

Hillsborough County Health Equity Profile



THE OFFICE OF HEALTH EQUITY
THE FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH IN HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY
Created June 2020



Dear Community Members:

In 2020, we started the new year like any new year, full of hope for what the future would bring. But we quickly saw COVID-19 in the news, making its way across the United States and to Florida. COVID-19 has made health inequities, or differences in health outcomes due to unfair, unjust, avoidable differences in health, more visible in the news. Nationally we have continued to see disparities in COVID-19, as Black residents and other residents of color experience cases and deaths at a higher rate than White residents.

There are other health inequities among residents in Hillsborough County. These inequities are shaped by conditions in our community; the policies and practices that have determined what our community looks like. Those conditions include the environments where we live, work, learn and play.

Diabetes, infant death, HIV and other problems are known to affect Black and other residents of color at higher rates than White residents. These health inequities are nothing new in our nation's history, in which Black, Indigenous and other people of color have been marginalized for over 400 years. Our country has a history of policies and practices that have been discriminatory in nature, intended to suppress the power of groups of people based on race, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, native language, income level and other characteristics.

So, how do we address these problems? The Office of Health Equity at the Florida Department of Health in Hillsborough County works towards policy, system and environmental changes that will help to improve community conditions. With your help and the involvement of community leaders, we can make the changes necessary to support our belief that ***good health should be an option for everyone*** in Hillsborough County.

Sincerely,

The Office of Health Equity
The Florida Department of Health in Hillsborough County

Hillsborough County Health Equity Profile

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INTRODUCTION

"**Health equity** means that everyone has a fair and just opportunity to be as healthy as possible. This requires removing obstacles to health such as poverty, discrimination, and their consequences, including powerlessness and lack of access to good jobs with fair pay, quality education and housing, safe environments, and healthcare." –*Robert Wood Johnson Foundation*¹

Health is about more than genetics. Available choices and lifestyle play a big role in health. Housing, income, education and access to resources like health care, parks, transportation and nutritious food determine the options available.



The places where people live, learn, work and play have a big impact on whether or not they can achieve good health.

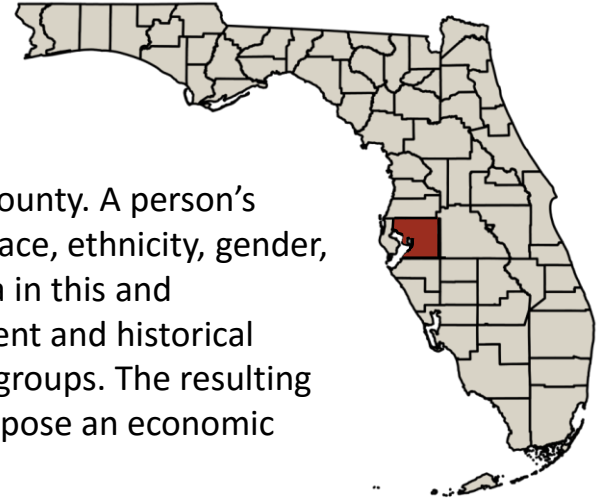


The whole person is affected throughout their life by the environment in which they live.

The Hillsborough County Health Equity Profile explores the differences in opportunity for health among residents using select local data on neighborhoods, transportation, income, education and health care access in Hillsborough County, FL.

In Hillsborough County

We have not yet achieved health equity in Hillsborough County. A person's opportunity to live a healthy life can vary based on their race, ethnicity, gender, income, age and other factors. This is shown through data in this and other reports. These differences in health are due to current and historical discrimination against people of color, women and other groups. The resulting health inequities are avoidable, unfair, and unjust, and impose an economic burden on all members of the community.



Themes

A recurring theme throughout this report is that social factors are interconnected; one factor can have a ripple effect on many others. For example, education and income impact access to safe and healthy neighborhoods, reliable, affordable transportation and affordable, quality health care. All of these factors separately and combined impact health outcomes. Other systemic factors that can impact health in our communities include homelessness, access to traditional financial institutions, policing and incarceration, voting rights and pre-school enrollment. Changes to policies, systems and the built environment through approaches such as Health in All Policies can help to reduce these inequities.

