



African Americans & Coronavirus:

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Have Reached Crisis Levels

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African Americans & Coronavirus: Disparities In Cases And Deaths Have Reached Crisis Levels

African Americans are far more likely to face barriers to accessing health care and to protecting themselves from the virus. Additionally, due to a variety of social and economic factors, they are more likely to suffer the brunt of the financial consequences of the pandemic.

KEY POINTS

- Years of structural racism have left African Americans especially vulnerable to the coronavirus crisis.
- Research confirms that African Americans nationwide are being hospitalized and dying at higher rates than white Americans. African-Americans account for [24% of COVID-19 deaths](#) where race is known despite comprising 13% of the population.
- Black Americans are far more likely to suffer from chronic illnesses like asthma, diabetes, and heart disease, which puts them at higher risk of developing severe complications if they contract coronavirus. A number of environmental factors, including crowded multi-generational homes and exposure to air pollution, have also increased risks in black communities.
- Black Americans face severe barriers to accessing health care. They are less likely to have health insurance and are more likely to live in states that have refused Medicaid expansion.
- Black workers are disproportionately represented in jobs that have been deemed essential and are therefore more likely to be exposed to the virus. Less than [20 percent](#) of black workers are able to work remotely.
- African Americans are more likely to experience the economic consequences of the pandemic. More than one in six African Americans have [lost their jobs](#) since February and half of the adult African American population was [jobless](#) by April. The Center For Responsible Lending estimated that [95 percent](#) of black-owned businesses stand close to no chance of receiving a Paycheck Protection Program loan.
- Between failing to adequately report race data and continuing its war on Americans health care, the Trump administration has made the crisis even worse for Black communities. Trump is currently supporting a lawsuit to repeal the Affordable Care Act (ACA) that could rip away health care from 20 million more Americans as the country is still reeling from the pandemic.

Research Confirms Africans Americans Are Both Contracting And Dying From Coronavirus At Higher Rates

Black Americans Have Been Dying From Coronavirus At About 2.4 Times The Rate Of White Americans. "The Covid-19 pandemic has only made those disparities — and the structural discrimination they are rooted in — all the more apparent. Black Americans have been dying at about 2.4 times the rate of white Americans. As medical anthropologist Clarence Gravlee put it in Scientific American: 'If Black people were dying at the same rate as white Americans, at least 13,000 mothers, fathers, daughters, sons and other loved ones would still be alive.'" [Stat, [6/9/20](#)]

NPR Analysis: Black People Are Dying Of Coronavirus At Rates Higher Than Their Proportion Of The Population In 32 States And Washington D.C. "NPR's analysis finds that in 32 states plus Washington D.C., blacks are dying at rates higher than their proportion of the population. In 21 states, it's substantially higher, more than 50% above what would be expected. For example, in Wisconsin, at least 141 African Americans have died, representing 27% of all deaths in a state where just 6% of the state's population is black." [NPR, [5/30/20](#)]

Research From The MIT Sloan School Of Management Found That The Higher The Percentage Of Black Residents In A County, The Higher The County's Death Rate From Coronavirus—Counties With A Black Population Above 85% Had A Death Rate Up To 10 Times Higher Than The National Average. "The higher the percentage of Black residents in a county, the higher its death rate from Covid-19 — even after accounting for income, health insurance coverage, rates of diabetes and obesity, and public transit use, finds a new study by researchers at the MIT Sloan School of Management. With those plausible explanations ruled out, 'the causal mechanism has to be something else,' said applied economist Chris Knittel, the study's senior author. 'If I were a public official, I'd be looking at differences in the quality of insurance, conditions such as chronic stress, and systemic discrimination...They then used

standard statistical tools to tease out which factors are most strongly correlated with mortality rates. Race stood out. Nationwide, the average county-level death rate from Covid-19 is 12 per 100,000 people. Counties with a Black population above 85% had a death rate up to 10 times higher. For every 10 percentage point increase in a county's Black population, its Covid-19 death rate roughly doubles, Knittel said." [Stat, [6/15/20](#)]

- **Stat: "Race May Be As Important As Age In Gauging A Person's Likelihood Of Dying From The Disease."** "As researchers pull back their lens from individuals to population-level risk factors, they're finding that, in the U.S., race may be as important as age in gauging a person's likelihood of dying from the disease." [Stat, [6/15/20](#)]

About 13,000 Black Americans Would Still Be Alive If They Were Dying From Coronavirus At The Same Rate As White Americans. "The latest overall COVID-19 mortality rate for Black Americans is 2.4 times as high as the rate for Whites and 2.2 times as high as the rate for Asians and Latinos....If they had died of COVID-19 at the same rate as White Americans, about 13,000 Black Americans, 1,300 Latino Americans and 300 Asian Americans would still be alive." [APM Research Labs, [5/27/20](#)]

Study: Counties With A Disproportionate Number Of African Americans Accounted For 52 Percent Of Cases And 58 Percent Of Coronavirus Deaths Nationally. "Counties across the country with a disproportionate number of African American residents accounted for 52 percent of diagnoses and 58 percent of coronavirus deaths nationally, according to a new study released Tuesday. The study, conducted by epidemiologists and clinician-researchers at four universities in conjunction with the nonprofit AIDS research organization amFar and PATH's Center for Vaccine Innovation and Access, attempts to fill in the blanks as states report piecemeal data on race and ethnicity." [Politico, [5/5/20](#)]

Kaiser Family Foundation: In The Majority Of States Reporting Race Data, Black People Accounted For A Higher Share Of Confirmed Cases And Deaths Compared To Their Share Of The Population. "Black people accounted for a higher share of confirmed cases (in 20 of 31 states) and deaths (in 19 of 24 states) compared to their share of the total population. These disparities were particularly large in Wisconsin, where Black people made up a four-times higher share of confirmed cases (25% vs. 6%) and an over six-times higher share of deaths (39% vs. 6%) compared to their share of the total population. Similarly, in Kansas, Black people accounted for a three-times higher share of cases (17% vs. 6%) and an over five times higher share of deaths (33% vs. 6%) than their share of the total population. Other states where the share of deaths among Black people was at least twice as high as their share of the total population included Illinois, Michigan, Missouri, Arkansas and Indiana. Moreover, Black people accounted for over half of all deaths in DC (75%), Mississippi (66%), Louisiana (59%), Alabama (52%), and Georgia (51%)." [Kaiser Family Foundation, [4/21/20](#)]

