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**NYC COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS LAUNCHES \$100,000 PUBLIC  
EDUCATION EFFORT TO COMBAT COVID-19-  
RELATED STIGMA AMID SOARING REPORTS OF DISCRIMINATION**

*Ads will run in print, radio, online, and in convenience stores and pharmacies. Since February 2020, the Commission has recorded over 350 incidents of COVID-19-related discrimination and harassment.*

**NEW YORK**—The NYC Commission on Human Rights is launching a new public awareness campaign to combat COVID-19-related discrimination and harassment. The campaign affirms protections for communities facing heightened levels of discrimination and harassment related to the pandemic. In addition, responding to renewed attention to disparities in access, treatment, and outcomes in medical settings, the campaign also addresses New Yorkers’ right to be free from discrimination in healthcare settings regardless of their race, national origin, immigration status, disability, and age.

The campaign emphasizes that reports to the Commission can be made on behalf of others, anonymously, and without fear of being asked about immigration status. The campaign will include multilingual advertisements in community and ethnic media, including print and radio, social media platforms, and targeted placements in pharmacies and convenience stores throughout the city.

“The COVID-19 crisis is challenging us all to confront the legacy of structural racism and bias in every aspect of public life,” said **Carmelyn P. Malalis, Chair and Commissioner of the NYC Commission on Human Rights**. “In addition to disparities laid bare by this crisis, it is a bitter injustice that many of the workers deemed essential to the core functions of our City are themselves or their loved ones facing disparate health outcomes, or are victims of discrimination or harassment because they must work throughout this crisis. No one has been unaffected by illness, economic hardship, or the anxiety caused by social isolation. As we continue to fight the spread of this disease, this public education effort underscores the Commission’s resolve to fighting discrimination and harassment and serve as a resource for all New Yorkers in this extraordinary time.”

The \$100,000 public education effort will feature placements in community and ethnic media such as *Korea Central Daily News*, *WZRC-AM1480*, *El Diario*, and *Amsterdam News*. Digital advertising will promote a new video on YouTube, Facebook, and Twitter that educates audiences on how to report incidents to the Commission for themselves or on behalf of others. For the first time, the Commission will leverage advertising on popular Chinese and Korean social media platforms, such as WeChat. Advertising in convenience stores

and pharmacies will be placed in all five boroughs and concentrate on neighborhoods with high proportions of immigrants, communities with limited English proficiency, and communities facing high rates of poverty. These multilingual placements (Chinese, English, Korean, and Spanish) will focus on the right to be free from discrimination in healthcare settings. Promoted social media posts will appear in over 10 languages expanding upon a set of [anti-stigma videos](#) already available in 12 languages.



## Discrimination and harassment due to COVID-19 are illegal in New York City.

Contact the NYC Commission on Human Rights if you or someone you know has faced discrimination or harassment due to COVID-19. We do not ask for your immigration status. Interpretation is available.

To report discrimination or harassment, call 311 and say "human rights" or call us at (212) 416-0197. Call 311 to report a hate crime. Learn more at [NYC.gov/stopcovidhate](https://nyc.gov/stopcovidhate).

**NYC** Commission on Human Rights  
Carmelyn P. Malalis, Chair and Commissioner



## Race discrimination is illegal in all medical settings in New York City.

You cannot be prevented from accessing treatment for COVID-19 or any other healthcare due to your race. Contact the NYC Commission on Human Rights to report discrimination or harassment in hospitals or clinics because of your race, national origin, immigration status, disability, age, or any other protected category.

To report discrimination or harassment, call 311 and say "human rights" or call us at (212) 416-0197. Learn more at [NYC.gov/HumanRights](https://nyc.gov/HumanRights).

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From February 1, 2020 to May 15, 2020, the Commission recorded over 350 reports of discrimination or harassment related to COVID-19, of which 133, or 37 percent, are anti-Asian in nature. By comparison, during the same time period in 2019 the Commission received 11 reports of anti-Asian discrimination. The Commission recorded almost twice as many incidents of COVID-19-related discrimination and harassment from March (103) to April (189). Reports of discrimination spanned age, race, disability, pregnancy, and lawful occupation, among other protected classes, across all areas of the Commission's jurisdiction: employment, housing, and public accommodations.

