

# HOW TO AVOID ANTI-ASIAN SCAPEGOATING

We call on political leaders, governments, community members, and allies to name scapegoating when it happens; acknowledge and apologize for the harm; and take affirmative measures to interrupt this centuries-old cycle of blaming communities of color for societal ills. Read on for high-level recommendations to help us avoid the centuries-old trap of anti-Asian scapegoating.

This list of recommendations is a part of the Stop AAPI Hate report, "**The Blame Game: How Political Rhetoric Inflames Anti-Asian Scapegoating**". [Click here to keep reading.](#)

## Politicians, candidates, and organizers

**1. Engage in responsible political debate.** Engage in vigorous discourse on China that does not contribute to scapegoating.

*Example:* The Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus (CAPAC) issued [guidance](#) to other elected officials on engaging in debate that does not preclude critiques of China while protecting the well-being of Asians and Asian Americans.<sup>58</sup>

**2. Hold political leaders accountable for irresponsible rhetoric.** Name when politicians and candidates use rhetoric that intentionally or unintentionally inflames scapegoating.

*Example:* Missouri State Representative Shamed Dogan, publicly called on his Republican and state colleague Representative Brian Seitz to apologize for his use of the term "China virus" during a floor debate. Dogan observed that similar inflammatory rhetoric has been linked to a rise in anti-Asian hate.<sup>59</sup>

**3. Address the needs of Asian and Asian American constituents.** Build ongoing trust and relationships with the wide diversity of Asian and Asian American communities. Listen and respond to feedback where rhetoric or policy may cause or reinforce scapegoating.

*Example:* A nationwide coalition of Asian and Asian American community-based organizations led by the Asian Law Caucus wrote a [letter](#) to the Speaker of the House to advocate for the removal of a proposed provision within the 2022 CHIPS Act that would lead to continued racial profiling of Chinese nationals.<sup>60</sup> Civil rights organizations along with CAPAC successfully took action to negotiate the removal of the problematic amendment.<sup>61</sup>

# Federal, state, and local governments

**1. Denounce scapegoating.** Affirm support, care, and belonging for Asians and Asian Americans and other targeted communities with a public stance against scapegoating. Use Stop AAPI Hate’s [model resolution language](#) as a starting point.

*Example:* Across America, at least 20 municipalities ranging from San Francisco, California to Oxford, Ohio have passed resolutions against scapegoating and racism related to COVID-19.<sup>62</sup>

**2. Acknowledge the government’s current and historic role in scapegoating and ensuing violence.** Where government is playing or has played a role in scapegoating, acknowledge it, end any scapegoating activities, and apologize for, address, and repair harm.

*Example:* In 2022, the city of Santa Ana, California, issued a resolution to apologize to Chinese immigrants and their descendants for the “fundamental injustice and discrimination ... on May 25, 1906, when city leaders decided to burn down Santa Ana’s Chinatown in an act of racism and xenophobia.”<sup>63</sup>

**3. Invest in Asian and Asian American-serving community-based organizations.** Long-term solutions to scapegoating address the roots of the problem — changing the narratives rampant in history, media, and American life that cast Asians and Asian Americans as outsiders and threats. With deep community relationships, Asian and Asian American community-based organizations are well-positioned to drive this narrative change.

*Example:* In 2021, the states of California and New York passed historic budgets with dedicated funding to address the rise in anti-Asian hate. The bulk of this funding went to community-based organizations serving Asian and Asian American communities.

## Asian and Asian American community members and allies

**1. Vote.** Address scapegoating and anti-Asian hate at the ballot box. When Asian Americans turn out to vote, they have the power to oppose politicians who cause harm and elect officials who listen to marginalized communities.

*Example:* A surge in Asian American voter turnout in Georgia contributed to Joe Biden winning the state in the 2020 election. Election eve polling showed that twice as many Asian Americans in Georgia preferred Joe Biden to Donald Trump, who they felt was “hostile” to them.<sup>64</sup> At least 53,000 new Asian American voters turned out in Georgia, a greater increase than any other ethnic group and more than four times Biden’s winning margin of less than 12,000 votes.<sup>65</sup>

**2. Use your voice.** When a political candidate or elected official engages in inflammatory rhetoric or scapegoating activity, speak up and name those actions as damaging and undemocratic. Write your local newspaper, engage on social media, join forces with community-based organizations working on these issues, campaign for candidates from Asian and other communities of color tackling anti-Asian hate, or even run for office yourself.

*Example:* Dr. Anming Hu publicly opposed the nomination of Casey Arrowood, who baselessly prosecuted Hu under the China Initiative, for U.S. Attorney for the Eastern District of Tennessee. Arrowood’s prosecution led to Hu’s wrongful arrest, jail time, and the loss of his job.<sup>67</sup> In addition to going on the record that the nomination was “ridiculous,” Hu and several other Asian American community-based organizations have written directly to President Biden to oppose the nomination.<sup>67</sup>

**3. Report harassment and discrimination.** In addition to reporting hate crimes to law enforcement and civil violations to civil rights agencies, share your stories of harassment, discrimination, and other hate incidents with Stop AAPI Hate through our confidential [reporting system](#). Collectively, the thousands of voices reporting together have launched a movement for change.

*Example:* As of March 31, 2022, community members have reported 11,467 hate incidents to Stop AAPI Hate’s reporting system. Stop AAPI Hate’s data has called nationwide attention to the rise in anti-Asian hate and scapegoating and led to advocacy for long-term solutions to hate — incorporating Asian American studies into K-12 curriculum, increasing civil rights protections, and reimagining approaches to community safety.<sup>68</sup>



Source: Jason Leung, Unsplash