

2021 ANTI-ASIAN HATE CRIMES IN LOS ANGELES COUNTY

Based on the collection and analysis of hate crimes reported in Los Angeles County from the Sheriff, over 40 city police departments, dozens of police agencies at schools, colleges and universities and trained community-based organizations, the Los Angeles County Commission on Human Relations found that reported anti-Asian hate crimes rose 67% in 2021 from 46 to 77. **This is the largest number ever documented in the history of the report.**

Asian Americans constitute 15.6% of Los Angeles County residents and were targeted in 16% of racial hate crimes in 2021. However, we believe that under-reporting of hate crimes is a serious problem in the Asian community because of linguistic and cultural barriers, immigration status, unfamiliarity with the criminal justice system, and fear that reporting hate crimes could bring retaliation or unwanted publicity. In one study, the FBI estimated that fewer than half of victims reported hate crimes to law enforcement.

In 18 of the reported crimes (23%) the suspects explicitly blamed the victims for COVID-19. It is not known if other suspects also held such views but did not express them at the time the police report was made. Anti-immigrant slurs were used in 22 (29%) of the crimes. Again, other suspects may have possessed anti-immigrant sentiments but made no explicit mention in the commission of the crime.

In 20 of anti-Asian hate crimes (26%), specifically anti-Chinese slurs were used. Five crimes (6%) were anti-Asian Indian and three crimes (4%) were anti-Japanese. There were single crimes targeting Filipinos, Koreans, and Vietnamese. In the remainder of these crimes, no specific group was mentioned.

Information about the actual ethnicities of the victims was available in 50 anti-Asian crimes. The largest group of victims were Korean (19, or 38%) followed by Chinese (16, or 32%), Indians and Japanese (3 cases, or 6%, each), Bangladeshi (2) and there were single crimes in which the victims were Cambodian or Vietnamese.

Fifty-four percent of the victims were male and 46% were female. The previous year only 38% of victims were female. The ages of the victims were identified in all of the cases. Forty-two percent of the victims were 40 years or older (including 8 who were more than 60 years old). Thirty-eight percent of victims were 26-40 and 14% were 18-25. Only 6% were juveniles.

The most frequent criminal offense was simple assault (48%), followed by aggravated assault (14%), intimidation and vandalism (13% each), and disorderly conduct (6%). In addition, there were 2 cases of robbery and single cases of sexual assault and trespassing. The rate of violence was 81% compared to 76% the previous year.

Similar to the previous year, anti-Asian crimes occurred most frequently in public places (44%), followed by businesses (35%), and residences (12%). Three crimes each took place at government buildings or via electronic communication, and a lone crime occurred at a school. The biggest change was that hate crimes at businesses grew from 24% to 35%.

In cases in which suspects were identified, 44% were white, followed by black (29%), and Latino/a (25%). There was a lone Asian-on-Asian crime. The previous two years, African Americans were the smallest

group of suspects. This is significant because nationally there has been speculation that African Americans have been the most frequent suspects in anti-Asian crimes during the pandemic.

Fifty-seven percent of the anti-Asian crimes took place in the City of Los Angeles. No other city or unincorporated area of the county had more than two crimes. This includes cities that have majority-Asian populations (such as Arcadia) and municipalities with very small Asian communities (like Manhattan Beach).

Actual 2021 Anti-Asian Hate Crimes in L.A. County

May 11, Koreatown

A Korean male was walking home late at night when he passed three black males. He felt something strike the back of his neck and fell to the ground. He heard one of the suspects yell, "Fuck Asians!" The victim tried to yell for help in Korean but the suspects continued to punch and kick him until he lost consciousness. A bystander found him and transported the victim home. He was later treated at a hospital for a fractured nasal bone and lacerations.

November 22, Hollywood

A Chinese male was unloading some items from his vehicle during his work shift when he noticed a suspicious vehicle. The victim approached the vehicle and informed the occupants, a black male and white female, that they were trespassing and would have to leave. The male suspect replied, "What are you going to do, push my car?" The victim informed them he was going to call the police and began walking away. Both suspects then started making racist remarks including, "You Ching Chong motherfucker!" "Go back home COVID-spreader!" The victim turned around and photographed them with his cell phone. The male suspect became enraged and approached the victim holding an aluminum pole. He said, "I'll beat your ass," and swung the pole striking the victim in the head.

December 18, Hollywood

A Bangladeshi Muslim male was working at a gas station. He was ringing up a white male customer who spoke in a low voice. The victim was unable to understand him, and the suspect said in a louder voice, "You're a fucking Indian Muslim!" Offended, the victim decided to refuse service to the customer. As the suspect left, the victim followed him in an attempt to take his picture. The suspect punched him in the left ear and once in the back of his head.