



ASIAN AMERICANS & PACIFIC ISLANDERS IN CALIFORNIA WANT GREATER PROTECTION OF THEIR CIVIL RIGHTS

California is home to over seven million Asian Americans and 300,000 Native Hawaiians and other Pacific Islanders (NHPIs), making it the state with the highest number of Asian Americans and the second highest number of NHPIs.¹ This brief summarizes the results of a Stop AAPI Hate survey on Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders in California and their experiences with discrimination and attitudes towards civil rights, which was conducted by the non-partisan and independent non-profit research institution NORC at the University of Chicago. The brief supplements nationally representative findings in the report *Barriers to Justice: Asian Americans & Pacific Islanders Want Greater Protection of Their Civil Rights*, available [here](#).

DISCRIMINATION AGAINST ASIAN AMERICANS & PACIFIC ISLANDERS IN CALIFORNIA IS COMMONPLACE.

Four in ten Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders living in California said they have been discriminated against or treated unfairly because of a protected characteristic.² Of those who experienced discrimination or unfair treatment, more than 8 in 10 cited race, ethnicity, national origin, skin color, or language as the protected characteristic they think the discrimination was based on. More than a third reported sex, gender, or gender identity or expression as a factor, while nearly one in five said their unfair treatment was motivated by their religion or immigration status.

Four Things You Should Know

About the Stop AAPI Hate poll conducted by NORC Among Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders in California:

- 1) Four in ten experienced discrimination or unfair treatment, yet only 15% reported the violation.
- 2) Most said the experience either negatively impacted their mental health, strained relationships, or changed their sense of belonging.
- 3) A majority wanted to know more about their rights and trust community groups serving Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders and civil rights agencies as places to report and learn more.
- 4) About seven in ten believed new civil rights laws are needed to reduce discrimination against Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders.

¹ AAPI Data. (2022). The State of Asian American, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islanders in California. https://aapidata.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/CA_State_of_AANHPIs_Report_2022.pdf.

² The survey defined "protected characteristic" as a specific characteristic about a person for which civil rights laws offer protection against discrimination or unfair treatment. Respondents were given a list of protected characteristics (such as race, sex, and disability) and asked whether they have ever been discriminated against or treated unfairly because of any protected characteristic.

ASIAN AMERICANS & PACIFIC ISLANDERS LIVING IN CALIFORNIA FACE DISCRIMINATION ACROSS A VARIETY OF EVERYDAY SETTINGS.

Nearly half of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders in California who said they experienced discrimination³ said it occurred as a customer at a business, about four in ten reported this occurred as an employee or job applicant at a workplace, and nearly a third were a student at a school. About a quarter of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders in California who experienced discrimination said that it occurred on public transportation, more than two in ten were members of the public seeking services with the government, and eighteen percent were treated unfairly when buying or renting housing.

AA & PI adults in California were most commonly discriminated against in businesses, at work, or at school

Percent of AA & PI adults in California who experienced discrimination



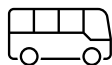
47% were customers



41% were employees or job applicants



32% were students



26% were riders of public transit



22% were renters or buyers of housing



18% were seeking services from the government

Question: Have you been discriminated against or treated unfairly based on a protected characteristic as a ... ?

Source: NORC poll conducted November 30 to December 22, 2022, with 356 Asian American & 43 Pacific Islander adults age 18 and older living in California.



MANY ASIAN AMERICANS & PACIFIC ISLANDERS IN CALIFORNIA SAID DISCRIMINATION HURT THEIR MENTAL HEALTH OR CHANGED THEIR SENSE OF BELONGING.