New York Times Analysis: Nursing Homes Where African Americans Made Up A Significant Portion Of Residents Have Been Twice As Likely To Get Hit By Coronavirus Than Overwhelmingly White Facilities. "But Covid-19 has been particularly virulent toward African-Americans and Latinos: Nursing homes where those groups make up a significant portion of the residents — no matter their location, no matter their size, no matter their government rating — have been twice as likely to get hit by the coronavirus as those where the population is overwhelmingly white." [New York Times, [5/21/20](#)]

- **More Than 60 Percent Of Nursing Homes Where At Least A Quarter Of The Residents Are Black Or Latino Have Reported At Least One Coronavirus Case, More Than Double The Rate Of Nursing Homes Where These Groups Make Up Less Than 5 Percent Of The Population.** "More than 60 percent of nursing homes where at least a quarter of the residents are black or Latino have reported at least one coronavirus case, a New York Times analysis shows. That is double the rate of homes where black and Latino people make up less than 5 percent of the population. And in nursing homes, a single case often leads to a handful of cases, and then a full-fledged outbreak." [New York Times, [5/21/20](#)]
- **Analysis Found That Racial Disparities In Coronavirus Outbreaks Remained Even When Accounting For The Size Of The Nursing Home, Population Density In The Surrounding Neighborhood, And Other Factors.** "But the Times analysis found that a racial disparity remained even after accounting for a variety of

factors, including the size of a nursing home, the infection rate in the surrounding county, the population density of the neighborhood and how many residents had Medicaid or Medicare." [New York Times, [5/21/20](#)]

Washington Post Analysis Found That Counties That Are Majority-Black Have Three Times The Rate Of Infections And Nearly Six Times The Rate Of Deaths As Majority-White Counties. "As the novel coronavirus sweeps across the United States, it appears to be infecting and killing black Americans at a disproportionately high rate, according to a Washington Post analysis of early data from jurisdictions across the country....A Post analysis of available data and census demographics shows that counties that are majority-black have three times the rate of infections and almost six times the rate of deaths as counties where white residents are in the majority." [Washington Post, [4/7/20](#)]

Early Data Showed That African Americans With Symptoms Were Less Likely To Receive Coronavirus Tests. "The biotech data firm Rubix Life Sciences, based in Lawrence, Massachusetts, reviewed recent billing information in several states and found that an African American with symptoms like cough and fever was less likely to be given one of the scarce coronavirus tests. Delays in diagnosis and treatment can be harmful, especially for racial or ethnic minority groups that have higher rates of certain diseases, such as diabetes, high blood pressure and kidney disease. Those chronic illnesses can lead to more severe cases of COVID-19." [Kaiser Health News, [4/6/20](#)]

- **Washington Post: Interviews With Nearly 60 Public Health Experts, Lawmakers, And Community Leaders Confirmed That The Nation's First Coronavirus Testing Sites Were Mostly In White And Affluent Neighborhoods.** "Interviews with nearly 60 public health experts, lawmakers and community leaders show that many of the first coronavirus testing sites went up in areas that happened to be whiter and more affluent, despite the requests of black leaders. Local governments — sometimes ignoring the pleas of community activists — targeted few of their education campaigns about prevention and social distancing specifically to African Americans, even as conspiracy theories spread that black people were immune to the disease." [Washington Post, [6/3/20](#)]

African Americans Are Bearing The Brunt Of The Pandemic's Economic Impact

One In Six Black Workers Lost Their Jobs Between February And April. "More than one in six black workers lost their jobs between February and April. As of April, less than half of the adult black population was employed. While the economic devastation is widespread, as we show in this report, black workers are less able to weather such a storm because they have fewer earners in their families, lower incomes, and lower liquid wealth than white workers." [Economic Policy Institute, [6/1/20](#)]

3.5 Million African Americans Lost Their Jobs In March And April. "In March and April, 3.5 million African-Americans lost their jobs. While black employment rose in May, it did so by less than for whites and Hispanics. The employment gain was also less than the increase in the African-American labor force—those working or actively looking for work. That is why the black unemployment rate rose while others' fell." [Wall Street Journal, [6/9/20](#)]

Center For Responsible Lending Estimated That 90 Percent Of Businesses Owned By People Of Color Will Be Shut Out Of The Paycheck Protection Program. "Based on how the program is structured, we estimate that upwards of 90% of businesses owned by people of color have been, or will likely be, shut out of the Paycheck Protection Program," said Ashley Harrington, director of federal advocacy and senior council for the Center for Responsible Lending, a non-profit group that combats abusive lending practices and recently examined the loan program's parameters." [CBS News, [4/22/20](#)]

- **95 Percent Of Black-Owned Businesses Stand Close To No Chance Of Receiving A PPP Loan.** "Roughly 95% of Black-owned businesses, 91% of Latino-owned businesses, 91% of Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander-owned businesses, and 75% of Asian-owned businesses stand close to no chance of receiving a PPP loan through a mainstream bank or credit union," the center warned on April 6 as the Paycheck Protection Program, or the PPP, was starting to take applications." [CBS News, [4/22/20](#)]

Polling Reveals African Americans Are More Likely To Be Directly Affected By The Crisis:

Axios-Ipsos Poll Found That 75 Percent Of African Americans Said They Were Extremely Or Very Concerned That Coronavirus Is Doing Greater Damage To People Of Color. "75% of African Americans say they're extremely or very concerned that coronavirus is doing greater damage to people of color, while 30% of whites and 42% of Hispanics share that concern." [Axios, [6/1/20](#)]

Kaiser Family Foundation Survey: Nearly Half Of African Americans Have Reported Problems Paying For Necessities During The Pandemic. "Almost a third (31%) of the American people say they've experienced problems paying the rent or mortgage, or for food, utilities, credit card bills or medical costs as a result of the coronavirus. Among African-Americans, that number climbs to 48%. Among Latinos, it's 46%. And 47% of households with an annual income below \$40,000 say they've had trouble paying their bills because of the pandemic." [Axios, [5/29/20](#)]

