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## Latinx and Asian Immigrants Across California Regions Have Different Experiences With Law and Immigration Enforcement

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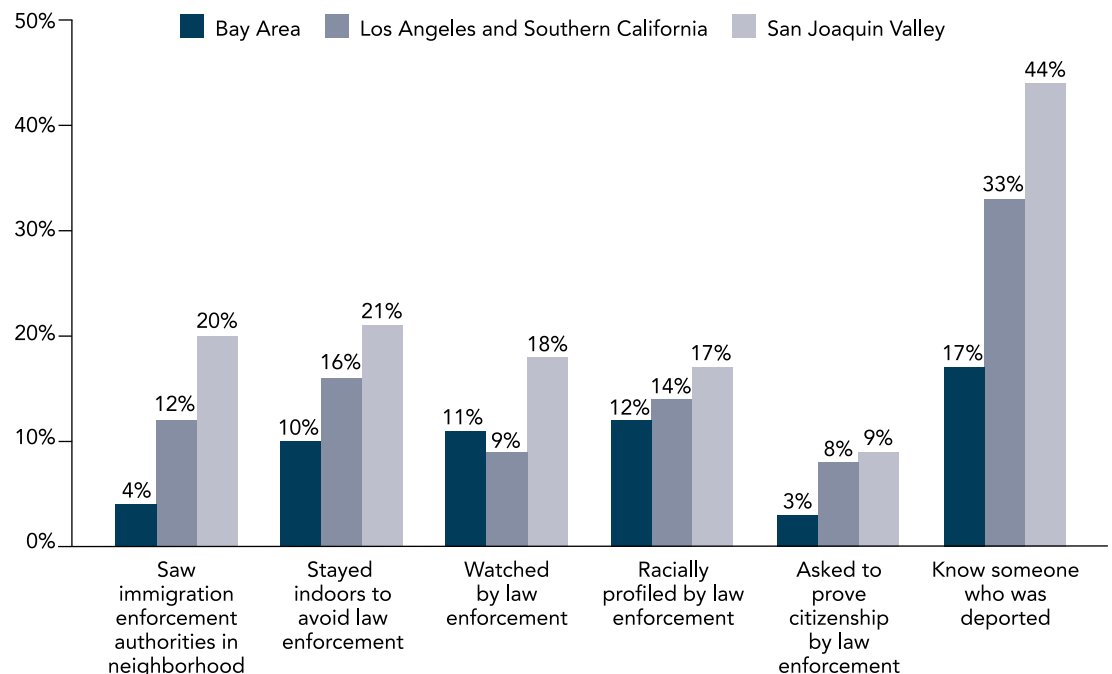
Latinx and Asian immigrants, California's two largest immigrant groups, face barriers to health care and experience worse health outcomes compared to U.S.-born Californians.<sup>1</sup> Such disparities may be due in part to restrictive immigration policies that permit local law enforcement (e.g., police, sheriffs) to collaborate with immigration enforcement authorities in the surveillance, policing, and deportation of

noncitizens.<sup>2</sup> While California has enacted multiple policies to disentangle local law enforcement from federal immigration enforcement,\* little is known about California immigrants' direct experiences with local law enforcement agencies or immigration enforcement authorities.

\*Recent legislation includes the TRUST Act (AB 4), TRUTH Act (AB 2792), and VALUES Act (SB 54).

