



Hamilton

## CITIZEN COMMITTEE REPORT

<b>To:</b>	Audit, Finance and Administration Committee
<b>From:</b>	Committee Against Racism  _____ Marlene Dei-Amoah, Chair
<b>Date:</b>	May 27, 2021
<b>Re:</b>	Recommendations for the City's <a href="https://www.hamilton.ca/coronavirus">hamilton.ca/coronavirus</a> webpage with Respect to Anti-Asian Racism

### Recommendation

It is recommended that the City of Hamilton Coronavirus Website Choose Solidarity message at <https://www.hamilton.ca/coronavirus> be amended to acknowledge the increase in anti-Asian racism against Asian communities, provide information about resources to support individuals who have faced racism, and provide information about anti-racism education.

### Background

At its meeting of May 25<sup>th</sup>, 2021, the Committee Against Racism passed the following motion:

That the Committee Against Racism will submit a Citizen Committee Report with recommendations respecting Anti-Asian Racism message on the City of Hamilton's [Hamilton.ca/coronavirus](https://www.hamilton.ca/coronavirus) webpage.

Since the COVID-19 pandemic began, there has been a highly disturbing surge of anti-Asian hate including violent assaults, verbal harassment, and being coughed at or spat on.

A recent report funded by the Government of Canada, “A Year of Racist Attacks: Anti-Asian Racism Across Canada One Year into The COVID-19 Pandemic”, released by the Chinese Canadian National Council Toronto Chapter and other advocacy groups, documented and analyzed 1150 cases of racist attacks across Canada during the period of March 10, 2020, to February 28, 2021 which were reported through the online platforms [covidracism.ca](https://covidracism.ca) and [eliminatehate.org](https://eliminatehate.org). Data which was collected up to December 31, 2020, was analyzed. The traumatic attacks were reported to cause mental distress, emotional harm, and physical harm.

Forty percent of the attacks that were reported occurred in Ontario. The attacks happened in locations including public spaces, business (such as grocery stores and restaurants), public transport, and schools.

Acts of anti-Asian racism also happen within Hamilton and have been written about in both the Hamilton Spectator and the Statement of Solidarity Condemning Anti-Asian Racism from No Hate in the Hammer.

### **Analysis/Rationale**

The Choose Solidarity message on the City of Hamilton Coronavirus website needs to be amended to acknowledge anti-Asian racism and provide information on resources to provide support for victims of racism in Hamilton. The City of Hamilton coronavirus webpage provides links, information, and contact information for topics related to COVID-19 such as COVID-19 vaccines, COVID-19 testing, and Protecting Yourself and Others. Although the Choose Solidarity message on the same webpage provides a positive message about inclusiveness and solidarity, it does not acknowledge anti-Asian racism and does not provide links, information, or contact information about supports for victims of anti-Asian racism that are available from the City of Hamilton or external resources. Furthermore, the Choose Solidarity message does not provide the much needed information on anti-racism education. Links to or information about anti-racism education can help stop the spread of misinformation which helps to fuel racism and to learn about what can be done to help.

Currently, the Choose Solidarity message on the <https://www.hamilton.ca/coronavirus> website states the following:

“The City of Hamilton values equity and inclusion and works to ensure Hamilton is a place where people of all ages, backgrounds and abilities are accepted and celebrated. Although the COVID-19 outbreak originated in China, this virus is not racially oriented - it is geographically oriented. This means that it does not discriminate among people who can be affected. Unfortunately, during the COVID-19 outbreak, persons of Chinese heritage (and other Asian countries)

have voiced concerns about the potential for discrimination. During times like this, people need to support each other and speak out against any instances of discrimination.”

In order to help support the victims and survivors of anti-Asian racism within Hamilton and to help our communities as a whole in the City of Hamilton to recover and thrive, it is recommended that the changes discussed above, acknowledging anti-Asian racism and relating to anti-racism education and support, be implemented on the City of Hamilton COVID-19 website.

### **Links referenced**

<https://www.hamilton.ca/coronavirus>

<https://www.covidr racism.ca/> (findings section)

<http://www.elimin8hate.org/>

<https://nohateinthehammer.ca/stop-anti-asian-racism/>

<https://www.canada.ca/en/canadian-heritage/campaigns/asian-heritage-month/anti-asian-racism.html>

<https://www.thespec.com/news/hamilton-region/2021/04/01/anti-asian-racism-on-the-rise-learning-the-long-history-of-racialized-violence-is-part-of-the-solution-says-mac-researcher.html>

### **Related Websites and other Resources**

<https://www.canada.ca/en/canadian-heritage/campaigns/asian-heritage-month/anti-asian-racism.html>

<https://toronto.ctvnews.ca/ontario-reveals-plan-to-combat-anti-asian-racism-in-schools-1.5425015>

### **Request for response**

We thank the Audit, Finance and Administration Committee of the City of Hamilton for reviewing our recommendations on such an important matter. We would please ask that the City of Hamilton provide our committee with their response to our recommendations and updated wording and links for the Choose Solidarity section on the City of Hamilton COVID-19 web page in time for our committee to review for our next Committee Against Racism meeting on June 22, 2021.