



FAQ: Reporting on Anti-Asian Hate

The COVID-19 pandemic has spurred an increase in hate incidents and crimes against Asian American communities. This discrimination comes in many forms: from hostility and suspicion that Asian Americans are carriers of the coronavirus because of racist rhetoric, to verbal abuse, harassment, and even physical violence. As we saw with the murder of six Asian women in Georgia, that violence has the potential to become deadly. Acts of hate breed a culture of intolerance and distrust that erodes our communities, seeps into our policies, spreads into our everyday life and can end lives. We need to address the root causes of this violence and hate.

Since early 2020, Asian Americans Advancing Justice – Asian American Justice Center (Advancing Justice - AAJC), based in Washington, D.C., has been raising the alarm about the increased racism and discrimination against Asian Americans who are being wrongly blamed for the COVID-19 pandemic. One way we are doing this is by capturing stories from Asian Americans on our website [StandAgainstHate.org](https://standagainsthate.org) about the hate they have experienced to show these are not isolated incidents and emphasize the need for action to address anti-Asian hate.

Reporters and the media are vital partners in sounding the alarm about the resurgence of anti-Asian hate. Below are frequently asked questions on anti-Asian hate and our work with *Stand Against Hatred*. Our hope is that the answers to these questions will help create more nuanced reporting around anti-Asian hate.

What has ignited the recent wave of anti-Asian racism?

The latest wave of hate is the result of years of attacks on immigrant communities by the Trump Administration and racist rhetoric by other elected officials related to the COVID-19 pandemic. But racism against Asian is not a new phenomenon. It is part of the deep structural racism that has long impacted communities of color. According to [Ipsos research](#), 30 percent of those surveyed witnessed someone falsely blaming Asian people for the COVID-19 pandemic, and over 60 percent of Asian Americans witnessed the same behavior. A [Pew Report](#) published in July 2020 revealed similar findings, with a majority of Asian adults (58 percent) saying it is more common for people to express racist or racially insensitive views about people who are Asian than it was before the COVID-19 outbreak. As a result, Asian people living in America have very real fears for their safety and the safety of their community and loved ones.

Is racism against Asian Americans new?

Anti-Asian racism has manifested itself in this country's policies and practices since the beginning of U.S. history, including with the "Yellow Peril" -- the racist notion that Asian



Americans are a threat to the United States -- and the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882; the internment of over 120,000 Japanese Americans during World War II; and the scapegoating and violence directed against Arab, Middle Eastern, Muslim, and South Asian communities after 9/11. The repercussions of these are still evident in today's policymaking and treatment of Asian Americans.

What is the difference between a hate crime and a hate incident?

A hate crime, in the legal definition, is a crime against a person or property that is motivated by bias, prejudice, or hatred toward the personal, or perceived personal characteristics of a victim. This includes categories such as a person's race, religion, disability, or sexual orientation. A hate incident is based on the same behaviors and motivations as a hate crime but is not considered a crime by our legal system. For example, you may be a victim of hate speech, which, depending on the circumstances, may not constitute a crime (and may be protected under the First Amendment). However, it can constitute a hate incident. Both hate crimes and hate incidents are racist and should be condemned. It is important to recognize the nuance between these two forms of hate to capture an accurate image of what Asian Americans are experiencing in the United States, and which cases allow for legal action and which do not.

Why does AAJC want to track hate incidents?

Understanding the breadth and depth of hate incidents taking place across the country is critical to maintaining a pulse on the experiences of Asian Americans so that we can proactively address hate in our communities. Hate incidents compound and can be indicators of systemic and broader societal issues that manifest into more elevated incidences, like the violent attacks in Georgia. .

Why is it important to get the language right around anti-Asian hate crimes versus hate incidents?

While all forms of hate must be condemned, careful and precise language is crucial when reporting on anti-Asian hate. Using the correct language when reporting hatred against Asian Americans ensures we assess each case carefully and that an appropriate response considers actions, motivations, and consequences. This is particularly important in the face of a racially biased criminal legal system.

What is Stand Against Hatred?

The Stand Against Hatred website was created by Asian Americans Advancing Justice in January 2017 to track reports of hate crimes and hate incidents submitted by Asian Americans from across the country. The site accepts submissions in Chinese (simplified & traditional), Korean, and Vietnamese. Asian Americans Advancing Justice is a national affiliation of five independent organizations coming together to advocate for the civil and human rights of Asian Americans and other underserved communities to promote a fair and equitable society for all.



The affiliation's members are: Advancing Justice | AAJC (Washington, DC), Advancing Justice - ALC (San Francisco), Advancing Justice - Los Angeles, Advancing Justice - Atlanta, and Advancing Justice - Chicago.

Why are we collecting accounts of hate incidents and crimes on Stand Against Hatred?

Hate crimes and hate incidents are chronically under-reported. That is one of the main reasons we encourage people who have experienced hate and harassment to share their experiences on StandAgainstHatred.org. Recording and sharing these accounts will help us bring greater visibility to the issue of anti-Asian hate, ultimately changing policies and practices to help create a country that is fully inclusive of Asian Americans. In addition to encouraging people to share information about the hate that they have experienced, we are working to make resources available to impacted individuals.

What is Advancing Justice | AAJC doing to intervene on these hate incidents?

Advancing Justice | AAJC and Hollaback!, an organization working to end harassment, especially against marginalized communities, have led Anti-Asian and Anti-Asian American Harassment trainings for more than 21,000 people. As COVID-19 and racial injustice persist, we will continue to offer training on how to intervene to stop anti-Asian harassment, how to de-escalate conflict, and a training for Asians and Asian Americans to learn how to protect themselves and practice self-care following a conflict. We can keep our community safe by teaching everyday people interventions and responses to help address the violence.

“If you are trying to decrease the level of stigma, decrease the level of discrimination and hate and xenophobia ... words matter,” said John C. Yang of Asian Americans Advancing Justice – AAJC.