



# Addressing Racism and COVID-19



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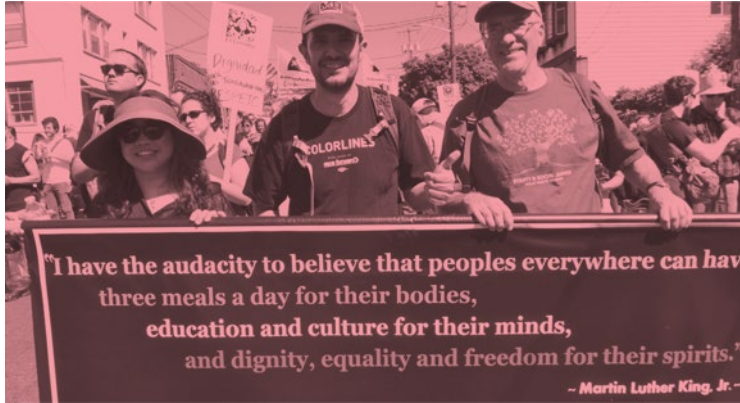
# Question for the Viewers

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Does your organization have a strategic plan for addressing equity in your jurisdiction?:

- A. Yes, we have developed a plan
- B. We are working on a plan
- C. No, we have not developed a plan
- D. Other (please type in chat)



## Origins of Equity and Social Justice Work in King County

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## COVID-19 and Health Disparities

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## Strategies for Equity During Two Pandemics

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# Origins of Equity Work in King County

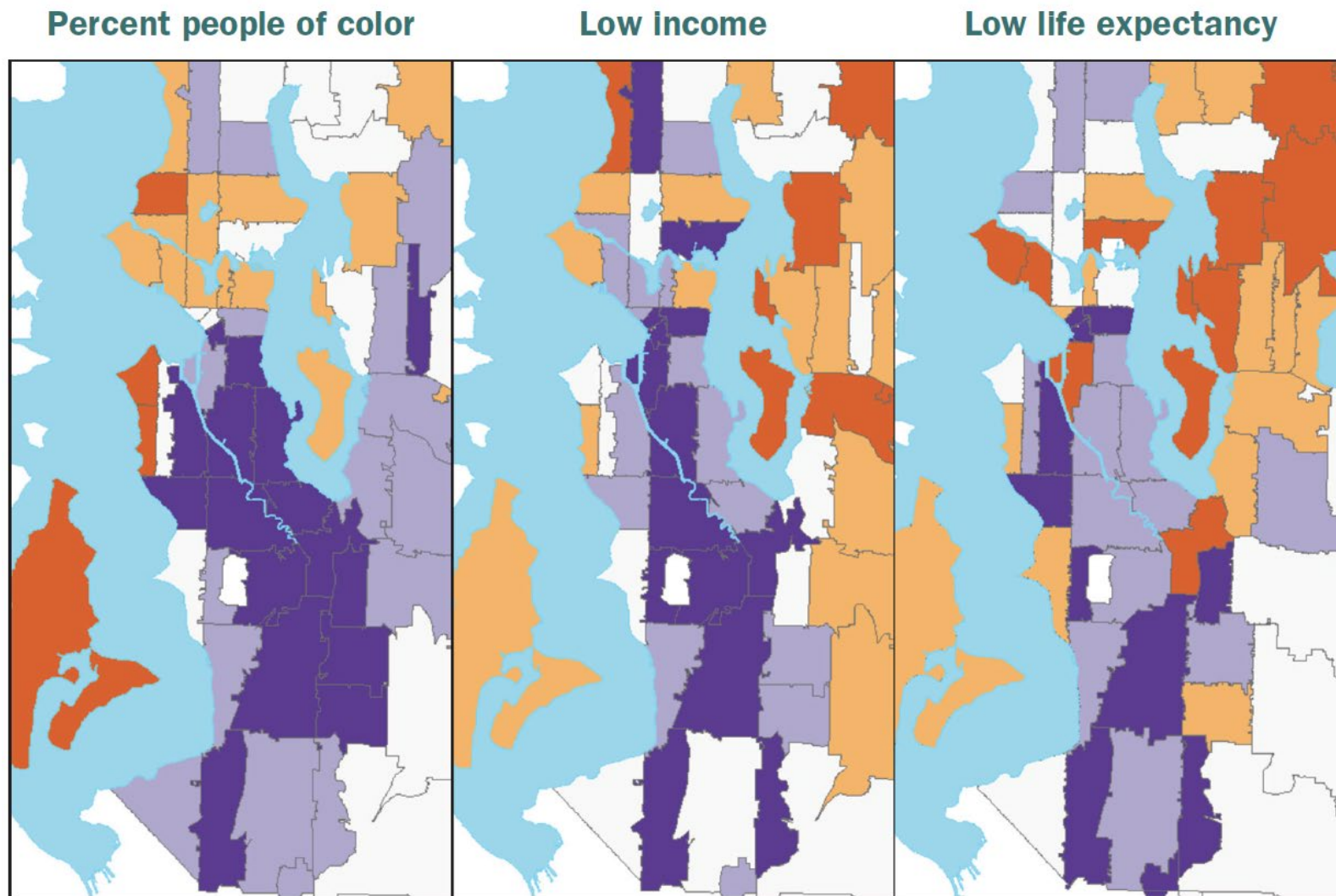
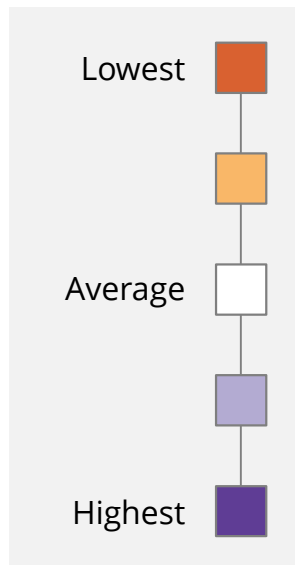
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**“I have the audacity to believe that peoples everywhere can have three meals a day for their bodies, education and culture for their minds, and dignity, equality and freedom for their spirits.”**

