



FLORIDA HEALTH JUSTICE PROJECT

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Media Contacts: **Alison Yager, J.D., Deputy Executive Director, FHJP**
646-322-8111; yager@floridahealthjustice.org;

Shenae Samuels-Staple, PhD, MPH

FHJP Health Policy Research Specialist; samuels@floridahealthjustice.org
954-655-3140

COVID-19 Continues to Have a Disparate Impact on Hispanic and Non-Hispanic Blacks in Florida

Early Racial/Ethnic Disparities Persist in 8/9 Florida Counties Examined

(Miami, Florida) – Florida Health Justice Project's latest COVID-19 Disparities Dashboard, shows that significant racial and ethnic disparities persist.

The updated [COVID-19 Disparities Dashboard](#), uses data from the Florida Department of Health's county-level COVID-19 report to show outcomes by race/ethnicity and age for the state, as well as nine counties of interest. Unemployment data trends are presented to show the interplay between COVID-19, employment status, and racial and ethnic disparities in health outcomes.

“Despite the tremendous progress in COVID-19 treatments, there is still much work to be done in addressing the racial/ethnic disparities that have emerged in COVID-19 and have long been present in other health outcomes,” said Dr. Samuels-Staple, FHJP Health Policy Research Specialist. “The availability of data stratified by racial/ethnic groups has proven to be crucial as we continue to monitor and address disparities among our communities of color.”

Key findings include:

- While non-Hispanic Whites constitute 53% of the state population, they account for just 27% of the state's total COVID-19 cases, 41% of hospitalizations, and 47% of deaths.
- In **Duval County**, NH Blacks make up 31% of the population yet they account for 43% of COVID-19 hospitalizations. In **Leon County**, NH Blacks make up 32% of the population while accounting for 45% of hospitalizations.
- While Hispanics comprise 31% of the **Broward County** population, they account for 40% of the county's COVID-19 cases.

- Statewide, 19% of cases reported, and 25% of cases in **Miami-Dade** County, are of unknown race, significantly hampering a complete understanding of racial disparities.

Outcomes and disparities vary widely by county. This is likely due to a confluence of factors, such as the demographic and socio-economic makeup of the county (e.g., age distribution, poverty rate, rates of insurance coverage or lack thereof, among others).

While there are some limitations in the dashboard, including data by age within racial/ethnic groups and the presence of unknown race data, the dashboard illustrates the continued need for data broken down by racial/ethnic groups. Research has shown that Blacks and Hispanics are least likely to self-report their race/ethnicity (Source: Dembosky, Jacob W et al., 2019). Given the relatively high proportion of data designated as “Unknown” race, it is important to note that the observed COVID-19 disparities may be underestimated and as such, may not give a true reflection of the state of COVID-19 disparities in Florida and the examined counties.

In an earlier period of the pandemic, the racial/ethnic disparities in COVID-19 outcomes were presented and discussed within a report by Florida Health Justice Project, “The State of COVID-19 in Florida and South Florida: An Early Look at Disparities in Outcomes,” May 2020. The COVID-19 dashboard illuminates the fact that racial/ethnic disparities have persisted long after first reported.

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About the Florida Health Justice Project

The [Florida Health Justice Project](#) (FHJP) seeks to improve access to affordable health care for Floridians, with a focus on vulnerable low-income populations. FHJP expands the advocacy community’s capacity to resolve individual access issues and educate consumers; identify and address systemic barriers to healthcare; and protect Medicaid and other safety-net programs. FHJP promotes health equity for vulnerable Floridians through advocacy, storytelling, outreach, education and technical assistance and support.