- **45 Percent Of Black Adults Said They've Either Skipped Meals Or Relied On Charity Or Government Food Programs During The Pandemic.** "45% of black adults and 39% of Latinos say they've either skipped meals or relied on charity or government food programs such as SNAP since February — compared with just 18% of white adults. Most of those people said their experiences were a direct result of the coronavirus' financial impact." [Axios, [5/29/20](#)]

ABC News/Ipsos Poll: 30 Percent Of Black Adults Know Someone Who Died Of COVID-19. "The devastating toll of coronavirus is far-reaching, but the impact of the pandemic is particularly acute among black Americans and Latinos, who are nearly three times as likely to personally know someone who has died from the virus than white Americans, according to a new ABC News/Ipsos poll released Friday. Thirty percent of black adults and 26% of Latino adults in the country said they know a victim of the coronavirus, who died either from the disease or from complications related to the virus. For white adults, the corresponding figure is 10%." [ABC News, [5/22/20](#)]

Axios-Ipsos Poll: African Americans Are Three Times As Likely As White People To Know Someone Who Has Died From Coronavirus. "African Americans (28%) are three times as likely as white people (9%) and twice as likely as Hispanics (13%) to know someone who has died." [Axios, [4/28/20](#)]

Pew Research Center: One In Four Black People Know Someone Who Has Been Hospitalized Or Died From Coronavirus. "About a quarter of black adults (27%) say they personally know someone who has been hospitalized or died due to having the coronavirus. By comparison, about one-in-ten white (13%) and Hispanic (13%) adults say they know someone who has been so seriously affected by the virus." [Pew Research Center, [4/14/20](#)]

Data For Progress Poll: Almost Half Of Black Voters Reported They've Lost Jobs, Hours, Or Been Put On Leave During Crisis. "The initial reports of the differential racial impacts of the virus show that African-Americans are disproportionately represented in COVID cases and deaths. They are also overrepresented in the economic impacts of the crisis, with 45 percent already having lost jobs or hours due to the virus. We find that 62 percent of African-American respondents report that they expect to have issues covering costs within the next month, and that 63 percent would be unable to pay their bills within a month if they lost their income." [Data For Progress, [4/9/20](#)]

HEALTH CARE BARRIERS

African Americans Are More Likely To Lack Insurance Coverage. "While the Affordable Care Act helped many people of color get health coverage, many still don't have insurance, or access to providers and quality care, experts said. According to the Census, 8.5% of whites were uninsured in 2017, compared with 10.6% of blacks" [USA Today, [3/31/20](#)]

Black Americans Disproportionately Reside In The South In States That Refused To Expand Medicaid. "Many black Americans in the South live in states that did not expand insurance after the passage of Obamacare at the start of the last decade. The region coincides with the 'Stroke Belt' across the southeastern US, where there is a 50% higher risk of a deadly stroke, compared to the rest of the country, and an even higher risk for black people living there. The

observation is linked in studies to higher rates of diabetes, heart disease, and smoking, as well as less access to health care in general.” [Buzzfeed News, [4/10/20](#)]

Black Americans Have Higher Rates Of Chronic Illnesses That Put Them At Higher Risk For Coronavirus. “From automobile and refinery pollution to lead-contaminated water and food deserts, structural and environmental racism has contributed to higher rates of serious chronic health conditions in communities of color. Today, approximately 18 percent of Black Americans have been diagnosed with asthma. As many as 15 percent of Black Americans have been diagnosed with diabetes. People of color also experience higher rates of obesity, HIV/AIDS, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, and other chronic conditions. On a good day, these conditions make life more complicated and difficult—but during a global pandemic, they are life-threatening.” [Center For American Progress, [3/27/20](#)]

- **More Than One In Four Black Adults Are At Higher Risk Of Developing Serious Illness If Infected With Coronavirus.** “More than one in four (27%) Black non-elderly adults are at higher risk of serious illness if infected with coronavirus, compared to about one in five (21%) White adults.” [Kaiser Family Foundation, [5/7/20](#)]
- **Black People Are At A Higher Risk Of Chronic Conditions That Leave Lungs And Immune Systems Vulnerable, Including Asthma, Heart Disease, And Diabetes.** “As the disease spread at a higher rate in the black community, it made an even deeper cut. Environmental, economic and political factors have compounded for generations, putting black people at higher risk of chronic conditions that leave lungs weak and immune systems vulnerable: asthma, heart disease, hypertension and diabetes. In Milwaukee, simply being black means your life expectancy is 14 years shorter, on average, than someone white.” [ProPublica, [4/3/20](#)]

19 Percent Of African Americans Were Unable To See A Doctor In 2018 Care Due To Cost. “According to a new CAP analysis of CDC data, 16 percent of Black people, 20 percent of Hispanic people, 19 percent of AI/AN people, and 18 percent of Asian Americans were unable to see a doctor in 2018 due to cost. By contrast, just 10 percent of white Americans were unable to see a doctor due to cost. Racial disparities in self-reported inability to afford care persist even after controlling for insurance coverage.” [Center For American Progress, [3/27/20](#)]

Hospitals Are More Likely To Close In Black Neighborhoods. “A 2014 National Institutes of Health study found that hospitals in predominantly black neighborhoods are more likely to close down than those in predominantly white neighborhoods, often making it difficult for black Americans to access health care near where they live.” [Washington Post, [4/10/20](#)]

Communities Of Color Face Barriers To Accessing Fresh Food And Are Targeted For Alcohol, Tobacco, And Junk Food Advertising. “Pervasive residential segregation puts people of color at a disadvantage, differences in employment and education opportunities exacerbate poverty, communities of color have fewer health resources and less access to fresh food, and for decades, alcohol, tobacco and junk food companies have targeted advertising to black and Hispanic communities.” [FiveThirtyEight, [4/9/20](#)]

