

Even before the coronavirus pandemic, there were already profound mental health inequities in New York City. Communities of color experienced a higher incidence of mental health needs yet were less likely to be connected to care. The COVID-19 pandemic is exacerbating these inequities.

1 Black and Brown New Yorkers are reporting that the COVID-19 crisis is having a greater impact on their mental health.

- In an April 2020 poll, more Latinx (24%) and Black (24%) Americans than White Americans (17%) said coronavirus has had a major negative impact on their mental health ([source](#))

2 Experiences of racism related to COVID-19 can create mental health needs.

- In an April 2020 survey of New Yorkers, 25% of Asian American respondents had experienced racism, violence, or harassment associated with the coronavirus ([source](#))
- Within New York City, serious psychological distress is three times higher among adults who experience racism “always,” “a lot,” or “some” (15%), versus those who experience racism “a little” or “not at all” (5%) ([source](#))

3 NYC’s frontline workers -- who will likely experience high rates of depression, anxiety, and PTSD -- are disproportionately people of color.

- A recent study by the NYC Comptroller’s Office found that 75% of all frontline workers in NYC are people of color ([source](#))
- Anecdotal evidence suggests that essential workers are experiencing skyrocketing levels of anxiety and disappointment in their employers related to their ongoing exposure ([source](#); [source](#)). Once-minor job-related decisions have newly become high-stakes, and can contribute to the development of mental health problems, including anxiety, depression and PTSD ([source](#))

4 Communities of color are experiencing disproportionate job loss, which is linked to depression and hopelessness.

- According to a survey of New Yorkers conducted between April 17th and April 19th, 2020, just under a third (32%) of White New Yorkers reported job loss, compared to 35% of Black New Yorkers, 40% of Asian American New Yorkers, and 44% of Latinx New Yorkers ([source](#))
- Among New Yorkers who indicated that someone in their household had lost their job as a result of the COVID-19 crisis during the prior week, 82% felt anxious, some to most of the time; 73% felt down, depressed or hopeless; and only 11% felt hopeful about the future ([source](#))

5 The City's Black and Brown communities have experienced greater loss of life due to COVID-19.

- As of April 27th, 2020, the COVID-related fatality rate among Black New Yorkers was 209.4 per 100,000 persons and 195.3 per 100,000 persons among Latinx New Yorkers, compared to nearly half that, 107.7 per 100,000 persons among White New Yorkers ([source](#))
- The circumstances surrounding COVID-related deaths, such as suddenness ([source](#)), time in an ICU ([source](#)), and familial regret ([source](#)) can put mourners at an elevated risk of developing prolonged ([source](#)) and/or complicated grief ([source](#)), which can have lasting effects on mental health