



2022-2023  
State of Black Los Angeles County Report

# Companion Piece

County of Los Angeles  
Anti-Racism, Diversity, & Inclusion (ARDI) Initiative



County of Los Angeles  
**Anti-Racism,  
Diversity,  
& Inclusion**

CREATING AN LA COUNTY  
WHERE WE ALL THRIVE

# Acknowledgments

## Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors

We are grateful for the bold vision and support of our Board of Supervisors who continue to carry forward the County's commitment to improving the quality of life for the people and communities of Los Angeles County:

- Supervisor Hilda L. Solis, First District
- Supervisor Holly Mitchell, Second District
- Supervisor Lindsey Horvath, Third District
- Supervisor Janice Hahn, Fourth District
- Supervisor Kathryn Barger, Fifth District

## Authors & Contributors

We also wish to thank the authors and contributors to this report who spent months conducting the research and writing for this report, data collection and analysis, and compiling the report elements into this important document.

We also want to acknowledge the time, effort, and support given by the many individuals and organizations that shared their experience, wisdom, and insight with us. We could not have accomplished this without you.

### *LA County Chief Executive Office, Anti-Racism, Diversity, & Inclusion (ARDI) Initiative*

- **Dr. D'Artagnan Scorza**, Director
- **Dr. Tolu M. Wuraola**, Data Analyst
- **Heather Jue Northover, M.P.H.**, Principal Analyst
- **ARDI Team**

### *California State University Dominguez-Hills*

- **Dr. Anthony Asadullah Samad**, Professor and Executive Director of the Mervyn Dymally African American Political & Economic Institute
- **Dr. Donna J. Nicol**, Professor and Department Chair of Africana Studies

### *Capacity to Impact, Inc.*

- **Dr. Nazanin Zargarpour, Ph.D.**, President & CEO
- **Devin Larsen, M.A.**, Senior Evaluator
- **Jonathan Kim, B.A.**, Evaluation Associate
- **Selam Stephanos, M.P.H.**, Evaluation Associate

### *Los Angeles County ISD-Enterprise GIS*

- **Shannon Julius, G.I.S.P.**, Principal GIS Analyst, Los Angeles County ISD-Enterprise GIS
- **Rob Graham, M.S., G.I.S.P.**, GIS Specialist, Los Angeles County ISD-Enterprise GIS

### *Prevention Institute*

- **Juliet Sims, M.P.H., R.D.**, Associate Program Director
- **Vince Leus, M.U.R.P.**, Associate Program Director
- **Brianna Hodge**, Program Assistant

### *Environmental Systems Research Institute, Inc. (ESRI)*

- **Evan Olivier**, Technical Advisor & Associate Consultant – Esri Professional Services

## Subject Matter Experts

- **Dr. Tasha Dixon**, Senior Physician LA County Department of Health Services & Assistant Clinical Professor at Charles R. Drew University of Medicine and Science
- **Dr. Javier Rodriguez**, Associate Professor, Claremont Graduate University
- **Dr. Marques Vestal**, Assistant Professor of Critical Black Urbanism at UCLA Luskin Public School of Affairs
- **Tim Watkins**, CEO and President of Watts Labor Community Action Committee
- **Mike Davis**, President Pro Tempore, City of the LA Board of Public Works
- **Dr. Lola Smallwood-Cuevas**, Project Director, UCLA Labor Center & Co-founder Los Angeles Black Worker Center (BWC)
- **Dr. Bernadette Lucas**, Chief Academic Officer for Inglewood Unified School District
- **Dr. Tyrone Howard**, Professor of Education, UCLA Graduate School of Education and Information Studies (GSEIS)
- **Kandice McLurkin**, Co-founder and CEO of Rose Equity Collective & Immediate-Past-President of Council of Black Administrators
- **Dr. Ange-Marie Alfaro**, Professor of Political Science & International Relations and Gender & Sexuality Studies at University of Southern California (USC)
- **Dr. Jody Armour**, Professor of Law at University of Southern California (USC)
- **Dr. Derik Smith**, Associate Professor of Literature and Africana Studies, Chair of Intercollegiate Department of Africana Studies at Claremont McKenna College

## Community Input Advisory Board Member Contributors

- **Reverend Edward L. Anderson**, LA Voice
- **Tamika I. Butler**, Tamika I. Butler Consulting
- **Shawn Cannon**, City of Lancaster Social Equity Commission
- **Teresa Chandler**, City of Long Beach Office of the City Manager
- **Elizabeth Cohen**, Los Angeles County Center for Strategic Partnerships
- **Dr. Chandra Ford**, University of California, Los Angeles Center for the Study of Racism, Social Justice & Health
- **Christian Green**, Cancel the Contract Antelope Valley
- **Tamu Jones**, The California Endowment
- **Lyric Kelkar**, Inclusive Action for the City
- **Dr. Nomsa Khalfani**, Essential Access Health
- **Kelly King**, Foundation for the Los Angeles Community Colleges & Los Angeles Community College District
- **Miguel Martinez**, Children's Hospital Los Angeles

## Community Stakeholders

- Los Angeles County African American Employees Association
- Department of Mental Health Black and African Heritage Underserved Cultural Community
- Department of Mental Health Hawthorne-Lennox Health Neighborhood
- Department of Children and Family Services Eliminating Racial Disproportionality and Disparity Workgroup