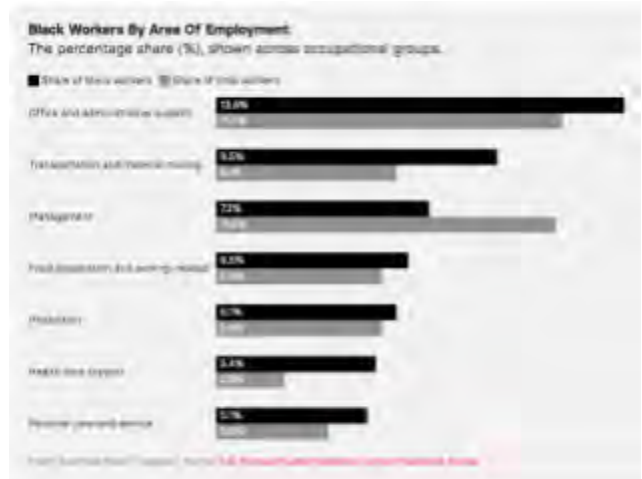
SOCIAL & ECONOMIC BARRIERS

Black Workers Make Up 17 Percent Of Front-Line Workers While Only Accounting For 11.9 Percent Of All Employees. “Workers across racial and ethnic groups have seen unemployment shoot higher amid state and local lockdowns in the pandemic, but many black workers fall into two fraught categories: They are either essential workers on the front lines, exposed to the virus, or they have lost their jobs. Black workers make up 11.9 percent of all employees but 17 percent of front-line workers, one study found.” [New York Times, [6/1/20](#)]

Bureau Of Labor Statistics Data Show That Black People Disproportionately Work In Jobs That Risk Exposure. “Bureau of Labor Statistics data shows black people work a disproportionate number of jobs as health care and personal care assistants, for example. Such jobs lead to exposure with potentially sick people, which is even more risky for people who aren’t wearing hospital-grade protective gear.” [Buzzfeed News, [4/10/20](#)]

African American Workers Are More Likely To Be Employed In Service And Hospitality Industries. “The study found the black and Latino workers are more likely to be employed in service and hospitality industries, which have been forced to close as the government enforces self isolation measures. [The Hill, [3/24/20](#)]

Less Than 20 Percent Of African American Workers Are Able To Work From Home. “According to a study by the Economic Policy Institute (EPI), only 30 percent of the U.S. workforce is able to work remotely, with less than 20 percent of black and Latino workers able to. The study, which compiled data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, found that a little more than 16 percent of Latinos are able to work from home and less than 20 percent of black Americans are able to. Asian Americans and whites were the most likely to be able to work from home, with about 37 and 30 percent, respectively, able to do so.” [The Hill, [3/24/20](#)]



Source: BuzzFeed News, 4/10/20

- **Dr. Chris Beyrer, Professor Of Epidemiology At Johns Hopkins, Said That "Occupational Exposure" Put African Americans And Latinos At Higher Risk As States Move To Reopen.** "Dr. Chris Beyrer, professor of epidemiology at Johns Hopkins, added that 'occupational exposure' is expected to present higher risks for African Americans and Latinos as states move ahead with reopening. Only 16 percent of Latinos and 20 percent of African Americans are able to work from home, compared with 30 percent of white Americans, according to an analysis of Labor Department statistics by the Economic Policy Institute." [Politico, [5/5/20](#)]

Even Before The Crisis, Black People Saw Higher Unemployment Rates, Lower Median Wealth Than White People. “Even before social distancing orders in states nationwide led to the staggering unemployment claims with millions now out of work, the unemployment rate for blacks was already higher, at 6.7%, against 4% for whites in March, which means they have less freedom to just quit their job. And black people have less savings, with the median worker having only 9.5% of the median wealth that whites did in 2016, which means they have little to survive on if they did quit.” [Buzzfeed News, [4/10/20](#)]

Black People Are More Than Twice As Likely As White People To Live In Poverty. "Yet black people are still more than twice as likely as whites to live in poverty. Their poverty rate has dropped from 55% in 1959 to 35% in 1968 to 21% in 2018. The white rate has barely budged at around 10%. The official poverty rate may understate African Americans' progress because it excludes the effect of non-cash government programs such as food stamps and Medicaid." [Associated Press, [6/8/20](#)]

The Median Income Among African Americans Is 41 Percent Lower Than For White Americans. “A survey by the Federal Reserve last year found that even in good times, African Americans are less able to pay their monthly bills than whites or Latinos. That's hardly surprising, since median income among African Americans is 41% lower than that of non-Hispanic whites.” [NPR, [6/1/20](#)]

African Americans Barely Earn 60 Cents For Every Dollar Of White Income. "African Americans still earn barely 60 cents for every \$1 in white income. They have 10 cents in wealth for every \$1 whites own. They remain more than twice as likely to live in poverty. And they're about as likely to own a home as they were when Richard Nixon was president." [Associated Press, [6/8/20](#)]

New York Times: "The Typical Black Household Has One-Tenth Of The Wealth Of A Typical White Household." "In part because they make less, black workers accumulate less wealth over time. The end result is that they have less money in their bank accounts to make it through extended economic weakness, as the United States could face in recovering from the pandemic. The typical black household has one-tenth the wealth of a typical white household, according to Federal Reserve data." [New York Times, [6/1/20](#)]

- **“Black Households Were About Twice As Likely As White Households To Say They Would Have Trouble Covering Their Bills If Hit By An Unexpected \$400 Expense.”** “As a result, black households were about twice as likely as white households to say they would have trouble covering their bills if hit by an unexpected \$400 expense in 2019, a recent Fed survey found.” [New York Times, [6/1/20](#)]

Report From JPMorgan Chase Institute Confirmed That Black Families Bring In Less Income And Have Less Savings: “For Every \$1 Of Liquid Assets Of A White Family, The Median Black Family Has Only 32 Cents.” “The average black and Hispanic families are already bringing in less income than the average white family, but they also have a smaller buffer of liquid assets like savings and investments, according to a new report from the JPMorgan Chase Institute...Black and Hispanic families earn between 71 cents and 74 cents for each dollar earned by the median white family, according to the JPMorgan report. But the racial gap in liquid assets between is far larger, and that means these minority families have a much thinner cushion to fall back on to weather the storm of economic shocks. For every \$1 of liquid assets of a white family, the median black family has only 32 cents, while the median Hispanic family has 47 cents.” [CNN, [4/21/20](#)]

