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STOP
AAPI
HATE

LICENSE TO HATE

Anti-Asian Racism in an Era of Anti-Immigrant Politics

Anti-immigrant hate and anti-Asian hate are deeply intertwined. Throughout U.S. history, xenophobia has been a central driver of racism against Asian American communities. Asian people have often been treated as perpetual foreigners regardless of how long they have lived in the country or whether they were born here.

This pattern continues today, as the second Trump administration's anti-immigrant rhetoric and policies are contributing to harm against Asian American communities. **A thematic analysis of anti-Asian hate acts reported to the Stop AAPI Hate reporting center between January 1, 2023 to June 30, 2026 found that anti-immigrant sentiment appeared in a growing share of reports.** The language used in these reports mirrored current anti-immigrant rhetoric and policies, demonstrating how political rhetoric, government actions, and hate acts reinforce one another.

Together, they form a *trifecta of anti-Asian hate* that fuels exclusion, expands the boundaries of acceptable discrimination, and turns political messages into real-world harm for Asian American communities. When political leaders and government institutions amplify anti-immigrant narratives and enact discriminatory policies — such as framing immigrants as threats and enemies, expanding mass deportations, and undermining birthright citizenship — they provoke hostility and embolden individuals to perpetrate hate acts against Asian American communities.

This report presents key qualitative findings on:

- 1. The growing presence of anti-immigrant sentiment in accounts of anti-Asian hate acts.**
- 2. The connections between anti-Asian political rhetoric, anti-Asian policies, and anti-Asian hate acts in recurring anti-immigrant narratives.**

Key Findings

Rising Anti-Immigrant Sentiment in Anti-Asian Hate Acts

- Anti-immigrant sentiment appeared in a growing share of reported anti-Asian hate acts, **increasing from 42% in 2023 to 62% in the first half of 2026.**
- Anti-immigrant narratives have appeared in reports submitted to Stop AAPI Hate since 2020, but they became more pronounced alongside the rise in anti-immigrant rhetoric and policies during the second Trump administration.

Recurring Anti-Immigrant Narratives

- Four recurring anti-immigrant narratives emerged from reports of anti-Asian hate acts: **exclusion** (casting Asian people as outsiders who do not belong), **dehumanization** (describing Asian people as less than human), **societal threat** (framing Asian people as national or economic threats), and **immigration status policing** (subjecting Asian people to immigration-related scrutiny).
- The exclusion narrative was the most common narrative throughout the study period, while the societal threat and immigration status policing narratives rose in prominence as anti-immigrant rhetoric and policies escalated.

Offenders Invoking State Power

- Particularly striking in recent years is the way in which offenders feel emboldened to police others' immigration statuses or to use deportation as a threat or means of intimidation.
- Given the state power behind this racism, the consequences are more severe including possible arrest, detention, and deportation.

Addressing anti-Asian and anti-immigrant hate requires more than responding to individual acts of hate. It means challenging the rhetoric, policies, and systems that enable them and working together to build safer, more inclusive communities for Asian Americans and immigrants. For concrete steps on how policymakers and community organizations can fight against anti-Asian and anti-immigrant hate, please see the recommendations section of Stop AAPI Hate's report "[Closing Doors, Widening Harm: Persistent Hate Against Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders in an Anti-Immigrant Climate.](#)"

ABOUT
**STOP
AAPI
HATE**

Stop AAPI Hate (501c3) is dedicated to exposing and combating racism and discrimination against Asian American and Pacific Islander people in the U.S. We research and document anti-AAPI hate, support and empower survivors, spread awareness of our communities' challenges and triumphs, and advocate for policies that help our communities thrive. For more information, visit stopaapihate.org.

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