- Department of Mental Health Faith Based Advisory Council
- Department of Mental Health Antelope Valley Health Neighborhood
- Department of Mental Health Long Beach Health Neighborhood
- Department of Mental Health Service Area 6 Health Neighborhood
- A Step to Freedom
- African American Leadership Organization
- Alzheimer's Association
- AMAAD Institute
- Asian American Drug Abuse Program
- Association Of Black Women Physicians
- BAM.eco
- Best Start Compton–East Compton
- California Black Women’s Health Project
- California Community Foundation
- Caring Across Generations
- Children's Hospital Los Angeles
- Children's Institute
- Clutch The World
- Coalition for Responsible Community Development
- Community Clinic Association of Los Angeles County
- Community Health Councils
- Elite Skills Development – Black Resource Center
- Essential Access Health
- Fathers and Mothers Who Care
- Friends of the African Union
- G's Victory International, LLC
- Harbor Regional Center
- Housing Rights Center
- Jenesse Center, Inc.
- JOY Youth Services, Inc.
- Kaiser Permanente Watts Counseling & Learning Center
- Kidsave
- Los Angeles Centers for Alcohol and Drug Abuse
- LA Harm Reduction Network
- Los Angeles County Commission on HIV
- Los Angeles House of Ruth
- Mirror Memoirs
- NAASD Los Angeles
- PATH
- Project Joy, Inc.
- Project: Peacemakers, Inc.
- Restoration Community Development Corporation
- Sanctuary of Hope
- St. Joseph Center
- State of California Assembly District 64
- Tafesilafa'i Pacific Islander Festival
- The Community Action League
- UCLA Kaiser Permanente Center for Health Equity
- West Athens Westmont Taskforce
- Watts Labor Community Action Committee
- YWCA of San Gabriel Valley

# Foreword

As the inaugural Executive Director of Racial Equity for Los Angeles County, it is my charge to carry out the Board of Supervisors' vision to ensure that the County of Los Angeles advances an anti-racist policy agenda – one that enhances the lives of the children, families, and communities we serve. The Anti-Racism, Diversity, & Inclusion (ARDI) Initiative was founded in the wake of George Floyd's murder and nationwide uprisings against anti-Black racism, but our efforts build upon the unyielding work of many communities who confront, resist, and challenge racial inequity daily.

While the ARDI team has had the honor to lead several groundbreaking projects since our launch in 2020, the release of the report stands out as one of the most essential efforts we've engaged in to date. This report is personal to me. As a native Angeleno, my own journey has taken me through many of the experiences described in this report. I've witnessed and have personally experienced the very conditions this report details and know that many Black Angelenos work to overcome. I've also reveled in the beauty of Black joy, excellence, and ingenuity that have made our local communities world-renowned for our contributions to this region and society.

Along the way, I have also been privileged to share community and collaborate with neighbors, colleagues, young people, friends, and family across the rich and diverse tapestry of Black Los Angeles County. Their resolve, resilience, and compassion to support one another through both challenges and successes has strengthened my own conviction and dedication to vanquish racial inequities and work toward a Los Angeles County where everyone can thrive and live well.

It is my hope that this report reaffirms the commitment that the County of Los Angeles must continue to renew in equitably serving our Black communities. I am inspired by the many efforts to address anti-Black racism, disparities, and disproportionalities across many of our County departments and systems, and we must also continue to introduce policies that advance racial equity, developed in partnership with communities affected. We must also acknowledge prior and ongoing harm, prioritize addressing root causes, and invest in support and resources that lead to healing, reconciliation, and justice.

We all deserve to live our best lives and thrive in this County we call home. Thank you to everyone who has made this report possible and to all those who will continue to champion the well-being of Black Angelenos and all peoples who live in our region.

In solidarity,

**D'Artagnan Scorza, Ph.D.**

Executive Director of Racial Equity  
County of Los Angeles Anti-Racism, Diversity, & Inclusion (ARDI) Initiative



**D'Artagnan Scorza, Ph.D.**  
Executive Director of Racial Equity  
County of Los Angeles Anti-Racism,  
Diversity, & Inclusion (ARDI) Initiative

---

# Table of Contents

## Section 1

Background	7
State of Black Los Angeles County	8
Why Is This Report Needed?	9

## Section 2

Digital Storytelling: How to Navigate the Report	11
Robust Community Engagement	13
Research Framework, Data Collection, and Analysis	15

## Section 3

Highlights and Key Takeaways	17
Summary of Findings: Black Outcomes in LA County	19
Next Steps   Conclusion	22

<b>Works Cited</b>	23
--------------------	----

<b>About ARDI</b>	25
-------------------	----



## SECTION 1

# Background

In the summer of 2020, during the COVID-19 pandemic and amid national protests against the killing of George Floyd, the Los Angeles County (County) Board of Supervisors (Board) adopted a motion recognizing, affirming, and declaring that “racism is a matter of public health in Los Angeles County and that racism against Black people has reached crisis proportions that result in large disparities in family stability, health and mental wellness, education, employment, economic development, public safety, criminal justice, and housing.”<sup>1</sup> The unanimous motion also called for accountability and the need to mitigate, reduce, and eliminate health, educational, economic, and social disparities based on race and ethnicity.

In addition, the Board motion established the Anti-Racism, Diversity, & Inclusion (ARDI) Initiative, which is charged with creating and implementing a racial equity strategic plan and anti-racism policy agenda that articulates the goals, actions, and policies for the County to adopt in order to dismantle structural racism throughout the region. The Board also issued a directive for the commission of a report on the state of Black Los Angeles County. Pursuant to this directive, a report on the health and well-being of Black residents in Los Angeles County must (1) be released on an annual basis; and (2) include an annual assessment of outcomes and progress with defined benchmarks and objectives for Black Angelenos in the areas of health (physical and mental), education, employment, law enforcement, justice, housing and homelessness.

In this companion piece to the [\*State of Black Los Angeles County Report\*](#), we (1) outline the key objectives of the report, (2) explain why this report is necessary, (3) present report highlights and key findings, and (4) provide guidance on how to navigate the report.



