

Race and Equity Pocket Questions

Title and purpose of this initiative: ARPA Nonprofit Agency Funding Recommendations

Department: Housing and Community Services

What are the racial and equity impacts?

During the Covid-19 pandemic, new systemic issues and barriers were created, and already existing ones compounded. BIPOC, low-income people, disabled people, and women faced increasing hardships because of the pandemic.¹ The percentage of Americans living at or below the poverty line increased by a whole percentage point in 2020 to 11.4% -- that's over three million Americans who fell below the poverty line beginning in 2020. People situated at the lowest end of the socio-economic scale were disproportionately impacted by the Covid-19 recession.² Many people faced reduced work hours, furloughs, and layoffs, heightening already present financial struggles. Data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) shows that BIPOC, specifically Black and Latino workers, as well as adult women, lost jobs at much faster rates during the pandemic compared to white males in the country.³ Oftentimes, these income struggles resulted in loss of housing and struggles to afford other basic needs, especially for people already experiencing economic hardship prior to the onset of the pandemic. Social safety net programs meant to support folks through such turmoil, were overwhelmed by need. Programs were ill-equipped to deal with many of the factors created by the pandemic, such as mass unemployment, and were thus unable to serve all eligible applicants, or eligible applicants were forced to wait lengthy periods before receiving services.⁴ The healthcare system was overwrought with Covid-19 cases⁵, making it difficult for people with disabilities to access necessary services and maintain necessary routines.⁶ Additionally, people with illnesses related to chronic pain or compromised immune systems were often more likely to contract and suffer severely from Covid-19.⁷

ARPA funds can be used to support the alleviation of such hardships created and compounded by the pandemic. This alleviation can be done through programmatic support from non-profit agencies. Many local agencies are attempting to create or bolster existing programs that support those already marginalized groups who were most impacted by Covid-19. From providing needed healthcare products, to food provisions, to supportive employment services, non-profits

¹ [The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on marginalized populations in the United States: A research agenda - PMC \(nih.gov\)](#)

² [How did COVID-19 affect poverty rates in the United States? | World Economic Forum \(weforum.org\)](#)

³ [Who has been most affected by COVID-19? | World Economic Forum \(weforum.org\)](#)

⁴ [The social safety net: The gaps that COVID-19 spotlights | Brookings](#)

⁵ [What has the pandemic revealed about the US health care system — and what needs to change? | MIT News | Massachusetts Institute of Technology](#)

⁶ [Research Findings: COVID-19 Impact on People with Disabilities \(acl.gov\)](#)

⁷ [What immunocompromised patients should know about the COVID-19 vaccines - UChicago Medicine](#)



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are directly addressing the systemic public health and economic struggles created and/or compounded by the Covid-19 pandemic. The following nonprofit funding recommendations will support in this alleviation.

Who is or will experience community burden?

If approved, organizations may face increased financial burden or capacity struggles in the pursuance of their projects.

If not approved, up to 900 Carrboro residents facing hardship due to the COVID-19 pandemic could be left without access to crucial support services. These vital services, provided by partner agencies, play a key role in alleviating the ongoing struggles created and compounded by the pandemic.

Who is or will experience community benefit?

Those most affected by the Covid-19 Pandemic, largely BIPOC, low-income people, disabled people, and women, will experience community benefit. They will be able to pursue supportive services through these agencies that will assist them in various aspects of their life, whether that be through providing healthcare supplies, food, or employment services.

What are the root causes of inequity?

American political, social, and financial systems have worked to actively marginalize many different groups. This has often come in the form of denying rights or access to systems and institutions that greatly benefit one's livelihood, education, and health. For hundreds of years, intentional actions have been taken to deny humanity, wealth and equitable education and employment for BIPOC, women, and disabled people, creating cycles of poverty and social marginalization. This has resulted in large disparities in educational opportunity, wealth and asset accumulation, and social mobility. Disparities have been created and widened through government sponsored intentional racism and marginalization in the form of enslavement, forced displacement and loss of homeland of indigenous peoples, Jim Crow era policy, redlining, restrictive zoning ordinances, predatory and barrier-ridden lending practices, the American Credit System, over-policing of communities of color, the lack of protections for disabled people, the lack of rent control in NC, and white power structures' lack of willingness to address, and explicit desire to maintain, racial disparities.

What might be the unintended consequences of this action or strategy?

Agencies that did not receive funding may not be able to pursue their projects that are meant to provide supportive services for those most impacted by Covid-19.



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How is your department planning to mitigate any burdens, inequities, and unintended consequences?

The department continues to engage with jurisdictional peers and community partners to advance health and human services in the community and to address racial and other inequities in these vital services under the guidance of the One Orange Countywide Racial Equity Framework and the Town's Office of Race and Equity. Since this department was formed our work has been increasingly focused on racial disparities in the areas of health, education, housing, and livelihood. The department's funding review process heavily emphasizes equity, specifically racial equity, by assessing the internal racial demographics and equity work of organizations, as well as the populations they are serving. These characteristics play a large role in the department's staff recommendations for funding.