

STATE OF TEXAS §
COUNTY OF FORT BEND §

FORT BEND COUNTY RESOLUTION
CONDEMNING COVID-19 HATE AND DISPROPORTIONATE IMPACT

WHEREAS, Since the outbreak of the COVID-19 virus, more than 13,000,000 cases and more than 580,000 deaths have been confirmed worldwide as of July 15, 2020, according to the Johns Hopkins University Coronavirus Resource Center, and according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 3,416,428 cases and over 135,000 deaths have been reported in the United States as of July 15, 2020; and

WHEREAS, COVID-19 will not be stopped by political boundaries and was not created or caused by any race, nationality or ethnicity, and the World Health Organization has cautioned against using geographic descriptors that can fuel ethnic and racial discrimination; and

WHEREAS, COVID-19 has infected people from all racial, national and ethnic backgrounds; and

WHEREAS, Data demonstrates COVID-19 has a disproportionate impact on marginalized communities, including communities of color and while only thirteen percent of the U.S. population is Black, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Black patients make up approximately 33 percent of those hospitalized with COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, Gross disparities in the infection and death rate of racial and ethnic groups for COVID-19 arise from systems and structures of racist oppression that have persisted in the U.S. throughout our history; and

WHEREAS, Fort Bend County is fully committed to the safety, security, and equal treatment of its residents as it confronts the COVID-19 pandemic; and

WHEREAS, Each individual has the ability to promote inclusiveness, celebrate diversity, support all fellow community members, prevent the spread of misinformation, and reject hate, racism and bias in all forms; and

WHEREAS, Hate crimes, discrimination and aggression against Asian and Pacific Islander individuals and Jewish individuals are on the rise throughout the country as these groups are being blamed for the COVID-19 outbreak and spread;^{5,7} and

WHEREAS, As our history has shown, times of great fear, uncertainty and unrest can lead to the demonization, blaming, and scapegoating of groups as the “other;” and

WHEREAS, Extremists are taking advantage of COVID-19 to spread their hateful ideologies, including antisemitism, racism, Islamophobia, and Sinophobia; and

WHEREAS, Amid the growing spread of COVID-19, there are surging reports of bias-motivated incidents targeting members of the Asian and Pacific Islander community in the U.S.;^{3, 6, 8} and

WHEREAS, COVID-19 is a public health issue, not a racial, religious or ethnic one, and the deliberate use of terms such as “Chinese virus” or “Kung Fu or Flu virus” to describe COVID-19 only encourages hate crimes and incidents against Asian and Pacific Islander individuals and further spreads misinformation at a time when communities should be working together to get through this crisis; and

WHEREAS, The Jewish community has been targeted with blame, hate, antisemitic tropes and conspiracy theories about their creating, spreading and profiting from COVID-19;^{1, 2, 4} and

WHEREAS, To target and stigmatize specific communities for the COVID-19 outbreak and world-wide spread creates an inexcusable risk to all community members; and

WHEREAS, Asian and Pacific Islander and Jewish communities to send a message that discriminatory and hate-motivated behavior or violence will not be tolerated; and

WHEREAS, It is critical that Fort Bend County take leadership and stand in solidarity with communities of color to address and dismantle the racist and inequitable systems that give rise to the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on communities of color; and

WHEREAS, All persons are encouraged to report any such antisemitic, discriminatory or racist incidents to the proper authorities for investigation; and

WHEREAS, Fort Bend County wishes to affirm its commitment to the well-being and safety of its Asian and Pacific Islander, Jewish, Black, Latinx and all other community members and ensure they know they are not alone and that Fort Bend County is committed to ending the spread of all forms of hate, bigotry, racism, discrimination and bias.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF FORT BEND COUNTY, TEXAS, THAT:

1. Fort Bend County denounces antisemitism, anti-Asian bigotry, racism and all hateful speech, violent action and the spread of misinformation related to COVID-19 that casts blame, promotes racism or discrimination or harms Fort Bend County Asian Pacific, Black, Latinx, Jewish, immigrant or other ethnic and religious communities.
2. Fort Bend County joins cities, counties and states across the country in affirming its commitment to the safety and well-being of all community members, including the Asian

and Pacific Islander and Jewish communities, and in combating hate crimes targeting Asian and Pacific Islander individuals and Jewish individuals.

3. Fort Bend County will continue its efforts to protect residents and targets and victims of hate, and to investigate, prosecute and curb hate acts related to COVID-19 in partnership with nonprofit organizations, the Fort Bend County District Attorney's Office, the Fort Bend County Sheriff's Department and all other law enforcement partners.
4. Fort Bend County is committed to addressing inequities amplified and perpetuated by COVID-19, including by collecting and reporting demographic data of individuals who have contracted, recovered from and died from COVID-19 as allowed by applicable laws.
5. Fort Bend County is dedicated to ensuring access to resources for all community members as well as equal rights and dignity.
6. Fort Bend County vows to investigate ways to address the role of racist and systemic inequality in employment, education and healthcare within its jurisdiction.
7. Fort Bend County pledges to support the inalienable rights of all people in our community, who should be treated with respect and must remain safe during this pandemic. We call upon all our residents to treat each other with respect.
8. Fort Bend County urges residents to join us in calling attention to these harms and denouncing hate to help keep us all safe during this unprecedented pandemic and beyond.

PASS AND APPROVED BY THE COMMISSIONERS COURT OF FORT BEND COUNTY, TEXAS, this _____ day of _____, 2020.

FORT BEND COUNTY, TEXAS

By: _____
KP George, County Judge

ATTEST:

Laura Richard, County Clerk

References

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3. Donaghue, Erin. “2,120 Hate Incidents against Asian Americans Reported during Coronavirus Pandemic.” *CBS News*, CBS Interactive, 2 July 2020, www.cbsnews.com/news/anti-asian-american-hate-incidents-up-racism/.
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6. “Surging Anti-Asian Hate Crimes Being Tracked during Coronavirus Pandemic: ‘Things Are Getting Very Physical.’” *CBS News*, CBS Interactive, www.cbsnews.com/news/coronavirus-pandemic-anti-asian-hate-crimes-tracking/.
7. “What Is ‘Zoombombing’ and Who Is Behind It?” *Anti-Defamation League*, 4 May 2020, www.adl.org/blog/what-is-zoombombing-and-who-is-behind-it.
8. “‘You Started the Corona!’ As Anti-Asian Hate Incidents Explode, Climbing Past 800, Activists Push for Aid.” *Los Angeles Times*, Los Angeles Times, 5 July 2020, www.latimes.com/california/story/2020-07-05/anti-asian-hate-newsom-help.