

## 2022 ANTI-LATINO HATE CRIMES IN LOS ANGELES COUNTY

After rising 10% in 2021, reported anti-Latino/a crimes in Los Angeles County climbed another 3% in 2022 from 117 to 121. They comprised 28% of racial crimes.

Because Latino/as comprise about half of L.A. County residents, this is a surprisingly low percentage especially in light of the on-going, volatile public debate on immigration policy which has resulted in increased xenophobia. Major cities like Los Angeles, Houston, Denver, and Philadelphia have documented significant declines in the number of crimes reported by Latino/a victims since the start of the Trump presidency.<sup>1</sup> It is possible that growing numbers of Latino/a victims are increasingly reluctant to contact law enforcement because they fear detection by Immigration and Customs Enforcement. This growing anxiety also could be a factor in the under-reporting of hate crimes. Below is more recent information.

A 2021 study funded by the Department of Justice's Office of Justice Programs, showed that Latinos who experience discrimination or "other forms of victimization" are reluctant to call the police and instead seek help from relatives, community members, or their church. The study's sample included people living in the San Diego metro area, the Galveston and Houston metro areas, and Boston.<sup>2</sup>

Reported hate crimes in which anti-immigrant slurs were used (e.g., "Wetback") increased 12% from 84 to 94. Suspects used anti-immigrant slurs in nearly half of anti-Latino/a crimes. In 73% of these crimes specifically anti-Mexican slurs were employed (down from 78%). There was one crime that was specifically anti-Nicaraguan, and the remainder did not specify any Latino/a ethnicity.

Of the larger victim groups, reported crimes targeting Latino/as were the most likely to be violent (93%, up 10% from previous year). This was the fourth year in a row that Latino/a victims of racial crime experienced the highest rate of violence. Furthermore, the 80% rate of violence is the highest percentage experienced by Latino/a victims in our accessible records.

The most common criminal offense was simple assault (55%), followed by aggravated assault (20%), and intimidation (15%). There was 1 attempted murder.

Latino/as were attacked most frequently in public places (47%), followed by businesses (32%), and residences (17%). There were also 3 crimes that occurred at schools and a single crime that took place at a government building. This represented a significant decline in anti-Latino/a crimes at residences and significant increases in those that occurred at businesses.

Fifty-one percent of anti-Latino/as were committed by African Americans (down from 64%), followed by whites (34%, up from 23%), and Latino/as (13%, up from 12%). This distribution showed a decline in the percentage of Black suspects and a rise in the White suspects. There were 2 Asian-on-Latino crimes. In Latino/a-on-Latino/a crimes, many of the suspects made anti-immigrant slurs, sometimes in Spanish.

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<sup>1</sup> FiveThirtyEight, "Latinos in Three Cities Are Reporting Fewer Crimes Since Trump took Office," ABC News, May 18, 2017

<sup>2</sup> [Longitudinal Examination of Victimization Experiences of Latinos \(LEVEL\): Extending the Bias Victimization Study | Office of Justice Programs \(ojp.gov\)](#)

It should be noted that in addition to being the targets of racial hate crime, Latino/as also comprised the largest group of victims in sexual orientation crimes (48%, up from 40%) and anti-transgender crimes (49% down from 51%).

### **2022 Actual Anti-Latino/a Crimes in L.A. County**

#### **April 22, Llano**

Two Mexican males were driving when a truck with three White men pulled alongside them. Unprovoked, all three began yelling racial slurs, including the phrases "wetbacks" and "go back to your country." The truck slowed down behind victim's car and one of the suspects threw an unknown object at victim's car cracking the entire rear windshield. The second victim believes they were targeted because of the Mexican flag sticker on the rear car window. The suspects' car displayed a confederate flag.

#### **December 10, Rosemead**

A Latina female and Latino male were walking when a vehicle nearly struck them. A White suspect exited the vehicle and started yelling at them, "What are you looking at Bearer?" The suspect then started punching the female victim and kicked the male victim. The female victim attempted to pull the suspect off but fell to the ground. The suspect kicked her in the face and bit her.

#### **August 22, Koreatown**

A female Black suspect became upset with a female Latina victim because she attempted to close a window on a bus. The suspect told victim, "You better close the fucking window. You fucking Latina! You fucking Mexican!" The suspect then produced a knife with a 3/4" blade and held it in her right hand. He suspect was standing less than one foot away from the victim and stated, "I'm going to kill you". The victim moved to the seat across from the suspect and began yelling for help. The victim called the police causing the suspect to flee.