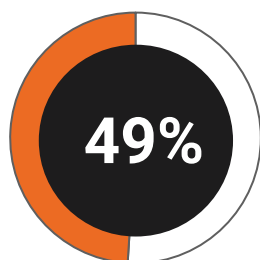
Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders in California said certain changes occurred in their lives due to having experienced discrimination or unfair treatment. About half (49%) of those who experienced discrimination said it negatively impacted their mental health, such as feeling sad, stressed, anxious, or depressed. More than four in ten said discrimination changed their sense of belonging, while roughly a quarter said their experience strained close relationships. Nearly a third of Asian Americans

³ Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders who said they experienced discrimination were provided a variety of follow-up questions aimed at unpacking the context of where discrimination occurs. This design enabled participants to denote multiple instances of discrimination.

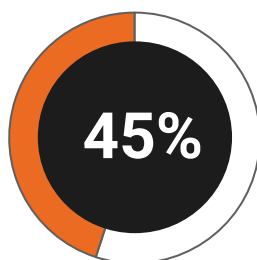
and Pacific Islanders who endured discrimination reported making changes, like switching a job or school or shopping at a different location. A similar proportion said they took an action to feel safer like taking a self-defense class or carrying a whistle or weapon, and 15% said they have become more civically engaged.

Half of AA & PI adults in California who experienced discrimination said their mental health was negatively impacted

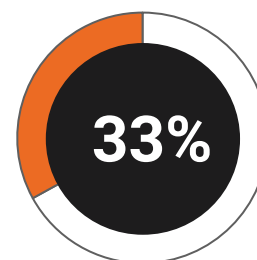
Percent of AA & PI adults in California who experienced discrimination



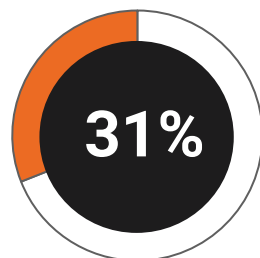
I experienced negative effects on my mental health



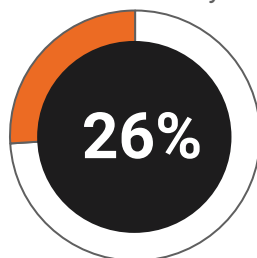
It changed my sense of belonging to my school, workplace, or other community



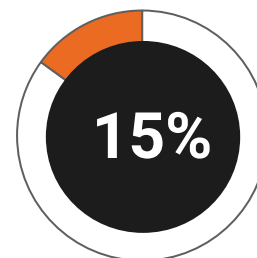
I felt less safe and/or took steps to feel safer



I changed my behavior, like changing schools, jobs, or where I shop



My personal relationships were strained



I became more civically or politically active

Question: Have any of the following happened to you because you experienced discrimination or unfair treatment?

Source: NORC poll conducted November 30 to December 22, 2022, with 356 Asian American & 43 Pacific Islander adults age 18 and older living in California.



DESPITE HIGH LEVELS OF AWARENESS OF THE STATE'S CIVIL RIGHTS AGENCY, JUST FIFTEEN PERCENT OF THOSE WHO EXPERIENCED DISCRIMINATION IN CALIFORNIA REPORTED IT