Pictured above: Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors: Hilda L. Solis (1<sup>st</sup> District); Holly J. Mitchell (2<sup>nd</sup> District); Lindsey P. Horvath (3<sup>rd</sup> District); Janice Hahn (4<sup>th</sup> District); and Kathryn Barger (5<sup>th</sup> District) <https://lacounty.gov>

# State of Black Los Angeles County

Los Angeles County is home to the third largest Black population (936,285) in the United States.<sup>2</sup> Since their arrival to the region in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, Black Angelenos have been integral to the cultural, economic, and sociopolitical landscape of Los Angeles. Despite the many contributions made by Black Angelenos, however, many continue to experience adverse life outcomes resulting from structural, and specifically anti-Black, racism<sup>3</sup> — including disproportionate rates of homelessness, incarceration, and other outcomes that have a significant impact on overall health and well-being.<sup>4</sup>

The [\*State of Black Los Angeles County Report\*](#) is an online interactive report comprised of several in-depth sections centered on the outcomes and lived experiences of Black people in Los Angeles County. In this report, we assess how Black residents are doing on 36 indicators, all within the domains of health, housing, income and employment, education, and safety and justice. The report features a series of bar charts, dashboards, and interactive maps enabling users to see differences in outcomes among racial groups in the County as well as visualize the geographical areas in the County with the most challenging outcomes and highest need. It also outlines some of the drivers and root causes of these outcomes as explained by local experts in the field and our review of the peer-reviewed literature in each topic area. For select indicators, we include infographics ranking the highest need communities<sup>5</sup> within each Supervisorial District. We also highlight 20 geographical areas within the County, providing insight into the history and sociopolitical context of each area, as well as historical and contemporary landmarks that hold unique cultural, historical, or political significance for Black Los Angeles County residents.



Scan the QR code above to visit the online [\*State of Black Los Angeles County Report\*](#).

Key features of the online report:

- Bar charts
- Historical narrative
- In-depth research framework
- Interactive dashboards & maps
- Infographics
- Analyses of drivers & root causes
- Images
- Locations of interest
- Surveys





## Why Is This Report Needed?

The COVID-19 pandemic laid bare the structural inequities in our nation’s public health systems as well as other systems including our education, child welfare, justice, and economic systems. It also made apparent the many challenges that resulted in Black communities being disproportionately impacted by the virus.<sup>6</sup>

Early in the pandemic, for example, while stay-at-home orders were in effect, many Black workers were either furloughed or laid off from their jobs, while others in roles deemed “essential” by the federal, state, and local governments continued to work—increasing their risk of contracting the virus.<sup>7</sup> Decades of disinvestment in Black communities combined with exclusionary hiring practices and discriminatory college admissions have shaped the County’s Black workforce, and several other aspects of Black life in LA County, leaving Black residents particularly vulnerable to the health and economic consequences of the pandemic.<sup>8</sup> Other issues, like inequitable access to the vaccine—partly stemming from vaccine distribution processes that favored whiter, wealthier communities, as well as residents from more affluent communities deploying their resources to get in line in areas designated higher vaccine priority because of higher infection rates<sup>9</sup>—also contributed to racial disparities in COVID-19 infection and hospitalization rates. A 2021 LA Times article revealed that by February 2021, 25% of Beverly Hills residents had received the first dose of the vaccine compared to only 5% of residents in South L.A. and neighboring cities like Compton. The article noted that County officials attributed the disparities to “long-standing issues with healthcare access, education and poverty, which government outreach efforts thus far have failed to overcome.”<sup>10</sup>

Black children without the requisite access to technology or caregivers available to stay home while they attend school via distance-learning were also disproportionately impacted by the pandemic—leaving them particularly vulnerable to the negative effects of the pandemic on children. These effects included “learning loss” and the trauma caused by the economic hardship faced by many families of color.<sup>11</sup> According to a study by the National Institutes of Health, nationally, Black children were more likely than white, Hispanic, Asian children to lose a primary or secondary caregiver.<sup>12</sup> And although American Indian/Alaska Native children were most likely to lose a caregiver to the virus, compared to white children, Black children were 2.4 times more likely to lose a parent or a primary caregiver to the virus.

Even before the pandemic, Black children were least likely to meet grade level for reading on the state standardized exam, less likely to report that they had a high level of school connectedness, and less likely to report feeling highly motivated about their academics.<sup>13</sup> In the aftermath of a pandemic, such outcomes are particularly worrisome given that “children who lose a parent are at elevated risk of traumatic grief, depression, poor educational outcomes, and suicide or unintentional death.”<sup>14</sup>

Numerous experts have examined the ways in which the pandemic has exacerbated existing inequalities across a multitude of domains including housing, health, education, economic opportunity, and issues around safety and justice.<sup>15</sup> Community activists have demanded that recovery efforts address both ongoing racial disparities as well as the disproportionate impact of the pandemic on communities of color.<sup>16</sup> In the time since the first wave of Black people migrated west to escape the rural South through today, racist policies and practices have either explicitly targeted Black Angelenos or have had an unintentional, but disproportionately negative, impact on them. Even bygone practices such as redlining and restrictive covenants continue to have lasting effects on Black Angelenos’ health and economic outcomes. We also see the residual effects of Proposition 13 and Proposition 209 in our local schools, universities, and businesses, while issues like racial profiling, mass incarceration, and police violence continue to leave an indelible mark on the lives of system-involved individuals, their families, and their communities.<sup>17</sup>

According to the American Health Association (AHA), “structural racism and its deleterious downstream effects on social determinants, [cardiovascular disease], and overall health and well-being require careful attention, exploration, and action.”<sup>18</sup>

**In this moment, LA County has an opportunity to eliminate structural racism and bias in all its forms to reduce negative outcomes and promote positive outcomes for all Angelenos, including Black Angelenos.**

A policy agenda informed by anti-racism – i.e., “the active process of identifying and eliminating racism by changing systems, organizational structures, policies and practices, and attitudes”<sup>19</sup> – is needed to reverse racially disparate outcomes. To do so effectively, the County must: acknowledge the role that structural racism has and continues to play in producing inequitable outcomes, affirm its commitment to combating structural racism, introduce policies that advance racial equity, collaborate with those from the communities affected, collect and analyze data, and increase public awareness about the problem.<sup>20</sup> By examining root causes, and establishing a baseline for where the community is on critical health and well-being indicators, Los Angeles County can begin to take the necessary and actionable steps to improve outcomes for Black Angelenos.