**~ Martin Luther King, Jr.**

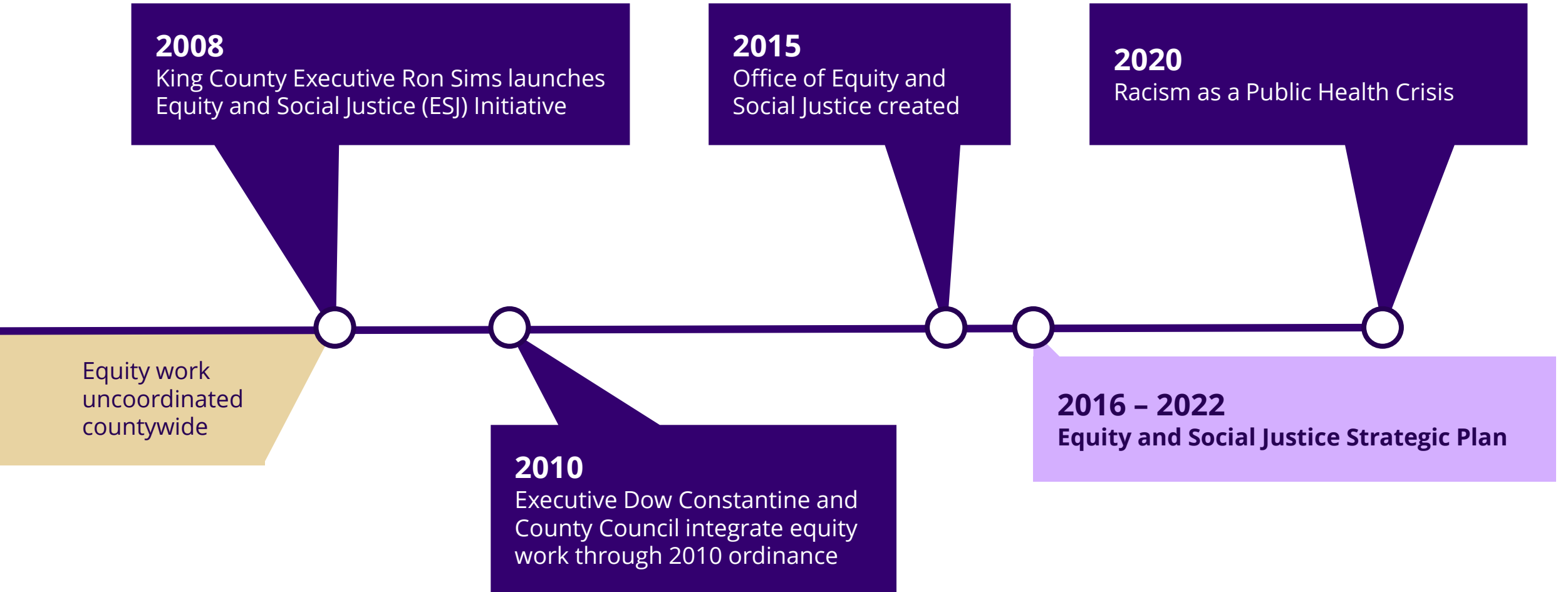
# Seattle & King County in Context

**A strong connection exists between health, income, place, and race**



Source: King County Equity and Social Justice - <https://kingcounty.gov/equity>

# Phases of Equity and Social Justice at King County



Equity work uncoordinated countywide

**2008**

King County Executive Ron Sims launches Equity and Social Justice (ESJ) Initiative

**2010**

Executive Dow Constantine and County Council integrate equity work through 2010 ordinance