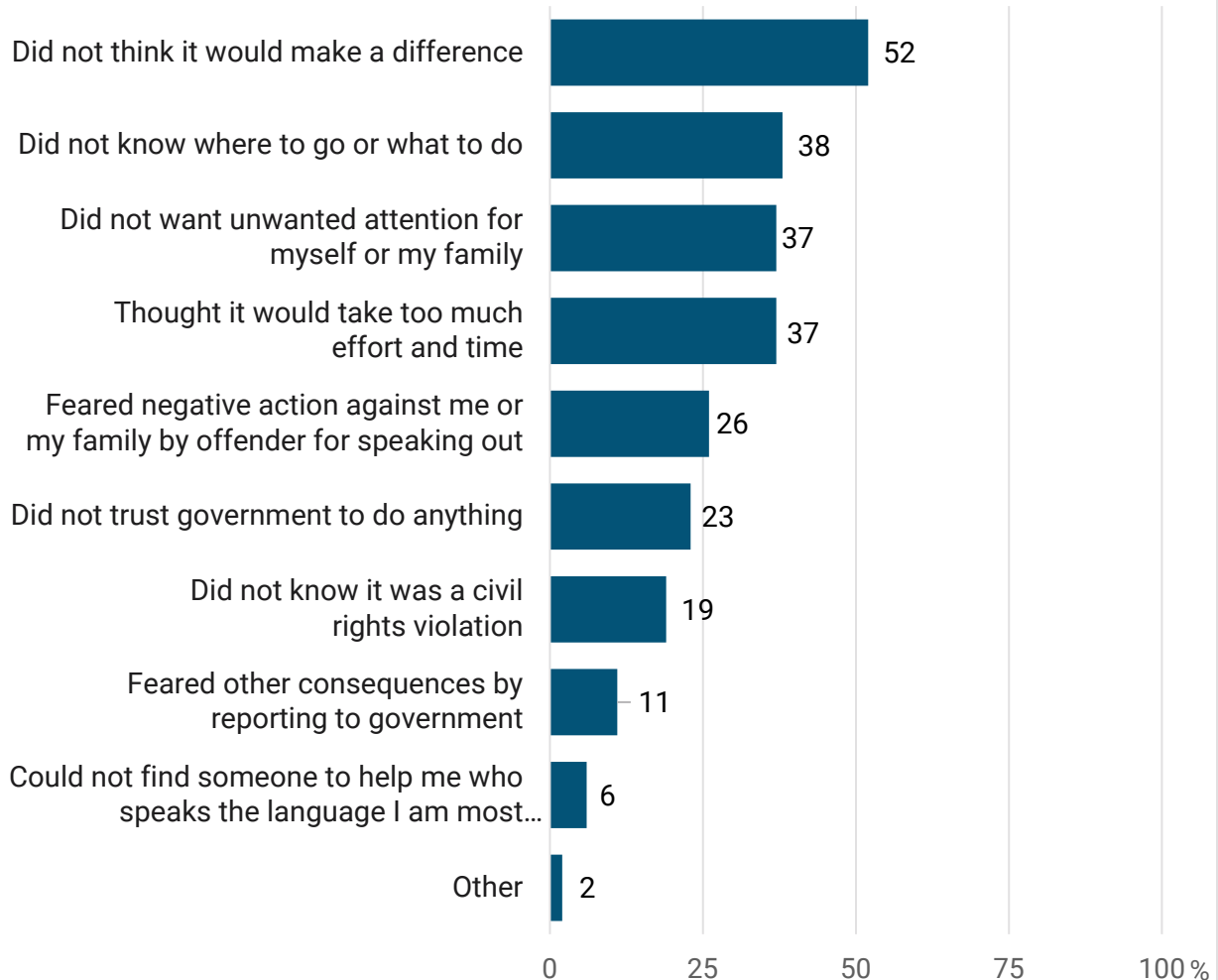
The California Civil Rights Department (CRD), formerly known as the California Department of Fair Employment and Housing (DFEH), is charged with protecting the civil rights of residents of California. Forty-eight percent of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders living in California say they have heard of CRD. Of those who say they have heard of it, 61% say they know what it does. Fifty-nine percent of

Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders living in California say they have heard of DFEH. Of those who say they have heard of it, 59% say they know what it does.

Yet, among Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders in California who experienced what they believed was a civil rights violation, only 15% said they reported it. Half of those who have experienced discrimination or unfair treatment but did not report what they believed to be a violation of their civil rights said they did not think it would make a difference, almost four in 10 feared unwanted attention for themselves or their families, more than a third were unsure of where to go or what to do, and nearly as many thought reporting the incident would take up too much time. A quarter feared that the offender would take negative action against them or their family for speaking out, about a fifth did not trust the government to do anything, and about as many did not know it was a civil rights violation.

More than half of AA & PI adults in California who experienced, but did not report discrimination cited thinking it wouldn't make a difference

Percent of AA & PI adults in California who experienced, but did not report a violation of their civil rights



Question: Why didn't you report?