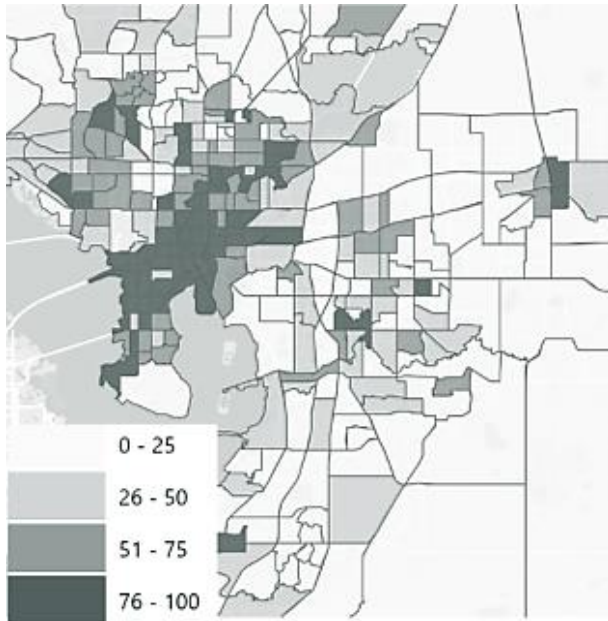


GOOD HEALTH SHOULD BE AN OPTION FOR EVERYONE

The Florida Department of Health in Hillsborough County's Office of Health Equity supports programs & partnerships that advance health equity by addressing inequities in the conditions in people's lives, and by ensuring health services are accessible to those with limited resources. We invite you to join in our efforts. Health equity is everyone's responsibility, and we all have a role to play.

NEIGHBORHOODS matter for health.

The conditions where people live and play have a tremendous impact on health. When people have places to exercise, affordable and nutritious food, and feel safe, they have a foundation for making healthy choices and living healthy lives. Many places in Hillsborough County lack the structural and psychological conditions needed for good health. Conditions needed for health equity include affordable housing, access to goods and services, and a feeling of safety.



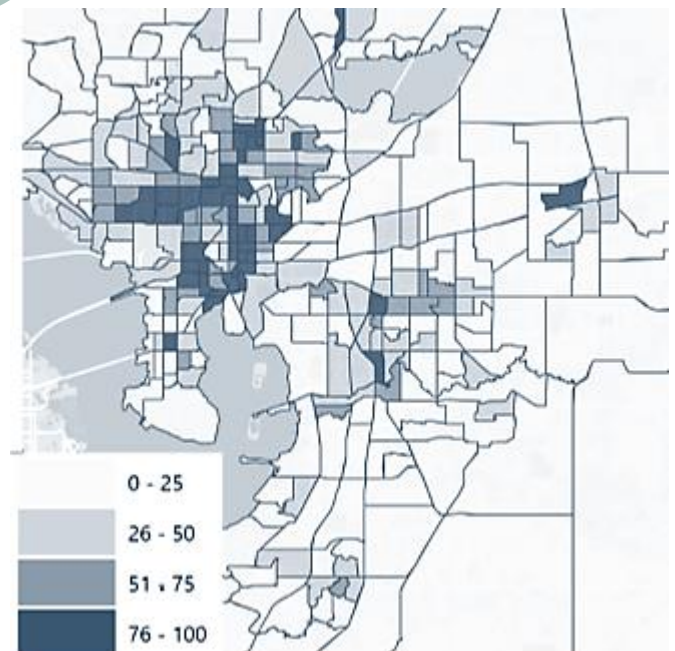
Percent of Population Living Within a 10-Minute Walk of a Park (2019)²



More than half of residents (56%) live farther than a 10-minute walk from a park.²

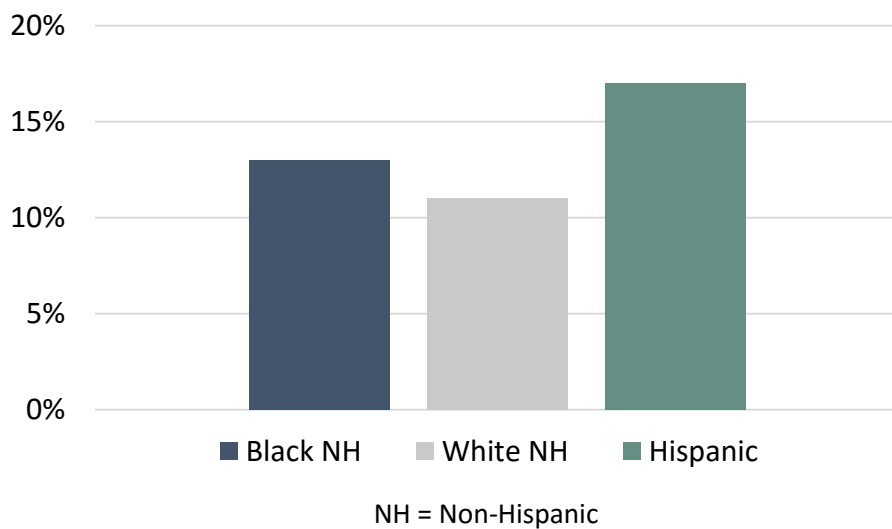


2 out of 3 residents (67%) live farther than a 10-minute walk from a healthy food source.²



Percent of Population Living Within a 10-Minute Walk of a Healthy Food Source (2019)²

Parents in Hillsborough County Who Report Feeling Unsafe in Their Neighborhood by Race/Ethnicity (2019) ³



1 in 5 parents with household income less than \$25,000 report feeling unsafe in their neighborhoods compared to less than 1 in 10 parents with household income of \$50,000 or over.³

The Office of Health Equity is working to make improvements:

- To address healthy and affordable food, we work with the Tampa Bay Network to End Hunger which aims to connect community members with food providers and the local food system.
- To expand the availability of free and low-cost recreational opportunities, we conducted a Health Impact Assessment evaluating the feasibility of fitness classes through Hillsborough County Parks and Recreation locations.
- To address differences in available services, we conducted neighborhood walkability studies that show some communities have walkable neighborhoods, and some do not.
- To support neighborhood development, we partner with organizations such as the Corporation to Develop Communities, Inc. (CDC) in the University Area and East Tampa.

