such assurances come a week after activists filed *APRL v. City of Los Angeles* in federal court, seeking to force the cities of Los Angeles and Irvine to prevent Orthodox Jews from participating in a millennia-old religious ritual called “kaporos,” while claiming the right to place individual kaporos participants under “private persons arrest” if the police will not.

“The First Amendment guarantees the right to practice one’s faith freely,” Stephanie Taub, Counsel to First Liberty says. “We hope these activists keep their word. No one should fear being placed under arrest—by the police or fellow citizens—for peacefully exercising their religion.”

First Liberty’s clients are members of the Orthodox Jewish community in and throughout Los Angeles and Irvine, California, who wish to participate in kaporos, a historic religious rite that takes place between the Jewish Holy Days of Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, where the atonement of sins is contemplated through prayer and the kosher and humane killing of a chicken.

This is not the first attempt by animal rights activists to prevent the Orthodox Jewish community from practicing their faith. Last year, First Liberty Institute represented the Chabad of Irvine, a small synagogue in Irvine, California, against two lawsuits brought by activists opposed to kaporos. Both cases remain pending on appeal. Learn more about these cases at FirstLiberty.org/Chabad. A separate suit brought by the same attorneys against specific members of the Los Angeles orthodox community and their synagogues (*United Poultry Concerns, Inc. vs. Bait Aaron, Inc.*), was dismissed outright, thanks to Aryeh Kaufman of the Law Office of Aryeh Kaufman, and G. Scott Sobel, of the Law Office of G. Scott Sobel, on freedom of religion grounds by the Los Angeles Superior Court.

“Americans may disagree with the religious beliefs of their neighbors, but should always respect their right to peacefully practice their faith” says Taub. “You cannot threaten to arrest someone just because you disagree with their religious beliefs.”

First Liberty will continue to monitor *APRL v. City of Los Angeles, et al.* on behalf of their clients and, if necessary, intervene to ensure their constitutional rights are fully protected.

###

About First Liberty Institute

[First Liberty Institute](#) is a non-profit public interest law firm and the largest legal organization in the nation dedicated exclusively to defending religious freedom for all Americans.

To arrange an interview, contact Lacey McNeil at media@firstliberty.org or by calling 972-941-4453.