

Pandemic to Prosperity: Chronicling the Path from Response to Recovery

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

July 21, 2020

Today marks the six month anniversary of the first announcement of Covid-19 on U.S. soil. Since then, Covid has impacted nearly every facet of life around the world. From health, to work, to school, to civic engagement, the virus has catalyzed dramatic changes in the status quo. The Covid crisis has also highlighted and exacerbated pre-existing inequities in the U.S. economy, criminal justice, housing, education, and health care systems.

History has shown that large-scale crises accelerate pre-existing trends and permanently change societies and civic life. While most of the nation's attention is currently focused on the response to Covid-19, we must ensure that recovery efforts in the months and years ahead lead to a more just and equitable society.

Pandemic to Prosperity offers a comprehensive overview of the Covid-related impacts on our lives and livelihoods, governments, civic institutions, and overall well being. *Pandemic to Prosperity* is a trusted, relevant, and highly-vetted source of information crucial for steering society toward a fair and complete recovery, yielding a better union than before the pandemic. This curated report analyzes disparate data, adding top-level insights about the implications of each indicator, what each indicator reveals, and how the indicators are interrelated. Such a resource is essential in a world where there is almost too much data to process and verified facts are often overcome by disinformation.

In the inaugural release of *Pandemic to Prosperity*, we look at the first six months of the pandemic in the United States to understand the initial impact of the virus, while laying the groundwork for the efforts needed to achieve a more prosperous future for all Americans. Future releases will track progress against these benchmarks and incorporate new data as the pandemic evolves.

Pandemic

Pandemic to Prosperity examines how the Covid-19 crisis has damaged lives and livelihoods across the United States.

- Indigenous, Black, and Hispanic/Latinx people are around 5 times more likely to be hospitalized due to Covid-19 than white people.
- While unemployment rates have improved since April, 19 states still had unemployment rates exceeding 10% in June.

Prosperity

High functioning governments and civic institutions will be crucial as we aim to build a more perfect union with well being for all post-pandemic.

Government

- Only 5 states—all in the Northeast—are currently making progress towards the White House Opening Up America Guidelines, with the majority of states either trending poorly or facing uncontrolled spread of the virus.
- At least 10 states are projecting fiscal year 2020 tax revenue reductions of 10% or more. In FY 2021, at least 26 states expect additional tax revenue reductions of 10% or more.

- In 6 states, 2020 Census self-response rates to date are below 56%, requiring extensive door-knocking to achieve a complete count.
- The majority of registered voters in 9 states who did not vote in 2016 cited structural issues such as polling place hours and accessibility challenges. Only 19 states are well-prepared for voting from home in the presidential election less than 4 months away, despite increased barriers facing our potential voters due to Covid.

Institutions

- More than half of the counties in the United States are local news deserts with no or only one local newspaper, exacerbating a lack of reliable information during the pandemic.
- Roughly 1 in 4 households nationwide do not have internet access, hindering their ability to participate in remote learning, telehealth, and working from home.

People

- The share of adults with employment fell from a high of over 61% in January 2020 to 55% in June 2020. While 55% of white adults had employment, only 51% of Black adults had employment as of June.
- More than 1 in 10 adults in the United States report not having enough food for their households during the pandemic.
- Nationwide, 1 in 4 adults is unlikely to be able to pay their rent or mortgage in August. In 10 states, this rate is even higher at 1 in 3 adults.

With the spread of Covid-19 increasing nationwide, and unemployment at 11.1%—higher than at the peak of the Great Recession—the virus has taken a terrible toll on both lives and livelihoods in the last six months. Federal stimulus packages are nearing the end of their anticipated lifecycle, and many small businesses are struggling to survive in the new reality. With expanded federal unemployment benefits slated to end this month, many renters and homeowners fear they will be unable to pay for housing in the coming months. Communities may face a devastating wave of homelessness as eviction courts reopen. These challenges are likely to be exacerbated as states and localities struggle with substantial reductions in tax revenues. States vary greatly as to their ability to protect lives and livelihoods, support their most vulnerable, and prepare for safe and fair upcoming elections.

Pandemic to Prosperity provides baseline indicators to track progress as the nation struggles to simultaneously manage Covid, and build a more equitable future for all. For the full report, visit:

NCoC.org/P2P

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