**2015**

Office of Equity and Social Justice created

**2016 – 2022**

Equity and Social Justice Strategic Plan

**2020**

Racism as a Public Health Crisis

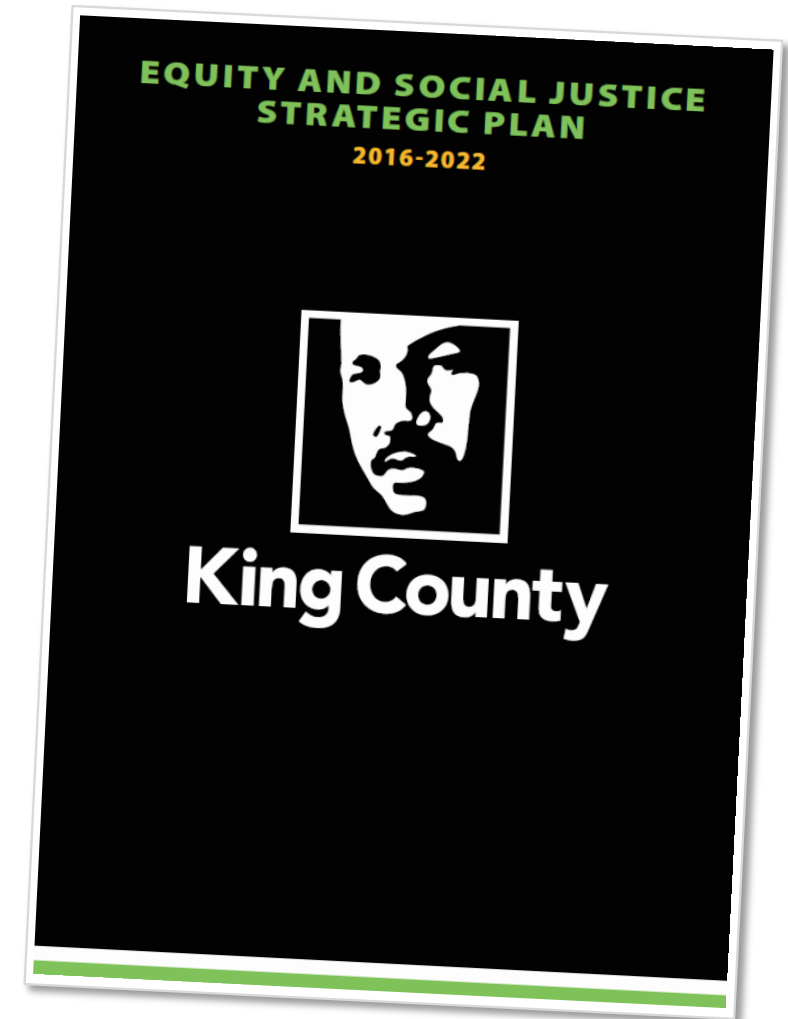
# Equity and Social Justice Strategic Plan

## **Vision:**

*A King County where all people have equitable opportunities to thrive.*

## **Values:**

- Racially just
- Inclusive and collaborative
- Diverse and people-focused
- Responsive and adaptive
- Transparent and accountable
- Focused upstream and where needs are greatest

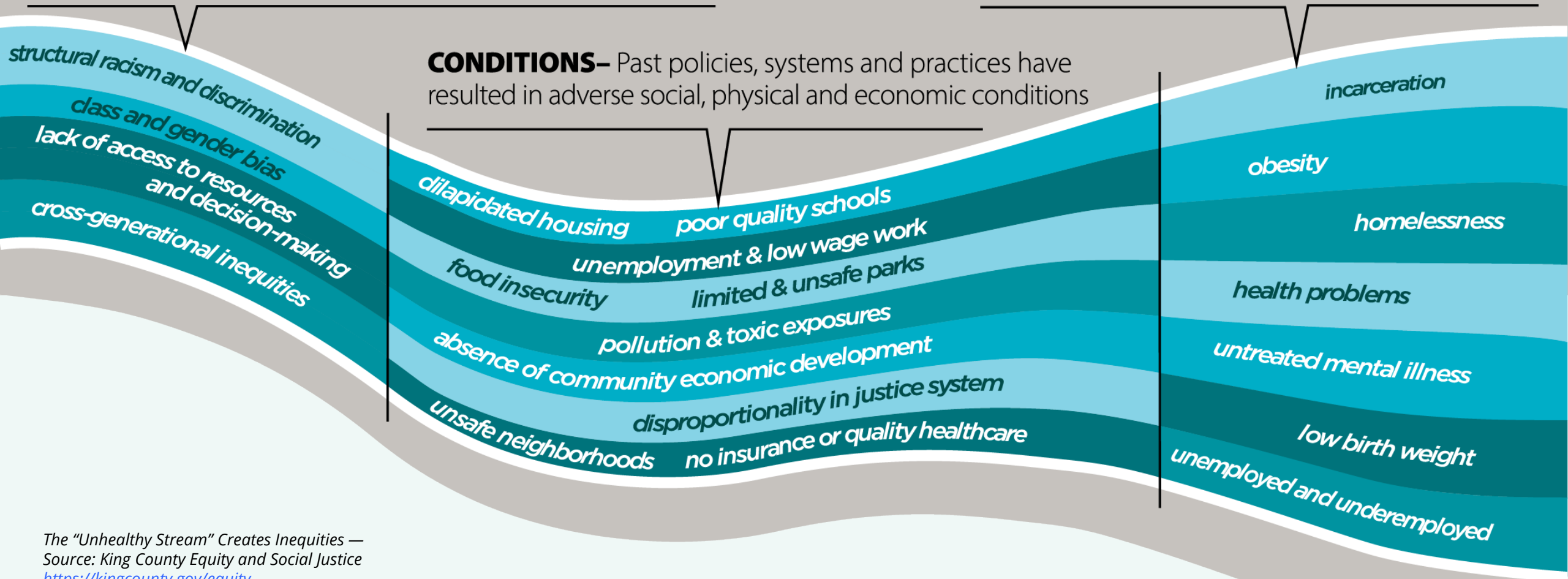


Source: <https://kingcounty.gov/equity>

# Anti-equity Systems

**POLICIES, PRACTICES & SYSTEMS**– Policies, structures and systems – including those in government – have sustained and even contributed to inequities

**OUTCOMES**– Organizations and their programs historically have tended to react to problems and treat poor individual and family-level outcomes





# Pro-equity Systems

## PRO-EQUITY POLICIES, PRACTICES & SYSTEMS–

For greatest and most effective impact, King County is **focusing “upstream” to address root causes and be pro-equity**