## SECTION 2

# Digital Storytelling

To enhance the user experience of reading this comprehensive report, we chose ArcGIS StoryMaps, a web-based application that allows users to explore maps alongside narrative text and other multimedia content. As a result, this online report also serves as a multifaceted tool that allows stakeholders—including residents, community advocates, and service providers—to visualize the geographical areas where Black residents are most impacted by certain challenges.

## How to Navigate the Report

While each [section](#) of the report is comprehensive enough to stand alone, users are encouraged to start at the [Introduction](#) section where we define the social and geographical context of Black Los Angeles County, address within-group diversity in the community, and define the concept of anti-Blackness. In the next section, [Community Input](#), we outline the process, as well as the community stakeholders who helped to shape this report. The next section, [Research Framework, Data Collection, and Analysis](#), provides a detailed description of our research approach and methodology, as well as the research framework developed by the research team to assess health and well-being.

### Online Report Sections:

1. Introduction
2. Community Input
3. Research Framework, Data Collection & Analysis
4. Key Findings
5. Physical Health
6. Mental Health
7. Housing & Homelessness
8. Income & Employment
9. Education
10. Safety & Justice
11. Community Voices
12. Conclusion
13. Locations of Interest

The [Key Findings](#) section provides an overview of the report’s findings, including a data dashboard for every indicator discussed in the report. There is one dashboard for each domain, and at the bottom of each dashboard, there are a series of tabs for users to click through the bar charts for each indicator within each domain. Each bar chart shows the data for each indicator broken down by race. Since Black outcomes are the focus of this report, Black outcomes are all represented by the orange bars in the chart. In this section, we also provide a brief [comparison](#) between Black Angelenos’ outcomes and those of Black people residing in different counties across the state and country. Near the end of this section of this report, after providing a summary of Black people’s outcomes at the countywide-level, we provide [hyperlocal data](#) through a [dashboard](#) that allows users to see a summary of community conditions at the sub-county level, including Black population size and percentage, in addition to the following indicators: average life expectancy, median household income, educational attainment rate, homeownership rate, poverty rate, unemployment rate, and eviction rate. In this dashboard, users can also enter their own address or zip code in the finder and see their community’s stats on the aforementioned indicators.

The next several sections of the online report hone in on the five key domains of this report including health ([physical](#) and [mental](#)), [housing and homelessness](#), [income and employment](#), [education](#), and [safety and justice](#). Here, we present racially disaggregated data on indicators within each domain. To provide context for these outcomes, we include analyses of the drivers and root causes for racial disparities on these indicators. These sections also include interactive maps as well as infographics ranking the communities within each Supervisorial District with the highest need on select indicators. For users interested in reading more, we provide QR codes to select articles or reports cited in each section, as well as a list of related topics we are exploring.

To supplement the charts, tables, and maps showcasing the data on how Black people in LA County are faring across a host of indicators, we include a section titled [“Community Voices,”](#) highlighting some of the personal stories of Black Angelenos who discuss their lived experiences with each of the issues elevated in the report. The final section of the report ([Conclusion](#)) focuses on next steps and future directions—including some areas of interest for future State of Black Los Angeles County reports. At the end of the report, we provide interactive maps for users to explore [Locations of Interest](#) in “Black Los Angeles County.” Here users to complete a brief survey letting us know which historical or contemporary landmarks to add.



## Robust Community Engagement

To ensure that the report reflected the concerns and lived experiences of everyday Black people in Los Angeles County, ARDI engaged in a robust community engagement process including a wide array of community engagement activities such as focus groups, listening sessions, work groups, one-on-one interviews, and more. Through these activities, we heard from groups and individuals representing a cross-section of the County population. One of these groups included the Community Input Advisory Board (CIAB). The CIAB, which is composed of local stakeholders, including community leaders, health and social services providers, and every day residents concerned about their communities, envisioned how the report could contribute to the existing knowledge around Black health and well-being outcomes in LA County. CIAB members shared ideas on how to accelerate the work by prioritizing areas in need of greater attention and investment and moving quickly into action by connecting with existing grassroots and power-building movements.

At one point during this process ARDI co-hosted listening sessions with local collaboratives and workgroups (primarily Black-led and/or centered on Black issues) to solicit their feedback about which issues they would like to see reflected in the report, which geographic areas they believed should be highlighted, and which sub-populations should be included. We also reviewed and integrated stakeholder feedback collected during the Countywide Racial Equity Strategic Plan listening sessions sponsored by the County and partner agencies, including Black-led organizations that compiled recommendations from their respective communities. More than 50 sessions took place over this time period, reaching over 1,300 participants. These sessions focused on five key strategic goal areas of which three link directly to this report: increasing the attainment of postsecondary credentials; increasing stable full-time employment; and reducing first-time felony convictions. Among participants, there was deep recognition that these three goals were interrelated and had a synergistic effect. For example, high school and college diplomas, as well as trade school certifications, they argue, are foundational to obtaining good, sustaining job opportunities – all of which serve as protective factors against involvement with the criminal justice system.

By and large, community members prioritized upstream interventions to interrupt the school-to-person pipeline, such as promoting youth development opportunities (e.g., science, technology, art, music, and other educational and career programs), as well as other supports to mitigate and/or prevent behaviors that jeopardize promising youth. These included more trauma-informed care and better access to substance use and mental health treatment. Other needed supports cited included affordable housing, living wages, childcare, and reliable public transit systems. People also elevated the need to acknowledge and address root causes, including bias in educational and employment practices, over-policing, and the criminalization of poverty.

Other community engagement activities include our interviews with local subject matter experts, internal County workgroup sessions, and qualitative interviews with local community members. Overall, there was a sense that transformational change is possible as long as sustained and meaningful action dedicated to eliminating racial disparities in LA County is prioritized.

