

APA Policy Statement on Reaffirming APA's Commitment to Human Rights and Freedom of Expression

FEBRUARY 2026

The American Psychological Association “stands for human rights and the psychological and physical health and well-being of all people worldwide” (American Psychological Association, 2021) and encourages members of our profession “to support and advocate for populations at risk of human rights violations, including marginalized populations both domestically and globally” (American Psychological Association, 2021). In light of the escalating trauma and suffering caused by the humanitarian crisis worldwide, the APA's Council of Representatives accordingly resolves to affirm the following principles:

1. **APA affirms, consistent with APA's mission to “to promote the advancement, communication, and application of psychological science and knowledge to benefit society and improve lives,”** our global commitment to human rights and freedom of expression as universal principles, applicable to all people regardless of race, religion, ethnicity, age, social class, disability, national origin, gender identity, sexual orientation, or immigration status.
2. **APA affirms, consistent with the final report of the APA Task Force on Human Rights,** that “on the topic of human rights concerns, especially in the case of severe human rights abuses with clear relevance to psychology” (American Psychological Association, 2021), it is appropriate for APA to engage in advocacy with its own government and to enter into international dialogue through its partnerships with psychology organizations in different countries, or with coalitions of organizations who have the authority to speak with governments.
3. **APA condemns, consistent with our opposition to bigotry in all its forms** (American Psychological Association, 2021), all forms of discrimination, prejudice, hostility, and violence.
4. **APA rejects, consistent with our recognition that the free exchange of ideas is essential to science, human welfare, and the just resolution of conflict** (American Psychological Association, 2021), the claim that criticism of any government's policies or actions is intrinsically racist, xenophobic, antisemitic, transphobic, anti Muslim, misogynistic, ableist, or prejudiced based on age, religion, nationality, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability or any other group circumstances. We therefore oppose efforts aimed at silencing or punishing non-violent advocacy directed towards safeguarding human life and upholding human dignity and human rights. We call for APA to commit to transparency and accountability by publicly documenting progress on its human rights efforts by developing guidance to academic, professional, and licensing bodies on safeguarding psychologists' rights to engage in non-violent political speech without professional retaliation.

Through these commitments, APA reaffirms its role as a global leader in advancing psychology in the service of human rights and freedom of expression.

Copyright © 2026 by the American Psychological Association.
Approved by the APA Council of Representatives, February 2026.