*pro-equity policies  
practices and values such as:*

*inclusion*

*racial justice*

**CONDITIONS–** Pro-equity systems and policies result in improved community conditions, also known as “determinants of equity”

*affordable & safe housing*

*living wage jobs & job training*

*quality education & early learning*

*healthy food & food systems*

*equitable justice system*

*community economic development*

*healthy built & natural environments*

*health care & human services*

*safe & supportive neighborhoods*

*transportation*

*information & technology*

*parks & natural resources*

**OUTCOMES–** Individuals and families thrive regardless of race and place

*good health*

*high quality of life*

*healthy years lived*

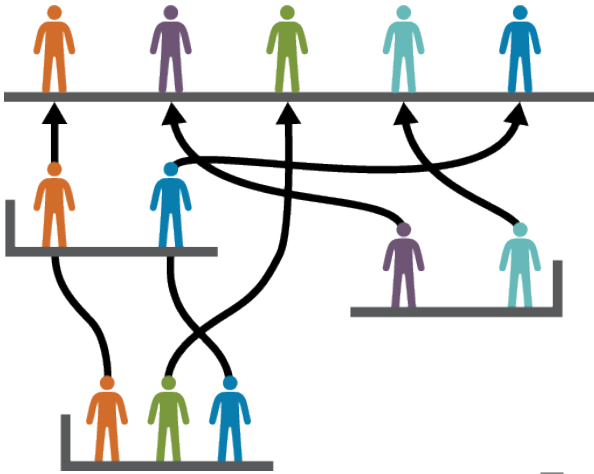
*happiness & satisfaction*

*educational success*

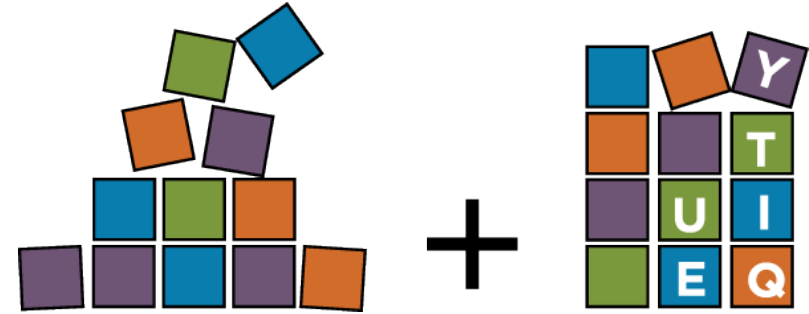
*civic engagement*

*economic well-being*

# Pro-equity Approaches

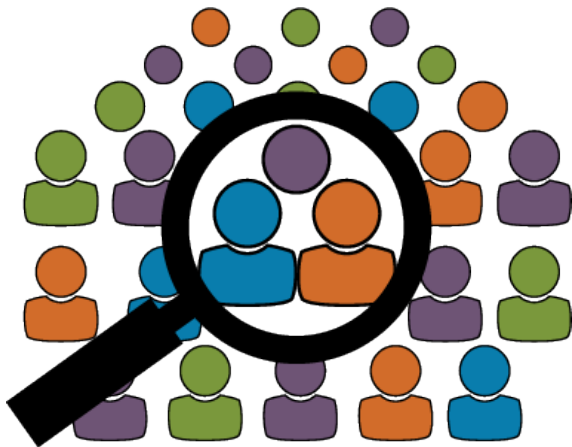


Targeted universalism

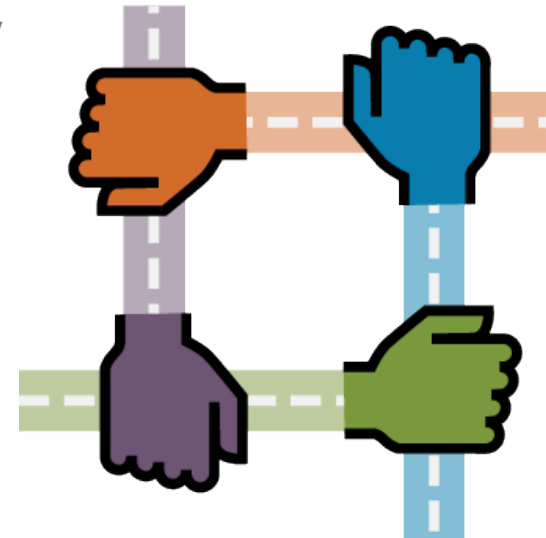


Dismantle systems of injustice

Focus on people and places with greatest needs



Process equity



# COVID-19, Racism, and Health Disparities



RACISM IS A  
PANDEMIC

A photograph of a protest sign made from a piece of light blue corrugated cardboard, resting on a concrete window ledge. The sign has the words "RACISM IS A" on the top line and "PANDEMIC" on the bottom line, written in large, bold, black, hand-painted capital letters. The sign is positioned in front of a window with a dark red curtain and a wooden frame. The background is slightly out of focus, showing the window and the curtain.