Source: NORC poll conducted November 30 to December 22, 2022, with 356 Asian American & 43 Pacific Islander adults age 18 and older living in California.



ASIAN AMERICANS & PACIFIC ISLANDERS IN CALIFORNIA WOULD FEEL MOST COMFORTABLE REPORTING CIVIL RIGHTS VIOLATIONS TO, AND LEARNING ABOUT CIVIL RIGHTS FROM, AA & PI-SERVING COMMUNITY AND ADVOCACY ORGANIZATIONS.

Community, advocacy, or civil rights organizations serving Asians, Asian Americans, or Pacific Islanders, such as Stop AAPI Hate, were most often cited as the entity to which Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders would feel comfortable reporting a civil rights violation (52%). About four in ten (42%) Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders might approach a government agency that enforces civil rights laws, a human resources department (42%), or the police or a prosecutor with their civil rights violation (37%). Roughly a third would feel comfortable reporting to a private lawyer (34%), and 28% said a teacher, administrator, or staff at school. Just 16% would be comfortable with approaching a religious leader to report discrimination.

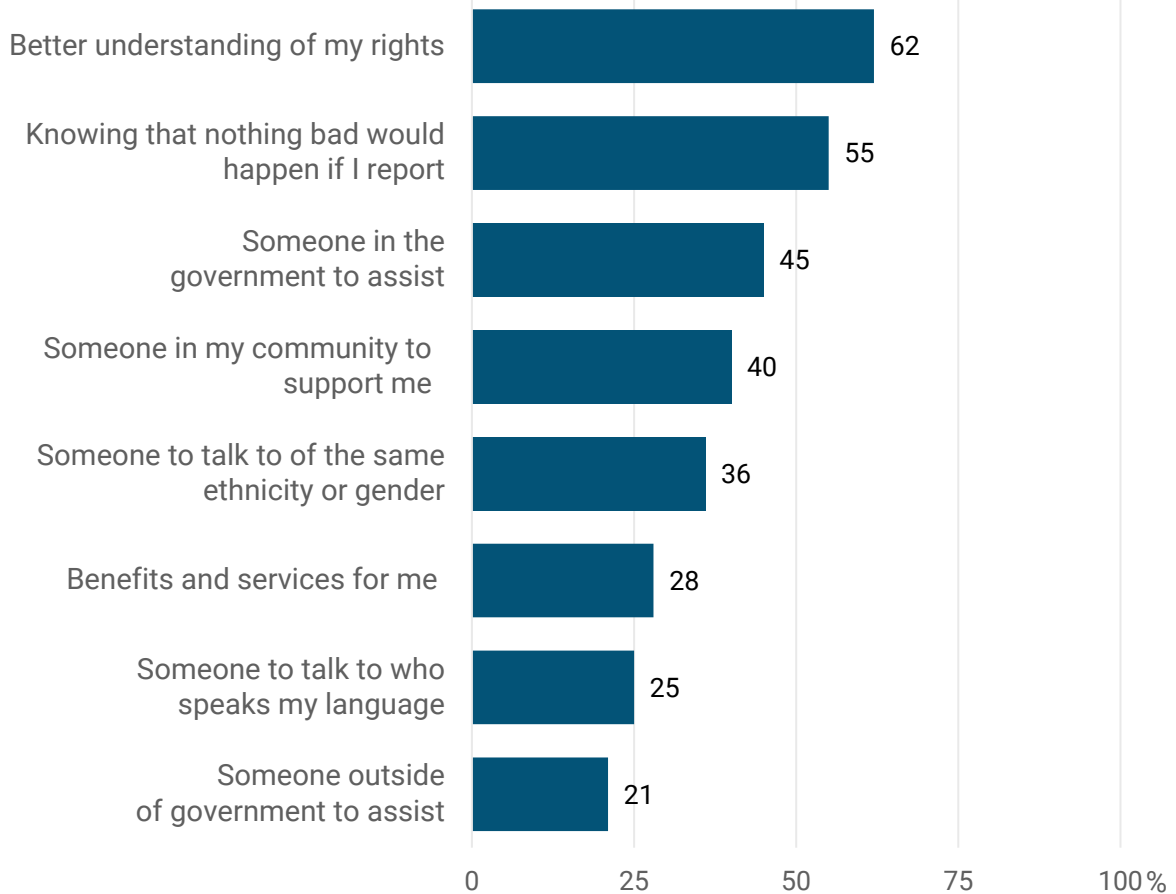
When it comes to learning more about civil rights, community, advocacy, or civil rights organizations serving Asians, Asian Americans, or Pacific Islanders were also the most trusted source (61%), followed by a government agency that enforces civil rights (58%). Forty-two percent trusted their workplace human resources department, 34% trusted a private lawyer, 32% trusted the police, 24% trusted a school staff, and 17% trusted religious leaders. Six percent of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders said they trusted no one to learn more about their rights.