African Americans Disproportionately Reside In Dense Metropolitan Areas In Conditions That Make It Harder To Practice Social Distancing. “American housing policies have long restricted people of color to segregated neighborhoods in urban areas. People of color now constitute a majority of residents in the five most densely populated cities in the country. They have less access to green space and are more likely to reside in substandard housing than their white counterparts. Many people of color also rely on crowded public transportation systems to travel to work, purchase groceries, and obtain medical care.” [Center For American Progress, [3/27/20](#)]

Black Families Are More Likely To Live In Crowded Multigenerational Homes Where Young Asymptomatic People Could Put Older Relatives At Risk. “Black and Latino families live in crowded multigenerational homes at much higher rates (26% and 27%, respectively) than white families (16%), according to the Pew Research Center. More than 60 million Americans live in multigenerational homes, where young asymptomatic people might put their older relatives at risk. Worries about this scenario drove a lot of school closings, despite the lower risk to the young from the coronavirus.” [Buzzfeed News, [4/10/20](#)]

African Americans Are Far More Likely To Reside In Neighborhoods With Higher Levels Of Air Pollution--A Known Risk Factor For Coronavirus. “It is well known among people who study air pollution that African American neighborhoods are much more likely to have high levels of contamination — the result of a multifaceted historical process. The link between air pollution and Covid-19 fatality could be a partial explanation for why African Americans seem to be dying at a disproportionate rate.” [Vox, [4/8/20](#)]

- **Union Of Concerned Scientists: African Americans’ Exposure To Air Pollution From Vehicles Is 61 Percent Higher Than White Residents In The Northeast And Mid-Atlantic Regions.** “On average, communities of color in the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic breathe 66 percent more air pollution from vehicles than white residents...Exposures for African American residents are 61 percent higher than for white residents.” [Union of Concerned Scientists, [6/21/2019](#)]
- **American Lung Association: Research Suggests People Of Color Are More Likely To Live In Counties With Higher Levels Of Pollution.** “People of color also may be more likely to live in counties with higher levels of pollution. Non-Hispanic Blacks and Hispanics were more likely to live in counties that had worse problems with particle pollution, researchers found in a 2011 analysis. Non-Hispanic Blacks were also more likely to live in counties with worse ozone pollution. Income groups, by contrast, differed little in these exposures. However, since few rural counties have monitors, the primarily older, non-Hispanic white residents of those counties lack information about the air quality in their communities.” [American Lung Association, [2/12/20](#)]

African Americans Are Disproportionately Represented In Homeless, Incarcerated Communities That Are At Higher Risk For The Virus. “In the end, though, no group of Americans may be more vulnerable to COVID-19 than the incarcerated and the homeless. About 40 percent of people experiencing homelessness are black, triple their share of the

U.S. population. Brown and black people comprise 56 percent of the prison population, doubling their combined share of the U.S. adult population. Homeless people may be the most vulnerable in cities like Seattle and Los Angeles. Prisons, jails, and detention centers have already turned into outbreak zones for prisoners, corrections officers, and prison health-care workers. At least 167 inmates and 137 staff members have already tested positive for the coronavirus at New York's Rikers Island prison complex. And it is getting worse by the day." [The Atlantic, [4/6/20](#)]

ADMINISTRATION FAILURES

CDC Is Not Reporting Comprehensive Data On Race And Coronavirus Infections. "Gross underreporting of tests, hospitalizations and deaths related to Covid-19 has plagued racial and ethnic data at the state and federal levels. Nearly half of all states have not included any data on the race or ethnicity of those affected by the coronavirus. Figures released by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention on Friday list the race and ethnicity of 75 percent of all cases as unspecified. None of the race and ethnicity statistics for deaths have been reported nationally." [Politico, [4/20/20](#)]

- **Race Was Known For Only About Half Of All Cases In Late May.** "Until a few weeks ago, racial data for COVID-19 was sparse. It's still incomplete, but now 48 states plus Washington D.C., report at least some data; in total, race or ethnicity is known for around half of all cases and 90% of deaths. And though gaps remain, the pattern is clear: Communities of color are being hit disproportionately hard by COVID-19." [NPR, [5/30/20](#)]
- **ProPublica: "Experts Say That The Nation's Unwillingness To Publicly Track The Virus By Race Could Obscure A Crucial Underlying Reality: It's Quite Likely That A Disproportionate Number Of Those Who Die Of Coronavirus Will Be Black."** [ProPublica, [4/3/20](#)]
- **Kaiser Family Foundation: "Comprehensive Nationwide Data By Race And Ethnicity Will Be Key To Understanding How Covid-19 Is Affecting Communities As Well As Shaping And Targeting Response Efforts."** [Kaiser Family Foundation, [4/21/20](#)]

Trump Has Spent His Presidency Sabotaging The ACA & Medicaid, Leaving More African Americans Without Coverage. "Insurance gains made by blacks and Hispanics have stalled, and even eroded, since 2016 — much as they have for the overall population. Black adults have seen their uninsured rate tick up by 0.7 percentage points since 2016, while white adults have seen a half-percentage-point increase. This has largely halted the improvement in coverage disparities. Hispanic adults continue to report significantly higher uninsured rates than either white or black adults." [Commonwealth Fund, [1/16/20](#)]

Trump Is Refusing To Open A Special Enrollment Period, Which Could Help African Americans Get The Health Care They Need. "If Trump had chosen instead to reopen the HealthCare.gov website — as 11 largely blue states that control their own markets have already done — people without insurance could buy more comprehensive policies that not only would cover coronavirus treatments but any follow-up treatment, mental-health care, and future check-ups." [Politico, [4/3/20](#)]

- **Dr. Patrick Sullivan, Professor Of Epidemiology At Emory University, Called For A Special Enrollment Period To Address Racial Disparities.** "The disproportionate toll on African Americans 'calls for interventions like considering emergency enrollment for the Affordable Care Act,' said Dr. Patrick Sullivan, professor of epidemiology at Emory University. 'And in the longer term Medicaid expansion in the South.'" [Politico, [5/5/20](#)]