# COVID-19 Data Tool: Significant Findings



## Older adults:

- West Seattle, Downtown Seattle, and Shoreline neighborhoods had the largest numbers (more than 13,000) of older adults



## Populations with health conditions:

- AI/AN adults in King County had the highest rates of high-risk chronic conditions (37%), followed by Black adults (26%) and multiple-race adults (24%)



## Access to care:

- Hispanic/Latinx (28%) and American Indian/Alaska Native (21%) adults are the most likely to be uninsured
- 32% of Asian residents and 28% of Hispanic/Latinx do not speak English very well

# COVID-19 in Seattle & King County

Confirmed cases per 100,000 residents (age-adjusted)

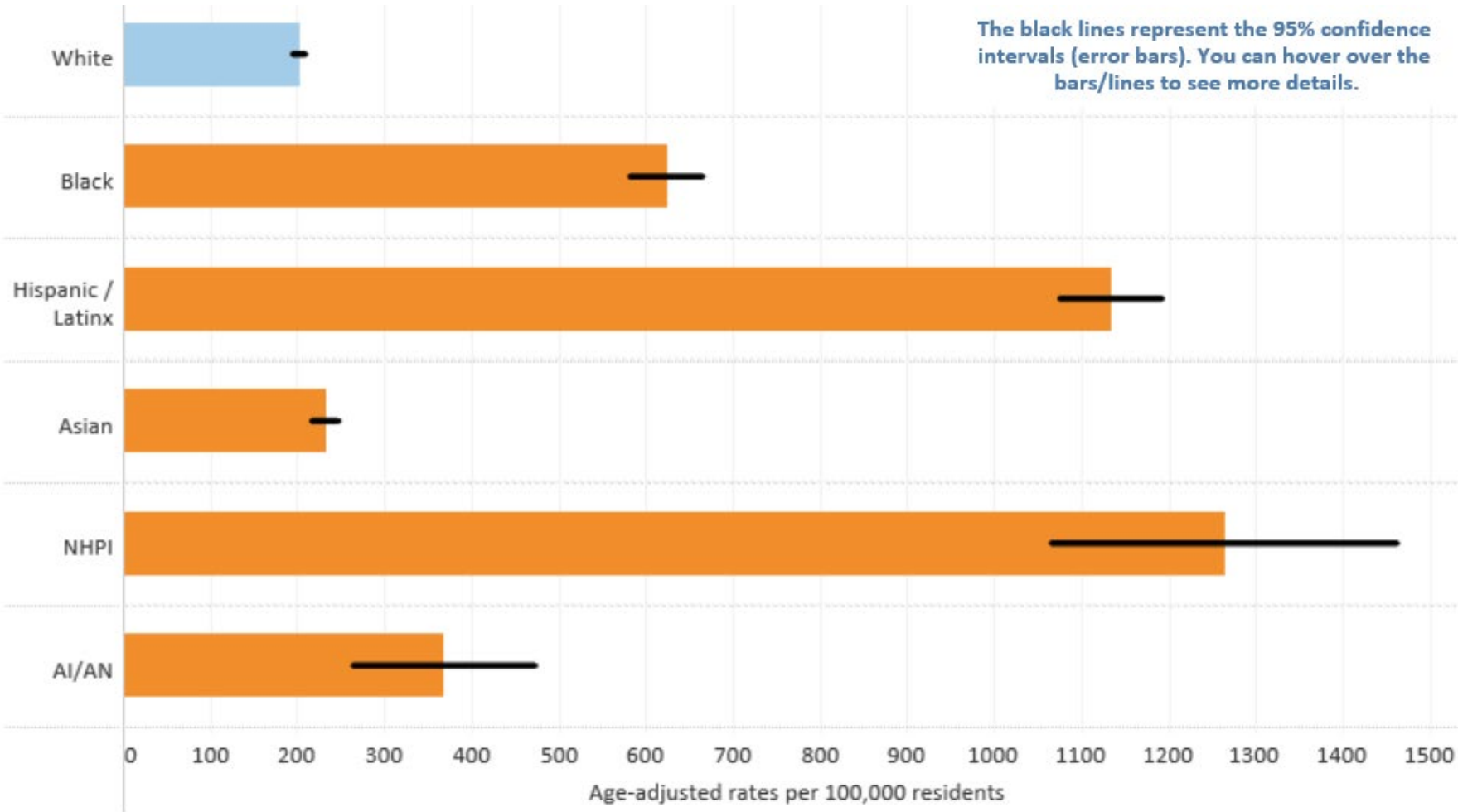
Source: Public Health – Seattle King County Covid-19 Data Dashboards

[www.kingcounty.gov/covid/data](http://www.kingcounty.gov/covid/data)  
June 26, 2020

**Abbreviations:**

- AI/AN** = American Indian/Alaska Native
- NHPI** = Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander
- Other** = Other or multi-racial

*Race groups are mutually exclusive, and Hispanics are counted as a race unless stated.*



Cases missing age where excluded from this analysis so overall counts may be different.  
Rates are age-adjusted using the King County 2019 population.

