

Press Release



The Coronavirus Pandemic's Disproportionate Impact on Minorities

ANDREW EVANS | MAY 12, 2020

While everyone is feeling the impact of the coronavirus pandemic, the health crisis and resulting economic disruption are disproportionately affecting racial and ethnic minorities. AAF's Director of Human Welfare Policy Tara O'Neill Hayes examines both these impacts — on health, nutrition, and education, among other areas — and the underlying forces driving them. While the pandemic is not creating these disparities, she notes, it is highlighting and exacerbating them.

Her central points include:

- Racial and ethnic minorities are less likely to have health insurance and more likely to have underlying health conditions, putting them at greater risk for negative outcomes if they contract COVID-19;
- Minorities are more likely to be employed in low-wage jobs at risk of loss as a result of the economic downturn, while low-wage workers in essential jobs are more likely to work in environments that require close contact with others, increasing their risk of exposure to the virus; and
- Children of minorities are less likely to have a computer and broadband internet access at home, making it more difficult to continue learning during school closures, and they are also more likely to rely for their nutritional needs on school meals, which are now more difficult to access.

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