A MAJORITY OF ASIAN AMERICANS & PACIFIC ISLANDERS IN CALIFORNIA WANTED TO KNOW MORE ABOUT THEIR CIVIL RIGHTS AND THIS UNDERSTANDING WOULD HELP THEM REPORT.

Six in ten (63%) Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders living in California wanted to know more about their civil rights. Sixty-two percent said that having a better understanding of their rights and how to enforce them would help them feel more comfortable reporting a civil rights violation. Fifty-five percent of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders in the state said that knowing that nothing bad would happen to them or to their families as a result would make them more likely to report. Forty-five percent of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders in California said that having someone in government to report violations to would make them more likely to report. Four in ten also said that having someone in their community to provide them support during the reporting process or talking to someone with similar personal characteristics would help them.

AA & PI adults in California say a better understanding of their rights would help them report more civil rights violations

Percent of AA & PI adults in California



Question: What would make you feel more comfortable reporting a civil rights violation?

Select all that apply.

Source: NORC poll conducted November 30 to December 22, 2022, with 356 Asian American & 43 Pacific Islander adults age 18 and older living in California.

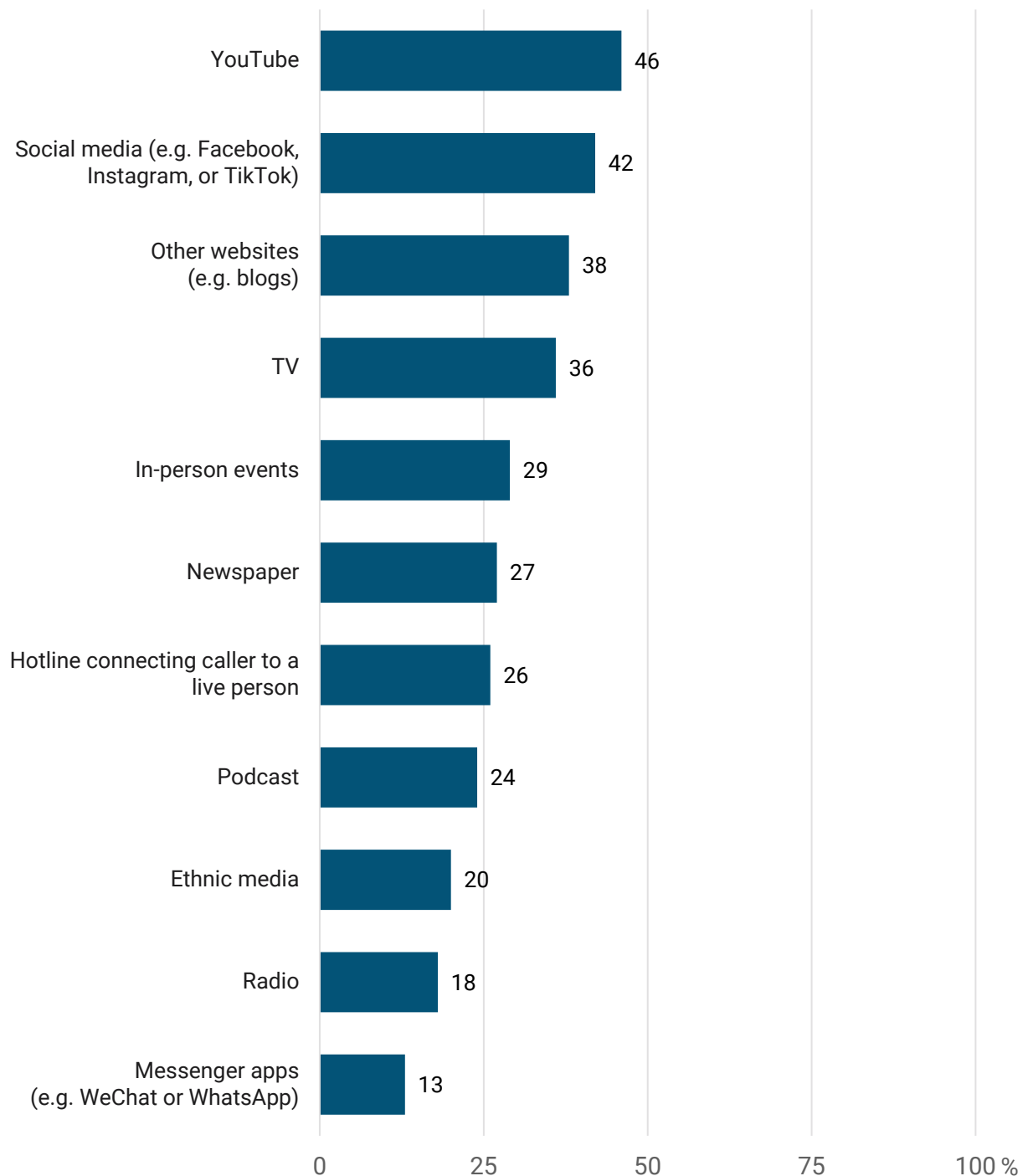


YOUTUBE, SOCIAL MEDIA, AND OTHER WEBSITES WERE PREFERRED PLACES TO LEARN MORE.

YouTube, social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, TikTok and Twitter, and other websites such as blogs were the most popular media for Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders in California to learn more about their civil rights.