# COVID-19 in Seattle & King County

Percent by race compared to the King County population

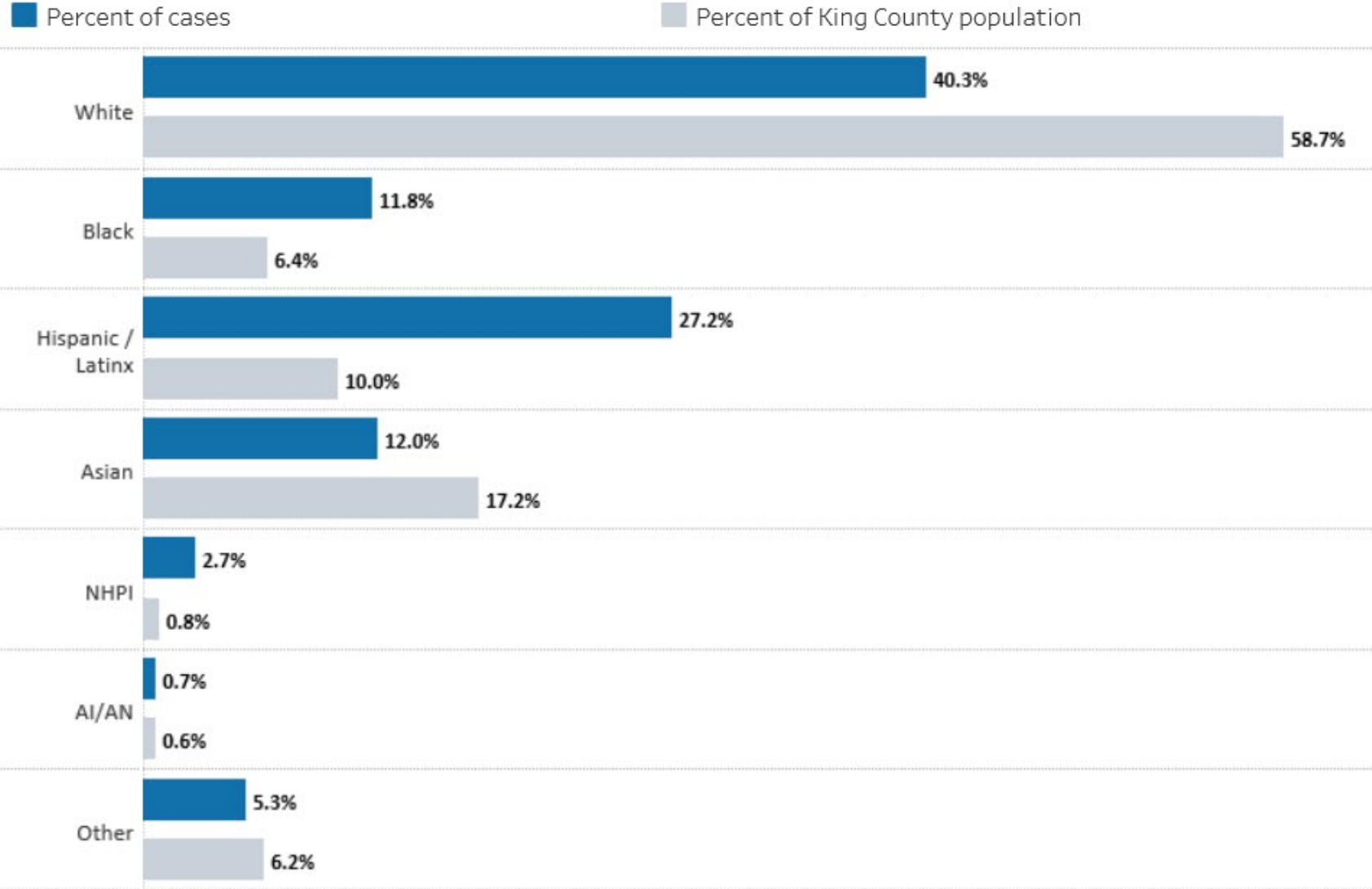
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**2,288 (23.6%) cases are missing race/ethnicity**

# COVID-19 in Seattle & King County

Source: Public Health – Seattle King County Covid-19 Data Dashboards

[www.kingcounty.gov/covid/data](http://www.kingcounty.gov/covid/data)  
June 26, 2020