More is needed. Tell us how we can support your efforts or join us by:

- Becoming involved in the civic process. Attend public meetings of county government and make public comments on behalf of others when appropriate.
- Telling your city or county public works department when you see roadway and sidewalk improvements that need to be made.
- Considering the health impacts of decisions before they are made, using a Health in All Policies approach.

TRANSPORTATION matters for health.

Reliable and affordable transportation gives people access to jobs, education, groceries, health care and other goods and services needed for healthy living. Communities that are walkable, bikeable and with good public transportation lead to better health than communities without these options. But transportation by motor vehicles also threatens health through crashes, pollution and physical inactivity. When looking at transportation, what is needed for health equity is a balance between safety, connectivity and affordability for all people.



Areas of high traffic volume in Hillsborough County are shown in the image to the left, where the larger, red and orange dots mean more traffic. These are some of the same places that also have higher:

- Numbers of severe traffic crashes
- Concentrations of airborne particulate matter (PM2.5)
- Rates of asthma, stroke, diabetes, depression and chronic obstructive pulmonary disorder
- Rates of unemployment
- Rates of Black and Hispanic residents

Average Traffic Count Station Data (2013 – 2018)¹⁸

"Older adults, people of color, and people walking in low-income communities are disproportionately represented in fatal crashes involving people walking."⁵



Low-income communities are *less likely* to have **sidewalks, marked crosswalks** and **street design** to support safer, slower speeds for traffic calming.

*-Dangerous By Design, 2019*⁵

\$65

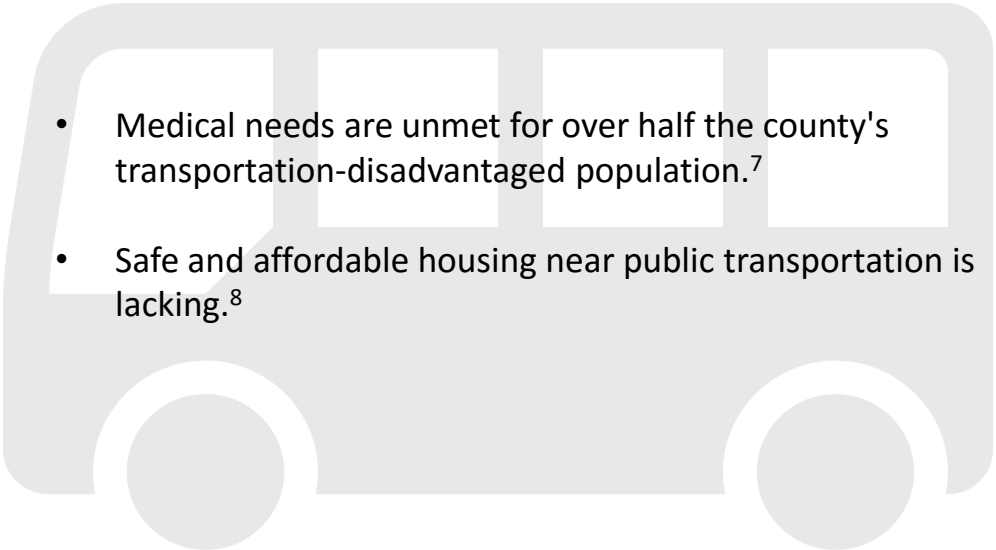
The cost of a 31-day unlimited ride bus pass in Hillsborough County. This is in line with most, but not all, major metropolitan bus fares across the Southeast US.⁶

\$68

The daily wage for someone earning the approximate 8-hour pre-tax Florida minimum wage. Meeting other survival budget expenses can be daunting. Limited numbers of discount bus passes are available.

The percent of 1,216 Department of Health clients in a 2018 study that said transportation problems were the reason for one or more missed appointments.⁷

20%

- 
- Medical needs are unmet for over half the county's transportation-disadvantaged population.⁷
 - Safe and affordable housing near public transportation is lacking.⁸

The Office of Health Equity is working to make improvements:

- Transportation and planning are addressed through our participation in advisory committees of the Hillsborough County Metropolitan Planning Organization focused on transportation-disadvantaged populations, bicycle and pedestrian groups and technical transportation issues.
- Community traffic safety is addressed through our involvement with Vision Zero Hillsborough, the local chapter of a global initiative to reduce traffic fatalities and serious injuries to zero.

