



HEALTH BRIEFS: PHS HEALTH EQUITY SURVEY

NEW YORK CITY'S RISING COST OF LIVING AND PERSISTENT HEALTH DISPARITIES WILL THREATEN THE ECONOMIC RECOVERY OF UNDER RESOURCED COMMUNITIES

New data from a recent Public Health Solutions survey reveals that race, income, and location of New Yorkers determine vastly different levels of economic recovery and health outcomes from the COVID-19 pandemic.

KEY FINDINGS

The fourth COVID-19 Health Equity survey from Public Health Solutions (PHS), the largest public health nonprofit serving New York City, reveals increased economic pressures and persistent health disparities are driving an unequal pandemic recovery among New Yorkers. It's clear that low-income New Yorkers (defined as an annual income less than \$50,000) and other under resourced communities are increasingly facing an excessive burden on fulfilling their basic needs.

Key findings in the report include:

- 16% of low-income respondents have not been vaccinated yet, compared to only 5% of high-income respondents.
- 69% of white respondents have received all required doses and a booster shot, compared to 37% of Black respondents and 49% of Hispanic respondents.
- More than half (53%) of Black low-income respondents have applied for or utilized SNAP in the last six months.

BACKGROUND

In addition to economic disparities exacerbated over the last two years, New Yorkers are now facing a rising cost of living, which plays a major role in their health and wellbeing. The timing of New York City's lifting of pandemic restrictions is likely to hurt low-income communities and Black New Yorkers who are still reporting lower COVID-19 vaccination rates.

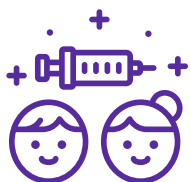
The latest PHS Health Equity survey reveals increased economic pressures will jeopardize the economic recovery of low-income communities and New Yorkers of color. Rising rents will increase the threat of housing instability and place greater financial pressure on meeting other basic needs such as food, health, and education.

The survey examines ongoing disparities in vaccination rates as well as access to preventative and mental services for under resourced New Yorkers and communities of color compared to wealthier and white New Yorkers. The survey also

investigates the financial concerns, spending and saving rates, and perceived state of the economy among these groups.

FINDINGS

Despite the year-long availability of the COVID-19 vaccine for adults and recent availability for children 5 and older, low-income New Yorkers continue to report lower vaccination rates than their wealthier neighbors.



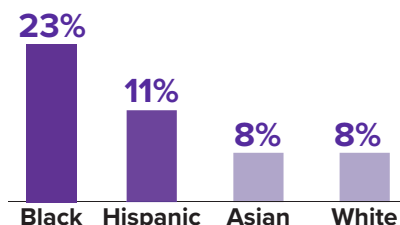
65% of high-income respondents say their child(ren) have been fully vaccinated, compared to **31%** of low-income respondents.

- 28% of low-income respondents are vaccinated but have not received a booster shot, compared to 18% of high-income respondents.
- 74% of high-income respondents have received all required doses and a booster shot, compared to 47% of low-income respondents.
- 83% of Asian and 75% of white high-income respondents have been fully vaccinated and boosted, compared to 31% of Black and 39% of Hispanic low-income respondents.

Significant racial disparities persist in vaccination rates, and Black New Yorkers are still reporting lower vaccination rates than other communities.

- 36% of Black respondents with children are eligible for a booster shot but have not received one, compared to 21% of white respondents with children and 8% of Asian respondents with children.
- 29% of Black respondents received all required doses but not the booster shot, compared to 18% of Asian respondents.

Demographic breakdown of respondents who say they haven't received any vaccine shots yet:



- 59% of white respondents with children say their children have received all required doses and a booster shot compared to 29% of Black respondents with children and 32% of Hispanic respondents with children.

As pre-pandemic economic inequities have gotten worse in the last two years, low-income New Yorkers are facing a disproportionate burden in meeting their basic needs.

- More than half of low-income respondents say that paying for food (56%) and paying for housing (52%) are among their top financial concerns for the year.
- Comparatively, less than half of high-income respondents had the same concerns: paying for food (42%), paying for housing (37%).
- The most frequently cited concern among high-income respondents was paying for health costs (47%).
- 19% of low-income respondents estimate more than half of NYC residents receive SNAP benefits, compared to 5% of high-income respondents.



