



CALIFORNIA
PSYCHOLOGICAL
ASSOCIATION

CPA Speaks Out Against Xenophobia Amidst COVID-19 Pandemic

In recent weeks our world, our country and our state has been dramatically impacted by the novel coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic. As the nation's largest state psychological association, we feel it important to speak not only to the rising anxiety and concerns that California residents are experiencing about our jobs, health and families, but also to the display of racism and xenophobia affecting our Asian and Asian American communities.

In 2005, the California Psychological Association (CPA) adopted the following Diversity Statement:

"In principal and practice, CPA values and seeks a diverse membership. CPA treats all people with respect and without discrimination and promotes full participation irrespective of gender, gender identity, race, religion, ethnicity, culture, national origin, age, sexual orientation, disability, language, or socioeconomic status. CPA implements and adheres to policies and procedures that discourage harassment and other behaviors that infringe upon the freedom and respect that every individual deserves."

In demonstration of these inclusive cultural and professional values, **CPA adamantly denounces and condemns the toxic xenophobia ascribed to COVID-19** being referred to as the "Chinese virus," "Kung-Flu" and/or any other term scapegoating the Asian and Asian American communities. On March 20th the World Health Organization characterized the virus as a pandemic. That categorization recognizes that the virus has spread globally. It affects all nationalities and ethnicities. Yet, some individuals continue to use biased messages across the public media. This messaging has resulted in the [increase](#) of verbal aggression, physical violence, racial [discrimination](#) and microaggressions directed at individuals and communities of Asian and Asian American descent. Racial discrimination has been a persistent stain plaguing our nation's pursuit of "e pluribus unum." Ignorance, fear and hatred resulting from politically weaponizing health and social crises do not serve our social fabric or collective well-being. Repeated use and acceptance of targeted language fuels the existing fears and anxiety experienced by the general public and turns it into toxic xenophobia that puts our colleagues, consumers and communities at risk.

The California Psychological Association stands together with the Asian and Asian American communities against xenophobia amidst the current COVID-19 pandemic.

As psychologists we remember our ethical principles of a) Beneficence and Nonmaleficence, b) Fidelity and Responsibility, c) Integrity, d) Justice and e) Respect for People's Rights and Dignity, to serve as our professional guide and compass. Now is an opportunity to apply these principles, as well as our knowledge of psychological science, to become better informed and prepared to address xenophobia in a way that promotes unity and healing. Below are

resources that we hope you will find helpful for you and your professional and personal communities.

Resources to Combat Xenophobia:

[5 Ways to fight Xenophobia by UNICEF](#)

[APA Calls for Destigmatizing Coronavirus](#)

[Combating Bias and Stigma Related to COVID-19 - American Psychological Association](#)

[Disarming Racial Microaggressions article by D.W. Sue, et.al](#)

[How to Defeat Xenophobia per WikiHow](#)

[Surviving & Resisting Hate: A Toolkit For People of Color](#)

[Teaching Tolerance](#)