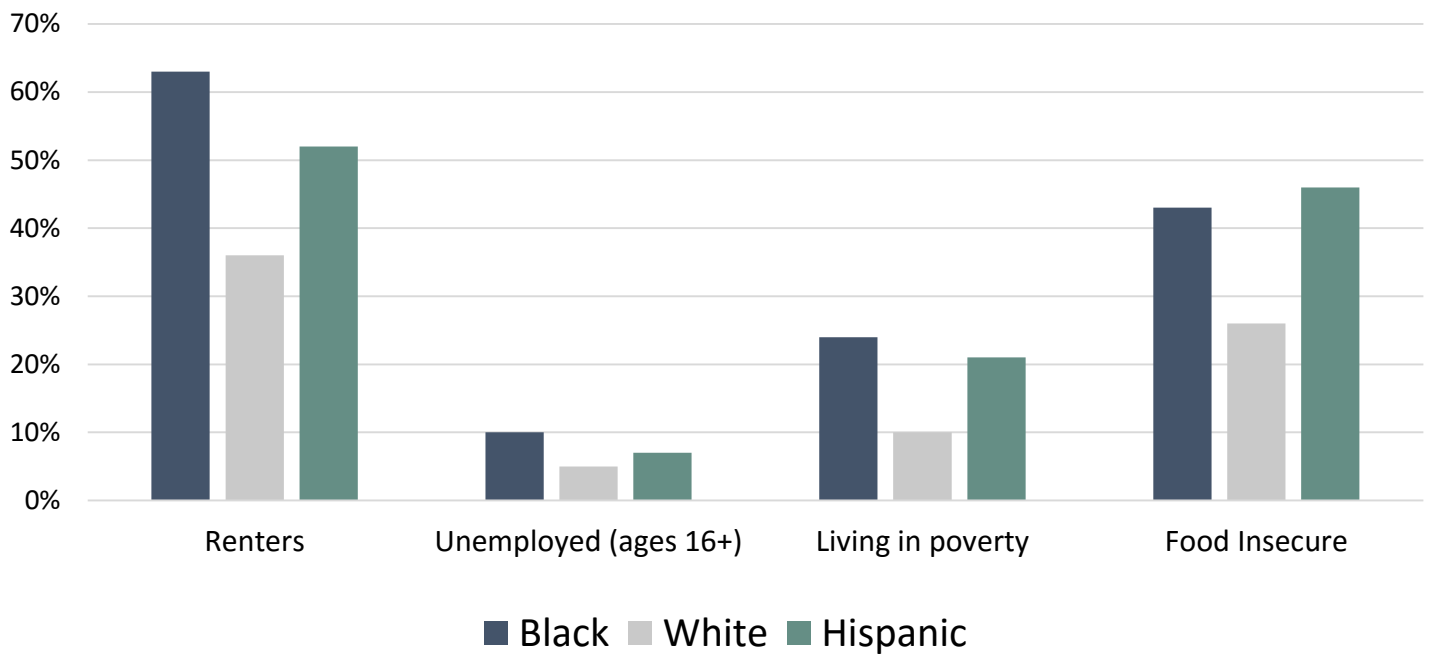
More is needed. Tell us how we can support your efforts or join us by:

- Considering the health impacts of transportation and other decisions made in our community through a Health in All Policies approach.
- Supporting affordable public transportation options and transportation improvements, particularly in areas of high need and in unincorporated Hillsborough County.
- Joining Vision Zero Hillsborough to stand with others to prevent needless traffic deaths.

INCOME matters for health.

Income has a strong influence on health and longevity. When people have enough income to support their needs – including healthy food, transportation, education, health care and more – and they have enough saved for unexpected expenses, they are more likely to achieve good health. When people lack adequate income, they face many barriers to good health. In Hillsborough County, residents of color make up the majority of those who are experiencing economic hardships. This contributes to health inequities.

Economic Conditions Among Adults in Hillsborough County by Race/Ethnicity (2018) ^{2,9}



Residents who have a disability* face additional barriers to economic stability.⁹

Residents of Hillsborough County	Employed	< 100% of Federal Poverty Level
With a Disability	21.3%	20.8%
Without a Disability	67.5%	12.1%

*Any intellectual, developmental or physical disability

Food Insecurity means not having consistent access to enough food for an active, healthy life.

61% of adults with household income under \$25,000 report food insecurity, compared to only 17% of adults with a household income of \$50,000 or over. About half of adults with household income \$25,000 - \$49,000 report food insecurity.³