# Research Framework, Data Collection, & Analysis

To create this report, ARDI partnered with researchers and scholars from two local research and academic institutions—the Mervyn M. Dymally African American Political & Economic Institute at California State University Dominguez Hills (CSUDH) and Capacity to Impact (CTI). We also worked closely with County’s Internal Services Department Enterprise GIS (eGIS) team. The research team’s research activities included researching the drivers and root causes of racial inequities on multiple health and well-being domains and indicators, conducting literature reviews on racial disparities in health and wellbeing, interviewing subject matter experts, developing a research framework, collecting and analyzing quantitative and geospatial data on multiple indicators, and conducting and analyzing qualitative interviews with Black Angelenos.



In order to ensure the rigor of our research and that our quantitative data findings aligned with Black Angelenos’ lived experiences, we adopted a mixed methods research approach defined as “research in which the investigator collects and analyzes data, integrates the findings, and draws inferences using both qualitative and quantitative approaches or methods in a single study or program of inquiry.”<sup>21</sup> This assures that the study results/findings are considered from the perspective of actual people so that the research is focused on their needs and priorities. To guide this process, we used Krieger’s Ecosocial Theory on Racism and Health.<sup>22</sup> Hence, we integrated our analysis of data from quantitative data sources,<sup>23</sup> geospatial analyses of local census and health survey data, and qualitative interviews with Black people who reside in LA County.

To assess Black Angelenos’ outcomes, we created a comprehensive equity framework including 36 indicators across multiple domains (see below).

PHYSICAL HEALTH	MENTAL HEALTH	HOUSING & HOMELESSNESS	INCOME & EMPLOYMENT	EDUCATION	CRIMINAL JUSTICE
Life expectancy	At risk for major depression	Homeownership	Median household income	High school diploma	Neighborhood safety
Obesity	Currently depressed	Accepted mortgage applications	Income per capita	College-going	Traffic stops
Diabetes	Likely has had serious psychological distress in the past year	Home value	Unemployment	Suspensions	Arrests
Insurance	Ever seriously thought about committing suicide	Rent-burdened Households	Poverty	Performance on standardized test (Math)	Use of force
Covid-19 vaccination	Needed help for mental health	Homelessness	College degree attainment	Performance on standardized test (English)	Incarceration ((County jail)
	Rec'd treatment for mental health	Eviction rate		Absences	
	Receiving counseling			Early childhood education participation	
	Taking medication Rx by a doctor				

The indicators were chosen after a rigorous vetting process, which included conducting literature reviews on each topic/domain, racial equity, and social determinants of health; conducting semi-structured interviews with local subject matter experts; and performing a feasibility assessment of preliminary indicators. After applying a rigorous set of criteria,<sup>24</sup> they created the framework above. The research team also reviewed the literature and spoke with local subject matter experts to identify some of the drivers and root causes, as well as other factors, contributing to racially disparate outcomes.

Once the framework was developed, we worked with the County’s Enterprise GIS team to collect, disaggregate, and analyze quantitative data from several data sources including census data and data collected and maintained by LA County agencies, the state of California, academic intuitions, and more. They also performed geospatial analyses of the data at multiple levels including by census tract, countywide statistical area (CSA), and countywide. To supplement the quantitative and geospatial data, ARDI conducted one-on-one interviews with a half dozen participants who identify as either Black or African American, and who grew up in and/or currently live in LA County. Interview questions focused on the interviewees’ lived experiences, particularly around the topics addressed in this report: education, economic opportunity, housing, health, and criminal justice. Interviewees were diverse and included people who identify as men, women, first-generation American, straight, queer, single, married or partnered, working-class, professional, college-educated, formerly incarcerated, parents with children, and formerly unhoused. Each of the interviewees spoke candidly about the challenges they have faced and/or continue face around race and racism. They also acknowledged the impact of structural racism on their lived experience and expressed a desire to see the County make the kinds of changes that will improve the lives of Black people in Los Angeles County.





## SECTION 3

# Highlights & Key Takeaways

Our report findings align with those of previous reports/studies examining racial inequity in Los Angeles County, which consistently show that Black Angelenos are less likely than other racial groups to enjoy good health, housing security, access to economic opportunities, quality education, and freedom from punishment and overpoliced communities (a summary of our findings on each indicator is provided in the next section). Further, our geospatial analyses show that adverse outcomes across multiple domains are often most acute in areas with higher concentrations of Black residents. On life expectancy, for example, the data show that among the 20 countywide statistical areas (CSAs) with the lowest average life expectancy, 14 have populations that are more than 20% Black. Similarly, in the area of housing and homelessness, the data show that among the 20 countywide statistical areas (CSAs) with the highest rate of evictions per 100 renters, eight are CSAs where Black residents comprise more than 20% of the population.<sup>25</sup> On homelessness, another housing indicator, the data show it is highest in Supervisorial District 2<sup>26</sup> at 36.2%. This supervisorial district has the highest percentage of Black residents in the County at 22.1%.

One important bright spot in our study was in the area of mental health where the data show that despite white residents being most likely to report that they were “currently depressed” (21.5%), Black residents (20.5% of whom reported that they were “currently depressed”) were more likely than any other group to report that they were receiving counseling from a mental health professional (59.4% compared to 55.2% of white residents). The same pattern emerged for people who reported “needing help” for mental and emotional issues in 2021 after the onset of the pandemic. Though Black residents were, again, second most likely (behind white residents) to report that they “needed help,” (25.5% compared to 30.5% of white residents), Black Angelenos were more likely than any other group to report that they received treatment for mental and emotional health issues. In fact, both before and after the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, among Black residents who reported that they “needed help” for a mental and/or emotional problem, approximately 62% reported that they were receiving help compared to 57.5% of white residents in 2019 and 59.8% in 2021.

