

# Chinese Canadians Today



**Chinese Canadians ARE Canadians!**

Understanding Chinese Canadian histories is important for many CCNCTO members, as they may not know about Chinese Canadian contributions and experiences (including discrimination)

- As such, they may not be able to connect these past injustices to current events

**PAST INJUSTICES**

**CURRENT EVENTS**



Looking at Chinese Canadians today, we know that Chinese Canadian communities are diverse

Chinese Canadian immigration has increased rapidly since the 1970s, as Canada's immigration system changed

- Many Chinese Canadians have immigrated in recent years from Cuba, India, Jamaica, Venezuela, etc



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# Demanding Accountability for anti-Asian Racism

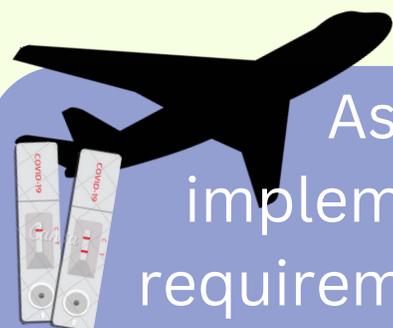


While we're entering a "post-pandemic" era, it's important for us to continue reflecting on the rise of anti-Asian racism throughout the COVID-19 pandemic

While folks may think this time is behind us, it's necessary to demand **accountability**



**What actions were taken to address the rise of anti-Asian racism and to curb the issue at its roots?!**



As the Canadian government has just implemented a negative COVID-19 testing requirement **SPECIFICALLY** for air travelers arriving to Canada from China, Hong Kong, and Macau, are we about to witness another wave of discrimination and violence against Asian folks?

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# Working to connect past discrimination and injustice to current events

Anti-Asian racism has roots in Canada, beginning with the mistreatment of Asian bodies (including during the construction of the Canadian Pacific Railway)



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Our [previous resource](#) highlighted that many Chinese folks continue to be barred from receiving immigration status

By restricting who can receive status, the Canadian government has allowed racialized migrants (including Chinese migrants) to be treated as second-class citizens, "granted entry in order to be exploited but not allowed the freedom to stay" <sup>1</sup>



- Without status, folks become more **vulnerable** to exploitation, including economic exploitation
  - For example, many Chinese workers that CCNCTO has connected with face issues such as bullying, harassment, wage theft, and exploitation because of systemic issues such as language barriers, precarious immigration status, age, etc

# Issues facing Chinese Canadians today

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Chinese Canadians continue to face similar struggles from the past, including fighting against claims that we don't *belong* in Canada and that Chinese folks are 'diseased', 'backwards', and 'inferior'



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For example, many Chinese Canadians experience **perpetual foreigner syndrome** as they have their Canadian-ness (and loyalties) questioned because of their ethnicity and/or race

The common question of “where are you *really* from?” continues to taunt many Chinese Canadians



**PERPETUAL  
FOREIGNERS WITH  
CULTURAL 'BAGGAGE'**

As they are excluded from the traditional idea of who is Canadian, it becomes that Chinese Canadians continue to be seen as foreigners, “regardless of legal, generational, or cultural status”<sup>2</sup>

- This experience of not belonging and facing increased hostility has been heightened for Chinese Canadians in times of political tension between China and the ‘west’ and in times of global crisis, including during the SARS outbreak (2002-2004) and COVID-19 pandemic



In this line of thinking, Chinese Canadians will always be Chinese, **not Canadian**



# Stereotyped as a 'Model Minority'

As a 'model minority' Asian folks are considered to be an example for other racialized folks. Rather than 'complaining' Asian folks are a model for how hard work (and not complaining) equals success



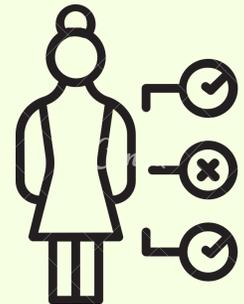
- Under this idea, all Asian people are 'successful' (meaning they are wealthy and well-educated)

However, we know that this is a myth, since it ignores the reality of systemic racism and invisibilizes the lived experiences of racism facing many Asian folks



Some of the stereotypes attached to the model minority title include:

- Chinese people are all rich
- Chinese people are all very focused on academics
- Chinese people are all hardworking



When considering stereotypes attached to the model minority, it's important to remember that there is **NO** such thing as a positive stereotype

- ALL stereotypes cause harm and work to invisibilize the diverse experiences and struggles facing Chinese Canadians



Chinese Canadians are **NOT** a monolith!

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The model minority title seeks to argue that Chinese Canadians **do not** face oppression!