23% of low-income respondents say they are saving much less money now than they were last year, compared to **11%** of high-income respondents.

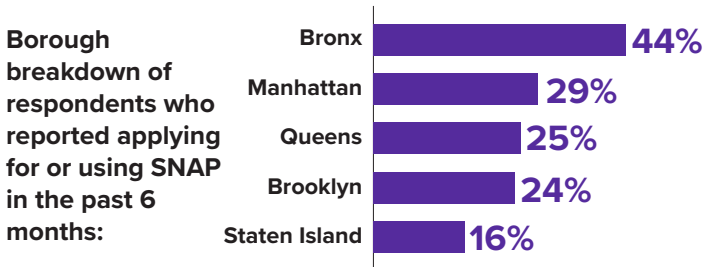
Black New Yorkers reported different levels of economic recovery, wellbeing, and concerns compared to other groups, and low-income Black New Yorkers will be disproportionately affected by rising rents and housing instability.

- Among low-income respondents, 4% of Black respondents say they own their home and do not pay rent, compared to white (16%) and Asian (16%) respondents.
- 13% of Black respondents report having applied for or utilized student forbearance in the last month, compared to 6% of Asian and 6% of Hispanic respondents.
- 14% of Black respondents reported applying for or utilizing housing assistance/mortgage forbearance, compared to 5% of Asian respondents.

- 29% of Black respondents reported cutting back or eliminating transportation costs due to housing costs in the last 3 months, compared to 19% of white respondents.
- 38% of Black respondents cite paying off debts, including student debts, as an area of financial concern compared to 29% of white respondents

New Yorkers also reported vastly different levels of economic wellbeing and recovery depending on their borough.

- 42% of Queens respondents say they're paying more for rent than last year, compared to Brooklyn (26%), Manhattan (26%) and Staten Island (12%).
- 16% of Queens respondents reported applying for or utilizing unemployment, social security disability insurance (SSDI), and/or SSI in the last 6 months, compared to 7% of Brooklyn and 8% of Staten Island respondents.
- 26% of Bronx respondents reported applying for or using utility assistance/cash assistance in the last 6 months, compared to 17% of Manhattan respondents.



During the pandemic, there's been gap across race and income when it comes to accessing and using preventative care and mental health services.

- Asian New Yorkers have been less likely to seek or use mental health services. 62% of Asian respondents say they did not seek or receive any

mental health services during the pandemic, compared to 46% of Black respondents.

- 12% of low-income respondents reported they currently do not have health insurance and that they were uninsured before the pandemic. Comparatively, only 7% of high-income respondents reported the same.
- 83% of high-income respondents reported receiving 1 or more annual physical exam during the pandemic. 67% of low-income respondents reported receiving 1 or more annual physical exam during the pandemic.
- 25% of high-income respondents sought out and/or received in-person therapy since the start of the pandemic; 14% of low-income respondents did the same.

CONCLUSION

As New York City starts to roll back pandemic restrictions, low-income New Yorkers and other under resourced communities are once again at the risk of being left behind in the city's recovery. An unequal pandemic recovery across income, race, and borough further confirms the ongoing and outsized impact of economic, racial, and health inequities in the city. The next phase and third year of the pandemic must be defined by the city's ambitious efforts to close gaps in health care and improve the well-being of at-risk communities.

SURVEY METHODOLOGY

1,000 New York City adult residents from varying income levels across all five boroughs were surveyed through an online questionnaire. The survey was conducted from February 15-26, 2022, in partnership with Kantar, the world's leading evidence-based insights and consulting company.

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ABOUT PHS

Health disparities among New Yorkers are large, persistent and increasing. Public Health Solutions (PHS) exists to change that trajectory, and support vulnerable New Yorkers in achieving optimal health and building pathways to reach their potential. We improve health outcomes and help communities thrive by providing services directly to vulnerable low-income families, and supporting 200 community-based organizations through our long-standing public-private partnerships. We focus on a wide range of public health issues including food and nutrition, health insurance, maternal and child health, sexual and reproductive health, tobacco control, and HIV/AIDS. Your support helps us to realize our vision for health equity in New York City. Visit healthsolutions.org to learn more.