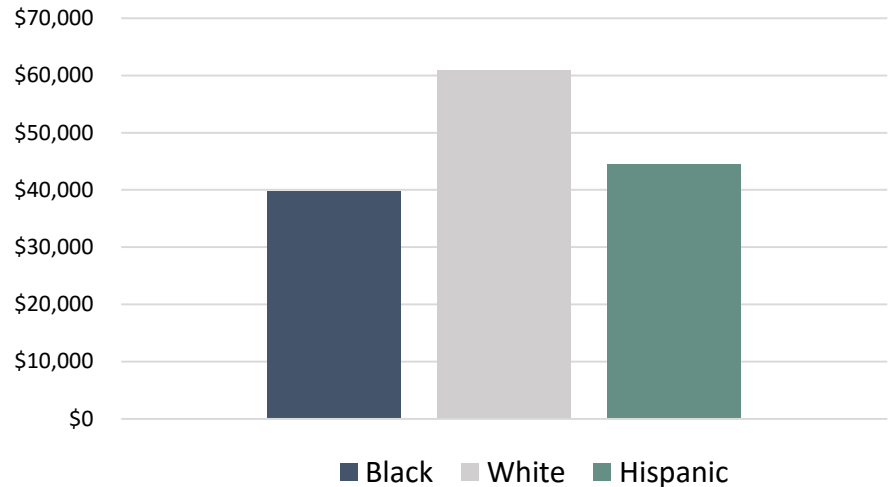
Affordable housing is a significant challenge.

48% of renters in Hillsborough County spend > 30% of their income on rent, and half of people who rent experience unsafe housing conditions.¹⁰

A female householder living alone earns an average income of \$27,401 in Hillsborough County. Her male counterpart earns \$10,000 more at \$37,444.⁹



Annual Median Income in Hillsborough County Across Race/Ethnicity (2018)⁹



The Office of Health Equity is working to make improvements:

- Food insecurity is addressed by expanding the use of a food insecurity screening and referral system in health care settings, included in the 2020-2025 DOH-Hillsborough Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP).
- Low and no-cost birth control, exams and education are provided to women, men and teens through Title X family planning services contracted with local health centers.

More is needed. Tell us how we can support your efforts or join us by:

- Supporting the Tampa Bay Network to End Hunger in their efforts to prevent needy seniors, vulnerable children, and others in our region from going to bed hungry.
- Partnering with the Corporations to Develop Communities, Inc., which provide job training, financial counseling and home-ownership programs.
- Becoming involved in our Food Insecurity Action Plan, as published in our 2020-2025 CHIP.
- Being a champion for state and federal policies that give families access to food relief.
- Ensuring your organization or business strives for excellence as an Equal Opportunity Employer.
- Promoting equitable pay among various groups where you work.

EDUCATION matters for health.

Education is an important factor in overall health and quality of life. When people receive quality education, they have access to better jobs, higher earnings and more resources for health.

Education improves social and psychological wellbeing and health behaviors. However, quality education is not accessible in many communities, mainly those that have low-income residents, or are mostly communities of color. Health equity requires access to quality education for all people.



Reading proficiency predicts lifelong learning.

- Black and Hispanic 4th graders scored, on average, lower than White 4th graders on reading tests in 2019.¹¹
- Students who are eligible for reduced lunch (from households facing economic hardship) also scored lower than those who are ineligible.

Standardized test scores are lower for Black, Hispanic and low-income students nationwide. This achievement gap is understood to be the result of 1) differences in school environments and resources and 2) differences in broader social, cultural and economic factors that impact the home environment.¹⁷

4th Grade Students In Hillsborough County (2019) ¹¹	Average Score (240 is National Proficiency)
Black	207
White	236
Hispanic	220
Eligible for Reduced Lunch	215
Ineligible for Reduced Lunch	242

Out of school suspensions predict school drop-outs and arrests.

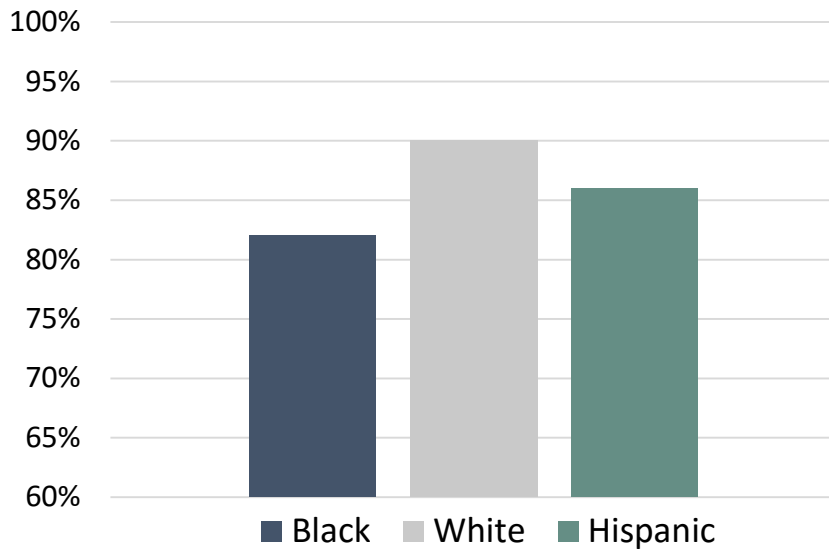
Black students are suspended from school at a higher rate than White students, in Hillsborough County¹³ and nationally. Research¹⁶ suggests this is because:

- Black students' behaviors are more likely to be interpreted by teachers as insubordinate when **compared with the same behavior** in White students. This is an example of **implicit bias**, which refers to the attitudes that affect peoples' understandings, beliefs and behavior, sometimes unconsciously.
- Black students are more likely to attend schools with a "zero tolerance" policy for misbehavior.
- Black students are more likely to be facing additional barriers, such as food insecurity, which can negatively impact behavior and decision-making.

