

Sinclair Defies Disney, Keeps Jimmy Kimmel Off the Air

Sinclair Broadcast Group announced it will continue blocking Jimmy Kimmel Live! from airing on its ABC affiliate stations, even after Disney lifted the show's suspension. The network group's decision follows outrage over Kimmel's controversial remarks about Charlie Kirk's alleged assassin, which Sinclair leaders called "inappropriate and deeply insensitive."

Beginning Tuesday night, Sinclair will be preempting Jimmy Kimmel Live! across our ABC affiliate stations and replacing it with news programming. Discussions with ABC are ongoing as we evaluate the show's potential return.

– Sinclair, Inc. (@WeAreSinclair) September 22, 2025

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Disney had suspended the late-night program but announced this week that Kimmel would return to production. Sinclair, however, which operates 30 ABC affiliates across the country, rejected the move and said its stations will keep replacing the program with news coverage. Sinclair executives argued that Disney's decision does not go far enough in addressing the harm caused by Kimmel's comments.



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Sinclair Vice Chairman Jason Smith stated the company expects both ABC and Kimmel to take further action before the show is allowed back on the air. That includes a public apology to the Kirk family and Turning Point USA, along with what Sinclair

described as a “meaningful personal donation.” Until then, the late-night slot on Sinclair’s affiliates will remain filled with alternate programming.

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The dispute highlights a growing rift between media corporations and local broadcasters. While Disney and ABC have reinstated Kimmel without conditions, Sinclair insists it has an obligation to uphold standards of respect at a “critical moment for our country.” The standoff demonstrates that major affiliate groups can exert control over what reaches viewers, regardless of decisions made at the network level.

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For audiences in Sinclair’s markets, Jimmy Kimmel Live! will remain off the air indefinitely. The decision underscores the increasing tension between left-leaning entertainment and conservative-leaning broadcasters, reflecting broader cultural divisions over what should be acceptable in mainstream media.

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