These findings are striking given the barriers to access for mental health care for Black people, including lack of awareness, access, affordability, and culturally competent providers.<sup>27</sup> Historically, researchers and practitioners have found that although Black people tend to be disproportionately burdened by challenges such as economic insecurity, housing instability, race-based violence and discrimination, and overpoliced communities, they are less likely than their white peers to utilize mental health treatment.<sup>28</sup> Aside from the aforementioned barriers to access, other concerns such as feelings of mistrust toward the health care providers, fears of being stigmatized by peers and family members, a preference for non-traditional mental health resources (such as spiritual and religious), and other factors have also contributed to lower rates of “help seeking” for mental health challenges among Black people in this country.<sup>29</sup> Some observers have credited “diminishing stigma” as well as more widespread availability of telemedicine as just a few of the factors influencing an increase in the use of formal mental health services.<sup>30</sup>

While an increase in the use of mental health treatment among Black Angelenos should be a cause for celebration, in light of national data showing increases in suicide rates among Black youth<sup>31</sup> and more Black people in need of mental health care due to additional stressors brought on by the pandemic,<sup>32</sup> health officials and community advocates must monitor ongoing trends, encourage mental health literacy and help seeking, and advocate for more access to culturally competent mental health resources for Black people living in Los Angeles County.

---

# Summary of Findings: Black Outcomes in LA County

Below we provide a summary of the findings from the State of Black Los Angeles County Report for each domain.

## Physical Health

- The average life expectancy for Black residents in LA County, is 74.8 years — 12 years lower than Asian residents (86.6 years) and 6 ½ years lower than the County average (81.3 years).
- Black residents have disproportionately higher rates of obesity (32.5%) and diabetes (14.4%).
- Black rates of health insurance coverage (93.6%) are only slightly less than that of white (95.5%) and Asian residents (94.3) and the percent of Black residents with no usual source of health care (11.6%) is on par with their white counterparts (11.6%).
- While Asian (87.4%) and American Indian (84.3%) residents had the highest COVID-19 vaccination rates (i.e., rec'd first dose), Black residents had the lowest (60.2%).

## Mental Health

- Black residents in LA County (12.9%) were second most likely (behind Hispanic residents, 15.2%) to be “at risk for major depression” and second most likely (15.3%) (behind white residents, 16.5%) to be “currently depressed.”
- Black residents were less likely (17.4%) than white residents (19.1%) and Latino residents (19.1%) to report having serious psychological distress in the past year; and in 2021 (17.9%), less likely than white residents (19.6%) to report that they had seriously thought about committing suicide.
- However, among Black residents who reported that they needed help or were diagnosed as depressed were more likely than any other group to report that they were receiving treatment or counseling from a mental health professional for their mental health or emotional issues.
- Black residents currently diagnosed with depression were second most likely (67.2%) behind white residents (72.6%) to report that they were taking medication for depression prescribed by a doctor or psychiatrist.
- Black residents were the only group who saw a reduction in the percentage of individuals reporting that they needed help in 2019 before the onset of the pandemic (26.5%) and after the onset (2021) of the pandemic (25.5%).

## Housing

- Black people had the smallest homeownership rate in the County, 33.5% compared to 53.9% for white residents, 54.0% for Asian residents, and 39.1% for Latino residents. Black residents (61.9%) were also less likely than white (69%), Asian (69%), and Latino residents (64%) to have their mortgage applications accepted.
- Average white home values exceed Black home values by 1.65x.
- Black Angelenos are vastly overrepresented among those experiencing homeless. Estimates show that Black Angelenos make up 30% of the homeless population despite being less than 10% of the overall population in LA County.
- Black people are also more likely than every other racial group in the County to be rent-burdened (62%) and experience eviction (1.6 evictions/100 renter households).



## Income

- Black households have the lowest median income than any other racial/ethnic group in the County.
- Black households, on average, earn \$20,000 less than the County median (\$71,358 compared to \$51,259) and nearly \$40,000 less than white households.
- On income per capita, Black residents, on average, earn \$4,500 less than the County median income per capita (\$35,685 compared to \$31,175) and half of what white residents earn (\$61,426).
- Compared to 16% of white residents and 21% of Asian residents living below 200% of the Federal Poverty Line, 29% of Black residents live below this threshold.
- Black residents have the highest unemployment rate in the County of 10% compared to the County average of 6.5%.
- Black residents have college degree attainment rate (A.A., B.A., or higher) of 39.5%, compared to 62.2% for white residents and 61.6% for Asian residents.

## Education

- Fewer Black children (55.6%) in LA County are enrolled in any kind of childcare than white (77.2%) and Asian children (61.7%).
- On 3rd grade standardized test scores, Black students have the lowest scores on English (32.4%) and Math (32.1%) for students meeting or exceeding grade level performance.
- Black students also have the highest rates of school suspensions (5.6%) and absences (24.3%).
- The high school diploma rate for Black students is 73.54%, 14 – 20 percentage points less than white and Asian students.
- College-going rates for Black students is 58.5%, 81.2% for Asian students, and 72% for white students.



## Criminal Justice

- On neighborhood safety, the data show that Black residents (82.9%) were less likely than white (88.5%) and Asian (90.1%) residents to perceive their neighborhood as safe.
- When it came to contacts with law enforcement, white, Asian, and Latino residents were more likely to report that they had gone three years without being stopped by law enforcement. Hence, while only 67.8% of Black residents reported that they experienced “no stops by law enforcement in the last three year,” 85.7% of Asian, 80.6% of Latino, and 75.9% of white residents reported “no stops” over the last three years.
- Racial disparities in arrests were also apparent, as 14.1% of Black Angelenos reported that they were ever arrested and booked, compared to 13.1% of white, 8.7% of Latino, and 2.5% of Asian residents who reported the same, indicating that the experience was a more common occurrence among Black residents.
- On prison incarceration rate, Black residents were over 100x more likely than Asian residents, nearly 12x more likely than white residents, and close to 4.5x more likely than Hispanic/Latino residents to be incarcerated in California’s prisons.



## Next Steps

The research and data in this report on Black Los Angeles County residents' health and well-being provides clear evidence that Black people in Los Angeles County continue to experience the effects of structural and anti-Black racism perpetuated over generations. Efforts to address these challenges and reverse racially disproportionate outcomes will require well-informed policy, planning, and strategic partnerships. The findings in this report serve as a baseline and a starting point for the County to begin the work of adopting and implementing an anti-racist policy agenda, county-wide procedures facilitating department-level action, and strategic initiatives aimed at eliminating racial disparities across multiple domains.