In the Hillsborough County School District during the 2017-2018¹³ school year...

- **46% of suspensions were of Black students**, yet only 21% of students were Black.
- **18% of suspensions were of White students**, yet 33% of students were White.
- **32% of suspensions were of Hispanic students**, and 36% of students were Hispanic.

Ninth Graders in Hillsborough County Who Graduate Within 4 Years by Race/Ethnicity (2018-19)¹⁵



Male teens are 7% less likely to graduate high school within 4 years of ninth grade compared to female teens.¹⁵



34% of White residents receive a bachelor's degree, compared to 23% of Black residents and 21% of Hispanic residents.⁹



Among residents 25 years or older, 18% of those with a disability do not have a high school diploma, compared to 10% of those without a disability.*⁹

*Any intellectual, developmental, or physical disability

The Office of Health Equity is working to make improvements:

- School health is addressed through our partnership within the multi-agency School Health Advisory Committee.
- Early childhood education is addressed through participation on the Early Learning Coalition of Hillsborough County Board.
- Health literacy is addressed through ongoing training and education for DOH-Hillsborough staff and a continuous commitment to health literacy within our programming.

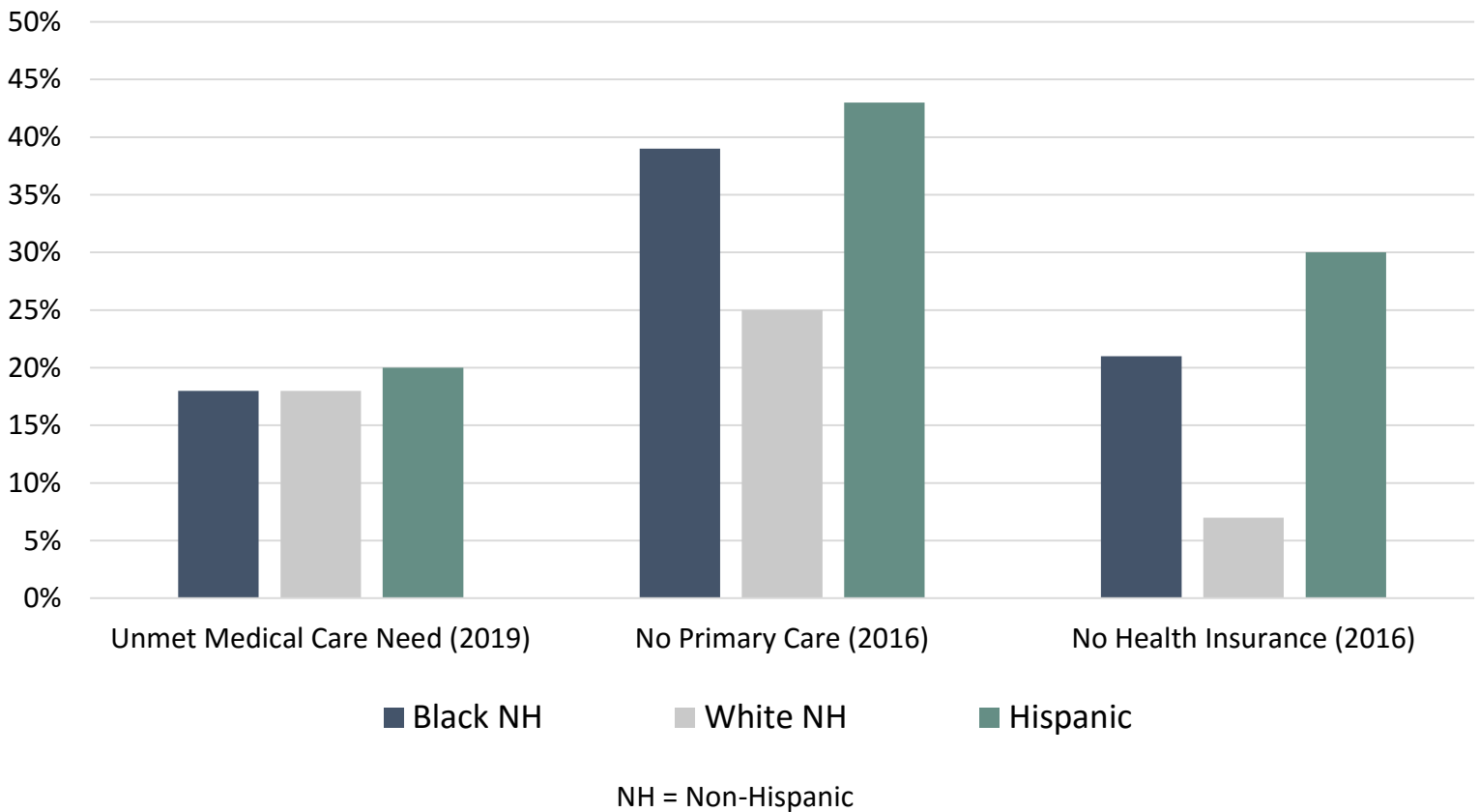
More is needed. Tell us how we can support your efforts or join us by:

- Supporting equitable funding for schools across Hillsborough County.
- Becoming a volunteer tutor for youth in disadvantaged communities through Big Brothers Big Sisters of Tampa Bay or another tutoring/mentoring organization.

