

NBC's *Today*

09/25/25

7:01:34 a.m. [TEASE]

22 seconds

[ON-SCREEN HEADLINE: Doubling Down]

CRAIG MELVIN: Doubling down. Jimmy Kimmel's new message overnight after President Trump's threat to sue ABC for putting the late-night host back on the air.

JIMMY KIMMEL [on ABC's *Jimmy Kimmel Live!*, 09/24/25]: You can't believe they gave me my job back. I can't believe we gave you your job back. [CHEERS AND APPLAUSE]

MELVIN: The latest on their war of words and the historic ratings just in for Kimmel's return to TV.

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7:21:23 a.m.

24 seconds

[ON-SCREEN HEADLINE: Coming Up; 7:31 AM; Kimmel Doubles Down]

SHEINELLE JONES: Still ahead, the latest on Jimmy Kimmel's latest return to late night, giving his show a big boost in the ratings. Liz Kreutz has more on that and what Kimmel had to say on his second night back.

LIZ KREUTZ: Yeah. Hi, Sheinelle, good morning. Night two following Kimmel's suspension and he did not hold back going after President Trump. And the big question now is what happens next with two major station groups saying they won't air the show? We'll have all of the latest, guys.

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7:30:36 a.m.

3 minutes and 25 seconds

[ON-SCREEN HEADLINE: Jimmy Kimmel Doubles Down in Return]

JONES: And we're starting with the latest on Jimmy Kimmel's return to the air.

MELVIN: Yeah. We're now learning his first night back was historic when it came to the ratings. NBC's Liz Kreutz joins us from Los Angeles with more on this. Liz, good morning.

KREUTZ: Hey, guys, good morning. Yeah. Millions of people tuned in to watch his show

Tuesday night, giving him his highest ratings in ten years. Last night, Kimmel responded to President Trump's reaction to his return. And while many are praising the way Kimmel has handled the situation, we are now hearing from others who say his remarks didn't go far enough. Overnight, Jimmy Kimmel returning to his late night show on Tuesday, doubling down on President Trump's criticism.

KIMMEL [on ABC's *Jimmy Kimmel Live!*, 09/24/25]: You can't believe they gave me my job back. I can't believe they gave you your job back.

KREUTZ: The late-night host responding to the President's Truth Social post where he suggested he may take legal action against the network for putting Kimmel back on the air.

KIMMEL [on ABC's *Jimmy Kimmel Live!*, 09/24/25]: Only Donald Trump would try to prove he prove he wasn't threatening ABC by threatening ABC.

KREUTZ: ABC says Kimmel's first show after his suspension following conservative outrage to comments he made about Charlie Kirk's alleged shooter was his highest rated show in a decade, drawing 6.26 million broadcast viewers despite being off the air in 23 percent of TV households. The network says his monologue garnered more than 26 million streams across YouTube and social media.

KIMMEL [on ABC's *Jimmy Kimmel Live!*, 09/24/25]: He tried his best to cancel me. Instead, he forced millions of people to watch the show. That backfired bigly.

KREUTZ: After ABC abruptly took Kimmel's show off the air last week following pressure from the head of the FCC, President Trump denied the government played a role. Instead blaming Kimmel's rating.

PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP [on 09/18/25]: Kimmel had, look, he was fired. He had no talent. [SCREEN WIPE] He had no ratings. His ratings were worse than Colbert, I think. They got rid of Colbert, which was a good thing to do.

KREUTZ: On Tuesday night, Kimmel got emotional during his return —

KIMMEL [on ABC's *Jimmy Kimmel Live!*, 09/23/25]: It was never my intention to make light of the murder of a young man.

KREUTZ: — while delivering a passionate defense of free speech.

KIMMEL [on ABC's *Jimmy Kimmel Live!*, 09/23/25]: This show is not important. What is important is that we get to live in a country that allows us to have a show like this.

KREUTZ: Some criticizing Kimmel for not directly apologizing for his comments. Kirk's organization, Turning Point USA, posting, "not good enough."

ANDREW KLOVET [on FNC's *America's Newsroom*, 09/24/25]: Where was the "I'm sorry"? Where was the contrition?

KREUTZ: This morning, Kimmel remains off the air on nearly 60 ABC affiliates. The stations are owned by Sinclair and Nexstar, which both have pending business requiring FCC approval. Nexstar says they're currently "engaged in productive discussions with" Disney on bringing back the show, "with a focus on ensuring the program reflects and respects the diverse interests of the communities we serve."

MELVIN: So, so, Liz, again, Kimmel is off the air in about 25 percent of the country right now. When it comes to the show's blackout, who do things play out from here?

KREUTZ: Yeah, well, Sinclair has not said anything yet following Kimmel's return. But, in their previous statement, they said discussions with ABC are ongoing. Sinclair said in order to bring the show back they wanted Kimmel to apologize directly to Kirk's family and to donate to them and Turning Point USA. There is no indication right now Kimmel plans to do that. That said, experts said stations are likely to want to reach an agreement. For now, though, those massive streaming numbers indicate the blackout may have driven people to watch on Kimmel's YouTube page. Craig.

MELVIN: Alright, more to come. Liz, thank you.