Trump Is Backing A Lawsuit That Would Overturn The ACA, Which Would Cause The Uninsured Rate Among Black Americans To Spike To 20 Percent. "Everything would go: protections for preexisting conditions, subsidies that help people purchase insurance, the Medicaid expansion...States that expanded Medicaid would get the worst of it: Urban projected their uninsured rates would nearly double if the law were overturned. The uninsured rate for black Americans would increase from 11 percent today to 20 percent without Obamacare; there would also be a dramatic spike in uninsurance among Hispanics." [Vox, [3/2/20](#)]

STATE DATA

(CA) Research From Sutter Health Hospitals In California Found That Black Patients Had 2.7 Times The Odds Of Hospitalization As Non-Hispanic White Patients. "A study last month of 1,052 Covid-19 patients treated at Sutter Health hospitals in California, for instance, found that Black patients had 2.7 times the odds of hospitalization as non-Hispanic white patients, indicating more severe disease." [Stat, [6/15/20](#)]

(DC) 76 Percent Of Coronavirus Deaths In D.C. Have Been Among Black Residents Even Though They Only Make Up Less Than Half Of The Population. "The unequal burden of the disease is most acute in Washington, where nearly 76 percent of deaths have been among black Americans even though they make up only about 47 percent of the population." [Washington Post, [6/6/20](#)]

(FL) Study From The University Of Miami Found That Residents Of African American And Caribbean Communities In Miami-Dade County Were Twice As Likely To Be Infected With The Coronavirus. "A recent study by the University of Miami found that residents of African American and Caribbean communities in Miami-Dade County, where Miami Gardens is located, were twice as likely to be infected with the coronavirus. The study also showed infection rates far greater than those reported by testing centers and hospitals, reinforcing fears that the disease is being spread by asymptomatic carriers, silently permeating vulnerable communities." [Washington Post, [6/3/20](#)]

(GA) Early Data Revealed That African Americans Made Up More Than Half Of Coronavirus Deaths In Georgia. "African Americans accounted for more than 50 percent of Georgia's deaths, despite making up about 30 percent of the state's 10.6 million people. The toll is far greater in less populous counties where the largest share of residents is black. The number of cases per capita in plurality-black counties is 1.75 times that of plurality-white counties. The number of deaths per capita in plurality-black counties is twice that of white counties." [Washington Post, [4/26/20](#)]

- **CDC Study Found That More Than 80 Percent Of Hospitalized Covid-19 Patients In Georgia Were Black.** "Surveying eight Georgia hospitals, researchers found that in a sample of 305 covid-19 patients, 247 were black — more than 80 percent and more than they expected....While limited by time and geography, the [results](#) of the study from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention released Wednesday echo [research showing](#) black Americans are more likely to be infected and die of covid-19, the disease the novel coronavirus causes." [Washington Post, [4/29/20](#)]

(IL) By Mid-May, Black Residents Made Up Nearly A Third Of Deaths While Only Accounting For 14 Percent Of Illinois' Population. "In Illinois, black people make up 14% of the population, but account for 32.5% of coronavirus deaths, according to the state's Department of Public Health." [CNBC, [5/15/20](#)]

- **70 Of Chicago's First 100 Victims Were Black, And Most Lived In Majority-Black Neighborhoods.** "Most of the first 100 lived in majority-black neighborhoods, according to an analysis of medical examiner data; hardest hit were South Shore, Auburn Gresham and Austin, where the median income for 40% or more of the residents in each community is less than \$25,000." [ProPublica, [5/9/20](#)]
- **Black Chicago Residents Continue To Die At A Rate Two- To Three-Times Higher Than White Residents.** "When COVID-19 first hit the United States, it spread through communities of color at alarmingly disproportionate rates. This was especially true in Chicago. More than 70% of the city's first coronavirus deaths were African-American. Those numbers have declined, but black residents continue to die at a rate two- to three-times higher than the city's white residents." [NPR, [6/9/20](#)]

(KS) Study Found That Kansas Has The Largest Racial Disparity In Coronavirus Deaths Among States Reporting Data: Black Kansans Have Made Up Nearly A Third Of Coronavirus Deaths While Only Accounting For 5.6 Percent Of The Population. "Kansas has the largest racial disparity among the 41 states that report demographic information about those who have died with COVID-19, according to a study by UC Berkeley's Othering & Belonging Institute. Nearly a third of the state's COVID-19 deaths have been black Kansans, although they account for only 5.6% of the state's population." [Wichita Eagle, [5/13/20](#)]

(LA) Early Data Revealed That More Than 70 Percent Of Coronavirus Deaths In Louisiana Were African

Americans. "And when Louisiana Gov. John Bel Edwards announced Monday that his state would begin releasing preliminary data on race and coronavirus deaths, he said he had a 'disturbing' note: 'Slightly more than 70 percent of all the deaths in Louisiana are of African Americans.' 'That deserves more attention,' said Edwards, whose state is about one-third African American, according to the Census Bureau." [Politico, [4/6/20](#)]

- **The Most Recent Data Shows Black Americans Are Still Dying At Disproportionately High Rates In Louisiana.** "Black Americans make up nearly 33% of Louisiana's population. They account for 54% of Covid-19 deaths in the state, according to the CDC." [CNBC, [5/27/20](#)]

(ME) By Mid-May, Black Mainers Made Up More Than 9 Percent Of Cases While Only Accounting For 1.6 Percent Of The Population.

"As of Wednesday, 140 black and African-American Mainers had tested positive for the virus, an increase of 67 cases from the previous week. They now account for 9.2 percent of Maine's cases, despite being only 1.6 percent of the state's population. That rate increases to 11.8 percent of the cases in which race is known, since 331 people (nearly 22 percent) declined to provide that information." [Portland Press Herald, [5/16/20](#)]

(MI) As Of Late-May, African Americans Make Up 39 Percent Of Deaths In Michigan While Only Accounting For 14% Of The State's Population.