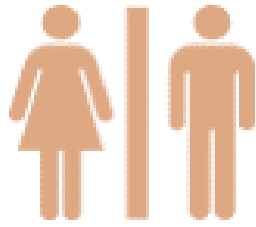
HEALTH CARE ACCESS matters for health.

Health care access means being able to use health services when you need them, which improves overall health and wellbeing. Being able to access quality and comprehensive health services is important for promoting and maintaining health. In Hillsborough County, health care access varies by race, ethnicity, income, gender and other social and economic factors. This contributes to health inequities.

Health Care Access Among Residents in Hillsborough County by Race/Ethnicity ^{3,4}



Residents of color visit the Emergency Room (ER) for diabetes and asthma at three times the rate of White residents. ⁴ This happens in part because residents of color are more likely to be uninsured and lack primary care. As a result, people are less likely to receive needed preventive care and disease management support that could help them avoid using the ER.



Men are 30% less likely to have a personal doctor compared to women and are 11% less likely to have health insurance.⁴



1 in 3 adults (33%) with a household income less than \$25,000 has no health insurance, compared to only 1 in 20 (5%) of adults with a household income of \$50,000 or greater.⁴



1 in 4 adults (25%) ages 26-34 has no health insurance. Among all age groups combined, 1 in 5 (20%) has no health insurance.³

The Office of Health Equity is working to make improvements:

- Health care access is addressed in partnership with federally-qualified health centers that offer low or no cost primary care and other services.
- We work with The Healthy Start Coalition to increase access to medical care and community resources and provide information county-wide to better ensure all moms and babies have the care they need.
- To increase access to dental care, we contract with local health centers to provide services for children, pregnant women and postpartum women.

More is needed. Tell us how we can support your efforts or join us by:

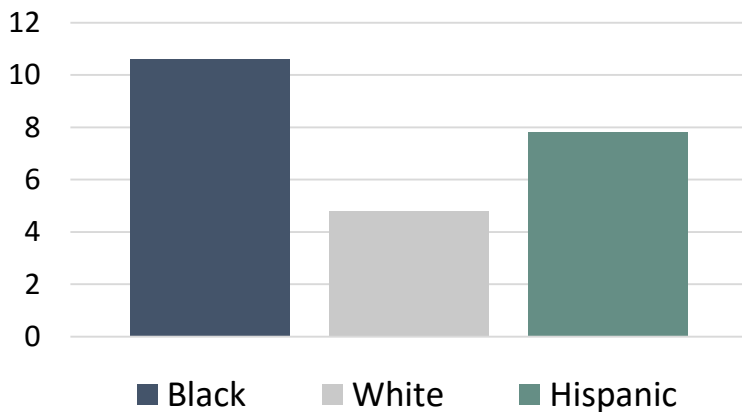
- Being a champion for state and federal policies that support access to affordable health care services.
- Becoming involved in our Access to Health Services Action Plan in our 2020-2025 Community Health Improvement Plan.
- Evaluating policies in your organization that support good health, such as access to health insurance and paid sick leave.

Differences in DEATH & DISEASE are the result of differences in life conditions and resources.

This report shows inequities in neighborhoods, transportation, education, economic conditions and health care access for residents of Hillsborough County. These conditions are important factors for good health. Therefore, health outcomes vary across groups of people. These differences in health— **HEALTH INEQUITIES**— are avoidable, unfair, and unjust.

There are many health inequities in Hillsborough County. These are just a few.

Infant Deaths per 1,000 Live Births in Hillsborough County by Race/Ethnicity (2018)⁴



Black mothers die from childbirth complications at 3 times the rate of White mothers.⁴

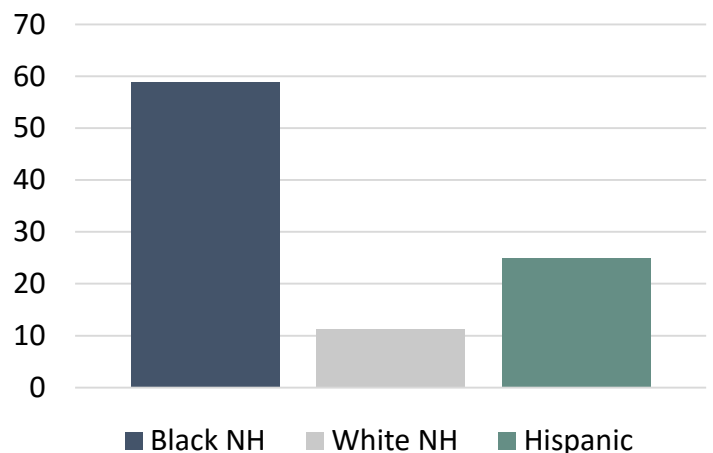
INJURY & VIOLENCE⁴

Black residents are hospitalized with non-fatal firearm injuries at 8 times the rate of white residents.