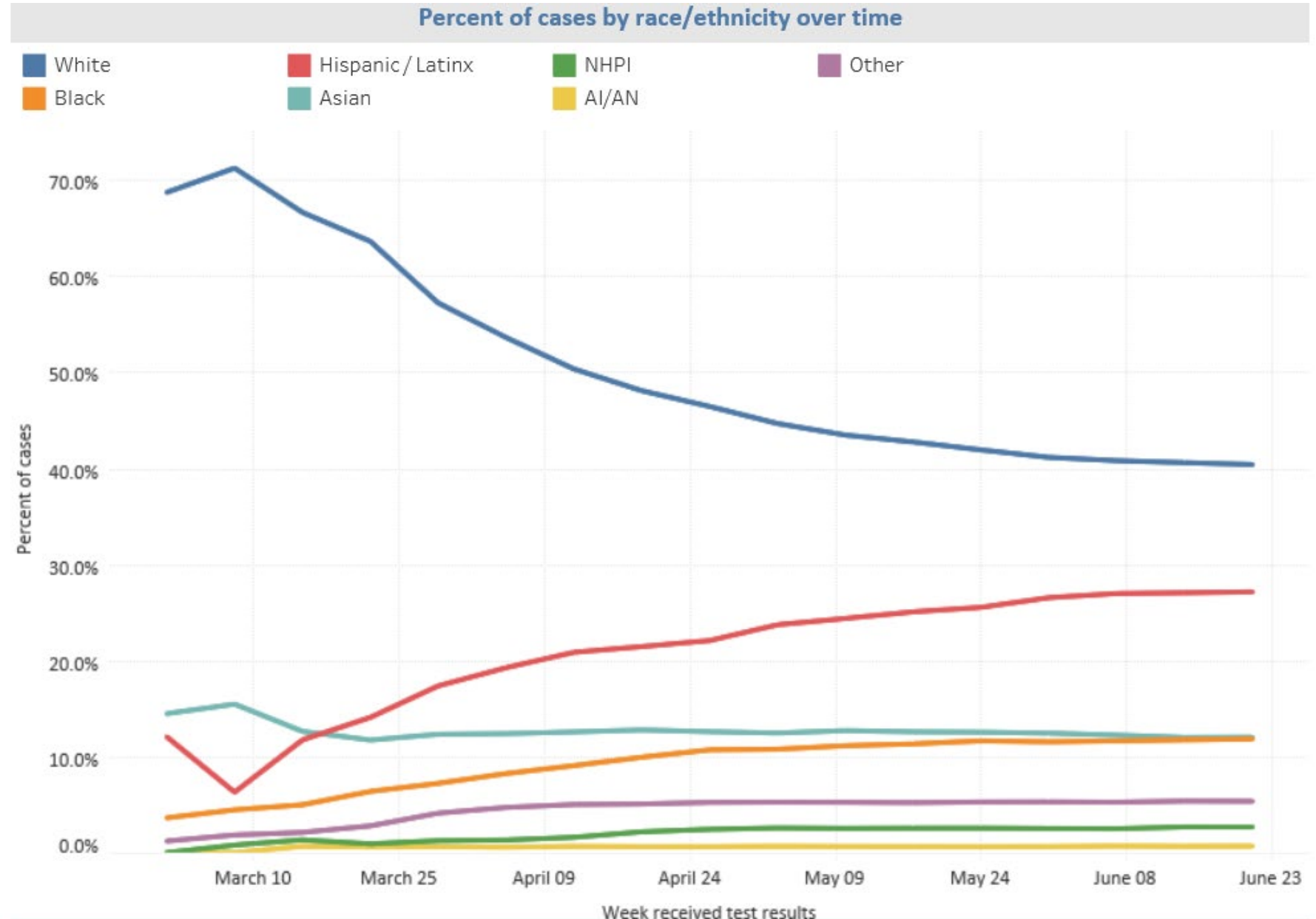
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# Conclusions from Data

**From an equity perspective, key areas of concern in the COVID-19 pandemic include:**

- ✓ Health care access
- ✓ Underlying health conditions
- ✓ Root causes / social determinants of health
- ✓ Living and working conditions
- ✓ Essential workers



# Question for the Viewers



Consider the following strategies for approaching equity and social justice work. Which area does your organization need to focus most on?:

- A. Building internal capacity
- B. Teaming with other government agencies
- C. Engaging community partnerships
- D. Other (please type in chat)

# Strategies for Equity During Two Pandemics

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# Strategic Plan Features

## **Major features of King County's Equity and Social Justice Strategic Plan:**

- ✓ Lead with racial equity
- ✓ Promote a pro-equity policy agenda
- ✓ Target specific goal areas, including:
  - Leadership
  - Operations
  - Services
  - Policies
  - Workforce
  - Workplace
- ✓ Pursue regional collaboration on equity

# Equity Tools: Community Engagement

## Community Engagement Continuum

County Informs	County Consults	County Engages in Dialogue	County and Community Work Together	Community Directs Action
County initiates effort, uses different channels to inform community to take action	Gathers information from the community to inform county-led interventions	King County engages community members to shape county priorities and plans	Community and County share decision-making to co-create solutions	Community initiates and directs strategy and action with participation and technical assistance from County
<b>Sample Characteristics:</b>				
<p>One-way communication</p> <p><b>Example:</b> <i>Media releases</i></p>	<p>One-way communication</p> <p><b>Example:</b> <i>Focus groups, surveys, etc.</i></p>	<p>Two-way communication</p> <p><b>Example:</b> <i>Forums, boards, etc.</i></p>	<p>Two-way communication</p> <p><b>Example:</b> <i>Co-led community meetings, coalitions</i></p>	<p>Two-way communication</p> <p><b>Example:</b> <i>Community-led activities, partnerships, coalitions</i></p>

