

U.S. Department of Justice
Office of the Inspector General
Investigations Division
ATTN: Civil Rights & Civil Liberties Complaint
950 Pennsylvania Ave., NW
Washington, DC 20530

Re: Austin Franco Complaint against Senior Counsel to the Assistant Attorney General Leo Terrell.

I, Glen Allen, Esq., am an attorney and the President and Chief Legal Officer for the Free Expression Foundation, Inc. I submit this complaint on behalf of Mr. Austin Franco.

Senior Counsel to the Assistant Attorney General Leo Terrell abused his position of authority as a Department of Justice official to blacklist Mr. Franco, a college student, by pressuring employers to refrain from hiring him. Mr. Terrell acted with a retaliatory motive against Franco in violation of the First Amendment. The United States Supreme Court has repeatedly affirmed that, “Freedom of association . . . plainly presupposes a freedom not to associate.” *Roberts v. United States Jaycees*, 468 U.S. 609, 623 (1984). When Mr. Franco declined repeated interview requests by a tech startup called VrfyID on the basis of his personal political and religious beliefs, he exercised this right. After three separate solicitations by the leadership of that company on May 29, June 5, and June 7, he declined their offer in accordance with his First Amendment protected personal beliefs and freedom of association.

Mr. Franco’s decision soon became the subject of a social media firestorm. In response, Mr. Terrell used both his personal and government X accounts to insist Mr. Franco should be unable to find gainful employment. He entreated hiring managers to make Mr. Franco “permanently unemployable” on June 13. Leo Terrell (@TheLeoTerrell), X (June 13, 2026, 7:44 PM),

<https://x.com/TheLeoTerrell/status/2065882948709007421>, Exhibit A. On his official Department of Justice twitter account, he announced that “Nobody should be interested in working with you, Austin!” and tagged Mr. Franco’s university, the President of the United States, Acting Attorney General Todd Blanche, and Associate Attorney General Stanley Woodward Jr on June 10. Leo Terrell (@LeoTerrellDOJ), X (June 10, 2026, 9:23 AM), <https://x.com/LeoTerrellDOJ/status/2064715134476394529>, Exhibit B.

In both the use of his government X account and tagging important officials, Mr. Terrell has used state pressure to harm Mr. Franco and steer the hiring decisions of private employers. Disturbingly, Mr. Terrell promises to offend again. Not content with using his office to participate in the doxing and harassment of a young man for his protected First Amendment rights, Terrell pledged on his personal X account that he would post identifying information of both Mr. Franco and his new employer if he were ever hired again on June 14. Leo Terrell (@TheLeoTerrell), X (June 14, 2026, 6:05 AM), <https://x.com/TheLeoTerrell/status/2066114761536811147>, Exhibit C.

There is little to assure the public that Mr. Terrell will not use his official government X account or other means of state action to bring this about. Mr. Terrell treats his personal and official accounts as interchangeable pulpits. Consequently, his conduct blurs the lines between official government positions and his own vendettas. *See Lindke v. Freed*, 601 U.S. 187, 202 n. 2 (2024) (“An official cannot insulate government business from . . . scrutiny by conducting it on a personal page.”). Mr. Terrell has no qualms about directing individuals to his personal X account from his government X account. From August 2025 to March 2026 alone, he tagged his personal username in posts by his DoJ account no fewer than 50 times. (X search query “from:LeoTerrellDOJ @TheLeoTerrell”), Exhibits D, E, and F.

As shown by this latest episode, Mr. Terrell operates his personal and government social media presence in lockstep to harass American citizens in violation of their civil rights. Since 2023, he has called for individuals to be made “unemployable” for their political beliefs 17 times with the latest example occurring on June 28. (X search query “from:TheLeoTerrell unemployable”), Exhibits G and H. Having been appointed to the Department of Justice in January, 2025, Mr. Terrell shows no signs of slowing down this behavior in his new position.

Abusing his position of power and obfuscating the divide between state and private action, Mr. Terrell has created an unregulated government-sanctioned “do-not-hire” list of which Mr. Franco is the inaugural member. This is the exact sort of government censorship the United States Supreme Court condemned in *Bantam Books v. Sullivan* and *NRA of America v. Vullo*. The Inspector General must take action against Mr. Terrell to prevent further harm to American citizens and their freedoms.

Respectfully submitted,

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Exhibit A – Mr. Terrell’s call to make Mr. Franco “permanently unemployable.”



LeoTerrell 
@TheLeoTerrell



Can we make the Jew Hater famous and make him permanently unemployable! Please RT to every employer in America! USA does not tolerate antisemitism!



New York Post  @nypost · Jun 13

Antisemitic Cornell student turns down interview because he's 'not interested in working for a Jew' trib.al/NRIMqqR



2:44 PM · Jun 13, 2026 · **226.4K** Views

Exhibit B – Mr. Terrell on his government account demanding Mr. Franco’s blacklisting



Leo Terrell  
@LeoTerrellDOJ




If true, nobody should be interested in working with you, Austin!

[@Cornell](#) [@realDonaldTrump](#) [@DAGToddBlanche](#) [@ASGWoodward](#)
[@IsraelWarRoom](#)



Israel War Room  @IsraelWarRoom · Jun 9

 Austin Franco, reportedly a student at Cornell University, told a potential employer he's "Not interested in working for a jew."