Following this sharp increase in reports of discrimination related to COVID-19, the Commission formally launched the COVID-19 Response Team in April 2020. The COVID-19 Response Team tracks and responds to incidents of discrimination and harassment connected to the

pandemic, including by conducting emergency interventions, providing referrals to services, informing people of their rights, and commencing investigations. Since the formation of the COVID-19 Response Team, it has taken action in 249 matters.

As COVID-19-related incidents of discrimination began to emerge in early 2020, the Commission has organized 16 in-person and virtual events reaching nearly 5,000 community members. The Commission has provided ongoing outreach and education to impacted communities, including:

- Hosting events in Chinese neighborhoods in Manhattan, Queens, and Brooklyn educating community members about the NYC Human Rights Law.
- Conducting three virtual town halls—one each in English, Mandarin, and Korean—with Asian and Pacific Islander community leaders to address concerns related to underreporting of bias incidents to law enforcement. The town halls featured the Mayor’s Community Affairs Unit, the Mayor’s Office for the Prevention of Hate Crimes, the New York City Police Department, and New York district attorney’s offices, and were attended by over 1,800 people. The Commission is organizing additional town halls in Tagalog and Japanese.
- Partnering on eight Bystander Intervention Trainings with Center for Anti-Violence Education in Mandarin and English reaching 250 people.
- Creation of videos by Commission staff on rejecting COVID-19-related discrimination and bias in Mandarin, Cantonese, Fujianese, Taiwanese, Korean, Tagalog, English, Arabic, Haitian Creole, and other languages.

If you have witnessed or experienced discrimination or harassment in New York City you can report the incident by calling 212-416-0197 or online at [NYC.gov/HumanRights](https://nyc.gov/HumanRights). Commission staff speak over 30 languages and reports can be filed anonymously. If you have been hurt or threatened with violence, report it to the New York City Police Department or call 911.

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"Unacceptable health inequities are compounded by xenophobia, discrimination and harassment that can drive people away from services," said **Health Commissioner Dr. Oxiris Barbot**. "As the COVID-19 continues to unfold, the Health Department is making every effort to provide New Yorkers with safe resources they can turn to."

"Harassment and discrimination have no place in our diverse city of immigrants," said **Bitta Mostofi, Commissioner of the Mayor’s Office of Immigrant Affairs**. "All New Yorkers—regardless of immigration status, race, ethnicity, and religion—deserve to live in safety and dignity and have the right to seek care and support without fear. If you or someone you know has been harassed or discriminated against because of your identity, help is available."

"Just as we must fight COVID-19 together, we must also fight the virus of hate which has sadly reared its ugly head during this pandemic," said **NYC Office for the Prevention of Hate Crimes Executive Director Deborah Lauter**. "Hate and discrimination are not tolerated in

NYC. The Office for the Prevention of Hate Crimes commends the CCHR for their excellent work confronting anti-Asian stigma and providing education on how to report and respond to bias and discrimination. We must all stand united to prevent hate from taking hold.”

“With the skyrocketing increase in anti-Asian bias incidents and hate crimes in New York City, we welcome the Commission on Human Rights’ efforts to educate New Yorkers against hate to support Asian American communities across the city,” said **JoAnn Yoo, Asian American Federation Executive Director**. “It is the first of many steps we must take to ensure Asian New Yorkers are protected from violence stemming from COVID-19. They should not have to fight the virus of racism and COVID-19 when all New Yorkers are struggling and no one should be scapegoated. We particularly welcome CCHR’s initiative to be more inclusive and increase language access by translating messages into many Asian languages, and hope these resources provide some support to those who are afraid and anxious about being targeted during these times.”

“From small businesses losing customers to individuals being victims of verbal and physical assaults, the Asian American community has struggled with the economic, health, and social impacts of the pandemic since January,” said **Wayne Ho, President and CEO of the Chinese-American Planning Council**. “We are thankful that the New York City Commission on Human Rights will expand its efforts to protect the Asian American community and other marginalized New Yorkers by launching a public awareness campaign to address COVID-19 related harassment and discrimination. The Asian American community is diverse and will benefit from understanding how to report discrimination, including in health care settings.”