From a primarily white racial narrative



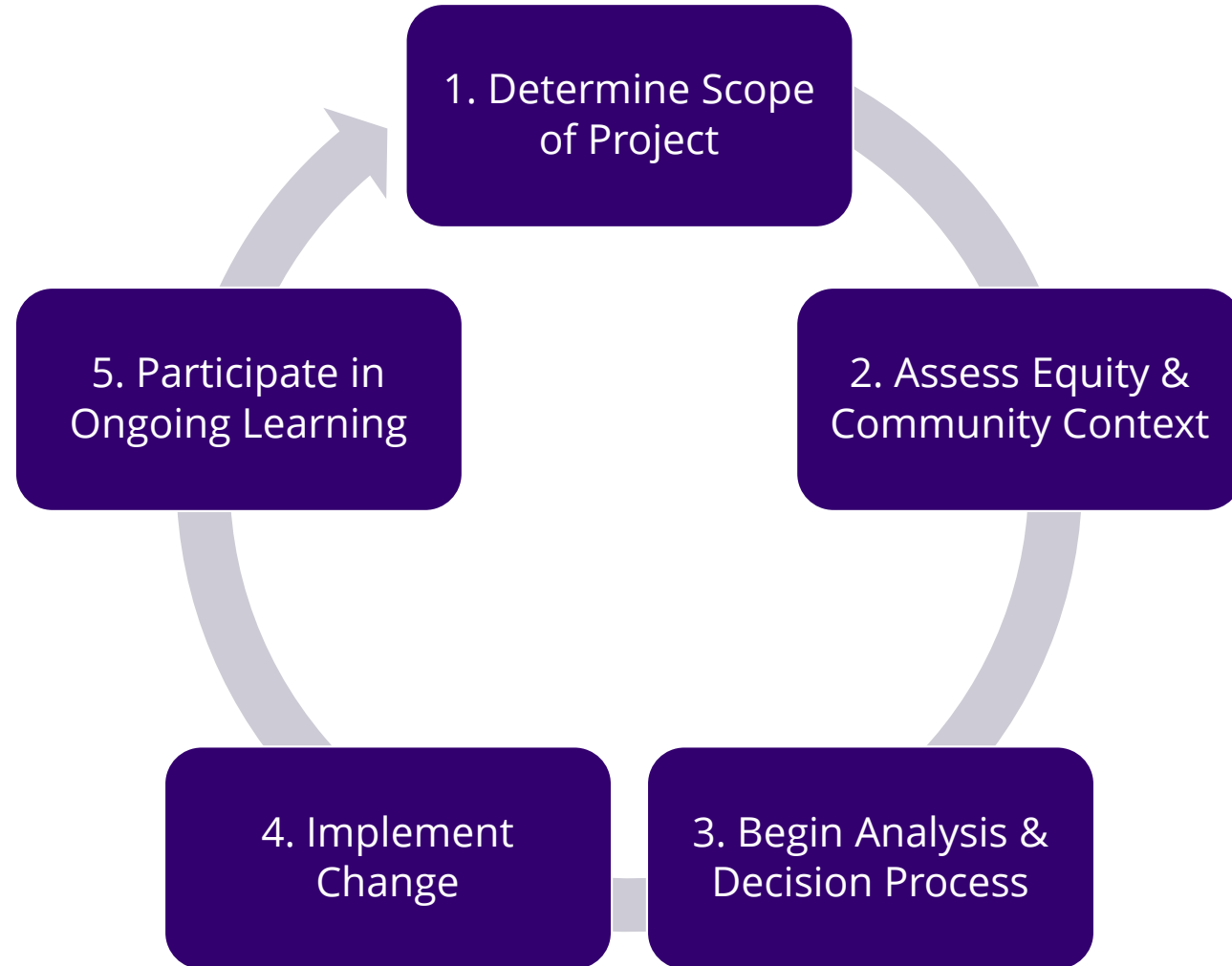
Towards liberatory racial narratives

Source: King County Equity and Social Justice - <https://kingcounty.gov/equity>

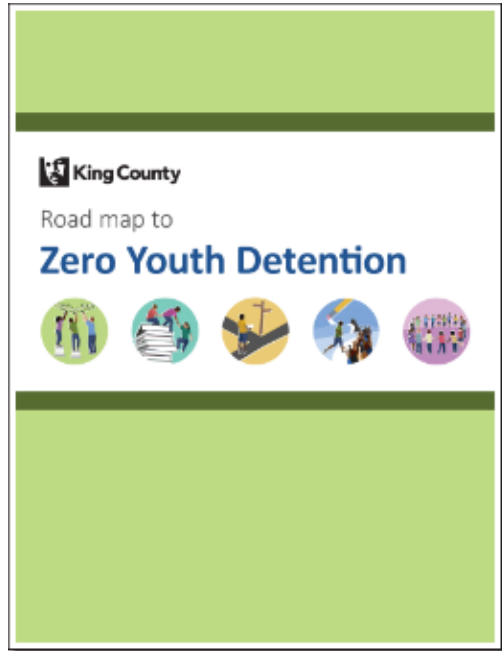
# Equity Impact Review Process

## Process is:

- Guided by community priorities
- Informed by current equity conditions



# Examples



# Key Takeaways

## **How can you concentrate your work on equity in times of crisis?**

- ✓ Seek commitment from leadership and include all team members
- ✓ Link your work to all policies, practices and strategic planning
- ✓ Lead work from values as well as empirical and qualitative data (community voice)
- ✓ Apply available tools and frameworks
- ✓ Focus on concrete, clear actions defined by those most negatively affected

# Declaration of Racism as a Public Health Crisis

*“We will share power and resources and work on community-defined problems using community-driven solutions. We commit to working side-by-side with anti-racist organizations, driven by people most negatively impacted by racism. We commit to convening other jurisdictions and agencies across sectors and to creating shared, measurable accountability.”*

*White privilege and anti-blackness cannot be fully addressed until the same systems that have “worked just fine” for white people while acting as the foot of oppression for indigenous, Black and brown communities are dismantled. In its place, we need new systems coming from the communities most affected by racism, oppression, and colonization.”*

— King County Executive Dow Constantine &  
Public Health Director Patty Hayes

June 11, 2020





# A Chat with Matías Valenzuela



Allene Mares



Matías Valenzuela

# QUESTIONS?

To ask a question, please click the



icon in the Zoom toolbar to open your Q&A Pod.

## **Communities Count**

COVID-19 Vulnerable Communities Data Tool

<https://www.communitiescount.org/covid19vulnerable>

## **COVID-19 Dashboard**

Public Health – Seattle & King County

<https://kingcounty.gov/depts/health/covid-19/data/race-ethnicity.aspx>

## **Health Equity Guide**

Case Study on King County's Transformation of Practices to Advance Equity

<https://healthequityguide.org/case-studies/king-county-transforms-county-practice-to-advance-equity/>