In the spring of 2023, ARDI will host a countywide launch event to release the report. ARDI will then hold several public convenings to inform the community about the report and its findings and share how community input was integrated in the report. We will also host a series of workgroups and policy tables to develop a robust set of community-informed recommendations. Once presented to and approved by the Board, ARDI will seek alignment with existing initiatives internal to and outside the County to accelerate the work and move quickly into action. This will involve fostering strategic partnerships with community-based organizations, service providers, local governments, and philanthropy to support implementation of the recommendations.

To support the development of future reports, ARDI will convene an Academic Research Consortium (ARC) to consult on the addition of domains and indicators, as well as advise on additional data sources, data collection methods, and other tools to assess well-being and track improvement over time. The next State of Black Los Angeles County report is scheduled for completion in June 2024.

## Conclusion

**Black people are core to the strength and fabric of LA County.** As such, the County's overall well-being and success depends upon the collective well-being and success of its Black residents. To realize this, the County must take steps to undo the harm caused by anti-Black racism and implement policies that will enable Black people to thrive. We look forward to embarking on the journey of creating a Los Angeles County for all. We hope that you will visit [the report](#), explore the maps and other features, share with friends and neighbors, and send your comments or feedback on the report to us at [ardi@ceo.lacounty.gov](mailto:ardi@ceo.lacounty.gov).



## Works Cited

1. Los Angeles County Board Motion Establishing an Antiracist Los Angeles County Policy Agenda, July 21, 2020. <https://ceo.lacounty.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/Motion-Establishing-An-Antiracist-LA-County-Policy-Agenda-7.21.20final.pdf>
2. American Community Survey, 2020
3. South Central Rooted: A blueprint to dismantle multigenerational inequity and restore community health in South (Central) LA (2020). <https://southlaisthefuture.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/SouthCentralRootedFullReport.pdf>
4. "No Going Back: Together for an Equitable and Inclusive Los Angeles" (2020) by Manuel Pastor and Gary Segura [https://secureservercdn.net/50.62.89.111/bj6.4b9.myftpupload.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/USC\\_ERI\\_no-going-back\\_policy\\_report.pdf](https://secureservercdn.net/50.62.89.111/bj6.4b9.myftpupload.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/USC_ERI_no-going-back_policy_report.pdf)
5. i.e., "Countywide Statistical Areas".
6. "No Going Back: Together for an Equitable and Inclusive Los Angeles" (2020) by Manuel Pastor and Gary Segura <https://dornsife.usc.edu/eri/no-going-back>
7. Compared to 29% of Black workers in jobs considered both "essential" and "high risk" (i.e., working in close proximity to others), only 17% of white workers occupied the same category
8. "No Going Back: Together for an Equitable and Inclusive Los Angeles" (2020) by Manuel Pastor and Gary Segura [https://secureservercdn.net/50.62.89.111/bj6.4b9.myftpupload.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/USC\\_ERI\\_no-going-back\\_policy\\_report.pdf](https://secureservercdn.net/50.62.89.111/bj6.4b9.myftpupload.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/USC_ERI_no-going-back_policy_report.pdf)
9. The wealthy scramble for COVID-19 vaccines: 'If I donate \$25,000 ... would that help me?' <https://www.latimes.com/california/story/2020-12-18/wealthy-patients-scramble-covid-19-vaccine>; Young L.A. 'vaccine chasers' crowd unofficial standby lines in hopes of a shot (January 23, 2021) <https://www.latimes.com/california/story/2021-01-23/standby-lines-backdoor-vaccine-access>; L.A. officials allowed dozens without medical credentials to get COVID-19 vaccine early (January 6, 2021) by Laura J. Nelson, Maya Lau, Joel Rubin <https://www.latimes.com/california/story/2021-01-06/how-la-covid-vaccine-line-skips-healthcare-workers>; The Wealthy Are Getting More Vaccinations, Even in Poorer Neighborhoods (Published Feb. 2, 2021, updated March 4, 2021). By Abby Goodnough and Jan Hoffman. <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/02/health/white-people-covid-vaccines-minorities.html>; California clinics: More vaccines going to rich than at-risk (Updated Mar 3, 2021) by Amy Taxin and Jamie Har. <https://www.kcra.com/article/california-clinics-more-vaccines-going-to-rich-than-at-risk/35714220#>
10. New Map Shows Deep Inequities in L.A.'S COVID-19 Vaccine Rollout (FEBRUARY 20, 202) by Sandhya Kambhampati, Iris Lee, Rahul Mukherjee and Ryan Murphy. <https://www.latimes.com/projects/la-covid-vaccine-racial-disparities-by-neighborhood-map/>
11. Johnson, Jr., S.L., Bishop, J.P., Howard, T.C., James, A., Rivera, E., Noguera, P.A. (2021). Beyond the Schoolhouse, Digging Deeper: COVID-19 & Reopening Schools for Black Students in Los Angeles. Center for the Transformation of Schools, School of Education & Information Studies, University of California, Los Angeles. <https://transformschoools.ucla.edu/research/beyond-the-schoolhouse-digging-deeper/>
12. <https://www.nih.gov/news-events/news-releases/more-140000-us-children-lost-primary-or-secondary-caregiver-due-covid-19-pandemic>
13. <https://www.kidsdata.org/demographic/13/african-americanblack-children/summary#60/demographics>
14. Kidman R, Margolis R, Smith-Greenaway E, Verdery AM (2021). Estimates and Projections of COVID-19 and Parental Death in the US. *JAMA Pediatr.*, 175(7):745–746. [https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jamapediatrics/fullarticle/2778229?guestAccessKey=43aa3546-0434-4397-b992-5e4806ea7953&utm\\_source=For\\_The\\_Media&utm\\_medium=referral&utm\\_campaign=ftm\\_links&utm\\_content=tf1&utm\\_term=040521](https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jamapediatrics/fullarticle/2778229?guestAccessKey=43aa3546-0434-4397-b992-5e4806ea7953&utm_source=For_The_Media&utm_medium=referral&utm_campaign=ftm_links&utm_content=tf1&utm_term=040521)

