

**March 18, 2021**

**ATTORNEY GENERAL RAOUL CONDEMNS RACISM AND HATE CRIMES AGAINST ASIAN AMERICANS**

**Chicago** — Attorney General Kwame Raoul today condemned discrimination and hate crimes targeting Asian Americans. As communities throughout Illinois and the nation continue to fight the coronavirus pandemic, Asian Americans have faced an increase in instances of discrimination and hate crimes.

The Attorney General's office has been contacted during the pandemic by individuals concerned about anti-Asian hate and discrimination. Following a series of shootings in Atlanta that left eight people dead, including several of Asian descent, Attorney General Raoul is encouraging people to report hate crimes and discrimination to law enforcement and the Attorney General's Civil Rights Bureau.

"The reports and images of hate and violence against Asian Americans during the pandemic are shocking and unacceptable. We must stand united in condemning these acts of hate and bigotry," Raoul said. "I urge all Illinois residents to report hate crimes and discrimination to local law enforcement and to my office's Civil Rights Bureau. It is incumbent upon all of us to send the message that we will not tolerate harassment or hate directed at our Asian American neighbors."

Since the COVID-19 outbreak spread throughout states, Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders have reported experiencing higher instances of harassment and bias. The Asian Pacific Policy & Planning Council (A3PCON) launched the Stop AAPI Hate website at the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. Stop AAPI Hate has since logged nearly 3,800 reports of discrimination, ranging from verbal harassment to physical assault and civil rights violations. The Center for the Study of Hate & Extremism reviewed anti-Asian hate crimes reported to police in the country's largest cities in 2020 and found that while overall hate crimes decreased, hate crimes against Asian Americans increased by nearly 150%.

Nationally, Stop AAPI Hate says Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders report that they have faced discrimination primarily at businesses, on public streets and in public parks, and that women report hate incidents 2.3 times more than men. During the pandemic, Asian Americans in the Chicago area have reported experiencing instances of harassment in neighborhoods, on public transportation and in airports.

As instances of harassment against Asian Americans began to increase, the Attorney General's office partnered with the Asian American Bar Association of Greater Chicago, the Chinese American Bar Association of Greater Chicago, the Filipino American Lawyers Association of the Chicago, the South Asian Bar Association of Chicago, the Korean American Bar Association and the Japanese American Bar Association to highlight resources for those who have faced discrimination.

Attorney General Raoul also met with Chinatown stakeholders and the Coalition for a Better Chinese American Community to discuss the president's executive order condemning anti-Asian racism related to COVID-19, as well as police reform. In addition, the Attorney General's office has partnered with Asian American community organizations, including the Coalition for a Better Chinese American Community and the Pui Tak Center, to highlight the resources available through the Civil Rights Bureau and other bureaus within the Attorney General's office. In August, Raoul joined a coalition of attorneys general who sent a letter to Facebook asking the company to take additional steps to prevent the spread of hate, discrimination and online harassment. Attorney General Raoul also has been appointed to co-chair the National Association of Attorneys General's Civil Rights Committee with New Jersey Attorney General Gurbir Grewal.

Attorney General Raoul urges individuals who experience or witness hate crimes against Asian Americans to contact local law enforcement. Raoul also encourages people to report discrimination or hate-motivated incidents to his office by [visiting his website](#), emailing [CivilRights@ilag.gov](mailto:CivilRights@ilag.gov) or by calling his Civil Rights Hotline at 1-877-581-3692. The Attorney General's [Civil Rights Bureau](#) enforces state and federal civil rights laws prohibiting discrimination and hate crimes in Illinois.