"In Michigan, black people make up nearly 14% of the population and account for roughly 39% of deaths." [CNBC, [5/27/20](#)]

- **Dr. Joneigh Khaldun, Michigan's Chief Medical Executive, "There Is No Question That The COVID-19 Outbreak Is Having A More Significant Effect On Marginalized And Poor Communities."** "There is no question that the COVID-19 outbreak is having a more significant effect on marginalized and poorer communities, particularly communities of color,' Michigan's chief medical executive, Dr. Joneigh Khaldun, told Bridge." [Bridge Michigan, [4/1/20](#)]

(MS) Black People Made Up 38 Percent Of Mississippi's Population While Accounting For More Than Half Of Coronavirus Infections As Of April.

"One in 5 Mississippi residents live in poverty. It is also in the heart of the 'Stroke Belt,' a band of 11 Southern states where obesity, hypertension and smoking contribute to an elevated rate of strokes. Blacks make up 38% of the state population — but more than half of COVID-19 infections in which race is known. They also account for nearly two-thirds of deaths from the virus, according to the state health department." [Kaiser Health News, [4/22/20](#)]

(NC) By Early May, African Americans Made Up 36 Percent Of Coronavirus Cases And 35 Percent Of Deaths While Only Accounting For 22 Percent Of The State's Population.

"While African-Americans account for 22 percent of our population, they account for 36 percent of COVID-19 cases and 35 percent of deaths." [WTVD, [5/7/20](#)]

(NY) New York City Data Revealed Black New Yorkers Were Twice As Likely As White Residents To Die From Coronavirus.

"Black residents in New York City are dying from the novel coronavirus more than any other racial group, according to data released Friday by the city's Health Department. There have been 1,999 deaths known to be of COVID-19 among black or African American people in the five boroughs, according to the data. Black people are twice as likely as white people to die from the novel coronavirus and more than twice as likely as white people to have a non-fatal hospitalization, the data shows." [ABC News, [4/17/20](#)]

(PA) Report: African Americans Made Up 20 Percent Of Pennsylvania's Coronavirus Deaths While Only Accounting For 12 Percent Of The State's Population.

"The new report shows that 73% of COVID-19 deaths were white, 20% were African American, about 4% were those with multiple/other races and 2% were Asian. Hispanic individuals made up 5.4% of the deaths. According to U.S. Census population estimates from 2019, African Americans make up about 12% of the state's population, while 7.6% is made up of Hispanics or Latinos, and Asians make up 3.7% of the population." [Lancaster Online, [5/19/20](#)]

(WI) Early Data Revealed African Americans Made Up Nearly Half Of Milwaukee Coronavirus Cases And 81% Of Deaths While Only Accounting For About A Quarter Of The Population. "As of Friday morning, African Americans made up almost half of Milwaukee County's 945 cases and 81% of its 27 deaths in a county whose population is 26% black. Milwaukee is one of the few places in the United States that is tracking the racial breakdown of people who have been infected by the novel coronavirus, offering a glimpse at the disproportionate destruction it is inflicting on black communities nationwide." [ProPublica, [4/3/20](#)]

- **By Early May, African Americans Still Made Up About 40 Percent Of Milwaukee County Cases.** "Clusters of COVID-19 cases emerged early amid the pandemic in African American neighborhoods on Milwaukee's north side, northwest side and Sherman Park. As of Thursday, Milwaukee County data showed there were 1,490 cases in the African American community, or about 40% of the county's cases. African Americans are about 27% of the county's population." [Milwaukee Journal Sentinel, [5/7/20](#)]

ADDITIONAL EXPERTS

Taison Bell, Professor Of Medicine At The University Of Virginia Medical School, Warned In April That There Had Been A Spike In Deaths In Minority Communities Seemingly Related To Coronavirus That Haven't Been Confirmed Due To Testing Shortages. "Taison Bell, a professor of medicine at the University of Virginia Medical School, said that in places where coronavirus testing is scarce for minority communities there's been a spike in related ailments. 'We see in states that aren't reporting on racial demographics that there's been a surge in patients dying from respiratory distress and respiratory failure. These are diseases that [COVID-19] causes but they're not diagnosed as [COVID-19] because they're unknown and aren't tested,' Bell said." [The Hill, [4/7/20](#)]

The American Public Health Association's Dr. Georges Benjamin Called For More Widespread Monitoring Of Race And Income Data In Coronavirus Response. "Dr. Georges Benjamin of the American Public Health Association has been pushing health officials to start monitoring race and income in the response to COVID-19. 'We want people to collect the data in an organized, professional, scientific manner and show who's getting it and who's not getting it,' Benjamin says. 'Recognize that we very well may see these health inequities.'" [NPR, [4/2/20](#)]

Maura Calsyn, Managing Director For Health Policy At The Center For American Progress, Said That African Americans And Hispanics Are Most Likely To Be Hurt By States Prematurely Reopening: "The People Who Are Going To Be Asked To Go Back To Work Are The People At Highest Risk Because Of Systemic Racism And Resulting Public Health Disparities." "In these states, like many others, African Americans and Hispanics are much more likely to lack insurance than white people, and make up large portions of the uninsured. 'The people who are going to be asked to go back to work are the people at highest risk because of systemic racism and resulting public health disparities. And if they go back to work, because these states have blocked expanded Medicaid it's very likely that a high number of them don't have health insurance,' Calsyn said." [Vice, [4/24/20](#)]

Kristen Clarke, President Of The Lawyers' Committee Of Civil Rights Under Law, Said African Americans "Have Every Reason To Be Alarmed At The Administration's Anemic Response To The Disproportionate Impact That This Crisis Is Having On Communities Of Color." "Some black leaders have described the Trump administration's response to COVID-19 as inadequate, after what they said was a hastily organized call with Vice President Mike Pence and CDC Director Robert Redfield last week...Kristen Clarke, president of the Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law, which took part in the call, said African Americans 'have every reason to be alarmed at the administration's anemic response to the disproportionate impact that this crisis is having on communities of color.'" [Associated Press, [4/18/20](#)]