Black and Hispanic residents are twice as likely to die from drowning compared to White residents.

Black residents die from homicide at 4 times the rate of White residents.

New HIV Cases per 100,000 Residents (2018)⁴



Black residents are more likely to die from cancer than White residents.

This is partly because Black residents are more likely to lack access to quality health care, and therefore receive delayed cancer screenings and begin cancer-related treatment further into the course of the disease than White residents. ⁴



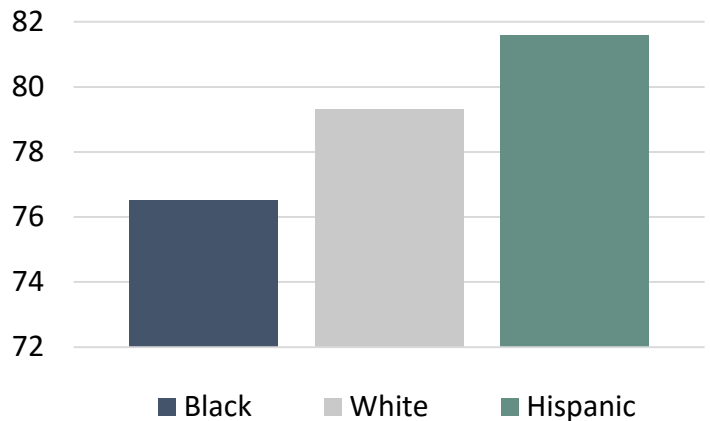
Age-Adjusted Cancer Death Rate Per 100,000 Population (2018) ⁴				
Residents	Prostate	Cervical	Breast	Colorectal
Black	34.1	4.5	26.1	21
White	14.1	3	17.2	14.9

Twice as many Black residents die from **diabetes** compared to White residents. ⁴

MENTAL HEALTH

33% of residents earning less than \$25,000 rated their mental health as fair or poor compared to 15% of residents earning \$50,000 or more.

Life Expectancy in Years in Hillsborough County by Race/Ethnicity (2018)⁴



The Office of Health Equity is working to make improvements:

- Infant deaths are addressed through the Florida Healthy Babies initiative, local community health improvement and strategic plans, and through local partnerships.
- Community health priorities are assessed regularly through engaging residents in our Community Health Assessment and addressed through our Community Health Improvement Plans.
- Mental health is addressed by providing Mental Health First Aid trainings through All4HealthFL, a four-county collaborative of not-for-profit hospitals and local health departments.

More is needed. Tell us how we can support your efforts or join us by:

- Acknowledging that there are factors outside of a person’s control that impact their health.
- Continuing to educate yourself on factors that impact health inequities.
- Partnering with local organizations that are engaged in health equity work.
- Sharing this report with friends and colleagues and engaging in discussions on health equity.

Conclusion

In Hillsborough County, not everyone has a fair opportunity to be healthy. Join us in our goal to achieve health equity in our community and tell us how we can support your efforts. We all have a role to play. In this report we provide multiple examples of specific ways to get involved.

You can support policies and decisions that improve access to health care, neighborhood safety, access to healthy food and parks, transportation, economic development and educational attainment, especially for communities of color and other marginalized groups.

You can become a health equity champion in your professional role and in your personal life, by understanding and acting upon the idea that health outcomes are strongly influenced by the conditions in which people live, and all people deserve the opportunity to be healthy.

You can become involved in initiatives that change our **policies, systems and environments** (PSEs) ¹⁴ so they support good health. PSEs are highlighted because they are the structural ways that problems have been created.

- Policy change can include changes in laws and budgetary measures or increasing public oversight. Some examples of public health policies are smoke-free places, seatbelt laws, funding local public health programs and considering health when planning or making policy changes through a Health in All Policies approach.
- Systems changes address how organizations work together to accomplish an outcome, and can include internal changes such as organizational practices, like screening for food insecurity at hospitals and referring people to food banks.
- Environmental changes impact the physical environment where we live, work, learn and play, such as how many parks and libraries are in a community, and whether there are crosswalks at intersections.

Join us in making changes to the PSEs in our community. They can have a lasting impact for present and future residents of Hillsborough County, and can help make **good health an option for everyone**.

Contact us at HillsboroughHealthEquity@flhealth.gov.

GOOD HEALTH SHOULD BE AN OPTION FOR EVERYONE

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