AA & PI adults in California were more likely to turn to YouTube, social media, and websites to learn their rights

Percent of AA & PI adults in California



Question: Which of these would be most helpful to you in learning more about your civil rights and how to enforce them? *Select all that apply.*

Source: NORC poll conducted November 30 to December 22, 2022, with 356 Asian American & 43 Pacific Islander adults age 18 and older living in California.



TWO-THIRDS OF ASIAN AMERICANS & PACIFIC ISLANDERS IN CALIFORNIA AGREED THAT NEW CIVIL RIGHTS LAWS ARE NEEDED TO PREVENT DISCRIMINATION AGAINST THEM.

Sixty-seven percent of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders living in California agreed that new civil rights laws are needed to reduce discrimination and unfair treatment against Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders.

METHODOLOGY

A nationwide study was conducted by NORC, a non-partisan and independent non-profit research institution, on behalf of Stop AAPI Hate. The survey was fielded from November 30, 2022 - December 22, 2022, using TrueNorth®, which combines a sample from AmeriSpeak®, the probability-based panel of NORC at the University of Chicago, with non-probability panel samples. In addition, Pacific Islanders were sampled at a higher rate than their proportion of the population to support analyses. Online interviews were conducted in English, Chinese Traditional, Chinese Simplified, Vietnamese, and Korean. This brief analyzes the responses of 356 Asian American & 43 Pacific Islander adults age 18 and older living in California. While the sample was drawn to be nationally representative, the 399 participants from California is sufficiently large to draw state-specific insights. The margin of sampling error for the California subset is +/- 6.88 percentage points.