Vedette Gavin, A Principal Investigator For The Conservation Law Foundation's Healthy Neighborhood Study On Racial Disparities In Housing, Said That Issues With Housing Put Black Lives At Much Greater Risk For Contracting Respiratory And Pulmonary Diseases Which Can Worsen Coronavirus Symptoms. "Vedette Gavin, a principal investigator for the Conservation Law Foundation's Healthy Neighborhood Study, told The Fix that racial disparities in housing put black lives at much greater risk for contracting an illness. Her organization attempts to better understand and address the effects of neighborhood change on health in the Boston metropolitan area...'There are huge issues with housing that are at play,' Gavin said. 'The poorer housing stock and code violations for asbestos, mold and

cockroaches increase the risk and prevalence of respiratory and pulmonary diseases, which heighten the severity of symptoms for those who contract covid. Black and Latino families in urban centers tend to double and triple up when rent is unaffordable, making distancing in the home impossible.” [Washington Post, [4/10/20](#)]

Arline Geronimus, Professor Of Public Health At The University Of Michigan, Said Black American's Already-Shorter Lifespan Can Be Attributed To "Weathering," Where Financial Stress, Discrimination, And Other Barriers Put Them At Higher Risk For Chronic Diseases. "Arline Geronimus, a professor of public health at the University of Michigan, said her research showed that blacks' shorter lifespan is partly due to a phenomenon she calls 'weathering.' Coping with financial strain, discrimination and barriers to good education sends stress hormones surging through the body that contribute to obesity, diabetes, hypertension and heart disease, she said." [Wall Street Journal, [6/13/20](#)]

Dr. Ebony Hilton-Buchholz, Associate Professor Of Anesthesiology And Critical Care At University Of Virginia, Said "We're Seeing That Race Literally Is An Independent Risk Factor." "Health professionals have warned that black and Latino populations are at potentially greater risk of severe illness from the coronavirus, due to prevalent comorbidities such as diabetes, heart disease, hypertension and asthma... 'If you look at pretty much any disease process, African Americans have higher rates or poorer outcomes for those diseases,' said Dr. Ebony Hilton-Buchholz, an associate professor of anesthesiology and critical care at the University of Virginia. 'We're seeing that race literally is an independent risk factor for many of these disease processes. And it's heightened [under Covid-19].'" [Politico, [4/6/20](#)]

Dr. Camara Jones, Family Physician, Epidemiologist And Visiting Fellow At Harvard University, Said Coronavirus "Is Just Unmasking The Deep Disinvestment In Our Communities, The Historical Injustices, And The Impact Of Residential Segregation." "COVID is just unmasking the deep disinvestment in our communities, the historical injustices and the impact of residential segregation,' said Jones, who spent 13 years at the CDC, focused on identifying, measuring and addressing racial bias within the medical system. 'This is the time to name racism as the cause of all of those things. The overrepresentation of people of color in poverty and white people in wealth is not just a happenstance. ... It's because we're not valued.'" [ProPublica, [4/3/20](#)]

Linda Sprague Martinez, Community Health Researcher At Boston University's School Of Social Work, Said That Coronavirus' Impact "Is Going To Be Tied To Our History And Legacy Of Racial Inequities." "Linda Sprague Martinez, a community health researcher at Boston University's School of Social Work, worries that the government is not paying close enough attention to race, and as the disease spreads, will do too little to blunt its toll. 'When COVID-19 passes and we see the losses ... it will be deeply tied to the story of post-World War II policies that left communities marginalized,' Sprague said. 'Its impact is going to be tied to our history and legacy of racial inequities. It's going to be tied to the fact that we live in two very different worlds.'" [ProPublica, [4/3/20](#)]

Dorianne Mason, Director Of Health Equity At The National Women's Law Center, Said That "This Outbreak Is Exposing The Deep Structural Inequities That Make Communities Pushed To The Margins Vulnerable To Health Crises." "This outbreak is exposing the deep structural inequities that make communities pushed to the margins more vulnerable to health crises in good times and in bad,' Dorianne Mason, the director of health equity at the National Women's Law Center, said in a statement. 'These structural inequities in our health care system do not ignore racial and gender disparities — and neither should our response to this pandemic.'" [Washington Post, [4/7/20](#)]

Dr. Lauren Powell, Executive Director Of Time's Up Healthcare, Said Messaging To Minority Communities Is "Paramount" During Coronavirus Outbreak. "Messaging is paramount in moments like this,' said Dr. Lauren Powell, former head of health equity for Virginia's health department. Powell added that the dearth of female and minority messengers could have negative consequences. 'This is a systemic problem across health care and many other industries where we don't see enough people of color, women of color in particular in positions of power and authority,' said Powell, the executive director of Time's Up Healthcare, a nonprofit foundation. 'And that could certainly impact the way these vital public health messages fall on the ears of those of us in minority communities.'" [Politico, [4/21/20](#)]

Stephen Thomas, Director Of The University Of Maryland's Center For Health Equity, Said If U.S. Continues A "Colorblind Policy" Where Race Data Is Not Collected, "We'll Be Left With An Explosion Of Covid-19

Concentrated In Racial And Ethnic Minority Communities." "We cannot have a colorblind policy,' said Stephen Thomas, director of the University of Maryland's Center for Health Equity. 'With a colorblind policy — 'Hey, we're all in this together' — we'll be left with an explosion of Covid-19 concentrated in racial and ethnic minority communities.'" [Politico, [4/6/20](#)]

Dr. Benjamin Weston, Director Of Medical Services For The Milwaukee County Office Of Emergency Management, Said That "A Big Reason Why We See Higher Rates Of Covid-19 In The [Black] Community Is The Institutional, Historical, Currently Ongoing Issue Of Lack Of Resources, And Institutional And Individual Effects Of Racism."

"A big reason why we see higher rates of Covid-19 in the [black] community is the institutional, historical, currently ongoing issue of lack of resources, and institutional and individual effects of racism,' said Dr. Benjamin Weston, director of Medical Services for the Milwaukee County Office of Emergency Management. 'It certainly isn't coincidence why that community suffers the greater burden of the vast majority of diseases in our county.'" [Politico, [4/6/20](#)]