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**MAYOR LIGHTFOOT AND CHICAGO DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH ANNOUNCE
UNION PARTNERSHIPS AND ADDITIONAL SCOPE FOR RACIAL EQUITY RAPID
RESPONSE TEAM IN RESPONSE TO SURGE IN LATINX CASES**

New data shows Latinx Chicagoans diagnosed and dying at higher rates from COVID-19

CHICAGO – Mayor Lori E. Lightfoot and the Chicago Department of Public Health (CDPH) today joined union leaders to announce a new phase in the City's plan to address the racial health disparities exacerbated by the COVID-19 outbreak, including new data showing the disproportionate impact on Chicago's Latinx community. As part of a robust response plan, the City has formed a partnership with SEIU Local 1, UNITE HERE Local 1, and the Construction and General Laborers' District Council of Chicago and Vicinity to better protect essential workers and address inequities across the city. The unions will work in partnership with the City's Racial Equity Rapid Response team to activate a new phase of the response plan, engaging the most impacted communities in an effort to build greater equity in health outcomes.

"We will not stand idle as COVID-19 continues to disproportionately impact members of Chicago's black and brown communities, and today's action marks another step in our robust citywide response to the COVID-19 global pandemic," said Mayor Lightfoot. "Protecting the health and wellness of all Chicagoans remains our top priority during this time, and launching this new scope of work for the Racial Equity Rapid Response team, in coordination with workforce partners, will allow us to enhance outreach and education in these communities and prevent the further spread of COVID-19."

The number of confirmed COVID-19 positive cases throughout Chicago continues to increase, and over the past month the data show an increasingly disproportionate impact on the Latinx community. In early April, the Latinx population represented 14% of cases and 9% of deaths. However, new data now show Latinx Chicagoans represent 37% of cases and 25% of deaths.

African Americans also continue to represent a disproportionate percentage of cases (36%) and deaths (52%), but Latinx residents now make up the largest percentage of cases.

As of Tuesday, May 5, COVID-19 demographic data show 7,156 Latinx Chicagoans, 6,967 black Chicagoans, 3,381 white Chicagoans, and 636 Asian Chicagoans had been diagnosed with COVID-19. Notably, in spite of efforts to improve reporting, about 28% of test results



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still lack race and ethnicity data, however in the cases of death only 3% of the same data is missing.

Last month, CDPH issued a public health order enhancing medical data-sharing requirements for all acute care and long-term hospitals, in line with Mayor Lightfoot's commitment to transparency and in order to better support the City's ability to track COVID-19 and its impact on individuals and communities. CDPH is releasing updated demographic data daily during the COVID-19 pandemic at [Chicago.gov/coronavirus](https://www.chicago.gov/coronavirus).

"From day one we have let the data and science steer our response to the COVID-19 global pandemic, and today's announcement continues this trend," said CDPH Commissioner Allison Arwady, M.D. "As we monitor and analyze new data as it becomes available, we will continue taking steps and building upon existing strategies that protect all Chicagoans, while targeting the areas that are experiencing the greatest impact of the virus."

The data shows COVID-19 is present in every age group and every zip code in Chicago but reinforces that people who are older and have underlying medical conditions are at a higher risk for severe illness and death from COVID-19. Fewer than one in five Chicagoans (18%) is over age 60, and just one in 12 Chicagoans (8%) is over age 70. But almost one-third of Chicago's COVID-19 diagnoses have been in people over 60. And more strikingly, 79% of Chicago's COVID-19 deaths have been in people over 60—and over half of the deaths have been in people over 70.

"Our core mission at Esperanza Health Centers is to preserve the wellbeing of residents in the community, which is crucial as we respond to the unprecedented nature of the COVID-19 global pandemic," said Dan Fulwiler, CEO of Esperanza Health Centers. "We are pleased to see the City taking these critical steps to address the disparities of the COVID-19 impact, and we look forward to working collaboratively to find innovative health solutions for this community."

Mayor Lightfoot and CDPH remain committed to addressing the health inequities highlighted by this new data and will continue working in partnership with other government agencies and community partners to implement additional solutions. To address systemic health inequities highlighted by the COVID-19 crisis, the City is leveraging the Racial Equity Rapid Response team to develop solutions that minimize gaps in healthcare systems, create more equity in service delivery, and educate targeted populations while enhancing programs to help vulnerable populations.

A key tactic to this new strategy will be the continued education and engagement of Chicago's essential workforce, which is why the City developed this new partnership with SEIU Local 1, UNITE HERE Local 1, the Construction and General Laborers' District Council of Chicago and Vicinity. Through this collaborative effort, the City and unions will develop a robust education campaign to help essential employees remain safe and healthy while they continue going to and from work. In addition, the unions will be organizing membership meetings that help employees better understand their rights during the COVID-19 pandemic, and the City will continue to work in close coordination with these unions to



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develop strategies to protect workers who may be experiencing increased risk of exposure to COVID-19.

"Our wellbeing is connected; we are coming together for clarity on how this virus is impacting Black and brown communities and to make sure every one of us, regardless of our color or where we live, can get the treatment, care and support they need," said SEIU Local 1 Vice President and Residential Division Director Efrain Elias. "Labor organizations with strong Latino and immigrant memberships, like SEIU Local 1, are ready to work alongside the City to help protect the lives and livelihoods of Chicago's residents."

In an effort to reach all members of these communities, the City, through its Racial Equity Rapid Response team, has organized several events in the coming months, including a townhall co-hosted by AARP and Univision, and a youth townhall specifically focused on emotional well-being. Additional events will continue to be organized in coordination with the Latino Policy Forum, Esperanza Health Centers and other community-based organizations.

"Our Latinx residents are vital community members that contribute greatly to the industries that help our city thrive, and we must do more to protect them during these unprecedented times," said 36th Ward Alderman, Gilbert Villegas. "I am pleased to join Mayor Lightfoot in announcing this new, and crucial, strategy that will work to safeguard the health and wellness of members of these communities."

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the City launched the *Stay Home, Save Lives* campaign to inform residents about how they can stay healthy and do their part to bend the curve of the virus. For more information and updates on COVID-19, text COVID19 to 78015, email coronavirus@chicago.gov or visit [Chicago.gov/coronavirus](https://chicago.gov/coronavirus).

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