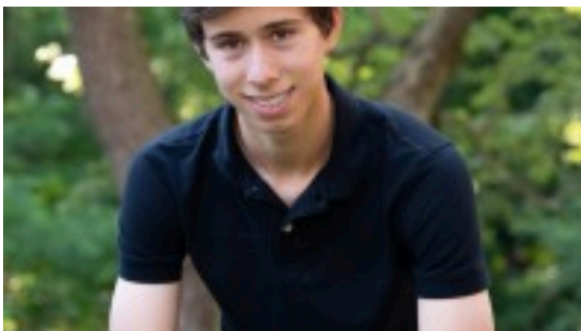
@Cornell says it's investigating the report.

You have a new notification

Hello Aiden,

You have a new message from **Austin** 
(Cornell University)

Not interested in working for a jew.
Thanks.



Cornell University 
@Cornell

Follow




Cornell University is aware of an unconfirmed report regarding a post made by a student on the Handshake platform. We take all reports of discrimination and hate speech seriously and are actively reviewing the matter. We are committed to conducting a thorough review in accordance with university policy.



Cornell condemns antisemitism and all forms of hatred and discrimination in the strongest possible terms. Our university remains deeply committed to fostering a safe, inclusive, and respectful environment for every member of our community.

9:23 AM · Jun 10, 2026 · 21.2K Views

Exhibit C – Mr. Terrell promises to enforce his newly created blacklist in the future

 **LeoTerrell**   @TheLeoTerrell  ...

If the Jew Hater is ever hired, please post and I will RT

 **Gabe Einhorn**  @EinhornGabe · Jun 13

Thank you @nypost for highlighting this story, and thank you to everyone showing support. To everyone who is commenting even more hate and justifying this, you are just proving the point even more that antisemitism is real. x.com/nypost/status/...

6:05 AM · Jun 14, 2026 · **62.5K** Views

 420  112  506  49 

Exhibit D – Mr. Terrell routinely discourages American political speech under the guise of fighting antisemitism from his official account while tagging his personal account.

 **Leo Terrell**   @LeoTerrellDOJ · Nov 18, 2025  ...

NEWS FLASH: If you spread antisemitic conspiracy theories, you are an antisemite.

Your political party won't give you cover.

[@realDonaldTrump](#) [@AGPamBondi](#) [@TheLeoTerrell](#) [@StopAntisemites](#)
[@JewsFightBack](#)

 410  189  1K  87K  

Exhibit E – Mr. Terrell has a repeated pattern of linking his personal and government accounts especially when condemning expressive speech, going so far as to label activists as terrorists

 **Leo Terrell**   @LeoTerrellDOJ · Oct 8, 2025  

Inciting terror in our country!!!

[@DHSgov](#) [@SecRubio](#) [@realDonaldTrump](#) [@AGPamBondi](#) [@FBI](#)
[@TheLeoTerrell](#)

 **Oliya Scootercaster**  @ScooterCasterNY · Oct 7, 2025

"We did not act enough!" Pro-Palestine protesters speak Fox News HQ in NYC

"We will show up, stronger than we did the first October 7th!" speaker addressed the crowd....



Exhibit F – Mr. Terrell makes liberal use of his public account to direct users to his personal account while advocating for government action to suppress points of view.



Leo Terrell   @LeoTerrellDOJ · Feb 12

Imagine your taxpayer money spent on such trash and lies.

Why are entities with ties to alleged terror-affiliated groups anywhere near your public health institutions?

[@realDonaldTrump](#) [@AGPamBondi](#) [@ChadGilmartinCA](#) [@GatesMcGavick](#)
[@N_Baldassarre](#) [@FoxNews](#) [@TheLeoTerrell](#)

Bassem Eid  @realbassemeid · Feb 12

Public institutions should never be used for ideological advocacy. But that's what happened in NYC. @ZohranKMamdani's NYC Health shared anti-Israel propaganda during a work-hour meeting.

@JulieMenin, as NYC Council Speaker, it's your responsibility to ensur...

3 replies 12 retweets 49 likes 6.3K views

Exhibit G – Mr. Terrell continues to call for individuals to be made “unemployable” even in his new role in the Department of Justice. This latest example is from June 28, 2026, and Mr. Terrell shows no signs of slowing down in his doxing and harassing of American citizens.



LeoTerrell  @TheLeoTerrell · Jun 28



Please RT: Let's get first and last names and make these haters famous and **unemployable!**



StopAntisemitism  @StopAntisemites · Jun 28

Los Angeles: How are these two spending their weekend?

Standing in the Fairfax District holding "F*ck Israel, Free Palestine" signs directly across the street from a Synagogue and a Jewish girls' day school.



Exhibit H – Before taking office, Mr. Terrell made it clear the desired outcome from his current and future targeted harassment: blacklisting, harassment, financial harm, and the suppression of speech.



LeoTerrell  @TheLeoTerrell · Nov 13, 2023



Let's remember their names and faces. Please RT! We need to make Jew Haters **unemployable**. They need to feel our anger in their wallets and purses. x.com/StopAntisemite...

This post is unavailable.

 61

 1.2K

 1K

 58K