15. [California's Future; Health Inequities and the Spread of COVID-19 Across LA County; Pathways for Economic Resiliency: Los Angeles County 2021-2026; The Los Angeles Housing Crisis: in the Wake of the COVID-19 Global Pandemic](#)
16. No Going Back: Policies for an Equitable and Inclusive Los Angeles. (September 2020)  
[https://dornsife.usc.edu/assets/sites/1411/docs/USC\\_ERI\\_no-going-back\\_policy\\_report.pdf](https://dornsife.usc.edu/assets/sites/1411/docs/USC_ERI_no-going-back_policy_report.pdf)
17. [RACE COUNTS: Advancing Opportunities for All Californians; South Central Rooted: A blueprint to dismantle multi-generational inequity and restore community health in south \(central\) LA](#); South Central Rooted: A blueprint to dismantle multigenerational inequity and restore community health in South (Central) LA (2020). <https://southlaisthefuture.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/SouthCentralRootedFullReport.pdf>
18. Call to Action: Structural Racism as a Fundamental Driver of Health Disparities, p. 456
19. National Action Committee on the Status of Women International Perspectives: Women and Global Solidarity
20. CEOARE Racial Equity Implementation Framework <https://ceoactionracialequity.com/insights/ceoare-racial-equity-implementation-framework/>
21. Regnault, A., Willgoss, T., Barbic, S. et al. Towards the use of mixed methods inquiry as best practice in health outcomes research. J Patient Rep Outcomes 2, 19 (2018). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s41687-018-0043-8> (p. 2)
22. It states that people embody their exposures and circumstances and that "Racial disparities are physical expressions of societal inequity. Exposure to injustice accumulates from utero to death, from the individual level to the global level, and through multiple 'pathways of embodiment' such as economic deprivation and social trauma." LaFave, S. E., Banteen-Roche, K., Gee, G., Thorpe, R. J., Li, Q., Crews, D., ... & Szanton, S. L. (2022). Quantifying Older Black Americans' Exposure to Structural Racial Discrimination: How Can We Measure the Water in Which We Swim?. Journal of Urban Health, 99(5), 794-802, p. 796. Chicago
23. including census data and data from government agencies, including survey data
24. See the criteria is detailed in the [Research Framework, Data Collection, and Analysis](#) section of the report.
25. These CSA include: Unincorporated - Rancho Dominguez, Unincorporated - Rosewood/West Rancho Dominguez, City of Compton, City of Inglewood, Los Angeles - Figueroa Park Square, Unincorporated - Athens-Westmont, Los Angeles - Exposition, Los Angeles - Century Palms/Cove
26. represented by Board Supervisor Mitchell
27. Harris, J. R. A., Crumb, L., Crowe, A., & McKinney, J. G. (2020). African Americans' perceptions of mental illness and preferences for treatment. Journal of Counselor Practice, 11(1), 1-33.  
[https://www.journalofcounselorpractice.com/uploads/6/8/9/4/68949193/10.22229\\_afa112020.pdf](https://www.journalofcounselorpractice.com/uploads/6/8/9/4/68949193/10.22229_afa112020.pdf)
28. Harris, et. al (2020).
29. Harris, et. al (2020).
30. "Increasing numbers of Black Americans report mental health concerns, survey finds," (October 3, 2022) by Marcus Biddle  
<https://why.org/articles/more-black-americans-report-mental-health-concerns-survey/>
31. "African American Youth Suicide: Report to Congress." U.S. Department of Health & Human Services (October 2020)  
[https://www.nimh.nih.gov/sites/default/files/documents/health/topics/suicide-prevention/african\\_american\\_youth\\_suicide-report\\_to\\_congress.pdf](https://www.nimh.nih.gov/sites/default/files/documents/health/topics/suicide-prevention/african_american_youth_suicide-report_to_congress.pdf); Ring the Alarm: The Crisis of Black Youth Suicide in America A Report to Congress from The Congressional Black Caucus Emergency TaskForce on Black Youth Suicide and Mental Health (2019). [https://watsoncoleman.house.gov/imo/media/doc/full\\_taskforce\\_report.pdf](https://watsoncoleman.house.gov/imo/media/doc/full_taskforce_report.pdf)
32. "Black mental health: Black Americans' behavioral health needs outpace access to care," (May 31, 2022). By Michelle Guerra  
<https://healthcare.rti.org/insights/black-mental-health-and-behavioral-health-disparities>





## County of Los Angeles **Anti-Racism, Diversity, & Inclusion**

### The LA County Anti-Racism, Diversity, and Inclusion (ARDI) Initiative

On July 21, 2020 the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors unanimously passed a motion to establish an Anti-Racist Los Angeles County Policy Agenda to address “generational inequality and systemic anti-Black racism.” This is the Board’s 8th Directed Priority.

Recognizing that racism is “a matter of public health in Los Angeles County,” and that racism against Black people and communities of color has resulted in large disparities in family stability, health and wellbeing, education, employment, economic development, public safety, criminal justice, and housing, the Board directed the County Chief Executive Officer to establish the Anti-Racism, Diversity, and Inclusion (ARDI) Initiative, which is now led by Dr. D’Artagnan Scorza as Executive Director of Racial Equity.

#### Our Initiative Functions

- Training and Capacity Building
- Data Collection, Analysis, and Reporting
- Technical Assistance and Planning
- Policy Analysis and Development
- Community and Stakeholder Engagement
- Equity-Infused Programming and Resourcing

#### Current Board-Directed ARDI Areas of Focus

- Child & Family Welfare
- Equitable Resource Investment
- Health
- Justice
- Policy
- Sustainability
- Truth, Racial Healing & Transformation
- Workforce Culture & Climate

To learn more, visit our website at <https://ceo.lacounty.gov/ardi/>  
or email us at [ardi@ceo.lacounty.gov](mailto:ardi@ceo.lacounty.gov).