### Exhibit 1

Law and Immigration Enforcement Experiences by California Regions, 2018–2019

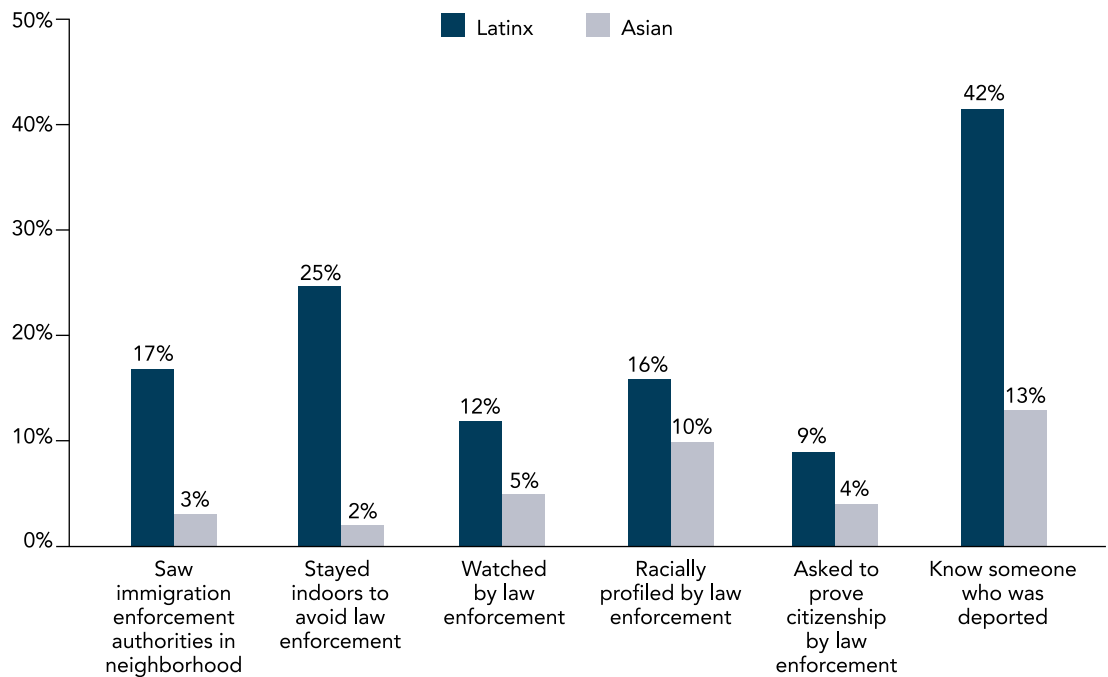


Source: Authors' analyses of 2018 and 2019 RIGHTS Surveys

Note: RIGHTS is a follow-on survey of CHIS and included 2,000 Latinx and Asian immigrant respondents.

## Exhibit 2

## Law and Immigration Enforcement Experiences by Race, 2018–2019



Source: Authors' analyses of 2018 and 2019 RIGHTS Surveys

Note: RIGHTS is a follow-on survey of CHIS and included 2,000 Latinx and Asian immigrant respondents.

We used data from the Research on Immigrant Health and State Policy Study (RIGHTS) to examine Latinx and Asian immigrants' experiences with local law and federal immigration enforcement policies and practices in three California regions: the Bay Area (n=305), Los Angeles and Southern California (n=989), and the San Joaquin Valley (n=141). The survey is a follow-on to the 2018 and 2019 California Health Interview Survey (CHIS). Respondents were asked if they had ever experienced any of six different types of encounters with surveillance, policing, or deportation by law enforcement, including local police, sheriffs, or immigration enforcement authorities.

We found that higher proportions of respondents reported direct experiences with immigration and law enforcement in the San Joaquin Valley compared to the Bay Area and the Los Angeles and Southern California regions (Exhibit 1). The most common experience among respondents across the

three regions was knowing someone who had been deported.

Across all regions, Latinx immigrants reported a higher proportion of law enforcement experiences compared to Asian immigrants (Exhibit 2). The two most common law enforcement experiences among Latinx immigrants were staying indoors to avoid law enforcement (25%) and knowing someone who had been deported (42%). The two most common law enforcement experiences among Asian immigrants were being racially profiled by law enforcement (10%) and knowing someone who had been deported (13%).

### Implications

Understanding Latinx and Asian immigrants' experiences with local law enforcement and immigration enforcement authorities is critical to understanding factors that may drive health inequities.

Our findings indicate that restrictive immigration policies have different impacts across California regions and immigrant groups. Recent reports indicate that California's policies to disentangle local law enforcement and federal immigration enforcement have been inconsistently implemented across regions, with some local law enforcement agencies continuing to collaborate with immigration enforcement authorities.<sup>3,4</sup> It is critical to ensure that the policies California has enacted to protect immigrants from immigration enforcement provide protection across all regions and immigrant groups.

#### Author Information

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#### Methodology

The RIGHTS respondents included CHIS respondents ages 18 or over and born in any country in Latin America (e.g., Mexico, Central America, South America, Caribbean) or Asia, including South and Southeast Asia, but excluding countries in the Middle East.

#### Suggested Citation

Young ME, Tafolla S. 2021. *Latinx and Asian Immigrants Across California Regions Have Different Experiences With Law and Immigration Enforcement*. Los Angeles, CA: UCLA Center for Health Policy Research.

#### Endnotes

- 1 Clough J, Lee S, Chae DH. 2013. Barriers to Health Care Among Asian Immigrants in the United States: A Traditional Review. *Journal of Health Care for the Poor and Underserved* 24(1): 384–403. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1353/hpu.2013.0019>
- 2 Perreira KM, Pedroza JM. 2019. Policies of Exclusion: Implications for the Health of Immigrants and Their Children. *Annual Review of Public Health* 40(1): 147–166. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-publhealth-040218-044115>
- 3 Velasco-Ramos M. 2018. The TRUTH Act Public Hearing Leaves More Questions Than Answers. *Valley Voice*. <https://www.ourvalleyvoice.com/2018/10/14/the-truth-act-public-hearing-leaves-more-questions-than-answers/>
- 4 Lauten-Scrivner A. 2019. "I Don't Work for ICE": Merced County Sheriff Faces Critics Over Contact With Immigration Agents. *Merced Sun-Star*. <https://www.mercedsunstar.com/news/local/article237506359.html>



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