This ignores the fact that Chinese Canadians **DO** experience systemic racism and many deal with additional difficulties such as language barriers, employment discrimination, immigration status precarity, etc



In our work with Chinese Canadians, we have witnessed the range of diverse experiences of low-income Chinese Canadians, newcomers, seniors, etc

CCNCTO's 2022 fundraiser highlighted the plight of exploitation facing Chinese workers

- Recognizing how many workers experience harassment, discrimination, bullying, wage theft, and other forms of exploitation at work we can see how the model minority myth seeks to **erase** their experiences
- Because of systemic racism, hard work **ISN'T** enough to create success!
  - It's clear that the model minority is a MYTH because when systems (such as school systems, political systems, economic systems) are not built **FOR** you (but often to exclude non-white folks), they are **impossible to overcome** through mere 'hard work'



Because they are stereotyped as a model, Chinese folks are expected to behave in ways that **support** (rather than challenge) racism (including remaining silent in the face of injustice to challenge the status quo)

This stereotype creates a **divide** between Asian communities and other racialized communities, making it more difficult to combat the root of struggles facing racialized communities, including dismantling white supremacy

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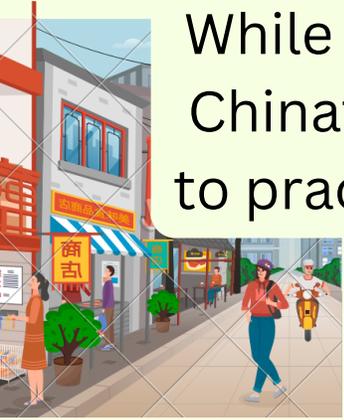


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# Cultural spaces and services

While our [previous resource](#) highlighted Chinatowns as a resilient space for folks to practice Chinese culture safely (in the face of discrimination), many Chinatowns today are struggling



- Many Chinatowns across Canada and the U.S. are being gentrified
- Many folks have moved out of Chinatowns and now many low-income and often elderly residents remaining in the area are being displaced by raising rental and housing prices

Culturally competent services (and linguistically relevant services) continue to be lacking



This is important because cultural factors can impact someone's access to necessary services, the effectiveness of communication styles, relevance of information provided, etc

- For example, how many students have had to translate for their parents at parent-teacher conferences because interpretation services were not readily available?
- During the COVID-19 pandemic, how many folks had to help their parents or other family members set up vaccine appointments because information was not as readily available in Chinese or other languages?



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Although there are a variety of issues facing Chinese Canadian community members today, our communities are resilient

**We adapt and work together to UPLIFT one another**



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For example, CCNCTO's 2022 Fundraiser has emphasized the importance of community power and resilience

By supporting and empowering Chinese workers, CCNCTO is proving that our community is **POWERFUL** when we work together!



We know how to keep each other safe and as we support one another, we can work to create a more **equitable society for us all!**

# How can I create change?



Support local and family-owned businesses in Chinatown!

- Think about the businesses and restaurants that you could go to and take a trip with your friends or family
- If you're into social media, you could take pictures or make video content to share stores or restaurants that you support in Chinatown!



Talk to your Chinese friends, family, and peers about their experiences with culturally or linguistically appropriate services

- Have they had any positive experiences?
- If they've had negative experiences, how can things be improved? Is there someone they could share these negative experiences with to create change for others?



Talk to your friends, family, and peers about their assumptions and share your experience of what being Chinese Canadian means to you to challenge assumptions about who is ***truly*** Canadian



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# What else can I do?

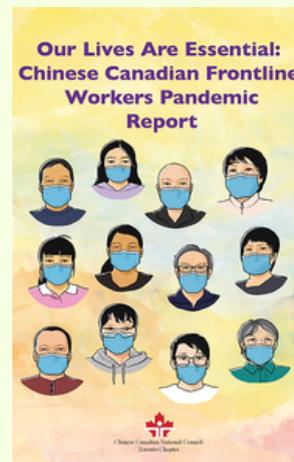


Stay in touch with CCNCTO through **WeChat** or follow us on Instagram **@CCNCTO**

Check out our most recent [2021 anti-Asian racism report](#) and our [Frontline Workers Pandemic report](#)

Fill in [this form](#) to join our volunteer team and support our various organizing, anti-racism, and equity work

- Talk to others in your social circles about racism
- Call out all levels of racism
- Share our [resources](#) with others
- Engage with local community members and organizations to advocate for change



Stay up to date about our events and the workshops, programs, and events we hold for Chinese Canadian community members!



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Check out these Ontario-based community organizations that serve and empower Chinese Canadians today!

- **(AQUA) Asian Queer Alliance** [@asianqueeralliance](#) an organization serving queer Asians of marginalized genders in Tkaronto
- **Butterfly: Asian and Migrant Sex Worker Support Network** [@butterflycsw](#) an organization that provides support to, and advocates for, the rights of Asian and migrant sex workers
- **Chinese Canadian Collective** [@chinesecanadianco](#) a collective that examines Chinese diasporic issues and experiences through hosting community events and digital campaigns
- **Friends of Chinatown Toronto** [@friendsofchinatownto](#) an organization fighting for housing justice, racial justice, and economic justice in Toronto's downtown
- **Migrant Rights Network** [@migrantrightsca](#) a cross-Canada alliance to combat racism and fight for migrant justice
- **Ontario Hong Kong Youth Action** [@ohkya](#) a youth-led group aiming to advocate and support the Hong Kong diaspora
- **project1907** [@proj1907](#) a grassroots group of Asian women, working to elevate Asian voices that are underrepresented and undervalued in mainstream discourse

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# Works Cited

Chinese Canadian National Council Toronto Chapter & Project 1907 (2022). *Another Year: Anti-Asian Racism Across Canada Two Years Into The COVID-19 Pandemic*. Retrieved from [https://ccncsj.ca/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/Anti-Asian-Racism-Across-Canada-Two-Years-Into-The-Pandemic\\_March-2022.pdf](https://ccncsj.ca/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/Anti-Asian-Racism-Across-Canada-Two-Years-Into-The-Pandemic_March-2022.pdf)

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